#1 Crush

by Janina

Summary

Jon is seventeen and in foster care. Sansa is his social worker. He's a troubled kid and all he wants is for Sansa to take him home...and into her bed.

Notes

So this was me when jonsastrash asked me if I could do this story:

And this was me when I realized I would have another WIP:
And this is me now:
Chapter 1

Dorne

Sansa Stark’s concern, as well as her frown, deepened when she stepped into her office and found Jon Snow sitting there holding a pack of ice to his face. He was slumped to the side, leaning on the armrest of the chair he occupied, his black curls in his face.

He turned his head to look at her when he heard the door and moved the ice pack away. “Hey, Sansa,” he said softly.

She didn’t bother to correct him that he should be calling her Miss Stark. Jon liked to flout the rules as much as possible anyway. Not that it was a rule per se that the kids in the Home for Youths had to call her Miss Stark, but Melisandre, the director of the Home thought it best since Sansa was young. She thought it might cause some of the older kids, like Jon, to consider Sansa one of them instead of one of their caretakers. Sansa didn’t think she looked all that young at twenty-six, but she went along with it.

Sansa tilted his head up with her finger under his chin so she could get a better look at him. He was going to have a black eye. “Oh, Jon,” she sighed sadly. “What happened?”

“Theyir son was a prick,” he said, referring to the latest foster home he’d been placed in.

“I need more than that, Jon, come on,” she said and waved her hand in a gesture for him to elaborate. She leaned back against her desk. “And put that ice back on your face.”

He put the ice pack back over his half-closed left eye and looked up at her. While he appeared a bit defeated at present, he also vibrated with something dangerous. But then, Jon always vibrated with something dangerous. He had a temper, and he could be unpredictable. He’d been through at least six therapists since he’d arrived, and been moved through at least as many group therapy sessions before Sansa was hired just the year before. So far, her group therapy sessions was the longest one Jon had attended without causing trouble.

He was a good-looking boy at seventeen - too good-looking considering most of the girls in the Home flocked to him like moths to a flame. It was cause for enough concern to up their monitoring at the Home to ensure no hanky panky was going on. He had shoulder-length black curls, intense grey eyes, and full lips that Sansa would kill for. He ran on the grounds regularly and lifted weights in the exercise room. He was muscular and fit, and Sansa had been told at the start that he was not to be placed in any home where there was a teenage girl.

“He called my mother a crack whore,” Jon said. “That enough?"”

Sansa sucked her bottom lip into her mouth and nibbled on it as she studied him. Their eyes were trained on each other, and Sansa was the first to look away. She usually was. Jon seemed to enjoy turning most of their conversations into staring contests.

“Well,” Sansa said, folding her arms across her chest, “I was told you stole his iPod and purposely broke it.”

“He listened to shit music, he deserved to have it broken!”

Sansa arched her brow and Jon glared at her with his good eye.
“Jon,” she sighed. “It was a good home--”

He moved the ice pack off his face. “Yeah,” he said dryly. “Fanfuckingtastic.”

“What do you want to do then? Why don’t you tell me so that I can help you better. You’re older now, it’s harder to place kids--”

“I want you to take me home.”

She stopped talking abruptly as his words penetrated her brain. She looked at him in bewilderment. “What?”

“I want you to take me home,” he repeated. “I want you to take me in.”

She shook her head. “No, I can’t do that.”

“Why not?”

“Conflict of interest, you know that already.”

He looked frustrated. “I don’t want anymore fucking homes then.”

“Jon, calm down. Breathe with me--”

“I don’t want to fucking breathe either, Sansa,” he snapped as he dropped the ice pack and stood.

Sansa straightened and dropped her arms. “Jon--”

Her breath hitched when he got in her face, definitely crossing boundaries and personal space.

“I either go home with you or I stay here until I age out.”

Gently and slowly, Sansa lifted her hands and placed them on his to push him back. He didn’t budge; she could feel his biceps tensed under his long-sleeved black shirt.

“Personal space and boundaries, Jon,” she said softly. “Please don’t make me call for help.”

He backed up an inch. “You or nothing. That’s what I want.” His jaw ticked with restrained anger and his good eye looked almost black.

She nodded. “Ok. Nothing then.”

His jaw ticked and he opened his mouth as though he wanted to say more, but then he snapped it shut and stormed out of her office.

Sansa sighed as the tension left the room.

“Everything okay?” Melisandre asked, peeking her head in the door. “I just saw Jon leave. He looked like he wanted to hit something. He didn’t touch you, did he?”

“No, he’s just frustrated.”

“Aren’t we all?” Melisandre asked as she slipped into the room and shut the door behind her.

Sansa ran a hand through her red locks and nodded. “Well, you know that there are more setbacks than happy endings in this place.”
Melisandre’s indigo eyes were sad as she nodded sagely. “I do indeed. What did he say?”

“He doesn’t want to be placed anywhere. He wants to stay here and age out.”

Sansa held back Jon’s request to have her take him in, which he knew was an impossibility. Social workers working in foster care agencies who wanted to adopt went elsewhere to adopt, not to their own. She knew he learned the rules so he could then bend or break them, but to ask that was odd, even for him.

Melisandre sighed. “It’s harder now for him anyway. He waited almost six months this last time.”

“I know,” Sansa said. “I just...just...”

“You just want to help.”

“Yes! And it’s frustrating when I can’t. He’s so angry and resistant to everything. How do I help him?”

“You can’t make him try, Sansa. Ever hear the saying you can lead the horse to water but you can’t make him drink?”

Sansa rubbed her forehead, feeling rather weary now. “I have, yes.”

“Why don’t you go home? It’s been a long day and then you had to deal with Jon being sent back and the foster family.”

Sansa nodded. “Okay, you’re right.”

“Tomorrow is another day.”

“You’re just full of sayings today, aren’t you?” Sansa said with a laugh.

“You should see my bathroom mirror. I have to recite them every morning while brushing my teeth just to get out the door.”

“That’s not good.”

“That’s the job.”

“You heading for burnout, Melisandre?”

The other woman shook her head. “No, not yet. You?”

Sansa didn’t want to say yes. She didn’t want to say that she was already looking for another job in her hometown of Winterfell. She had thought this was what she wanted after finishing her Master’s Degree in Social Work, but now she was thinking of something else. She kept thinking maybe a private practice of some sort was the way to go. Working with foster kids was hard. To watch some of them go in and out of foster homes, for some to be utterly heartbroken when they didn’t get adopted, for some to be passed over again and again, and then for kids like Jon who seemed beyond hope...

It was no wonder she had to pop a sleeping pill before she could sleep at night.

“No,” Sansa replied softly. “I’m fine.”

She was thankful that Melisandre didn’t call attention to the fact that it took her a while to answer.
“Well, that didn’t last very long,” Jon’s friend Grenn drawled when Jon entered the rec room and sat down in a huff on the sagging lump of a couch in the middle of the room. “Going for a world record, Snow? That was all of a week.”

“Piss off,” Jon grumbled and then gestured to the TV. “What is this shit?”

Grenn looked at him calmly. “It’s called a tv show.”

“It’s shit,” Jon snapped and jumped up. He shut off the TV, causing Grenn to shout “Hey!”

Jon ignored him and left the rec room and headed down to his bedroom at the end of the hall. He slammed the door shut and sat down on the bed. He buried his face in his hands and looked over at the window at the head of his twin bed. He could see Sansa leaving the building for the day. Jon got up and went to the window and watched her.

He did this often, watched her come in and watched her leave. Watched her do everything when she was in the room with him.

Sansa Stark was hands down the hottest woman he had ever laid eyes on. If she knew how often he thought about filling his hands with all that red silky hair, of kissing that little mouth and laying between those long fucking legs…

He made her uncomfortable sometimes, and often he did it on purpose. He was working on a theory that she found him as attractive as he found her. He liked holding and meeting her gaze the best. She always turned those baby blues away from him first and he knew, he just knew that she had to feel what he was feeling.

She did care about him, but then she cared about everyone in this dump. He told himself not to read into any of the attention she gave him because it was her job, but he couldn’t help it. In Jon’s mind, the attention she paid him was special. It meant something.

If she took him home, he’d do whatever she asked. Anything so that he eventually found himself in her bed. He’d twine those long legs around him and pound her into the bed until she was screaming for him. He’d get to hold those ripe tits in his hands and fill his mouth with them.

He’d make her his. All his. His home, he was convinced, was with her.

The day she took him on and told him she would do whatever she could for him, was the day Jon had felt hope for his sorry ass. Someone in his pathetic life cared about him, and that someone was Sansa.

A soft knock came at the door and Jon turned to find Ros, a sixteen year old foster kid, slipping inside his room with a saucy grin. “I’m so glad you’re back,” she whispered.

He liked Ros okay, but then most boys here liked Ros okay. She put out.

“No one saw me,” she whispered as she came up to him and wrapped her arms around his neck. She kissed him and Jon kissed her back. Ros had red hair, darker than Sansa’s, but in the dark it didn’t matter. He could pretend.

And pretend he did.
Chapter 2

Sansa’s alarm went off promptly at 6:30 am, and she lay there in the semi-dark, the sun peeking through her blinds and lavender curtains. She didn’t want to get up and face the day.

She still felt as though she had failed Jon in some way. If she could take him home, she would. She knew he had abandonment issues - they all did at the Home - and that he had a lot of anger. She also knew though, that when he applied himself, when he tried, he could be a good kid. She just worried about his future and that was what she had fallen asleep to thinking about last night. What would happen to him when he aged out? She did not want to see him out on the streets. So, he was going to have to think about community college, or getting a job, or joining the military when he turned eighteen. He attended public high school rather than take the classes offered at the Home, and his grades were decent. Not great, but again, Sansa knew they could be better if he just tried...and didn’t get sent to the office so much for being disruptive.

Today, when he got out of school, she’d have to speak with him. See how he was doing after yesterday, and then tell him they needed to make a plan and that she’d help him. She wouldn’t abandon him.

Dragging herself up, she swung her legs over the side of the bed and reached for her phone on her refurbished antique nightstand. In her spare time, Sansa enjoyed frequenting antique shops to find the odd piece of furniture to refurbish. That was how she’d gotten the cute little table for mail and her keys by her front door. She’d also managed to find a coat rack at a tag sale that needed some love to go above the table. These were things she could fix without any trouble. They were tangible with an end result she could often be certain about, and she liked that. She needed that.

She went through the motions of getting ready, her mind making lists of things she needed to get done. She was almost to the front door when her phone buzzed. She pulled it out of purse and smiled. She’d just gotten a text from her brother, Robb. Three years older than her, with the same red hair, though his was definitely curlier, and the same blue eyes, he sent her a picture of himself lying on the couch in his house with his dog, Grey Wind, a grey Siberian Husky, lying next to him. Margaery, his girlfriend and a friend of Sansa’s, must have taken the picture.

She sent a quick text that said: *Cute. How’s Mom?*

She waited for Robb to reply, and he did quickly enough: *I’m great, thanks for asking, San, Margaery, too. She sends her love and asks you to call her.*

Sansa: *I’m sorry, I’m leaving for work now. I miss you all!*

Robb: *We miss you, too. When you coming home? Mom is doing okay. She misses Dad.*

Sansa felt a pang as she thought of her Dad having had a heart attack the year before. He had been the cornerstone of their family, and her parents a strong united front and a loving couple. When she thought of them, she was reminded of how lucky she was to have such parents. She also felt a bit
guilty because when she thought of the kids she worked with, she knew that some of them might
never know what it was like to be part of a loving family. And even if they did, it would always be
marred in some way of how their previous family had failed them.

Sansa: *I’ll see you at Thanksgiving. Gotta run. Love you.*

She slipped her phone back in her purse and headed out. She’d check Robb’s replies later.

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Sansa had barely entered her office and gotten her lights on when Melisandre came in the room and
shut the door behind her.

Sansa looked at her in surprise. “Everything okay?”

“There was an incident after you left.”

Sansa’s heart fell. “What happened?”

“Ros was caught in Jon’s room. They were having sex.”

Sansa’s mouth dropped open. “How - I mean - no one saw her go in?”

“No. But a staff member doing rounds heard them.”

Sansa sat down with a thud in her swivel chair and dumped her purse at her feet. “My God.”

“Turns out, it wasn’t the first time this happened.”

Sansa rubbed her forehead. “Is she on birth control?”

“Yes, and Jon has condoms apparently. He was using one.”

“Well, thank the Gods for that.”

“Ros very gleefully informed me that it wasn’t the first time, nor was Jon the only boy. No one is
to leave any of them alone, ever, and they will be watched like hawks even more now.”

“When it rains it pours?” Sansa said.

Melisandre looked out the windows at the other end of Sansa’s office and shook her head. “I know
I shouldn’t say this, but I can’t wait for Jon to leave.”

Sansa understood the sentiment though it hurt her heart to hear it. Jon wasn’t a bad boy; he was just
a product of unfortunate circumstances. She reminded herself of this often when faced with a
challenging child.

His mother having died of a drug overdose when Jon was just fourteen, and his father a drug addict
as well who claimed he never fathered a child, left Jon with no one to care for him. What family
they were able to find, none wanted him. The refrain was “Too much trouble there”. Was it any
wonder he was so angry?

“I have some things to tend to, and I want to check in with some of the kids,” Sansa said. “When
Jon comes home from school, I’ll check in on him, too.”

“If he gets to be too much for you, Sansa, please let me know. I’ll have someone else work with
Sansa nodded. “I’ll keep that in mind.”

At 3, when Sansa knew Jon was home from school, she made her way down the hall to his room, saying hello to Edd who was monitoring the halls before she knocked on his door.

“Who is it?” Jon shouted. No doubt he had an earbud in. He typically did.

“It’s Miss Stark, Jon,” Sansa said.

The door opened a second later and he stood there, looking as though it was just another day and he hadn’t had a hellish day being kicked out of a home, and hadn’t gotten in trouble for having sex with Ros. In fact, he was grinning. The only sign that anything had occurred was the black eye.

“Well, well, well, if it isn’t my favorite social worker,” he said. “I take it you heard what happened after you left? Have you come to chastise me? Maybe take me over your knee?”

Edd cleared his throat behind Sansa. Jon’s gaze drifted to him only briefly before focusing back on Sansa. “You want to come in, Sansa?”

“Miss Stark,” she corrected, “And I thought we might speak down in my office.”

“Lead the way,” Jon said and pulled the ear bud out of his ear and tossed it and his iPod on the bed.

He followed close behind her and Sansa forced herself to walk slowly and not quicken her pace the way she wanted to. He was doing this to intimidate her, and she would not let him win.

When they got to her office, she opened it and stepped aside to let him pass. He smirked down at her as he walked past and then took his customary seat in the chair before her desk. She sat on the other side and nervously straightened the papers on her desk. When she looked up, she found Jon watching her, clearly amused. She had the funny feeling he knew he had succeeded in making her anxious. Of all the kids she dealt with, Jon was the one who got under her skin that way. But then, he got under everyone’s skin. He knew how just by watching with those intense eyes of his.

“How’s your eye?” she asked.

“Black and blue.”

“How do you feel?”

“Before the sex I felt pretty wound tight. After, I found myself rather relaxed.” He slid down a bit in the chair and kicked at her desk with the toe of his black boots lightly.

Sansa sighed. “Jon.”

“Given any more thought to taking me home, Sansa?”

“Miss Stark.”

“Well?”

“No. I can’t do that, Jon, and you know it.”
“Bullshit. You could find a way. They want me out of here badly. Melisandre would do whatever it took to get me the fuck out of here.”

“I thought you were relaxed,” Sansa said. “You don’t sound it.”

Silence fell and he watched her. She had that bug under a microscope kind of feeling, and his kicking of her desk was getting annoying. She was about to ask him to stop when he said, “Do you have a boyfriend?”

“Inappropriate,” she said and pointed at him.

He rolled his eyes. “It’s a simple yes or no.”

“It’s none of your business. Boundaries, Jon. How about you tell me the nature of your relationship with Ros?”

“You get to ask me but I don’t get to ask you? I’ll tell you whatever you want to know, but first you have to tell me if you have a boyfriend. Shit, I’ll even tell you about her stealing meds.”

Sansa’s jaw dropped. “She steals meds? How?!”

He shook his head. “You have to answer me first.”

“No, I don’t have a boyfriend. Now tell me about the meds she’s stolen.”

He grinned. “I lied. She doesn’t. I just wanted you to answer me.”

Sansa felt her temper begin to rise. She could already feel heat in her face. It was best with Jon not to let that show, however, so she sat back and and looked out the window. She thought of the beach, of crashing waves...then Robb popped in her head and she thought of home.

“Sansa?”

“Jon,” she began in an even and measured tone, turning her head slowly to look at him. “Is there some reason why you are determined to challenge me today? Is it because of what happened at the foster home? If so, I wish you would talk to me about it instead of provoking me. If you cannot remember boundaries, then I will remove myself from your care and find someone else to represent you.”

“No,” he said hoarsely, shaking his head. “I don’t want that. Sansa, you can’t leave me.”

“Miss Stark.”

He nodded emphatically. “Miss Stark, yes, Miss Stark.” He looked at her pleadingly and leaned forward in his chair until he was nearly dangling out of it. “Don’t give up on me.”

“I haven’t given up on you, Jon. I never will. But if I am to help you sort things out then you have to meet me halfway.”

“Whatever you want, I’ll do it. For you I would.”

This was...odd? Unprecedented? She wasn’t sure what to make of this. But then, she’d never threatened to give up representing him and handing him over to someone else. It wasn’t a threat though. She’d meant it. He was crossing lines left and right, and there was something about his attitude toward her that made her feel as though she was prey and he the predator.
It made her feel uncomfortable and it wasn’t right. If he had developed an attraction to her then, well…an end would have to be put to that immediately.

Now though, now it appeared he was repetent. He looked downright desperate, too.

“Sansa, please. Please, don’t leave me. I won’t accept anyone else. Only you.”

She sighed and held up a hand. She had now, as it were, the upper hand. For once. “All right, here is what we’ll do. I’m sure you were reprimanded by Melisandre last night for what you and Ros were caught doing.”

“Yes,” he nodded.

“Then how about we wipe the slate clean for now and we talk instead about your future?”

He sat back and nodded. “Okay, okay. Just…don’t leave me.”

She shook her head and softened her tone and her gaze. “I won’t.”
Chapter 3

Fear of losing Sansa had Jon on his best behavior. He called her Miss Stark, he listened to her talk to him about his future - something he hadn’t put much thought into - and was mindful of crossing a toe out of line with her.

He found he sort of resented her for it.

In the beginning, when he’d first arrived at the Home, he had been scared out of his mind and mourning the loss of his mother. He had been on his best behavior. He’d been placed in a foster home pretty quickly and had done what was asked of him even if he found the foster father, Rick to be a bit of a dick to him and his own kids. Rick the Dick Jon had called him behind his back.

But, he’d kept his head down, staying out of sight as much as he could, until the night Rick had gotten drunk and started taking his bottled-up rage out on a select few in the house. When Rick came after Jon, something in him had come back to life since his mother’s passing. The tough kid who had to protect himself from pervs who thought he could be payment for his mother's heroin addiction, and had to beat back gross men who came to the house at all hours looking for his mom for a quick fuck had pushed through his grief and come out swinging.

He’d given humanity one last chance, and it had let him down.

And to Jon, the staff at the Home had been in it so long that he found their own belief to be fake. It was all an act to him. They were as jaded as he was, and how could anyone have any kind of hope for survival when the people who were supposed to be advocating for you didn’t believe in you or anyone else either?

Sansa though...Sansa had breathed life into the place. She had come in on a burst of sunshine and light, riding in on a unicorn of hope and her gentle manner, easy smiles, and kind words had meant everything to Jon. Including her patience. Especially her patience. God knew he’d try the patience of a saint.

Cynically, he’d waited for the shine to wear off of her, and for her to become as jaded as the rest, all the while secretly hoping it wouldn’t. He needed her light. He wanted to bask in it as long as possible.

Sansa, he’d decided, was his. She didn’t know it, but she was. Losing her was not an option.
But this whipped boy she’d turned him into? This fear he had now that he could lose her? He
didn’t like it. It made him feel off balance and weak, and yet even as he gritted his teeth he toed
the line.

For her.

A more concrete plan began to form as the days went on. What he needed was a way to keep her
with him. Beyond this dump, beyond his aging out - he needed Sansa to stay with him. Always.

If he could make her see him as more than just the troubled kid she wanted to help. If he could
make her want him as much as he wanted her.

It burned some of the resentment away to think this way, to have some sort of endgame in sight. To
have some control back.

He listened to her talk to him about his options and even entertained some of them. Military? No.

They sat together on her computer and looked through possible part-time jobs he could do now
while in school. She encouraged him to seek out tutors for classes his grades weren’t up to par in.
He sat by her day after day for over a week and his want of her grew.

“The thing with a job,” she told him one afternoon in her office, “is that you will have to accept
that you’ll have superiors. You’ll have to do what you’re asked to do - within reason of course, but
you will have to learn to play by the rules. Can you do that?”

He looked over at her, into those gorgeous eyes and into that gorgeous face, and found himself
falling into her. He thought if he got a good job and his own place after he left the Home, she could
visit him. She could spend the night.

He nodded while cursing himself for being such a fucking wuss when it came to her. She was
lodged somewhere inside him and he held onto it with all his might while also wishing he could
release it.
One afternoon, during a party the Home was having for ten-year-old Alys - she was going to be adopted - Jon found himself feeling particularly bitter about the festivities and just wanted to go back to his room. He had just slipped into the hallway and was on his way down the hall when Sansa called his name.

He kept going. He wanted to lead her to his room.

“Jon, hold on,” she called out. He kept going. Almost there…

“Jon!”

He stopped in front of his door and turned to her. “Hey. Sorry. I just had to get away.”

Her look of concern nearly undid him. She was just so good. Why did she have to be so good?

“Are you all right?” she asked, stopping in front of him. She had a small paper plate in her hand with a slice of vanilla cake on it. She held a fork in her other hand.

He stepped into his room and she took the bait and followed him, but stood near the door. The only place they could be alone was her office, and that was because there were four other offices that surrounded them. Even when they were alone, they weren’t really. Here though, there was more of a chance they could be and no one wanted that. More of a chance to be accused of something.

He moved further into the room, willing her to follow. She put her cake and fork down on his bureau. “How about some cake at least?” she asked gently.

“That cake is for celebrating. I don’t want to celebrate anything,” he said.

“I’m sorry, Jon. I know this is hard. All hope is not lost--”

“Sansa - Miss Stark - just don’t. Don’t give me that crap. You won’t even take me home and you know me.”
“Jon, it’s not because I wouldn’t, it’s because I can’t, and you know that. It’s not ethical for me to do that. It’s a conflict of interest.”

He pressed himself against the wall next to his windows. “If I was a kid somewhere else and you knew me, just as I am now, would you take me in?”

“If you could promise to follow my rules, yes, I would.”

His eyes welled up in tears. This, he had not planned on. He hadn’t had much of a plan to begin with; he hadn’t expected her to follow him out of the party. He’d thought he’d just figure it out, if he could get her alone, feel her out, see if he could make her feel something for him. And she did, even it was just pity right now. He’d take it. Because she cared. She would take him in.

He moved swiftly toward her before she could even think to stop him, and pulled her into his arms. He heaved a trembling sigh and his eyes closed. Sansa. Sansa was in his arms. She felt better than he’d imagined.

She patted his back. “Jon, we should--”

“You’re just so good. You’re the only one who has ever believed in me,” he whispered, burying his face in her hair and breathing her in. He pulled back and looked down at her, framing her face in his hands.

Her eyes went wide and she made to push away. He fused his mouth to hers before she could. She tasted sweet, like frosting and mint tea. He slipped his tongue in her mouth, pressing deep, wanting more -

And she shoved him away.

She looked at him as though he’d just betrayed her. With a shake of her head, she turned and stormed out of his room. Fearing what she would do, Jon ran after her. “Sansa, stop, just stop!” He grabbed her arm and spun her around to face. “Sansa, listen to me. I’m sorry--”

“Jon, stop,” she muttered and shook him off.
“I’m sorry!” he exclaimed, reaching for her again. “I know I should haven’t done that. I crossed a major line, I know I—”

“What’s going on?” Melisandre asked from a few feet away.

Sansa looked helplessly at the other woman and before she could say anything Jon said, “Nothing. Sansa was just trying to get me to go back to the party and I was being a dick.”

Now Sansa looked at him in bewilderment. Melisandre studied Jon silently for a long moment and then turned to Sansa. “Sansa?”

Jon looked at Sansa pleadingly. He didn’t want to think what would happen if Sansa told Melisandre what he did. Sansa turned to face Melisandre, yet said nothing. Her bottom lip quivered.

“Sansa, is there something you’re not telling me?” Melisandre encouraged.

“Jesus, not everything is a goddamn conspiracy!” Jon shouted and moved in front of Sansa, shielding her. “Leave her alone!”

Melisandre glared at him. “Jon Snow, I am not talking to you. Keep your voice down.”

Melisandre and Jon glared at each other, and the sounds of the party had quieted. Glancing past Melisandre, Jon noticed that they’d drawn a crowd.

“Everything okay out here?” Edd asked, appearing to be keeping everyone from flooding the hall.

“We’re fine,” Jon replied.

No one moved. And then, softly, sadly, came Sansa’s voice. “Melisandre, we need to talk.”

Jon shut his eyes and tilted his head back. No, God no.
“Follow me then,” Melisandre said with a nod and turned quickly on her black heels.

Sansa scurried around Jon and fell into step behind Melisandre. Jon fought the urge to run after her and carry her off somewhere. She was ruining everything!

The walk to Melisandre’s office was the longest walk of Jon’s young life, and once they were inside Melisandre’s plant-filled room, he broke out into a sweat. He was going to lose her.

Sansa wouldn’t look at him and Jon wanted to plant himself in front of her so she couldn’t ignore him.

“I kissed her, all right?” Jon said, beating Sansa to the chase. He didn’t like just standing by and waiting for the verdict to come down. He wanted to plead his case at least. “I was emotional over Alys being adopted and thinking of my own sorry life and Sansa was trying to be supportive. She was doing what she always does which is give me fucking hope, which is bullsh*t because there is no hope for me, and I hugged her and then kissed her. I got caught up in the moment, that’s all.”

Melisandre sucked in a breath and looked over at Sansa. “Sansa?”

Sansa nodded.

“Jon, go to your room now, please,” Melisandre said. “I’d like to speak to Sansa alone.”

“No,” Jon said defiantly. “You’re just going to take her away from me, and I won’t let you do it. I crossed a line and it won’t happen again.”

Melisandre snapped her gaze to his. “Jon, to your room. Now. I won’t ask again.”

Jon threw up his arms. “This is bullsh*t!” He made to approach Sansa, but he saw Melisandre move toward the door and he knew she’d get Edd to haul him out. He stayed himself. “Sansa, you promised not to give up on me. You promised not to leave me.”
She looked at him, tears in her eyes. “I’m sorry, Jon.”

“Don’t,” he whispered, feeling tears of his own coming. “Don’t leave me.”

“Jon,” Melisandre said.

Clenching his jaw, Jon stormed from the office and slammed the door shut so hard a picture on the wall outside Melisandre’s office fell and crashed to the floor. In a rage, he grabbed another picture off the wall and flung it against the wall. Then he went for the desk in the middle of the room and started shoving things off it.

Edd and Mance came in then to detain him. As he was being dragged to his room, he saw Sansa in Melisandre’s doorway looking at him in horror.

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Melisandre closed the door to her office and sighed as she leaned against it. She turned and Sansa blurted out, “I want to take some time off. I think I need to. I want to go home and visit my family.”

“You’re upset.”

Sansa gaped at her. “Aren’t you?!”

Melisandre sighed and nodded. “I am. I’ve seen this sort of thing before - a kid misplacing their feelings for their social worker. It happens. And it’s never easy. When I first started in the field, there was an agency I worked for that had a teenage girl develop feelings for her social worker, a good friend of mine and woman. The girl did the same thing Jon did, she kissed my friend. My friend told her no, and the girl turned around and said my friend molested her.”

“Jesus,” Sansa whispered.

“It was thoroughly investigated, but in the end the girl confessed that she’d made it up to get back at my friend. It still ruined my friend’s career nonetheless.”

“Do you think Jon would…?”
“No, but...but there are factors here to consider and who knows really? He just did attempt to trash the office. In a rage, Jon is capable of a lot.”

Sansa nodded slowly and slowly eased into the loveseat against the wall. “I had an inkling,” she said softly. “Full disclosure - I had an inkling that Jon had possibly developed feelings for me. I thought at first that he was just testing me, pushing his limits, but there was something there that gave me pause. When I told him I would give him to someone else, he promised to be on his best behavior if I didn’t give up on him. I agreed and for the past few weeks up until today, he had been on his best behavior.”

Melisandre’s mouth quirked up into a bit of a grin. “I noticed. It’s been rather quiet around here.”

Sansa buried her face in her hands and started to cry softly. “He’s attached to me, I just didn’t realize how much until he kissed me. I feel like I failed him.”

“Sansa, you absolutely did not fail him.”

Sansa looked up at her boss. “Can I take some vacation time effective immediately? I think some time away would be best for all of us. Let the dust settle.”

Melisandre nodded. “I agree. Though, I’m not sure if Jon knows how to let things settle. He is attached you, Sansa, very much so based on what I just saw, and how he lied about exactly what happened at the start. He was trying to make you complicit in that lie. We might need more than a vacation to get things back on track.”

“Like?”

“Either we transfer him or we transfer you.”

Sansa sighed. “Me. Transfer me. He has friends here and he has only a year left. He’ll be a mess if he goes someplace else.”

“How about you take that vacation. You have how many weeks?”
“Three.”

“Take two. Get some rest. I’ll see what I can do.”

Sansa stood on shaky legs and nodded. “Thank you, Mel.”

Melisandre opened her arms and Sansa walked into them. She started to cry again and Melisandre stroked her hair. “It’ll be okay. Jon will be okay. I promise.”

Sansa though, she wasn’t so sure about that.
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

I didn't get a chance to respond to all the comments last chapter, but I just wanted to say thank you so much! This Jon is very different and not quite in my "comfort zone", but I am enjoying exploring him!

“I’ve got the guest room all set up for you, honey,” Catelyn Stark said cheerfully over the phone.

Sansa, cradling the phone between her ear and shoulder, smiled as she stuffed underwear in her suitcase. “You mean my bedroom?” she asked her mother teasingly.

Catelyn laughed and it made Sansa’s smile deepen. “Yes.”

“I’m just finishing up packing now and the car to take me to the airport should be coming at three to pick me up for my flight at four.”

“And Robb and I will be there by the time you touch down at six.”

“Barring any delays I’ll be there by then.”

“Think positive.”

Sansa shut her suitcase and sat down on her bed. “You’ve been saying that to me my whole life,” she said.

“Is there something wrong with that?”

Sansa sighed, letting her gaze drift out the window across the room. A breeze blew in, ruffling the white sheer curtains. It was a warm breeze, doing absolutely nothing to cool the room off. She might have to turn on the AC before she left, just to cool off a bit so she wasn’t a sweaty mess.

She was a little nervous about leaving her condo for two weeks, but it wasn’t as though she had a pet and the little community of condos wasn’t in a rough neighborhood. And Dorne wasn’t like Winterfell - it was hot year round and Winterfell was no doubt already cold and snow could come any day now. One year it came on Halloween, and Halloween was in just a week.

“No,” Sansa finally said. “There’s nothing wrong with thinking positive. But at what point do you stop? I mean, what if a situation just isn’t going to improve no matter what you do? Or a person? No matter how much you want them to succeed, you can’t do all the positive thinking for them, and you can’t always be their cheerleader, can you?”

“Thinking positive doesn’t mean you’re blind to reality,” Catelyn said sagely. “Being positive means you hope for the best and deal with what’s thrown at you if shit hits the fan.”

Sansa laughed. “Such language, Mom!”

“A negative person is often stuck in the past and has given up. They’ve fallen down and stayed down.”
Sansa grimaced. “What if life dealt them absolute crap? What if all they’ve known is the worst? What if they don’t believe in themselves?”

“Sansa, honey, you want to tell me what happened at work? What prompted this vacation?” Catelyn asked softly.

Sansa released a tremulous sigh, dangerously close to tears. “No, not right now. I need to finish up here and get ready for the car to pick me up.”

“Okay, call me at the airport before you board.”

“I will. Love you.”

“Love you, too.”

Sansa disconnected from her Mom and zipped up her suitcase. She put it down on her shaggy white area rug and extended the handle. She rolled it from her bedroom down the hall. She paused, thinking she heard her doorbell, but when she didn’t hear anything again, she started back down the hall. It was loud on the hardwood floor and when she got to the top of the steps, the doorbell did in fact ring.

Sansa frowned and hoped the car wasn’t early. Leaving the suitcase at the top of the steps, she called out, “Hold on!” and jogged down. The door was right at the bottom of the stairs and she opened it.

And gaped.

Jon was standing there, dressed in his customary black with dark circles under his eyes. He looked a bit...feral. He looked at her as though she was an oasis and he was dying of thirst.

She pushed the screen door open. “How - how did you find out where I live? And why aren’t you in school?”

“I went to homeroom and first period and then skipped,” he said. “Can I come in?”

“How did you find out where I live?”

“Google.”

“Try again. I check periodically to make sure my information is kept private.”

“Grenn busted into the office and I got your address.”

Sansa looked at him helplessly. “Gods, Jon. Did you walk here?”

“I hitched part of the way.”

She stepped aside to let him in. Now she was angry. Once the door was shut behind them she started yelling at him. “How could you do something so dangerous? What if you got into the car with a murderer? And you do realize that the school is going to call eventually and figure out you’re not there, right?”

Jon, who had his back turned to her as he looked around her living room, turned now to face her, his expression hard. “I don’t give a fuck if the school calls Melisandre. I don’t give a fuck what she does to me.”
“You should care.”

“Rumors get around in that place you know.”

“I know.”

“I heard you were on vacation.”

“That’s true. I’ll be gone for two weeks.”

He winced and looked away. “That’s so long,” he said softly. “You’ve only been gone one day and I miss you.”

“Jon, you shouldn’t be here. You should be in school.”

He looked back at her. “There’s also talk that you might leave the Home.”

Sansa sighed, and then nodded.

He shook his head. “No. You can’t leave me, Sansa. You promised you wouldn’t give up on me!”

“I haven’t given up on you! I will always root for you, Jon.”

“I don’t want you to leave!” He stalked over to her and she saw tears in his eyes. “I won’t have anyone if you leave, Sansa. No one. No one gives a shit about me in there.”

“That’s not true,” she said fiercely. “Melisandre cares very much what happens to you.”

“Don’t patronize me. I know she is just counting the days until she is rid of me. I’m surprised she didn’t kick me the fuck out so she could keep you there. She knows you’re the best thing that could have happened to that shithole.”

“You have a year left there. Just a year. You can manage a year, Jon.”

“Not without you,” he said hoarsely.

“Jon, your attachment to me isn’t healthy. You crossed a line, a major one.”

“I know I did,” he said softly, his eyes pleading. “And I won’t do it again. I promise.”

“It’s not that easy. You can’t stay in my care after that.”

“Sansa,” he croaked.

“And how am I helping you in any way if you misread every interaction we’ve had as meaning more than me trying to help you? It’s best for me to transfer than to stay.”

“Where are you going?”

She shook her head. “I don’t know yet. And even if I did, I wouldn’t tell you.”

“I can find out,” he said stubbornly.

“Melisandre wouldn’t let you go.”

“She would if I raised holy hell in that place.” He leaned in towards Sansa. “And I’d do it too. You know I would.”
Sansa felt a shiver go up her spine. She believed that he would. All just to get to her? It boggled her mind. It also scared her. This wasn’t just unhealthy, his attachment to her had crossed into downright terrifying. “I think it’s time you left now,” Sansa said firmly. She would not show him that he’d scared her. “I’ll call you a Lyft.” She pointed at him. “Don’t move.” She started for the stairs when Jon snagged her arm gently.

“Sansa.”

She looked back at him. “Please let go of me, Jon.”

He let go. “Do you think I mean to hurt you?”

She turned to face him and folded her arms across her chest in a protective manner. “What am I supposed to think when you say the things you’re saying? When you ditch school over me going on vacation?”

“No, that’s not fair, Sansa, and you know it. It’s not just vacation. You’re planning on leaving the Home.”

“Do you realize how you sound right now? Do you understand how it sounds to me that you would make things difficult at the Home all with the purpose of getting transferred to where I am? Do you understand how obsessive that sounds, Jon?

He hung his head and Sansa thought he might start crying for real. She wanted to comfort him now the same way she’d wanted to comfort him the night he’d kissed her. But it was crossing lines and boundaries - and he was in her home for crying out loud. This was a bad situation all around.

“You’re the only one I’ve given a damn about since my mother died,” he said softly and looked up at her. His eyes were glistening with tears. “You gave me hope when I had none for myself. Do you have any idea how dangerous it is to give hope to someone like me? I’m sure all your fancy textbooks have a word for how I feel about you and what you’ve done for me, but I can’t stop my feelings, Sansa. Isn’t that what you always tell me?”

“I also tell you that while you can’t control how you feel, you can control how you act on those feelings. Ditching school to come here? Threatening to raise holy hell at the Home to get transferred? Those are actions, not feelings.”

“I think about you all the time,” he said softly.

“Jon, don’t do this—”

“I watch you everyday, Sansa, every time you’re in the room.”

“Jon, this is inappropriate,” she said. “I want you to stay here while I get my phone and call you a ride back to the school. I want you to take a few minutes to get yourself together, okay? Try one of the breathing exercises --”

He grabbed her and yanked her to him so fast she had barely processed what he’d done until his eyes were so close she could see flecks of green in them. “Did you feel anything when I kissed you?” he whispered. “Anything at all?”

She shook her head and pushed at him. He framed her face with his hands and leaned in until their foreheads were touching. “You’re lying,” he murmured. “You have to be. I couldn’t have been alone in feeling something.”
“Jon, don’t do this,” she whispered.

“I won’t hurt you, Sansa. I would never hurt you.”

She put her hands on his wrists. “I know.”

He lifted his head. Studied her. “Do you?”

She thought about it, looked at him and saw the worry there. No, he wouldn’t hurt her. She nodded.

“It’s not about sex, you know,” he told her. “Well, not completely.” His mouth curved into a smile. “I mean, I do want you.” He pushed his forehead against hers and breathed her in. “It’s all of you. It’s your warmth and your good heart. I feel like you could make me clean. Like you could lift away every bad thing that’s ever happened to me and I’d be reborn.”

“You’re giving me more power and credit than I deserve.”

“I don’t think so,” he murmured and pressed a soft kiss to her cheek.

Her eyes shut at the feel of such tenderness that belied the tension she could feel in his body. He smelled like pine and she found herself inhaling deeply.

He placed gentle kisses all along her jaw and up to ear. Then he trailed more down to her mouth and then captured it with a moan. This was not like the first one in which shock and then outrage had suffused her and caused her to react so readily. This time, she felt almost drunk. His closeness and his deep voice had lulled her into a dreamlike state. Where before she had been afraid of what he might do to keep her, he had now woven a some kind of spell around her.

He kissed her as though the world was crumbling down around them and he wanted her kiss to be the last thing he felt before he perished.

“God, that felt good,” he whispered.

Sense was starting to return, but before it did Jon murmured, “Give me my sin again,” and kissed her yet again.

Who he was and who she was slowly pierced through her daze and she jerked away from him and shoved him away.

He was panting, and so was she.

Tears welled up in her eyes. What had she done? What was she thinking? Why why why why?

“You have to go,” she croaked. “That was wrong. On so many levels that was wrong.”

“It didn’t feel wrong,” he said, his eyes burning into her. “You kissed me back, Sansa.”

“I want you to go. I want you to go now.”

He licked his lips. “I can taste you.”

“Get out!” she shouted, nearly hysterical.

His jaw clenched and his eyes narrowed. “I’m in your system now. In your head. Under your skin. Coursing like blood in your veins.”
“Get out Jon, now,” she said sternly, afraid that if he didn’t, she might actually hit him.

He stormed past her and she didn’t bother to turn around. She was long past offering to call him a ride. She was done.

“Have a nice vacation, Sansa,” he said. “See you when you get back.”

She turned to yell at him again, and found the screen door swinging shut.
Sansa wondered how many people left for vacation a shaking, sobbing mess. Most people were thrilled to be getting away, and she was, but Jon had left her having a breakdown. She had managed to pull herself together before the car came to pick her up and take her to the airport, but she found herself right on the edge of breaking down in the car.

All she could think while the driver tried to make friendly chit-chat with her was, *I failed him I failed him I failed him.*

Where had her head gone? What had made her do something so stupid as to kiss him back? How had she fallen under his spell so easily? How could she do something so stupid?! He was her client and *seventeen-years-old.*

She had failed him, herself, Melisandre, and all the kids she worked with. She was officially a predator now. It didn’t matter that Jon had been the one who pursued her, the fact of the matter was, she had kissed him. She’d let him in her home and she’d kissed him.

She wrestled with what to do the whole way to the airport which made her not a very good conversationalist. The driver gave up after she’d zoned out on him for the third time in fifteen minutes. Then she felt bad; he probably thought she was just some snob.

Did she call Mel and come clean? Or did she keep her mouth shut? And what would Jon do? He had her now. He could ruin her if he wanted. *He had blackmail.* If he wanted, he could manipulate her with what she’d done and no doubt he knew it.

*Did he plan on it? Bet on it?*

She needed help. She needed to talk to Mel. She was *afraid* to talk to Mel.

Sansa barely remembered going through the airport. She was consumed with what she should do,
could do, and didn’t want to do.

She spent the two-hour flight composing in her head what she would say to Mel if she called, and all the various scenarios that could ensue.

It was with all this swirling in her head that by the time she saw her Mom and Robb standing there, waiting for her at the end of the gate, she burst into tears.

After gathering her luggage and getting her to Robb’s truck, Sansa spilled it all. She felt such shame telling them what happened - leaving Jon’s name out of it of course - but she had to tell someone. She needed help because she felt paralyzed by fear.

Silence fell in the truck and Sansa felt her face flaming red with how ashamed she was of herself.

“First of all,” Robb said, his deep voice cutting through the silence, “I think you need to stop beating yourself up for all this, Sansa.”

“How can I not, Robb? He’s my client, and he’s seventeen.”

“He kissed you,” Catelyn said. “He got your address in files that were private, and he skipped school to visit you. That crosses so many lines and breaks so many rules.”

“Yes, but I shouldn’t have let him in,” Sansa argued. “That was my first mistake.”

“Why did you?” Robb asked, glancing back at her.

“I didn’t want him to hitch back to school and I…” she sighed heavily. “I guess I didn’t want him to get into any more trouble if I called them to come and get him. He’s always in trouble for something, and I thought I could talk sense into him.”

“Well, it sounds like he brings trouble on himself,” Catelyn said primly as she tossed her long auburn hair over her shoulder. She turned her head in her seat and looked back at Sansa with pale blue eyes. “You were trying to protect him by letting him in it sounds like.”
“Yes.” And I did a bang up job of that, didn’t I? I am now a predator.

“And you said you kept trying to tell him you were going to call him a Lyft back to school.”

“Yes.”

“And it sounds like you tried to reason with him and what he was putting on you,” Robb said.

Sansa nodded. “Yes.”

“And he took it too far,” Robb said.

“But I should have pushed him away immediately. Instead, I just let it happen,” Sansa said, her eyes welling up with tears all over again. “I need to tell Mel. I need to come clean.”

“Sansa, it was… I mean…” Robb sighed the sigh of someone trying to find the right words. “San, he was forceful with you - from getting someone to get your information to showing up at your house and saying all that stuff? He pushed himself on you. A kiss is… I mean, it’s a kiss, yeah, but it’s not like you took advantage of him.”

“They won’t see it that way, Robb,” Sansa said. “I’m his social worker and he is my client. He has several issues and it is my job to make sure lines are not crossed.”

“But you can’t control his behavior when he crosses them,” Catelyn said matter-of-factly. “You can tell him the rules and make sure you don’t cross them, but he has free will and you can’t make him do anything when it comes down to it.”

“I kissed him back,” Sansa croaked.

“For like a second,” Robb said.
“Were you there?” Sansa asked.

“Sansa,” Robb said gently. “Just stop. Call your boss when we get to Mom’s. From the sound of this little prick, she won’t be surprised. Nothing says you have to tell say that you kissed him back. All you have to say is that he kissed you again and it’s his word against yours.”

“I’m not sure I like you putting Sansa in the position of being dishonest,” Catelyn said with a frown.

“Not dishonest completely, but what good is it going to do to say she kissed him back when he was the one who initiated it to begin with?”

“I could have pulled away,” Sansa said softly, sadly. “I should have.”

“Call your boss when we get home,” Catelyn said. “I’ll sit with you if you want while you do.”

Sansa nodded, staring out the window. She was so happy that she was miles and miles and miles away from Dorne and Jon and this giant mess.

_I just want to stay here_, she thought. _Screw getting transferred. I want to come back home, be back with my family and far far far away from Jon Snow._

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Sansa sat in her old bedroom, changed just a bit from when she was growing up. All the pink was gone, replaced with white and turquoise shabby chic furniture, and a Queen-sized bed instead of a twin complete with a fluffy white comforter. She had her phone pressed to hear as she ran her fingers along the smooth white edge of the nightstand. On the phone with Mel confessing her sins and sitting in all this white, she felt as though she was being cleansed.

She could hear her family downstairs getting dinner on the table. She’d wanted to make the call immediately and just get it over with, and Robb and her Mom made her excuses after she’d said a quick hello to Bran, Rickon, Arya, and run up the stairs to call Melisandre.
“Honestly, Sansa, I’m not surprised Jon did this,” Melisandre told her. She sounded weary. “I had this funny feeling as soon as I got the call that he’d skipped out. I just knew it.”

“But what I did--”

“I don’t blame you,” Melisandre said firmly. “I don’t place any blame on you. You kissed him back or you didn’t - I don’t care, honestly. He forced himself on you.”

“I should have stopped it. I never should have let him in.”

“Sansa, you’re not a predator. I know you. I won’t let you lose your career over this, all right? I have your back.”

“I failed him. I failed you, I failed the kids…” her voice wobbled, she was ready for tears again. Now she’d wished she had her Mom sit with her, but no, she wanted to face this head on like an adult.

“You’ve failed no one. Listen, just enjoy your vacation and put this out of your mind. I will deal with Jon. I’ll look for a transfer for you and I’ll make damn sure he doesn’t show up at your house again.”

How? Sansa thought? How could she guarantee that when Jon was so determined to get to her?

“Mel, I...I don’t want you to look for a transfer.”

“Pardon?” Melisandre sounded surprised.

“I can’t do this anymore,” Sansa confessed. “I’m not cut out for it. I think I need a change.”

“Sansa, you are wonderful with those kids. They love you! Don’t let Jon stop you from helping the kids that need it.”

“No, I just...I can’t. I can’t stop feeling awful about it and I’ve been feeling worn out for a
while…”

“I had a feeling about that, too,” Melisandre said softly.

“I don’t know what I’m going to do yet. I want to look into my options.”

“Might I suggest you just take a breather for right now? This is raw and fresh - it just happened. Take a week and let things settle. Enjoy your family and try to relax.”

Melisandre was right, but Sansa didn’t think anything would change. If ever there was a sign that it was time for a change, it was this. She felt like a failure - only a year in, moved and everything, and she was already ready to throw in the towel and move back home. She’d been warned that social work and especially social work in a group home had a fast burn out rate, but had she listened? No. Instead, she wanted to help people like her Mom did a nurse.

But, maybe Melisandre was right. Maybe what she needed was time. She was home now with her family, and she’d confessed. The only thing left to do now was try and put Jon Snow out of her head and enjoy the next couple weeks as much as she could.

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Never had Jon thought Sansa would tell Melisandre what happened.

But then, Sansa was a good girl. Normally, he liked that about her. Now, not so much. Because he knew that spelled doom for him. He knew that meant that transfer was definitely happening now and that Sansa and Melisandre would conspire to make sure him visiting her never happened again.

He had hoped Sansa would be so afraid to spill what had transpired between them - not to mention turned on - that she’d keep it a secret. That they’d have their own little secret. He had her now; he knew he did. She’d kissed him back after all. And fucking hell that kiss was on repeat in his head. He was in danger of chafing from the amount of jerking off he’d done over it.

He felt like a caged animal and it didn’t help that after Melisandre had reamed him a new one for what he’d done (and Grenn too), he was now basically on lockdown. Mance and Edd were never very far away. Just one day in and Jon thought he might lose his fucking mind.
He had taken some comfort in the fact that Grenn had managed to get Sansa’s cell phone number for him. He’d gotten a burner phone after he’d left Sansa’s that day and thought he’d give her a few days before he tried to text her.

But, unfortunately, his idiot friend had gotten the number wrong.

That was enough to bring him to Grenn’s door. He could hear Edd talking to one of the kids down the hall, and Mance was nowhere in sight.

“You fucking moron,” Jon seethed to Grenn after slipping into his room and shutting the door behind him. “I asked you to get Sansa’s phone number and you copied it wrong. It keeps going to some guy named Jason.”

Grenn looked up from where he was reading a comic book on his bed and looked over at Jon, completely disinterested. “Sorry?”

Jon balled his hands into fists at his sides. He wanted to punch Grenn in his fucking face. “You had one job--”

Grenn put his comic down and sat up. He looked angry now. “No, actually, I had two. I was the one who broke into the office, remember?”

Jon raked a hand through his hair and looked up at the ceiling in annoyance.

“I got in a shit load of trouble because of you,” Grenn snapped as he got to his feet.

Jon glared at him. “Like I put a gun to your fucking thick head.”

“You threatened to beat the shit out of me,” Grenn hissed.

“What’s wrong? Too much of a wuss to fight me?” Jon sneered.
“What is your deal with Miss Stark anyway?” Grenn demanded. “You want to fuck her?”

Jon stuck his finger in Grenn’s face. “Don’t talk about her like that.”


“Shut the fuck up Grenn,” Jon growled as he got in Grenn’s face and stared him down. “I’ll fucking gut you if you keep talking about her like that.”

Grenn stepped back. “You’re such a dick, you know that? You think you have a shot in hell with Miss Stark? Well, let me save you the trouble - you don’t.”

“Shut the fuck up,” Jon said through clenched teeth.

“What Miss Stark feels for someone like you and me and all the fucking kids in this place is pity. Guys like us will never get a woman like Miss Stark because we’re pieces of shit and they know it. That’s why we’re here in case you missed the fucking memo. We’re pieces of shit and everyone knows it. Including Miss Stark. You’ll never have her.”

Jon swung and punched Grenn so hard he fell back on his ass. He was about to kick him in the ribs when Mance rushed in swearing up a storm and shouting for Edd.

“Couldn’t even take a leak,” Mance muttered as he managed to detain Jon and haul him back to his room.

Mance pushed him inside his room and then shut and locked the door. Jon knew he was probably not going to be able to leave his room for a very long time now. But that wasn’t what brought the tears on as he stood there, staring at the door.

No, it was what Grenn had said. Grenn might not be good at fighting with his fists but he sure as fuck knew how to eviscerate someone with his words.
Chapter 6

One Year Later

Sansa pushed the door open to the waiting room of Life Management Associates and waved to the receptionist behind the sliding glass window at the front of the room.

She crossed the waiting room and pushed another door open and headed down the narrow hall to her office. She let herself inside, turned on the light, and looked about the muted lavender room to see if there was anything she’d left behind yesterday that needed tidying up.

Her last client last night had been a wreck and had blown through, no pun intended, a whole box of tissues. She’d taken care of the mess when her client had taken to missing the trash completely and just tossed them on the table next to her. Sansa couldn’t fault her; she had just lost her mother and their relationship hadn’t been the greatest. There was a lot there to work through.

A stray tissue was peeking out behind the plant on the table and Sansa made her way over to grab it, and the one left stuffed into the cushion of one of the two chairs her clients sat in. She tossed the tissues and went back to her desk to put her purse down and pump some anti-bacterial gel that sat on her desk into her hands.

As she rubbed the gel into her hands, she looked down at the calendar upon it to confirm her appointments that day, and then grabbed the plastic watering can at the corner of her desk and headed down to the bathroom to fill it up so she could water her plants.

She hummed to herself as she made her way back to her office. She was happy...ish. Making the decision to leave foster care services altogether and move back to Winterfell to be with her family had been the right decision. It was just that sometimes she missed working with kids, troubled as they were.

Melisandre had been devastated when Sansa had called a week into her vacation at Winterfell and told her she would not be returning. She would return to Dorne to do what she had to do to sell her condo and tie up other loose ends, but after that she was done.

And it ended up that after meeting with a realtor, she didn’t have to do much. The realtor handled everything for Sansa while she moved back home. She stayed with her Mom until the sale of the condo went through and then she moved to her own place. An apartment this time.

It had been an eventful year culminating into the practice she had been thinking of having before everything went to hell at the Home with Jon.

Jon.

Whenever Sansa thought of him, all she felt was profound regret. She did often wonder whatever happened to him. She hoped he found peace; she hoped he found direction. She hoped he was happy and somewhere safe. That was all she wanted for him. It was all she had wanted for all the kids under her care.

Leaving them all had been hard, and she felt as though she had let all of them down, not just Jon. And, sometimes she fought with feelings of failure - that she’d given up too quickly and too easily. It wasn’t in her nature to give up, but she felt that in this she felt that maybe she had. However, something told her that if she stayed, Jon would have just made things more difficult for her and it
was the very last thing Sansa wanted.

So, here she was. Home. With her family. Sunday dinners, cookouts, siblings dropping by at random times without calling - it was all part of the package.

Her phone chirped and she dug into her purse to see who had just texted her. She smiled when she saw it was Dickon Tarly, the guy she’d been dating for a few weeks now.

She quickly texted back confirmation that they would be having dinner at the steakhouse that night and slipped her phone back in her purse.

Despite a few regrets, she really couldn’t complain about how things had turned out.

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Jon stepped out of his black truck and into the blinding sunshine. Looking out over the valley of dirt, concrete, two-by-fours and trucks with equipment on it, he felt a bit of anxiety wash over him.

He wanted this job. Badly.

Heaving a sigh, he looked at the trailer that said “Stark Construction” on it and started over. He was dressed for an interview since that’s what he had, and he wished that he could ditch the dress pants for his jeans. He stepped inside the trailer and took off his sunglasses. Pretty standard set up - long tables, a few desks and chairs, a couple water coolers and small fridges, and a coffee station with styrofoam cups. He assumed the door at the back led to a bathroom.

A woman, a redhead sat behind a desk right at the front, and she smiled as she quite boldly looked him up and down. “Hello, may I help you?” She had blue eyes, but they weren’t the right shade of blue eyes. Too dull for Jon’s liking.

“Jon Targaryen here to see Robb Stark,” he said.

She smiled and gestured to three white plastic chairs behind him. They were the kind of cheap white chairs one used for their patio. “Have a seat, Mr. Targaryen. Mr. Stark will be right in. He’s on the site having a meeting with the architect.”

“Thank you,” Jon said stiffly, and sat down. Awkwardly, he held onto his sunglasses for a minute before placing them down on the seat beside him.

“Do you have a copy of your resume?” the redhead asked.

“Mr. Stark has it. I sent him a copy when I applied,” Jon said, and wondered if he should have brought one anyway. Some websites he went to, to study how to excel at interviews, told him when interviewing it was good to bring a copy, but Jon felt that was rather redundant. Maybe he should have listened.

“I’m Ygritte,” the redhead said.

“Nice to meet you,” Jon said. The words didn’t come easy. He didn’t care about making small talk. He hated small talk. He just wanted Mr. Stark - Robb to show up already so he could get this over with and hopefully be hired.

“I’ve never seen you around before,” Ygritte said.

Jon fought the urge to roll his eyes. Was she kidding? Even in small towns it was impossible to run
into people all the time. She was digging for information and possibly coming on to him, and he wasn’t interested.

“I just moved,” he said. “My girlfriend and I. We just moved here.”

Her face fell. Jon fought the urge to smile. The girlfriend bit was a lie, but an effective one. So effective that she stayed silent.

Robb Stark, and Jon knew it was him from the man’s website (and from Facebook), came in the door a few minutes later and noticed Jon right away. He smiled as he came over to Jon, extending his hand. “Jon?”

Jon nodded. “Jon. Good to finally meet you, Mr. Stark.”

“Call me Robb. And your last name - Targaryen? Am I pronouncing that correctly?”

“You are.”

Robb grinned and Jon was struck by the family resemblance between Robb and Sansa. The same red hair, the same blue eyes and pale skin. He felt himself begin to calm a bit. Being here was right.

They sat down together and the interview was underway. Jon was confident. He was young, but he had some experience working construction. Not a lot, considering his he’d only been doing it for a year, but he enjoyed working with his hands and to pass the last of his miserable time at the Home, he had built a couple bookcases and shelves for Melisandre. He was interested in carpentry work, but he needed a job first.

He’d done just what Sansa had asked him to do and got himself a job. He worked hard, and socked money aside and made plans.

He made lots of plans.

He was checking off the boxes of those plans here with Sansa’s brother. Another had been checked off when he’d found an apartment before leaving Dorne so he wouldn’t be homeless when he arrived in Winterfell. He’d even gotten himself a bit of furniture from Savers - a couch, a bed, and a kitchen table.

Talking with Robb was easy, and Jon found he liked him. He knew he would though. This was Sansa’s brother after all. Jon felt even closer to her talking to him, and he wanted to hold onto that feeling.

“I’ve got some paperwork to fill out if you’re up for it,” Robb said.

Jon couldn’t keep the surprise and the hope out of his voice. “I have the job?”

Robb grinned. “You do. I was your age when I started. Gotta start somewhere, right?”

Jon smiled. “Thank you, Robb.”

“I’ll ask Ygritte to get the papers you need to fill out and then you can take one of the tables behind me and spread out.”

They both stood, shook hands, and while Robb ambled over to the redhead-who-now-had-a-name, Jon walked around Robb’s desk to the table behind it. He sat down and looked over at Robb’s
Sansa.

Jon gripped the armrests on the chair hard. He wanted to get up and go over to Robb’s desk and pick that picture up. She was beaming into the camera, sunglasses on, and had her arm wrapped around some brunette with gray eyes. The brunette was sticking her tongue out. *Younger sister*, Jon thought.

Jon had learned much stalking Robb’s Facebook when he’d started making plans. And then Sansa had finally, *finally* caved and created one. She didn’t have a lot of pictures, but the few she did have, he pored over for hours. She had cleverly named herself Lady Stark so as to hide her identity well from people like him who might be looking for her.

Ygritte stepped into view, hiding Sansa’s picture from his greedy eyes and Jon forced himself not to scowl. She put the papers down along with a pen.

“Welcome to Stark Construction, Mr. Targaryen.”

Jon smiled, buoyed by the fact that his plans were falling into place and that soon, soon, he would make his presence known to Sansa.
Over the next few weeks, Jon made sure he made himself invaluable to Robb. He was the first one to work, and the last one to leave. He asked questions, offered assistance where he could, and made sure he did his job thoroughly and correctly.

He sat with Robb and the other men at lunch and asked them about their lives. People liked it when you gave them an opportunity to talk about themselves. That’s what he’d read, anyway. So, that’s what Jon did. He wasn’t a kiss-ass about it either - he just pushed himself to shake off his loner tendencies and engage. He wasn’t a fan of people - he hated them, actually - but he wasn’t going to win points with Sansa’s brother if he made himself the outsider.

Robb took a liking to him, just as Jon had planned. And Jon liked him, too, but then he already knew he would. He was Sansa’s brother after all.

One late afternoon, after everyone had left and Jon was helping Robb lock up, he found a way to talk about the pictures on Robb’s desk. The picture of Sansa was one he found a way to look at daily, even if it was just a quick glance.

Now that Robb liked him, Jon could ask about the people in the photos without seeming creepy about it.

“These all your siblings?” Jon asked, nodding to Robb’s pictures.

Robb put some papers down on his desk and looked down at the photos. He smiled. “That’s all of them.” Then he picked up one on the end of a brunette Jon knew was his girlfriend. “Except for this one. This is Margaery, my girlfriend.”

He put it down and then started picking the photos up one by one to name the people in them. Jon filed the names away by order of youngest to oldest: Rickon, Bran, Ayra, and then, finally, Sansa.

“Rickon and Bran are in college. They go to Winterfell University and commute from home. Arya is in grad school, and Sansa is a therapist.”


“Yeah, but it’s better than what she was doing before.”

“Oh?” Jon asked, hoping he sounded nonchalant.

“She used to work for a group home for foster kids in Dorne.” He looked over at Jon quizzically. “You came from Dorne, didn’t you?”

“I did.” So long, shithole, Jon thought.

Robb nodded and they both gazed back down at Sansa and Arya’s photo. “I can’t remember the name of the place, but it was hard on her,” Robb said.

“I’m sure,” Jon said, hoping his voice didn’t wobble. “A place like that has to be rough.”

“Yeah, and Sansa, God love her, has always been the type to want to help people. She was always seeing the ‘potential’, ” for this he used air quotes, “in someone. Meanwhile, they would eventually suck the life out of her. There was some kid there that ended up doing just that and it got to the
point that she felt it was best to leave.”

_I sucked the life out of her?_ Jon thought, horrified at the idea. _I just want to make it up to her. I want to show her I’m someone she can be proud of. I want to show her I can be something, that I took her advice and got a job and I can treat her like a Queen._

“But she’s home now and seems to enjoy her career change,” Robb said.

Jon wanted to ask about her, but he knew that asking too many questions would seem odd. Robb might get the idea that he was interested in her, and he wasn’t ready for that yet. He needed to get to Sansa first, fix what was broken, make it all up to her, and then they could take it from there. Once Sansa was committed to him, everything would be fine. Everything else would sort itself out.

Robb’s phone chirping put a halt to the conversation and Jon went to wash his hands in the sink.

“All right. I’m on my way now. I just had some stuff - okay, okay. Just order me a beer and I’ll be there by the time the pie hits the table.”

“Hello? … No, Sansa, I didn’t forget,” Robb sighed. Jon froze, one hand on the hot water knob. His heart raced.

He could wash his hands at home.

Instead, he turned and shuffled to the table near Robb’s desk and opened his backpack on it. He pretended to be looking for something while he strained to hear her voice. He hadn’t heard her voice in so bloody long...

“I’m on my way now. I just had some stuff - okay, okay. Just order me a beer and I’ll be there by the time the pie hits the table.”

Jon couldn’t hear her. He held his breath; he wanted to hear her voice so bad. Christ, he wanted to see her so bad. He shut his eyes and wished he could just pluck the phone from Robb’s hand and say Hello to her. He imagined a day when he could do just that and Robb would laugh and Sansa would say, “I miss you, baby. Hurry up.”

“Goodbye, San,” Robb said with a twinge of annoyance. “Sisters,” he muttered a second later. “Ready, Jon? My girlfriend and my sister are going to have my head if I don’t get down to The Wall now.”

_The Wall. The Wall. The Wall...Yes! The Wall!_ It was the place everyone went for pizza and to drink, and it was not far from his apartment.

He could see Sansa tonight. Just look at her. Just..._just feast his eyes_ on her.

“I’m ready,” Jon said and zipped up his backpack. He didn’t sound as shaky as he felt. As anxious and coiled up tight.

Once outside, the two got in their respective trucks, but Robb left before he did. Jon sat there, gripping the steering wheel tight wondering if he could make himself known to her now. Could he just waltz up to her and say hi? He’d gotten a few more things for his apartment with his paychecks and had made a few repairs that knocked his rent down for the month…

Was the apartment Sansa ready?

Christ. He needed to calm the fuck down. He couldn’t and wouldn’t just waltz up to her while she was out with Robb and his girlfriend. His gut clenched - fuck, what if the _boyfriend_ was there?

Jon’s eyes narrowed, his grip tightening on the wheel. He didn’t want to see her with someone, but
he did want to get a good look at who this dumb fuck was. And a dumb fuck was indeed what he was for touching what belonged to Jon.

Starting the car up, Jon made his way out of the site and then through town down to his apartment. The Wall wasn’t far. He could walk there. Though if he walked there, he wouldn’t be able to follow Sansa home and he was desperate to find where she lived.

Well, he could just park somewhere across the street and wait for her to emerge.

Turning the car around, he headed back to The Wall to find a place to park. And watch.

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The thing about lying in wait for a couple hours was that it gave the mind time to wander. He played music from his phone, and munched on the nuts he had in his backpack, but his stomach was far from being full and he kept hearing Melisandre and Grenn in his head.

Grenn telling him how a woman like Sasna would never go for a guy like him.

Melisandre telling him that he had to let Sansa go.

It was what she’d told him when she’d given him the news that Sansa was not only not returning to the Home, but she was not returning to Dorne at all. He’d lashed out at first, raging at Melisandre and blaming her for it all, and then he’d started to beg her to fix it. To get Sansa back. To let him talk to her so he could fix it.

Of course, she’d done no such thing.

He’d cried in front of that bitch. He’d let her see him vulnerable and needy. And all she’d done was tell him that he had to let Sansa go and walked away from him.

He was here now though, and so there was no reason to give her up. It was the complete opposite of what he planned to do, and he sort of wished he could let Melisandre know that he was here, in Sansa’s hometown, and he was going to show her and Grenn and make Sansa his.

The door to The Wall opened then and Jon slunk down in his seat. Robb came out and Jon waited, his breath held. Margaery came out next. Then some blond guy Jon didn’t recognize, and then...then…

Sansa.

“Gorgeous,” he breathed.

He ached to be closer to her. To see her smile up close and those eyes. He always loved her eyes.

She was dressed in jeans that clung to her curves, black boots, and a black pea coat tied up around her slender waist. Her hair was pulled back into a ponytail and it was as long as it had been in Dorne and Jon’s hands itched to run his hands through it.

She slid her arm through the arm of the blond guy and Jon’s expression soured, his whole body went rigid. He imagined himself rushing across the street and punching the guy out. Breaking his nose. Making him bleed.

He watched Sansa and the blond wave to Robb and Margaery who went one way down the street, while Sansa and the blond went another. He sank down as far as he could to keep his eye on Sansa
and not be discovered.

Robb disappeared somewhere behind him on the other side of the street, and Sansa and the blond got in a blue Nissan. His? Hers? The blond was driving but that didn’t mean anything.

Jon started up his truck when the Nissan pulled out onto the street, and slowly Jon pulled out too. He checked the rearview. No one was behind him which meant Robb was gone. Good.

Jon paid close attention to where the Nissan was going, filing away street signs and landmarks and turns in his brain. He even committed the license plate number to memory. After turning down Spring Street, a tree-lined street complete with sidewalks and street lamps, the Nissan stopped in front of a big blue house with a porch out front and several cars in the driveway.

The Nissan sat running and Jon pulled to the other side of the street several feet away and cut the engine. He couldn’t see what was happening, and he didn’t want to imagine it either. The Nissan pulled away and there stood Sansa, waving. Then she turned and trudged up to the house, which Jon assumed was an apartment building.

He watched her take a path to the right of the house and a light went on, lighting up another porch, a smaller one. He watched her go to the door at the end of it and let herself inside.

He put his hand on the door handle. She was alone. He could just go up to her door and knock. She’d let him in. She’d see him. He knew she would. He could tell her all about the potential he thought he might have, and maybe she could help him discover more.

But no. Not yet.

He just needed to get a few more things to make his apartment a place Sansa would feel comfortable spending time in.

And then he’d go to her.
“So, Dickon is nice,” Margaery told Sansa over lunch one afternoon. Margaery was a hairdresser and she didn’t work far from Sansa, and so sometimes they met for lunch at a deli in downtown Winterfell.

Downtown Winterfell was a quaint little area with cute little boutiques, a couple café’s, restaurants, and an antique shop. Sansa enjoyed sitting by the window in the deli so she could watch the people out and about run errands or window shop.

She stirred the milk she’d just put in her tea and looked up at Margaery. “Thank you,” she said with a smile, “He is.”

“And the sex?”

“Um, we haven’t had sex yet actually,” Sansa said. “I’m waiting.”

Margaery gaped at her. “For what?”

“To get to know him better. I read this book—”

Margaery rolled her eyes and sat back, cradling her coffee mug in her hand. “Here we go.”

Sansa shot her a mock glare. “No, but listen, this book was great. It was all about relationships and how sex can muddy the waters when it comes to developing a relationship. She really emphasized the process of getting to know another person really well before jumping in the sack with them, and that just leaping into bedroom with them can cause you to miss red flags because you’re all hopped up on endorphins and sex.”

Margaery arched a brow. “Hopped up on endorphins and sex? Where do I sign up?”

Sansa rolled her eyes. “I have dealt with clients who have been in really shitty relationships and didn’t notice the signs until they were in too deep and had difficulty getting out.”

“Thankfully your brother is a prince of a man so I don’t need to worry about that.”

“Did he ever tell you how he used to snap damp dish towels on me when we’d have to do the dishes together?” Sansa asked.

“Goddamn him to hell. I’ll break up with him tonight.”

Sansa laughed and Margaery joined in. Sansa sipped her tea and sat back. “I just want to get to know him better. I might be overly cautious but I’ve heard some real horror stories.”

“Yeah, and most of them have been my foray into dating before I got your brother to settle the fuck down.”

Sansa arched a brow. “Really? Wasn’t that the other way around?” She glanced out the window briefly while Margaery answered her and saw someone looking at her across the street that looked an awful lot like Jon Snow.

She did a double take, but then he was gone.

“San? You okay?” Margaery asked.
Sansa peeled her eyes away from the blob of people walking down Main Street in which she had thought she’d seen him, and looked back at her friend. “Yeah, I just thought I saw someone I knew.”

“Judging by the look on your face, not a good someone.”

“Someone from the home I worked in while living in Dorne. The one who pushed me to leave, actually.”

“Ah. What was his name again?”

Sansa smirked. “Nice try.”

“Tell me again why you can’t tell me that?”

“Privacy. Ethics.”

Margaery nodded slowly. “Ethics has always been a gray area for me.”

“You don’t say.”

“Not even his first name?”

“Nope. It’s a small world.”

“The chances of someone knowing this kid here in Winterfell is slim to none.”

“It’s been ingrained in me from training.”

Margaery sighed. “Well, I can understand how seeing him again might be cause for concern.”

“Seeing him again in and of itself would be...awkward at best. But seeing him here in Winterfell would be cause for concern.”

“Because he might’ve followed you here.”

“Precisely. But I doubt it. I think it’s just that I’ve been thinking about him lately and wondering how he’s doing. I know he’s eighteen now and I can’t help but wonder what happened to him after he left the home.”

Margaery smiled warmly. “That’s what makes you the best, Sansa. You worry about the people you take care of, even if they did put you through hell like this kid did.”

Sansa felt a twinge of something...guilt? Regret? She wasn’t sure. But it accompanied the memory of a kiss that should not have happened and the...well, the desire that came along with it, shocking as it was.

Their order number was called, signalling their food was ready and Sansa got up, happy for the distraction, and put Jon out of her head once again.

Jon stood in front of the bathroom mirror and combed through his hair. Not that it did a lot of good with all his curls, but he wanted to at least look somewhat groomed if/when he saw Sansa tonight.

He was wearing dark blue jeans and a crisp white dress shirt tucked into them. He’d put on his
black pea coat when he left and put on his black boots, shined just that day.

His bathroom sink held the evidence of his beard trim, and after he finished with his hair, he cleaned it up. In fact, he’d cleaned his entire apartment before grooming himself.

He now had more furniture - some bought at Savers, some even found at the antique shop in town. He hung pictures of landscapes, and got curtains. He got extra pillows for his bed because he thought Sansa might like them, and he got area rugs to cover up some parts of the hardwood floor that was scuffed up.

It took time to do all this, week by week until almost two months passed. And in that time, he drove by Sansa’s house, sat outside in his truck to watch her leave for work, come home, and even followed her around town to see what places she frequented.

He had a moment of panic one afternoon when she went to what he assumed was her mother’s house. Arya had looked his way while Jon watched the house, and he swore in that moment that she had seen him watching. But then she’d gone down the driveway to the grand Victorian house and he’d breathed a sigh of relief.

He even followed the interloper’s car a couple times, and one night, in a fury, slashed the interloper’s tire in the parking lot of his apartment complex.

More the once the appearance of the interloper had turned him into a blind rage, and he had to stop himself each time and remember the plan. Remember to not do anything stupid that could land him in trouble - slashed tire notwithstanding - and jeopardize any chance with Sansa.

His apartment was now a home. He felt comfortable there; he liked having his own space that he paid for and decorated himself. He liked the privacy and the feeling of coming home and being able to relax.

The only thing missing was Sansa.

He imagined her there in his bed when he woke up in the morning. He would stare at the empty spot beside him and picture here there, sleeping or waking up or looking at him with a smile.

When he made dinner for himself, usually consisting of grilled cheese sandwiches, boxed mac and cheese, and pasta with a jar of Ragu that he dumped on it, he pictured here there cooking with him. If she knew how to cook she could teach him, if she didn’t, they could learn together, side-by-side.

At night on his couch while watching TV, he thought about how he’d put his arm around her and hold her close, how they might bicker teasingly over what to watch. How he’d put his head on her lap and she’d play with his hair while they watched the telly.

He would lay in bed at night and jerk off while thinking about undressing her, laying her down, and making love to her for hours. Sometimes he’d think about fucking her hard and fast, taking her on the couch, the kitchen table, against the door. He hungered, he ached, he yearned. It felt like a living breathing thing inside him.

He wanted her in every aspect of his life, and he wanted to put himself in every aspect of hers. He wanted those Sunday dinners with the family. He wanted to hold her hand through them all, and while they walked down the street together. He wanted her in his car, he wanted in hers, he wanted her girly things in his bathroom and in his bedroom. He wanted a toothbrush at her place, and a bottle of aftershave and shower gel - he wanted to be immersed in her and for her to be immersed in him.
There would be no half measures, and frankly, he never did like to do anything half-assed. He’d give everything he could to her, and he wanted the same back.

He would be whole with her. He would heal. He would be all that he never was and needed to be. Should be. All the things she saw in him, he would become. She had his utter devotion, and he wanted all that devotion back.

He would not settle for less.

He heaved a deep breath as she stared at himself in the mirror.

It was time.

He made his way out of the bathroom, and to the front door. He slipped on his coat, grabbed his keys off the counter, and left.

He was nervous. He was excited. He couldn’t wait to see her up close. He was afraid she wouldn’t be happy to see him. Doubt was a terrible thing and it crept in, fucking him up and making him worry.

He had a job. An apartment. He had a vehicle. He was eighteen now, and despite the fact that on some level he would always be a foster kid, he hoped Sansa could look past all that to what he was now, to what he was trying to become. For her.

The drive to her house took forever and on the way he prayed to whatever deity that might be listening that she be alone tonight. He parked across the street and said a silent “thank you” when he did not see the interlopers car.

He made his way up the path to her apartment and his heart pounded hard in his chest, and he felt like his nervousness would make him jump out of his skin. His hand shook when he rapped on her door.

“Coming!” he heard her call and he started breathing heavier, as though he’d run a race. He trembled with nerves and joy.

The door whipped open and there she was. His sweet Sansa.

She froze, staring at him, and he could tell her mind was racing. She hadn’t caught up yet.

“Hello, Sansa,” he said.

And she shut the door in his face.
Sansa locked her door and kept her hand on it, her heart racing. That wasn’t…

She stared at the shut door now as though she was Supergirl and could see right through it and see him on the other side.

“Sansa?”

Yep, it was. That was his voice. Jon Snow was here, on her porch, at her front door.

She unlocked the door and opened it. She looked up at him as she stepped out and pressed her back against the door. He looked older, though she wasn’t sure how considering it had only been a year. It had to be the beard. And there was something about how he stood there all tall... and his clothes - his clothes were nice and crisp and he just seemed… steady.

But there was nothing steady about him being here, in Winterfell, and on her front porch.

Her mind was racing with questions.

And he just kept smiling at her, his gray eyes glowing. Jon hadn’t often smiled at the Home. Not unless he was sucking up for something and working an angle. He didn’t have the ever-present tension in his shoulders either. Jon at the Home had worn his surliness like a cloak, forever an armor against the world.

The Jon smiling at her as though she was the best thing he’d ever seen looked...calmer.

And, he was still quite a beautiful young man.

Maybe she was the one losing it. She reached out and poked his arm. He looked down at her finger and then up her arm and then finally at her face.

“Do you think I’m not real?” he asked her, humor in the silky warmth of his voice.

“I am...” she trailed off as she pushed away from the door and began to walk around him, “not sure what to think.” She watched him, looked him over, and moved closer to the steps. She folded her arms across her chest tightly as though to protect herself, and then let them drop in case she needed to defend herself. “What are you doing here? When did you get here? How did you find me? Why - why are you here, Jon?”

He turned and faced her. “I am here to see you.”

“Did you follow me here from Dorne?”

“I got here a couple months ago.”

“That’s not really an answer--”

“I did a little digging to find you, but it wasn’t that hard,” he said.

“What do you mean by digging to find me? Where and when did this digging happen--”

“I have a job working for your brother,” he said softly. “I have an apartment. I worked hard to make it a home, Sansa. I’m real proud of it.”

His brow furrowed as he studied her. “You look frightened.” He took a step toward her and she took a step back. He stopped, frowning. “Are you afraid of me?”

“Why are you here?” she whispered.

“I’m not going to hurt you, Sansa. I would never. I wanted to see you. Ihad to see you.”

“You moved to Winterfell to see me? You started working for my brother…?”

“You told me to get a job once. So, I did. I got one after you left working construction. When I left the Home I looked for a job. Your brother’s business seemed the perfect fit. Ask him about me. I’m his best employee. I work hard, and he’s taught me a lot.”

“Did you know he was my brother when you started working for him?”

He frowned again. “What is it you want me to say, Sansa?”

“The truth! I want the truth and I’m only getting bits and pieces…”

“Yes, I knew he was your brother.”

“Jon,” she said, trembling. “This is si—” No, don’t say sick. That could throw him into a fit. “Wrong. This is wrong. This is stalking.”

“I haven’t stalked you.”

“You’re here in Winterfell, working for my brother, and you’re on my porch after doing some ‘digging’ to find me. What else would you call it?”

“Looking up an old friend? Using the internet?”

She rubbed her forehead and sighed. “Jon.”

“Sansa, you….you left. You left me.”

She heard the vulnerability in his voice and that soft part of her that had worried about him and wondered about him started to rise up…but she couldn’t allow it to derail good sense.

This was wrong. And scary. Period.

“You left me no choice,” she said, infusing her voice with strength.

He winced.

“You crossed massive boundaries and lines, and you’re continuing to do so. What did you think would be gained by coming here? What did you think would happen? Why are you working for my brother? Is it to get to me?”

“You’re angry,” he said softly.

“Yes! I am!”

He put one hand on his hip and used the other to scratch at his brow. “Okay, I feel like this went all wrong. Can we start over?”
“I’m not sure we can.”

“You were the only true friend I had,” he said. “The only one who gave a damn about me in that hell hole. After I left the Home I didn’t know where else to go. I didn’t want to stay in Dorne, and I just wanted to be in a place where I knew someone. You were...you seemed like a safe place for me.”

Her eyes narrowed. His tone had gone all soft and pleading. “You’re lying to me.”

He shook his head. “No, I’m not. You are a safe place for me. You believed in me. I wanted to show you that I did something with that belief and I am building a life here. I didn’t come to you right away because I was afraid this would happen. That you would be freaked out about my being here and shut me out. Sansa, I just - I just want us to be friends.”

“Friends,” she repeated.

“Yes, friends.”

“Well, to start, friends tell each other the truth. Did you start working for my brother as a way to get to me?”

“I was looking for a construction job. His name came up, and he was hiring.” So were a few other places in town, but he wasn’t about to tell her that.

He’d really bungled this all up and now he had to backtrack to fix it. For all his planning to get to her, he hadn’t done enough planning of this moment, all of it had just been to get here...and then after, when they were together. On some level, he had thought she would be pleased to see him.

He’d scared her, and now he had to find a way to fix this and get in her good graces. What would he do if she told him to leave and never come back? What would he do if she convinced Robb to fire him? What would he do if he had nothing to offer her anymore? Being this close to her, he just wanted to reach out and touch her. He wanted her in his arms. She was so beautiful, but then he had always thought so. “Your hair is longer,” he murmured.

“What --? Oh. Yeah, it is,” she muttered, staring at him as though she didn’t know what to do with him.

“Did you think of me at all?” he asked softly.

She met his gaze. “Of course I did. I worried about you. I hoped you were well.” She shook her head. “I’m not sure you are…”

“I am Sansa, I swear it. I know this looks bad, but I had the purest of intentions.”

She laughed a little at that, but it was a humorless laugh. “Are you capable of pure intentions, Jon?”

That hurt. “Yes.”

She winced, studying him, and then shook her head. “I...I am not sure what to say...do…” She looked up at him. “I can’t believe you’re here.”

“Can I tell you what happened after you left?”

She pursed her lips together, looked ready to say no, and then nodded. “Sure.”
“Well, like I said before, I got a job. I put money aside. I knew I had to save up for when I turned eighteen.”

She nodded slowly. “That’s good.”

“I uh, I ended up meeting my real father, too.”

Her jaw dropped. “What?”

He rubbed the back of his neck, the topic making him still feel a bit uneasy. “I got a call from his girlfriend. This real prim and proper chick—”

“Don’t say ‘chick’, Jon.”

He laughed. “Sorry. So, the girlfriend calls me and tells me my father is dying and asking for me.”

He didn’t want to call attention to the fact that she’d moved closer to him so he kept talking and kept hoping that maybe, just maybe, he’d be able to touch her in some small way…

“Dying? From...?” she asked.

“Cancer. Apparently, he’d spent some time getting cleaned up. Getting his life somewhat together. The girlfriend helped. So, he’d been clean about a year and a half straight and he discovers he’s got cancer. He also discovers that he needs to make amends with me.”

“You saw him?” she asked, inching closer, her eyes wide with wonder.

Jon nodded. “I saw him. He looked like shit. Like, well, death. All gray…” He grimaced. “I look nothing like him. He’s got white blond hair and these weird eyes….I look like my Mom.” He was embarrassed when his voice cracked with emotion.

He nearly jumped when Sansa touched his arm gently. Sansa. Touched. Him. He wanted to cover her hand with his. Wanted to pull her into his arms and find comfort in them.

He looked down at her and not at her hand. He wanted to savor it, memorize it…but he had to keep talking.

“It was hard to see him,” she said knowingly, her blue eyes soft now. Gentle.

He nodded, finding himself sinking into her blue depths. “He wanted to tell me how sorry he was, explain to me why he’d been such a junkie like I was supposed to fucking care about his feelings of inadequacy. All I saw was the man that ditched my mother and probably helped to kill her.”

She gripped his arm. “Oh, Jon. I’m so sorry. What did you do? What did you say?”

“I told him he shouldn’t have bothered. He cried. I walked out.”

“Did you see him again?”

Jon nodded slowly. “I went back the next day. I had questions only he could answer about my Mom.”

“And did he answer them?”

“A little. Turns out he didn’t remember much about her because he was so high all the time. Go figure, right?”
“Is he…?”

“Gone? Yeah. He left me some money, what little he had...that’s how I got my truck. And I took his last name.”

“You did? Why?”

“I wanted to do something with it. It would have been my last name anyway if he had claimed me - though I’m glad he didn’t. He was in and out of rehab for a while so he said. I guess I just wanted to get rid of Snow and be someone else, but do better at being a Targaryen than he was.”

Her hand fell away and Jon fought the urge to grab it. He watched it dangle by her side and wanted it back.

He looked up at her. “I missed you when you left,” he said softly.

“Jon, don’t.”

“Don’t what?”

She sighed. “You followed me here. That’s a real problem for me.”

“I told you why.”

“You’re also working for my brother, knowing he was my brother.”

“Do you want me to quit and find somewhere else to work?”

She shook her head. “That’s not fair and you know it.”

“I told you why I’m here. Why I wanted to find you. Sansa, I’m trying - I’ve been trying, and it’s because of you. Haven’t you ever had a mentor in your life you wished you could see again and thank?”

“Yes, but I wouldn’t go looking for them and live in their town!”

“Do you want me to stay away? I will if you ask me to.” He wouldn’t. Not at all. But he’d let her believe it for at least a little while if it made her feel better. He’d find another way in.

“I want you to seriously consider a therapist, Jon.”

“If I get one, can I see you again sometime?”

“I didn’t suggest that as a way to bargain with you,” she said with a laugh.

“Sansa, you’re the only one I know here. Well, I mean, aside from the people I work with, but you’re the only one who knows about my past and where I came from. I know I made things hard on you at the Home, and I can see how being here has scared you, but my intentions were pure. You were always my safe place at the Home and I want to make it up to you, all that I did. I wanted to show you I took your advice and I’m doing something with my life.”

She studied him closely, suspiciously. “You know,” she murmured, “sometimes your tall tales sounded so incredibly sincere.”

“I am sincere,” he said emphatically, almost desperately. “I’ve been here for a couple months now. I didn’t immediately look you up. That has to mean something, right? A stalker wouldn’t have been
able to wait.”

“Not necessarily,” she said.

“Sansa, please...will you just let me see you sometime? We could get a coffee somewhere. That’s it. Just a chance to talk more. You can tell me about your life.”

She skirted past him and Jon spun, ready to go after her, but then she turned and pointed at him. “Stay.”

He nodded. He’d do whatever she asked. *Whatever it took.*

She went inside her apartment and then returned with a phone. “Give me your number,” she said. “If and when I am ready, I’ll contact you. Until then, you don’t come back here again.”

Okay, that last bit rather hurt, but okay. This was good. This was better than how their conversation had first started. There was hope here. She’d call. He knew she would.

He rattled off his phone number and watched her put it in her phone, smiling at the way she nibbled on her bottom lip. He wanted to suck on that bottom lip; he always had when she’d nibble on it.

She looked up at him. “I’m going inside now. Goodnight, Jon.”

He wanted a hug at least, but he couldn’t press his luck. “Goodnight, Sansa.”

He forced himself to walk off her porch and head to his car. Halfway there, he turned. She was watching him. He smiled as he turned back around.

She’d call. Of that, he was certain.
Later that night, long after Jon had left, Sansa kicked the covers off her and let out a growl of frustration. She looked at her alarm. It was almost one and she was nowhere near sleep. And she had work in the morning.

She planned to hold it against Jon if she was exhausted for her clients.

Annoyed, she sat up and flicked on the the lamp on her nightstand. Climbing out of bed, she padded into her kitchen and flicked on the light in there. She poured herself a glass of water and considered taking a sleeping pill.

No, it would just make her even more tired in the morning.

_Goddammit, Jon!_

Sansa leaned back against her sink and stared at her fridge across from her. She put her glass down and gestured to the fridge. “Okay, let’s start with what we know,” she said aloud. “I left the Home and Dorne because Jon was attached to me to the point of nearing obsession. Well, I was also burnt out from all the stress that he just kept adding onto.

He had a crush on me because I wanted to see him do well and he knew that. He has abandonment issues, and it’s no wonder that he does with his mother never being available for him, and his father being a junkie who didn’t get his act together until the end of his life. He really did Jon no favors by doing what he did and he only contacted Jon for himself not because it was what Jon needed—”

She sighed. Started again. “These abandonment issues made him cling tightly to me because no one ever tried with him. Melisandre just wanted him out of her hair and she gave up on him. I didn’t, and he held onto that with all his might.”

She took a sip of her water and narrowed her eyes at the fridge. “I know what you’re thinking. I feel sorry for him because of what he told me about his Dad and what I know of his Mom, and I’m going to give in and see him.”

She put her glass back down and started to pace. “The question is, what is the best thing for the patient?” She stopped and looked up at the ceiling. “He’s not my patient.” She started to pace again. “However, if I see him again, it could just add more fuel to the fire and I could just enable him and his attachment slash obsession with me.” She stopped. Paused. “On the other hand,” she said and paced again. “If I do see him and show him that the Miss Stark and Sansa are not quite the same that could cure him of the obsession.”

She stopped in front of the fridge and pointed at it. “How am I different you ask? Well, taking care of those kids was part of my job. That meant taking care of Jon was my responsibility. Oh, sure, it was Mel’s job, too, and she had washed her hands of Jon by that point, but I was new and idealistic. I had no idea what I was getting myself into and how could I not feel bad for him? He was left all alone in the world and no one wanted him.

Granted, he could have made it a lot easier for the homes he went into to accept him, but he’d had a bad run of it in that first home and what kid wants to go through that again?” She rubbed her forehead and sighed. “But it’s not my job to take care of him anymore. He’s not my responsibility and I have a life he knows nothing about. So, if he saw that, he’d realize that I don’t have the same
time to devote to him and he’d be able to learn that I’m not Miss Stark from the Home who cared about him, but Sansa from Winterfell who is a psychologist with a life of her own and is not and cannot see to his needs anymore. And no, that doesn’t mean I don’t care about what happens to him, because I have cared all this time, but there is a difference now and he needs to see that and know that.”

She nodded, resolute, and grabbed the glass of water. She took one last sip before placing the glass in the sink. She headed out of the kitchen, flicking off the light, and muttered, “I have no idea what the hell I’m going to do.”

Jon was going out of his mind.

A week had passed and nothing. No phone call from Sansa, no text, nothing.

He kept telling himself to be patient. To wait for her, to give her time, to show her that his intentions were pure, but he had betted on a few days not a whole goddamn week.

He pushed himself hard at work to burn off the tension. Not that it did any good. He was still on edge, and a few times he’d snapped at the crew. They took it all in stride though, but Jon found it was best to pick jobs he could do alone so he could mope and brood about Sansa not calling to his heart’s content.

He still went by her house every night to see if she was home and what she was up to. She’d seen his truck in the dark from a distance so he wasn’t all too concerned that she would notice it. Yet, just to be on the safe side, he went on loops around the block instead of parking.

Once, he’d seen the interloper leaving her house and Jon had entertained ideas of slashing his tires again.

“Hey, you’ve been quiet all week,” Robb said to him Friday night while they were all closing up for the night.

“What are you doing this weekend?” Robb asked.

“Nothing,” Jon replied with a shrug “Just hanging out at my place. You?”
Robb rolled his eyes. “Margaery is dragging me to some outlet mall tomorrow, but Sunday I’m sort of free…”

“Sort of?”

“Well, in the evening-ish, like around five? Hey, look, if you’re feeling like you need a family fix, you could come to my mom’s house for dinner at noon with me.” He grinned. “We randomly invite people all the time. You could meet my brothers. They’re all close to your age. They can all be a bit much sometimes, but it’s a good time. You game?”

Jon frowned, though inside he was doing flips. “Sure it would be okay?”

“Of course! It’s just an excuse for us all to get together and pick on each other,” Robb said with a laugh. “Like I said, we bring people by all the time.”

“Sure, that sounds great,” Jon said, smiling. “Should I bring anything?”

“Just yourself. Or, if you want to get in good, flowers for my Mom.”

Jon grinned. “Done.”

“I’ll text you the address and you can meet me there.”

Jon nodded. “Thanks, man.”

“No problem.”

Grinning, and feeling much lighter than he had in days, Jon headed to the door. He stopped and turned. “Hey, Robb?”

Robb looked up from his desk. “Yeah?”

“Can you just not mention my aunt to anyone? I don’t want to do the awkward sympathy thing.”

Robb nodded. “No problem.”

Jon thanked him and left, smiling to himself. In two days, he would see his sweet Sansa up close and personal.

He couldn’t wait.

xxxxxxxxxx

“How’s Gendry?” Sansa asked her younger sister, Arya, as they busied themselves snapping the stems off the peas their mother had pulled from her garden. They were sitting outside on the deck, hoodies on. It was a mild day, a break in the cooler fall weather they’d had as of late, and so they were happy to use the time outside.

“He’s good,” Arya said noncommittally.

Sansa rolled her eyes. “That’s all you got?” She tossed a green bean in her mouth and munched on it.

“Well, I mean, we’re both busy with school, and we sometimes have trouble finding time to spend together, but we’re not fighting or anything.”
“That’s good.”

Silence fell as they both worked and then Arya asked, “Is Dickon coming today?”

Sansa shook her head. “No, he was going somewhere with his brother and his brother’s girlfriend today.”

Arya nudged her sister with her foot under the table and grinned. “And how is Dick?”

“How old are you again?” Sansa asked with a roll of her eyes.

“Younger than you!”

Sansa stuck her tongue out at her sister and Arya giggled.

“Sansa, Arya, your brother is here!” Catelyn called from the open kitchen window that overlooked the deck.

“Yeah? I’ve seen his punk ass before!” Arya called out.

“He has a guest! Would you two please come in and meet him?”

Arya and Sansa looked at each other and both mouthed, “Him?”

“Grab the beans!” Sansa said as she stood, grabbing the bowl of stems.

Pushing into each other playfully as they entered the kitchen and laughing together, they stumbled into the kitchen.

“Girls,” Catelyn Stark scolded. It had no bite though, both of them could hear the laughter in her voice.

Sansa looked up at her brother and grinned.

And then Jon stepped out from behind him and she dropped the bowl with the green bean stems to the floor.

“Klutz!” Arya exclaimed.

“Thank God that bowl is plastic,” Robb said.

“I’ll get the dustpan and broom,” Catelyn said. “Don’t mind us, Jon.”

“Not at all,” Jon said smoothly, his gaze on Sansa.

Sansa stepped her way out of the mess at her feet and when her mom came over with dustpan and broom, she took them from her to sweep up. It gave her something to do while she tried to wrap her mind around the fact that Jon was in her mother’s kitchen.

“Let me help.”

And now he was there, picking up the dustpan from the top of the trash and squatting down with it in his hand. She looked down at him and he smiled warmly at her.

She kind of wanted to smack him with the broom.

Instead, she pushed the stems into the dustpan and watched as he discarded them in the trash.
“Where does this go?” he asked, holding up the dustpan.

“I’ll take it,” she said and snatched it from him. Aware that she might have snapped that and her family did not know her past with Jon she said, “Thank you. Jon is it?”

He looked like he wanted to laugh. “Yes, Jon Targaryen.”

“What brings you here today, Jon? With my brother. To my mother’s house.”

“He was kind enough to invite me,” Jon said. “Sansa, is it?”

She plastered on a fake smile. “Mm-hmm.”

She walked away to the pantry to put the broom and dustpan away and when she came back, she found Arya giving her an odd look and Robb and Jon talking to Catelyn, who was now arranging a bouquet of flowers in a vase.

“Where did the flowers come from?” Sansa asked.

“Me,” Jon said.

“You brought my mother flowers?” Sansa asked. “Why?”

“Sansa,” Robb said with a frown, a hint of a reprimand in his voice.

“Sorry,” Sansa muttered. “They’re very nice, Jon.”

“Thanks,” he said and stuffed his hands in the pockets of his jeans.

“Where are Bran and Rickon?” Robb asked his mother.

“Four-wheeling,” Catelyn replied. “I made them promise to be back by dinner.”

“Great,” Robb said. “I wanted Jon to meet them.”

“Can you get the steaks out of the fridge, honey?” Cately asked. “Arya, will you taste the potato salad for me?”

Sansa grabbed the tray with all the condiments on it from the island and looked pointedly at Jon.

“Will you help me for a minute, Jon, and grab the plastic cups?”

Jon nodded and grabbed the plastic cups, also on the island, and followed Sansa outside onto the deck.

Once outside, she led Jon off to the side - out of sight of the window and door - and set the tray down on the caddy. She whirled around to face Jon and found him right there, practically on top of her.

“What are you doing here?” she hissed.

“I told you; your brother invited me,” Jon said. He leaned past Sansa to place the cups down and she caught a whiff of his cologne. He smelled good.

Sansa shimmied away from him. “And of course you couldn’t say no.”

He grinned. “Now why would I do that?”
She sighed. “Jon—”

“I take it they don’t know about me?”

“They know of you, just not your name.”

He nodded. “Thank you, Sansa.”

“Keep pushing me and they’ll find out,” she ground out.

“You didn’t call,” he said softly. “Why didn’t you call?”

She looked away from him, at the pleading and kicked puppy look on his face. She hated it when he did that. “I was thinking.”

“You think too much.”

She looked at him, narrowing her eyes.

He inched closer to her. “All I want is a little bit of your time. Just a little. Please, Sansa.”

He was doing it again. Drawing her in, making her feel bad, making his request seem so innocuous when she knew it wasn’t.

This was how young women fell prey to abusers. The abusers made it seem as though their victims were just being silly by not doing the one simple thing asked of them, and then the victims were drawn in before they knew it.

“You need to let me make my own decisions,” she told him. “I don’t like being manipulated.” She started to walk away and Jon reached out and grabbed her wrist.

“Sansa, wait, don’t—”

Sansa pulled away from him. “No, Jon. You don’t.” She went back in the house without looking behind her once.
All right, so Jon could admit he’d fucked that up. Royally. His desperation to see Sansa had gotten the better of him and he’d possibly ruined whatever headway he had made with her. If he had made any at all.

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do about it now. He was here, at the Starks, and it wasn’t as though he could bail.

Instead, he remembered his manners. The manners that he’d never learned from his mother, but had learned from the Home. Melisandre and the other social workers had driven them into his head, not that he often listened to them. But, still.

He knew it was polite to ask if he could be of service - to carry things, clean things up, fetch things - and of course to remember “please” and “thank you” and “you’re welcome”.

He found it easy to put all these things in practice with the Starks, because they were kind to him. And through the gentle ribbing of each other, kind to each other, too. It soon became apparent to Jon that this family was close. He’d been in a few foster homes where a family looked close enough on paper, but in actuality, they weren’t. Or, they were, but that closeness had never extended to him.

Spread out on a picnic table on the deck, Jon watched the Starks interact. He listened as Rickon, the youngest, told them all of the trails he and Bran had taken four-wheeling. Bran, just a year older than Rickon, admitted, much to his brother’s chagrin, that the trail had been dangerous. Catelyn imparted warnings, Robb and Sansa, a united front, backed her up. Arya, somewhere in the middle between Sansa and the younger boys in age, offered to go with them the next time. It wasn’t clear on whether or not she meant to keep them away from taking treacherous trails, or wanted in on them herself.

Arya, Jon concluded, seemed to have a bit of the devil in her. It was the impish smile she had and the mischief in her eyes. Jon liked her, but then he liked them all.

He got to see Sansa in her element with her family. She smiled and laughed more than he’d ever seen. He supposed there hadn’t been much to smile and laugh about at the Home, and he felt sad thinking that he’d never made her laugh. He’d rarely made her smile either.

It was no wonder she’d wanted to come home. She had a supportive loving family here.

And so on the downward spiral did his thoughts go.

Sansa had grown up with all this - no, not just Sansa. There were other people in the world who had grown up with loving and supportive families like the Starks. A mother who cared, siblings who looked after each other.

He had grown up with a mother who alternated between being high all the time or sleeping for hours and sometimes days on end. He’d taken care of her; he’d taken care of himself. He cleaned up after her, and it wasn’t always the kind of cleaning up like this occasion where the dishes needed rinsing before being put in the dishwasher, or the table needed clearing. That’s what he should have had to worry about. Not cleaning up used needles, pieces of mirrors with traces of white dust, spoons that had not been used for cereal or soup, and bottles of alcohol that one could trip on in the dark. Nor should he have had to clean up his mother who often threw up when she...
was itching for a fix, or after a binging on alcohol.

It pained him, seeing this family. It hit upon what Sansa would call a “trigger”. He felt angry, envious, and morose with a healthy dose of ‘how-is-what-I-got-fair?’ and ‘what-did-I-do-wrong’? Why had his mother never cared enough to stop? What had been wrong with him that she hadn’t loved him enough to clean up her act?

Was he trash just like her?

No. No. His Mom was not trash...she was…

Trash.

Shame filled him for thinking it and he had the overwhelming desire to run. To escape this Rockwellian scene of the Starks and retreat under some rock where he belonged. This...he was not meant for this. He did not deserve this.

He just desperately wanted this. Even when he told himself he didn’t, that he was better off because he’d seen the harshness of life and knew how to deal with the shit. He could clomp through the muck better than most because of what he’d been through. He knew how to deal.

He looked over at Sansa and found her watching him, a contemplative look on her face. She missed nothing, his girl. And he felt dirty under her gaze, dirty for being there when he felt as though the stink of his former life clung to him and would choke them all.

He got up and excused himself hastily, picking up his plate and a few of the empty ones around him. He heard Rickon and Bran and Catelyn thank him, and he muttered a quick “You’re welcome”, before heading into the house.

Tears stung his eyes and he hated himself for it. He hadn’t cried about the life he’d never had, and the life he did have for quite a long time and he preferred that hard outer shell. It kept him safe. It kept him sane.

He hadn’t heard anyone come in until a hand dropped on his arm. He looked down at the hand on his arm, utensils still in his hand and he let them drop with a clang on the counter. He looked up at Sansa, at the concern etched onto her face and he grabbed her into his arms and buried his face in her neck, while he tried in vain to stem the tears he felt coming.

It was her that ended up holding him, however. Her arms came around him and she placed one hand at the back of his head.

Comfort. This was comfort. Hugs had not been common in the home and Jon felt deprived of them. Of any contact that was meant for comfort and support, really. Sex with Ros did not count, though it had given him oblivion when he needed it.

“How did you know?” he asked, his face still in her neck. Her family could walk in at any minute, but he didn’t care. He needed this too much.

“I was watching you,” she said softly. “You were smiling one minute and then the light went out of your eyes. I’ve seen the look on you before, the need to run from something that is overwhelming you.”

He laughed hoarsely. “You know me so well.”

“I know some things,” she said lightly.
“Your family is amazing,” he said, choking on the words.

“Is that what triggered you?” she asked softly.

He smiled wanly as he lifted his head. “There’s that word,” he said.

“What word?”

“Trigger. I was thinking when I...got upset...that you would say something triggered me,” he smiled. “And then here you are saying it. I know you, Sansa.”

“You know some things,” she said evasively. “What was it that upset you specifically?”

“My mother was trash and so am I?”

“Jon.”

“No, it’s true. I mean, you have this great family - you’re all so loving and supportive and shit, look at this palace!”

“Jon—”

“I lived in a dump, Sansa. It should have been condemned and that was before my mother trashed it with remnants of her habit. But you - you got to live in this great house with all these people who loved you…”

“Jon, listen to me. What did I tell you in the Home? I told you that you could choose to dwell on the things you didn’t have, or you could rebuild with what you do have.”

“And what do I have, Sansa?” he asked bitterly. “What did I ever have?”

“Your intelligence. Your determination and will. Your strength. And now you have a job and a place of your own, and a vehicle. The things you want, you can have, Jon, with some time and,” she looked at him pointedly, “patience.”

“I don’t regret coming to Winterfell to see you. I do regret scaring you as I did. I regret not telling Robb that I couldn’t come today because I knew I was putting the pressure on you. I just...I didn’t want you to forget me and forget that I was waiting for you.”

“Forget you?” she laughed softly. “Jon, you are completely unforgettable.”

There she went again, filling him with warmth.

The sound of voices coming closer filled the kitchen and Jon looked at Sansa in a panic. “The bathroom is down that hall,” she pointed to it. “Go wash up.”

“Thank you,” he said hastily and started in the direction she’d pointed.

“And Jon?”

He turned. “Yeah?”

“I’ll call you tomorrow.”

He broke into a wide smile and then hurried down the hall when the sliding glass door started to open.
Chapter 12

Sitting in front of her desk the following afternoon, Sansa was trying to figure out how to explain Jon without really explaining Jon to Dickon.

If she told him that Jon was a friend she’d had in Dorne and was now living in Winterfell, that would raise some questions that Sansa was not prepared to answer. It could also result in Dickon wanting to meet Jon and Sansa didn’t want that.

She thought about telling Dickon the truth, but she hadn’t even told her family who Jon was, and so why would she tell Dickon and not her family? And she didn’t want her family to know that the boy who had been the catalyst for her leaving Dorne was Robb’s star employee.

If she told Dickon that she was just meeting a “friend”, he could ask if that “friend” was a man or a woman. If she said man, then she was back to having to explain. The thing was, she didn’t want to have to lie, but she didn’t want to tell the truth either.

Despite it all, she still found herself in the position of protecting Jon.

She wasn’t sure what that said about her. Or him. Or what that said about any of it, really.

If Dickon told her he was meeting a friend she’d want to know if it was a man or woman, and if it was a woman then she’d have some questions. Probably some problems, despite how she did trust him. Well, as much as she could after a few months. She and Dickon were still getting to know each other. For crying out loud, she hadn’t even slept with him yet. She wasn’t exactly…emotionally entangled.

She liked him well enough. He did make her smile and laugh and feel good, but…

But….

What?

She didn’t know.

And now, Jon.

He really did have a knack for sending her life into a tailspin, didn’t he?

So, in the end, Sansa decided not to tell anyone at all about Jon. She’d meet him somewhere, not in Winterfell, and they could have a drink - non-alcoholic for him, of course - or a snack or something, and then that would be the end of that.

When she called him in the afternoon in between clients, she half-expected and half-hoped it would go to voicemail. He was at work right now after all. Maybe they could phone tag it for a while and she could delay this subterfuge a little longer.

But, no. He answered on the first ring.

“Hi,” he breathed.

“H--hi.”

“How are you?” He sounded as he genuinely wanted to know.
“Am I interrupting work?”

“No, I’m on break.”

“Oh.” She bit her lip. This was awkward. “So, how are you feeling today?”

“I’m all right…” There was a note of sadness in his voice though. “I wasn’t sure you were really going to call.”

“I told you I would.”

“Yeah, I know…”

“So--”

“I’ve been thinking about what would be easier for us to meet. Since you haven’t told your family about me, I’m sure you don’t want to go anywhere where they might run into us.”

She picked up her pen and started tapping it against her knee. She had some nervous/awkward energy to expel. “That’s true,” she said slowly. “And I’m sure you don’t want to have to explain a few things either.”

“Not yet.”

She stopped tapping her pen. “Not yet?”

“I want to make you dinner.”

She really wanted to explore the “not yet”, but now he’d gone and offered to make her dinner which meant dinner at his apartment and Sansa wasn’t quite keen on that idea.

“I know how it sounds - I mean, with how I showed up on your doorstep--”

“Or, how you showed up in Winterfell. Period.”

“Yeah, so I have that working against me.”

She couldn’t help but laugh nervously, an involuntary sort of laugh. “Jon--”

“I’m just really proud to have my own place. That I paid for and decorated, and made a home. And it is, ya know? A home. My home. And I want to show it to you. It’s what you wanted for me, remember? To have a place I could call home? Well, now I do and I want to show it off. Not that it’s the greatest thing ever, but it’s mine. You get that, right?”

She did. She completely got that.

“Sansa,” he said, his voice dropping low, “I know I freaked you out. I’m sorry. Please come over and let me cook for you.”

“I feel like acknowledging you freaked me out and then asking me to come over and have dinner in your home are two contradictory things somehow,” she said, frowning. She dropped the pen on her desk and swiveled towards her desk. She put her elbow up on it and rubbed her forehead. “It’s kind of like - I know I have blood on my hands but it’s not what you think. Now let me show you the well I have in my house.”

“I’m Buffalo Bill now?”
Sansa winced. Okay, that was a misstep on her part. “No, I just… I don’t know, Jon. You did freak me out by showing up in Winterfell. And then showing up on my doorstep….and then showing up at my mother’s house… and then working for my brother - do you see where I’m going with this?”

“I have no desire to wear a Sansa suit.” She heard him sigh. “Okay, I feel like this went off the rails a bit. What do you propose then? Do you want to just meet somewhere out of town?”

Now she felt guilty. Jon was a lot of things, but she didn’t honestly think he’d hurt her.

“Let’s just meet at your house,” she blurted out. She shut her eyes and shook her head slowly. What the hell was wrong with her?!

What was it about this boy - man - whatever - that made her do things she knew were stupid? She didn’t want to explain to Dickon about seeing Jon at a restaurant, but what if she found herself having to explain seeing Jon in his apartment?

I am an idiot, she thought.

“Thank you, Sansa,” he rushed out, sounding adorably grateful.

Somehow, she felt even worse. Did she really have to go and liken him to Buffalo Bill? After all he’d been through? I’m insensitive and an idiot, she amended.

“How about Wednesday?” he asked, sounding downright giddy now. “Allergic to anything?”

“No, I’m not allergic to anything.”

“Favorite dessert?”

“Lemoncakes.” Now she found herself smiling at his eagerness to please. She could hear the excitement in his voice. It puts on the lotion or it gets the hose. Okay, stop it.

“If you want wine, bring it,” he said. “Since, ya know, I can’t.”

“Your address?”

He rattled it off and she quickly jotted it down on a scrap piece of paper with that trusty pen of hers. They worked out a time, and that was it. They had a…meeting.

“I’m looking forward to seeing you, Sansa,” Jon said huskily. “See you Wednesday.”

“See you,” she murmured and ended the call. She opened her mouth in a silent scream of what-do-you-think-you’re-doing? and then tried to focus on getting ready for her next client. Tried being the operative word.

************************

The next two days dragged for Jon. He and Sansa had made plans on a Monday, and he’d have thought the next two days would go by fairly quickly, but no. They’d gone by at a snail’s pace.

After work on Monday, he swung by the library and took out a stack of cookbooks. The elderly woman behind the desk commented on what a lucky lady he must have at home that he was going to cook for. The younger woman at the desk with her chimed in with, “Or a lucky man!” and winked.
He found the name of a great bakery in town from his co-workers and bought Sansa lemoncakes. He got flowers for the table and a tablecloth. He bought fancy cheese and a package of grapes for before dinner. He asked for help on picking the right steak and searched endlessly online for how to make the perfect marinade, the perfect cheesy scalloped potatoes, and the perfect hollandaise sauce to go with the asparagus he got.

After work on Wednesday, he rushed home and made sure his apartment was clean. Just in case, he cleaned the bathroom again. He vacuumed the area rugs and he fluffed the throw pillows. Then he took a shower and dressed in a blue sweater and dark blue jeans. He then started preparing dinner while soft jazz music played on Pandora on his TV.

He looked at the clock every five minutes. This, he decided, was the worst part. Knowing that she would soon be there and having to wait while time just crept s l o w l y on by.

When his phone dinged, Jon nearly cut himself with the knife he was using to cut up the cheese. He put the knife down, heaved a deep breath, and picked up his phone to look at the text he’d just gotten.

*Here! Where do I go now?*

Jon smiled. His girl was finally here. *I’ll come down.*

*Ok!*

Exiting his apartment, he stepped to the railing that overlooked the parking lot and waved down at Sansa who was standing near the stairs.

“I can walk up!” she called to him.

“No, don’t. I’m coming!” he called back and started down the steps.

She’d made it to the first landing when he caught up with her and it took everything in him to not grab her into his arms and just hold her.

“Hi,” she said, and he noted she looked a bit shy.

“Hi,” he said huskily, unable to tear his gaze from her face.

She laughed softly. “We gonna go up? Or have dinner here?”

He laughed. “Come on.”

Up another couple flights and he opened his door for her and stepped aside to let her in. Her perfume tickled his nose and he longed to bury his nose in her neck. Would he ever want anything as much as he wanted Sansa Stark?

“Let me take your coat,” he said.

She put a gift bag down on the nearby kitchen counter and he wondered how he missed her carrying that. He almost laughed out loud. Because he’d been too consumed with Sansa being here that he’d noticed nothing else, that was how.

He helped her take off the jacket she wore and hung it on the coat rack he’d found at the antique shop. Underneath her coat, she wore a black sweater that clung to her curves and looked soft to the touch. She also wore jeans that outlined those long fucking legs of hers. Her hair was pulled back
in a ponytail and he longed to run his fingers through the strands.

“Let me take off my boots so I don’t scuff up your hardwood floors,” she said and set about doing just that. He didn’t bother telling her that he was wearing shoes at the moment, too. Instead, he kicked them off and set them near the door as she had done.

Sansa Stark had her shoes off in his apartment. This meant she was relaxed, right? Comfortable? God, he hoped so.

She smiled at him and he wanted to kiss those pink lips. Then she sniffed the air. “It smells divine in here, Jon. What are you making?”

“I’ve got scalloped potatoes in the oven. The asparagus and steak I’ll do in a few minutes.” He picked up the wooden serving board with the cheese and grapes on it. “A snack before dinner?”

She smiled and picked up a cube of Wensleydale with cranberries and emitted a moan. “Oh, that’s good.”

That moan...fuck. It wouldn’t do any good to get hard now.

“Can I show you around?” he asked, his voice a bit rough now.

“Yes, but first...” she grabbed the blue gift bag. “It’s not much, but I wanted to get you something in honor of your first apartment. I didn’t know what you already had or didn’t have so...”

“You didn’t have to do that, Sansa,” he said softly.

“I wanted to. Your first apartment is a big deal, Jon.”

He dug into the bag and found a box. He pulled it out and opened it on the counter. Inside were coasters, the gray stone kind with the initial ‘J’ on them. He loved them. He’d sleep with them because they came from her.

“It’s a little cheesy--” she began.

“No, it’s not. I love them.”

She smiled. “There’s something else in there, too.”

Indeed there was. A candle.

She took the candle from him and his breath held when their hands brushed. She opened the top. “It’s one of my favorite scents - Mahogany and Teakwood. It’s very masculine, so I thought you might like it, too.” She sniffed it and then hummed and held out the jar to him. He looked up at her as he bent his head and sniffed. He did like it. And knowing she liked it so much made him like it even more. He’d burn it all damn night and buy stock in the brand.

“Let’s light it in the living room,” he said sotto voce.

“Okay,” she said with a beaming smile.

He rummaged in a nearby drawer for a lighter, and then led the way into the living room when he found it, candle in hand. “Where should I put it?” he asked her.

She took the candle from him and placed it in the center of his cherry coffee table. “Right here,” she murmured. “And this, by the way, is a beautiful piece of furniture.”
“I found it at an antique shop.”

“Oh, the one on Canal Street?”

He grinned as he lit the candle. “The one and the same.”

“I love that place!” she said. “I haven’t been in so long and I keep thinking about it.”

It was on the tip of his tongue to ask her if she wanted to go with him, but he refrained. She was here. She was here and that was a first step. Considering how skittish she had been about coming to his place, he didn’t want to scare her off by coming on too strong now. Baby steps with Sansa.

He watched her do a turn about the room, taking it all in, and he wondered if the dim lighting and the music felt as romantic to her as it did him.

“Show me the rest then?” she asked, turning to look at him.

He knew one room he wanted her to get acquainted with. “Follow me,” he said.
“Jon, your apartment is very nice and cozy,” Sansa told him as they headed back into the kitchen after he’d finished giving her the tour.

“It’s not much, but it’s home,” he said, and opened the oven to peer inside.

“Don’t diminish what you’ve done by making it your own,” she admonished lightly. “You sounded so proud when you told me about it, and you should be. It’s a wonderful place.”

He grinned over his shoulder at her as he closed the oven door. “Thank you, Sansa.”

“Is there anything I can do?”

“Just relax and have some more cheese,” he told her. “The scalloped potatoes are done. I just need to make the hollandaise sauce, boil the asparagus, and then do the steaks.”

“Let me help? Please? I can make the hollandaise as long as you tell me how.”

He didn’t answer her as he shoved on some oven mitts and dug the casserole dish of scalloped potatoes out of the oven and placed them on a wooden cutting board. He took off the oven mitts and turned to her.

She pressed her hands together as though she was praying and put them against the side of her face. She had an impish grin on her face that Jon found it impossible to resist. “Pretty please?”

He chuckled. “How can I say no now?”

She smiled. “You can’t. Tell me what I need and where stuff is.”

Going to the table, he plucked a piece of paper off it and handed it to her. “The recipe.”

He went to get a saucepan for her and when he turned back around, he found her staring at him in awe. “What is it?” he asked, slightly alarmed. “What’d I do?”

“You...you did your research. I mean, you looked stuff up and printed it out…”

He shrugged. “It wasn’t hard. I just went to the library and did it. Why?”

“I’m just… I’m just really touched that you went to all this work for me, Jon. And I’m proud of you. I’m just so proud of you.”

Jon ducked his head, feeling a surge of pride in himself - something that he still wasn’t used to feeling. He wasn’t used to good things happening for him, and he wasn’t used to being the cause of good things either. He had sort of gotten used to everything he touched falling utterly apart. But now, here was Sansa, looking so proud of him and making him feel....just, yeah, making him feel.

“Are you blushing?” she asked and it sounded like a tease.

He looked up at her and found her grinning at him. Yeah, she was teasing him. When had they ever had the opportunity to tease each other?

“I don’t think I’ve ever blushed,” he laughed.
“Well, there’s a first time for everything!”

He laughed again, enjoying this mischievous impish side of Sansa that he never got to see. It felt good to laugh with her, it felt good to be in a situation where they could laugh.

It took Sansa all of fifteen minutes to make the sauce and Jon got out a bowl and a spoon for them to use to drizzle the asparagus - which Sansa also started while he prepared the steaks in the cast iron skillet he got.

“Let me help set the table,” she told him. “Where are the plates?”

“Sansa, you don’t have to do that,” he told her.

“I want to! I don’t mind.”

He pointed to the cupboard that had the plates and wished he had thought of that beforehand. He should have set the table before she arrived.

“What’s wrong?” she asked.

He shook his head. “Nothing, I just - I should have set the table before you got here. I should have had that set up for you--”

He broke off when she placed a hand on his arm gently. “Jon. You didn’t have to set the table before I got here. There is nothing wrong with waiting until dinner is just about done to do that.”

He looked at her a bit exasperated. “I wanted everything perfect…”

“Everything is perfect,” she said.

He nodded, feeling like he could cry. How could he tell her that he’d wanted her here for so long and had wanted so badly to impress her and - and - and fucking woo her…

But then, he’d also imagined them working together in the kitchen and that had happened. She had made herself comfortable and that was ultimately what he wanted.

He nodded. “You’re right.”

“I often am.”

She was teasing again and he laughed softly.

Soon, the dinner was ready, the table was set, and since Sansa didn’t get any wine, Jon offered her water, orange juice, Mountain Dew or milk. She opted for water and Jon poured himself the same.

“I’ll get you fancy wine glasses for the water for next time,” she told him as she raised her glass.

Jon paused in the raising of his glass and wondered if she realized what she’d just said. Next time. She’d referenced a next time. He lifted his glass to hers and they clinked.

“To you,” she said. “And your awesome apartment and this wonderful dinner.”

She wasn’t backpedaling about the ‘next time’ comment, so Jon wasn’t sure if he was supposed to have hope for a next time (even though of course he already did), or if it was just a figure of speech, an off handed comment that meant nothing.
They tucked in to their meal and Sansa’s eyes rolled up in her head when she took a bite of the steak. “Damn, Jon, that is delicious!”

He grinned. “Really? You’re not just saying that?”

“Have you taken a bite yet?”

“No, I just tried the potatoes. I was worried they might be dry.”

“Try the steak,” she ordered, pointing at him with her fork.

Still grinning, he cut a piece and took a bite. He nodded. “Okay, I don’t mean to pat myself on the back here, but you’re right. That’s some damn good steak.”

She laughed. “Pat away, you did a good job!”

For the next few minutes, the two ate in silence. Sansa’s attention was completely devoted to eating and savoring every bite while Jon’s attention was completely devoted to watching her enjoy the meal.

“Do you cook like this for yourself often?” she asked after a while.

He shook his head. “No. Usually it’s mac and cheese, pasta with sauce dumped on it, or sandwiches.”

“I think I eat out entirely too much, but I do enjoy a home-cooked meal.”

“You don’t cook at home?”

“I do, just not often enough.”

Jon wanted to say something to effect that maybe they could cook together again. But it was too soon, and he knew that - even with the mention of a next time. Not yet, slow down.

“Jon?”

“Yes, lo--yes?”

If she caught the slip of him almost calling her ‘love’, she didn’t say. “Can you tell me what happened at the Home after I left? I mean, did you go easy on Melisandre?”

He didn’t like to think about that time. How lost he’d felt. How alone. How he’d felt as though he was going to go out of his bloody mind knowing she was so far away from him. And how Melisandre had watched him beg her to get Sansa back and done nothing.

He shrugged. “I kept to myself after you left. I didn’t really feel like…” He shook his head. “I just….checked out.” Because he’d had a goal in mind by then, and that goal was sitting across from right now. Everything else felt irrelevant after that. He’d had a single-minded determination to just get the fuck out of Dorne and get to Winterfell.
She nodded, looking sad. “When we talked at my house I made it seem as though I hadn’t thought about you much. I wanted you to know that I did. I worried about you quite a bit and hoped you were doing well.”

“Thank you,” he said softly. “Sansa, I...Robb and I were talking one day about you.”

Her brow arched. “Oh?”

“It was a while ago. He mentioned how you’d lived in Dorne and he mentioned you’d worked in a home for foster kids. He couldn’t remember the name of it. But he said something that stuck with me.”

“What’s that?” she asked cautiously.

“He basically said some kid there gave you a really hard time and forced you to leave.” He put his fork down and now he dropped his hands to his lap. “And when we talked at your house you said I left you no choice but to leave. Sansa, I’m sorry. I’m sorry I made things so hard that you felt you had to go. And I’m sorry that showing up here scared you. I don’t...I don’t want to scare you.”

She nodded, sighed. “I know.”

“Do you think we could be, ya know, friends?”

She looked at him sadly and Jon felt his heart plummet. She wasn’t going to say no was she?

“I don’t know, Jon,” she said softly. “It’s all very complicated. You were once in my care, you work for my brother, and there is an age gap that would give people pause if we just randomly started spending time together--”

“No one has to know about Dorne. Not yet. Maybe not at all. We could ease them into it. I mean, I was already at family dinner. If we saw each other on the streets of downtown Winterfell once in a while and had a chat--”

“Jon.”

“Sansa, I don’t want to push, but I don’t want this to be the only night I ever get to see you either. I’m not in your care anymore. I’m an adult now. I don’t think the age difference is so vast that we couldn’t hang out. Robb and I are friends and he’s older than you. Maybe they’d think it a little odd that we’d befriend each other, but who cares? No one can control who hits it off.”

“Jon, you’re getting a little manic.”

He sighed. He knew he had been. He’d been talking fast and getting worked up. It was just the thought of not seeing Sansa after tonight… he couldn’t do it. If he lived in a castle, he’d stick her in a tower and never let her go.

“How about we clean up dinner and just talk for a bit?”

“I’ll see a therapist,” he blurted out. “I’ll find a way to make everything up to you--”

“Jon. Stop.”

Goddammit. He’d been doing so well, too. Then he’d gone and just leapt forward.

“I got lemoncakes,” he said, his voice a bit hoarse. “And I can make us coffee if you want?”
She smiled. “I’d like that.” She stood, grabbing her plate, and Jon stood and shook his head. “Sansa, no. You’re my guest.”

“Jon--”

“Sit,” he ordered, arching a brow.

She looked a bit stunned by the order, and then he caught a bit of a smile as she sat and put her plate back down. She looked up at him, looking all docile. He didn’t buy it for a minute. “I’m sitting,” she said. It almost sounded like a challenge.

He smirked. “Stay.”

She smiled and it almost looked...flirtatious. “Yes, sir.”

He grinned as he grabbed her plate. “You know, Sansa, I could get used to that.”

Her soft laughter was his only response.
Jon lay in bed, naked, one arm bent behind his head and his eyes closed. In his mind, he was replaying the evening with Sansa.

There was a wisp of a smile on his face as he pictured her face when she smiled, replayed the sound of her laugh in his head, and how she’d told him she was proud of him.

He hoped he hadn’t done too much damage by pushing to see her again, but she hadn’t left when he had and, he’d noted, she had yet to officially tell him about the asshat she was dating.

In fact, when she’d been listing the litany of reasons she didn’t think they could be “friends”, she had never listed The Boyfriend as one of those reasons.

And then there had been that moment when he’d told her to sit...there had been a gleam in her eyes and a flush on her cheeks. She’d flirted with him. She’d liked him being stern with her.

Jon moaned as his cock started to harden. Sitting up, he opened his nightstand drawer and pulled out a bottle of lube. He squirted a bit into his hand, snapped the lid shut, and dropped the bottle back into the drawer.

He laid back and thought about the hug she’d given him when he’d walked her to her car. The feel of her body against his, her breasts pressed against his chest, the scent of her…

He grasped his cock and squeezed just a little before starting to stroke himself.

He thought of her in his bedroom. In his bed. Of her bent over in front of him while he bound her wrists back. Then of her under him, his hands pushing hers to the bed and keeping her from moving as he thrust into her. He thought of slapping her ass, biting her neck and marking her as his, making her scream and beg for him to make her cum -

“Sansa!” he cried out hoarsely as he came, his cum landing on his stomach.

Panting, he squeezed the tip, the last few drops dribbling out.

Feeling boneless and somewhat sated - God, he just wanted to spend inside Sansa - he thought that he needed to find some way to get rid of The Boyfriend.

*************

“Jon, please…” she whined as she looked up at him while he undressed.

“Sit there and watch, Sansa,” he told her sternly. “Good girls listen when their masters tell them to do something. Good girls get to touch. You were bad, so you don’t get to touch.”

She pouted, hoping he would relent. It wasn’t often he could resist her pout. He growled at her, but didn’t relent. Once the last stitch was off him, he pointed to the bed.

Sansa got up and climbed on top of it. She rested the side of her face on the mattress and lifted her ass in the air. She felt him climb up on the bed behind her and felt his fingers spreading her nether lips. He teased her nub and then slipped his fingers inside her and started driving them in and out...
Sansa moaned, her thighs rubbing together. Jon had just made her cum so hard…

No, wait.

Her eyes opened. She was in her bedroom, not his. She was alone.

It was a dream.

She’d made herself cum from a dream.

And Jon had been in it. Not Dickon. Jon.

It wasn’t real. It was just a dream. It was brain trash because I saw him tonight, she told herself as she sat up and flicked on the lamp on her nightstand.

And there had been that moment.

She climbed out of the bed as though doing so would make her forget that moment. She padded down the hall to the bathroom, used it, and then went to the kitchen to get a glass of water.

Remember that what you resist, persists, she thought. So, just give that moment the attention it wants and then you’ll be able to move on.

Fact: That moment when Jon had been stern with her and told her to sit had been electric. The air had snapped, crackled, and popped or, at least, for her it had.

Fact: There had been more of a spark in that moment with Jon than there was with Dickon.

Fact: She had flirted with him.

Sansa put her glass down and ran a hand through her hair. This was not good.

“Okay, full disclosure,” she said to the window above her sink. “I had a really nice time tonight. I enjoyed Jon’s company, I was really touched that he went to all that trouble for me, and I…”

Nope. Nope. Nope. She wasn’t going to admit that one. She was going to shove that thought right down to her toes. She was going to deny, deny, deny. Sure, it wasn’t the advice she’d give her clients, but this was her she was talking about and she knew better than to go down that road.

“Right then,” she muttered. “Off to bed I go. I think I’ll read a bit, maybe watch some TV…”

Anything so she didn’t have to admit that one thing. And if she didn’t admit it, then it wasn’t true.

***************

The next few days dragged on by. So many times Jon had almost texted Sansa. Just a quick “hey, how are you?” just to have some form of contact. To occupy himself, he took to following The Boyfriend. If he was going to dig up any dirt on him, then he had to learn about him.

He ended up one night at The Wall when he’d seen The Boyfriend and a group of friends - men and women - and he thought - jackpot. Sansa wasn’t part of the group, so Jon thought maybe he’d find The Boyfriend up to something he shouldn’t be.

The more he thought about it though, and the more he watched The Boyfriend, from a prime corner
in the pizza place, the more Jon found he didn’t want to see The Boyfriend do anything behind Sansa’s back.

He didn’t want Sansa hurt.

He wanted The Boyfriend gone, but he didn’t want it because this chump cheated on her. He kept watching though, just to be sure, just in case. He wasn’t sure what he’d do if The Boyfriend stepped out of line, but he’d figure something out.

The Boyfriend was clean though, even if he did flirt quite a bit in Jon’s opinion. He was one of those guys that just had charm oozing out of his ass. Snake Charmer, his mom would have said. It was possible he was judging The Boyfriend harshly, but this was the guy in his way after all.

When The Boyfriend left with his gaggle of friends, Jon did too.

Okay, new tactic.

Sitting in his truck, he sent Sansa that text and added on: I hope it’s okay that I am texting? and sincerely hoped that it was.

xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Jon: Hey, how are you? I hope it’s okay that I am texting?

Sansa felt her heart skip a beat, which she ignored and texted back: I am well, Jon. How are you?

And was it okay for him to text? Probably not. Yet here she was, not telling him to stop.

It could have something to do with the fact that she and Dickon had broken up the day before. His doing, not hers. As kind as he was, and as patient as he’d seemed, it turned out that her not having sex with him yet made him feel unwanted. Sansa wasn’t about to fuck him after that and so she let him go, angrily, and was now feeling a wee bit sorry for herself. So, that accounted for her allowing this exchange and drinking almost a half bottle of wine.

Oh, and the polished off pint of Sea Salt Caramel Gelato.

Jon: I’m okay. What are you doing?

Sansa: Just watching some TV.

Jon: So I was thinking of going to that antique shop this weekend. Would you like to join me?

If she was honest with herself, the invitation enticed her. She wanted to go. She’d been wanting to go to the antique shop for a while now, and she wanted to see Jon again. Perhaps to put to bed (wrong choice of words, Sansa!!!) that Moment from the other night. It had been a fluke. That was what she told herself. And if she spent time with him again in a non slightly-romantic- dinner way in his home, which was very intimate, then she’d find that there was nothing there.

There were so many reasons why she should say no. The least of which was The Moment (which she had started calling it in her head).

And yet, she found herself in her moment of vulnerability (and if you asked her that’s exactly what she’d chalk it up to), texting him back and saying yes, she would join him.
I am just so very not sure about this chapter. At the end of the last chapter there was a switch that went on in Sansa. I felt it. She felt it. And so it stood to reason that it rattled her and got her thinking and feeling things....I don't know. I suppose I feel as all over the place as she is lol.
By mid-week, Sansa started to wish she hadn’t made plans with Jon. In fact, she had anxiety about the whole thing. How many times had she warned clients not to make rash decisions during a moment of heightened emotions and vulnerability? And yet, that was exactly what she had done.

Fact: Jon made her feel about herself.

Who wouldn’t want to spend time with someone who made them feel good about themselves after just being dumped?

But it wasn’t fair to him because it was giving him false hope. He wanted friendship, though Sansa was pretty sure that wasn’t all he wanted (she wasn’t stupid). So, giving in to seeing him again was leading him on and she felt pretty terrible about that.

She could admit now that yes, she was attracted to him. But, she could also rationalize that it meant nothing. He was a good-looking kid - boy, man, whatever. The point was, he was attractive. She was sure he turned many heads. It was biological and nothing more.

Being just friends with him was difficult enough. She’d been his social worker for crying out loud. That had put her in the role of his caretaker of sorts. It would be...creepy, not to mention unbalanced. It would just be wrong.

Plus, he was attached to her in a very unhealthy way. She was certain that he’d transferred some motherly feelings her way and that was just a recipe for disaster. Once Jon realized that she was not a stand-in for his mother, he would be devastated. Despite how well he was doing, there were still a lot of issues there, ones that needed addressing and she could no longer be the one to address them.

He needed help.

And by leading him on in any capacity, she was not helping. She could end up making it all worse.

She didn’t want to tell him any of this over the phone, so she figured when she met with him at the antique shop, she would just be honest with him and explain to him that this couldn't happen.

Sansa arrived on time to meet Jon at the infamous antique shop. The shop was a rather large three-story brick building that was really more like a warehouse. A sign out front simply said “Antiques” and it was clearly hand-made. It rather gave off the vibe that perhaps this wasn’t the best place to be shopping for furniture, and yet the inside was glorious and busting at the seams with antique and refurbished furniture. And all of it was excellent quality, too.

Jon was standing outside, smiling brightly and looking so happy that Sansa felt like worst person on the planet. This boy - man, whatever - had been hurt so much in his young life. How could she add her name to the list of people who had let him down? But then, if she didn’t put a stop to this,
how much damage could she end up doing for him in the long run?

As soon as she parked her car, Jon ran up to greet her. “Sansa, remember you told me how you were looking for a bookcase?”

“I do,” she said as she leaned in and grabbed her purse, and then shut the car door.

“I got here early and I saw a really great one you might like.”

He was trying so hard. How could she do this to him? What if it set him back?

She followed him inside and he led her through the winding path of furniture to his find. It was hard to miss. It was a gorgeous piece of cherry furniture. Tall and shiny with intricate woodwork that reminded her of the Victorian era. “Wow,” she breathed. “Jon, that’s gorgeous.”

“Isn’t it? I was just walking by and zeroed right in on it.” He looked so goddamn proud of himself. “It’s not a bad price either. Just one-fifty.”

“How is that even possible?” she asked incredulously as she gaped at the bookcase.

Jon grinned as he stood beside her. “Because this place is pretty awesome.”

“It really is,” she murmured.

Silence fell and Sansa found herself feeling a little antsy. Her previous thoughts about meeting came rushing back and Sansa turned to face him and found him already looking at her.

“I’m really glad you came,” he said softly. “I didn’t think you would.”

She sighed and wrapped her arms around herself. “I almost didn’t,” she admitted.

“Let me guess - age difference, you were my social worker...boyfriend?”

“Well, I’m currently without the boyfriend, so yeah, the other two.”

“You broke up with him?”

She sighed and shook her head as she turned back to the bookcase. “He broke up with me.”

“He’s an idiot.”

“Thanks.”

“Are you okay?”

“Yeah, I am. My ego is a bit bruised but I’m not all that heartbroken over it.”

“So, you weren’t in love with him.”

“Not even close,” she blurted out and then sighed.

Jon arched a brow. “Well, that’s telling.”

“Yeah, I guess it is.”

“You know, you never told me you were seeing someone.”
She blinked. “What?”

“You never mentioned him.”

“I didn’t?”

“Nope.”

“I thought I did.”

“You didn’t.”

“Huh.” She stared at the bookcase wondering if that meant anything, that she had never told Jon about Dickon. She thought she had though, so maybe it was just a slip of the mind…?

“He didn’t make much of an impression then,” Jon said softly.

“No,” she murmured. “I guess he didn’t.”

“What can I do to convince you we can be friends?”

“I don’t know, Jon. I’m not sure you can. I just think of how inappropriate this is for you.”

“Inappropriate for me? How is this inappropriate for me?”

“I was your social worker--”

“Was. Past tense.”

“Jon, you were under my care,” she argued. “Lest you forget that you crossed major lines while under my care, and then crossed even more by coming to Winterfell.”

Jon looked annoyed now. “You need to sing me a different tune, Sansa.”

“No, the same tune is relevant.”

“I’m an adult now, I’m not under your care, and I make my own choices.”

“Some of those choices are not healthy and I feel I need to warn you about them,” she told him.

“Fine then. Warn me. What is so unhealthy about us being friends?”

She looked around the room they were in, making sure no one was in there with them and then faced him. “You’ve got an attachment to me that isn’t healthy. You’ve transferred.”

“I’ve transferred. What have I transferred exactly?” he asked, folding his arms across his chest and looking at her challengingly.

“You’ve transferred the feelings you had for your mother to me. You think of me as a mother figure.”

He burst out laughing at that. “Trust me, Sansa, I do not in any way think of you as my mother. My feelings for you are not at all what a son would feel for his Mom.”

“Maybe not all of them, but you think of me as some kind of savior--”

“I never thought of my mother as a savior. I wanted her to be, but she never was. She couldn’t even
save herself,” he said bitterly.

“Okay, I am not explaining this well.” She held up her hands. “I’m going to start again. No interruptions, okay?”

He nodded once. “Okay.”

“You think of me as someone you can lean on and help you with your life and your problems. Like a mother-figure, though not exactly your mother. That was my role as your social worker - to help you and to guide you. To look out for you. You’re looking for that again, and I can’t be that for you now, Jon. Not anymore. I am no longer your social worker, and I am not here to help you navigate through your life. You want our old dynamic back--”

“No, I don’t. Not at all, actually.”

She narrowed her eyes. “I said no interruptions.”

“Well, you’re wrong so I felt I should interject.”

“I’m sorry, but who is the professional therapist here?”

Jon narrowed his eyes. “And I’m the one you’re analyzing and I should know me better than anyone, right?”

“Not always. Some people think they are self-aware but they’re really not or they don’t have all the information. There are patterns people make as early as childhood that they’re not often aware of.”

“My pattern is to transfer feelings of wanting a Mom onto others?”

“I’m not saying it’s a pattern, Jon,” she said, trying to reign in her temper. “I did not see signs of it at the Home because you never attached to any foster parent. You attached yourself to me and have told me more than once about how I gave you hope and pushed you to where you are now.”

“And you did,” he said simply, and put his hands on his hips. “What’s wrong with that? Doesn’t everyone have someone in their lives that pushes them to be a better person? Who makes them feel good about themselves? Isn’t that what we’re all here for? To make connections to other people?”

“You’re doing that thing you do again,” she said with a shake of her head.

“Oh, so I do have a pattern!”

“Yes, when you want to manipulate someone into your way of thinking you twist words to fit your narrative!” she exclaimed. “If you want to know the truth, it’s the same sort of thing abusers do to their victims and I do not like it, Jon!” She gestured to him. “So there’s a pattern for you!”

Angry now, she turned and stormed out of the room. Jon caught up with her and grabbed her arm. She snarled at him to let her go and he did, holding up his hands in surrender.

“Sansa, I’m sorry,” he said. “I didn’t - I’m sorry.”

“Sorry doesn’t magically fix everything, Jon. You can say you’re sorry until you’re blue in the face, but it does nothing if you’re not willing to change the behavior.”

“I didn’t know I had the behavior,” he ground out.

“I am quite certain I’ve called you on it before.”
He sighed. “I know you don’t want me to say it, but I am sorry. And I’ll stop. Just...just keep telling me when I’m doing it.” He looked at her, stricken. “Sansa, I don’t want to have the same actions as an abuser.”

Now she felt bad, like she should apologize, but she didn’t. If she made it okay for him to manipulate her and others, he would keep doing it.

“I really think you need to see someone,” she said softly. “You have a lot to deal with right now, Jon. The transition alone from the Home to here, your father--”

“I’ll see someone,” he rushed out. “I promise I will.”

“However, I want you to go of your own volition, not just because I tell you to. If you go and aren’t open to the experience then it’s not going to do anything for you. Don’t go for me. Go for you. Do you understand that?”

He nodded. “Yes,” he said hoarsely. “Sansa, I’m sorry. I just...I don’t want you to go away again. You know what I liked about our dinner? I got to see a different side of you. The real you outside of the Home. The you everyone else gets to see. I want to see more, learn more...and I want you to see the me that’s not at the Home. The me I am now, here.”

“I don’t want to set you back,” she said pleadingly. “I don’t want you to think of me as some kind of savior for you, Jon. You put a lot on me at the Home, and I can’t be all that for you. No one can. I’m only human, and you’re not in my care any longer.”

He shook his head, moving closer to her until he was in her space. His grey eyes bore into hers. “I don’t want to be in your care like that. I want to know you, Sansa. And I want you to know me. If I...if I act like a dick or like I’m putting a lot on you then tell me.”

“Jon, I don’t know...”

“Please just give me a chance? Please? That’s all I’m asking for.”

She nibbled on her bottom lip and looked down, clearly mulling it over. Jon said not a word; he was afraid to. He was so close to losing her and he was feeling pretty damn desperate.

His Sansa was smart. No manipulations were going to work on her. He really had to stop that with her, because that was going to drive her clear away. Honest communication was what she wanted. Anything other than that and she’d clearly give him the boot.

Of course, he wasn’t going to admit he’d been trying to manipulate her. He would just do his level best to not do it again...or find another way.

She looked up at him and he held his breath. “Let’s just do what we came here to do and see how it goes.”

He let go the breath he’d been holding and smiled. “Okay, thank you. Shall we start over?”

Her smile was thin. Wary. “What did you have in mind?”

He took a step back. “Sansa, I have this really great bookcase I want to show you. Follow me?”

Her smile grew more genuine. “That sounds great, Jon. I’ll just follow you!”

He laughed a little; she laughed a little, and for now, crisis averted.
Chapter 16

Chapter Notes

It's been a while, and I'm feeling a little rusty!

“I did measure the spot I want to put it in,” Sansa told Jon as she ran her fingers over the wood of the bookcase, feeling its smoothness. “But I did not measure the door. I would have to do that first I suppose. No sense in getting something I can’t fit through the front door.”

Jon nodded thoughtfully and ran a hand over his beard. “You could always put a hold on it, like a down payment? Just to prevent someone nabbing it before you can measure the door.”

She bit her lip and looked at him. “Or...we could just do that now?”

Jon smiled. She was going to let him in her home then at least near it.

“I’m not that far from here so it wouldn’t take long and then I’d have the answer and--”

“Sansa, are you trying to convince me or something?”

She scrunched up her face adorably in uncertainty. “I think so?”

He laughed softly and shook his head. “I don’t mind going to measure your door now.”

She heaved a breath of relief. “Good. Thank you. It’s just that I love this thing so completely already, and I want to know that there is the possibility it could actually be mine. I hate having unanswered questions in the air.”

He grinned. “Take my truck?”

She smiled. “Sure.”

Having Sansa in his truck was another fantasy Jon had entertained before. He’d imagined them on their way out to dinner or taking a road trip somewhere, and him just being able to reach out and entwine their fingers together.

Now, his free hand on his thigh, it itched to reach out and take hers. Her scent permeated the small space and he hoped it lingered. He wanted to be able to smell her every time he got in his truck.

He told her how he’d seen a sign at the shop that they would refurbish anyone’s old furniture for a fee. “I’d like to try my hand at something like that,” he said as he turned down her street.

“Why don’t you?” Sansa asked.

He shrugged. “I wouldn’t know where to start.”

“With old junky furniture, I believe,” she said. “Or maybe just something you want to change the appearance of? There are a few antique shops on Route One that have some sad looking furniture just looking for someone to love them. I bet you could take something like that and fix it up.”
Jon frowned thoughtfully. “You think so?”

“Why not?”

“Think I could turn a profit if I wanted?”

“If you were good at it, sure. I have thought about doing the same thing. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve spent on DIY websites thinking oh sure, I could totally turn that buffet into an entertainment center!”

Jon laughed. “What’s stopped you from doing it?”

“Honestly, I’m not sure. Resources? Time? Lack of a space to do it in?”

“Know anyone with a garage?”

“My Mom. Robb.”

Jon grinned and looked at her knowingly.

She laughed nervously. “What? What’s that look?”

“You also happen to know a couple people with tools.”

“Robby and…?”

“Me, of course.”

“You have tools?”

“Probably not as much as Robb, but yeah, I do. I made a couple bookcases and shelves for Melisandre at the home. The guy I worked for, he let me use his table saw one weekend. I mean, they weren’t anything fancy, but it was fun to do.”

“Jon! You never told me that!”

He laughed. “Was I supposed to?”

“Yes! That’s amazing!”

He pulled into her driveway and cut the engine. He turned slightly in his seat and looked at her. She was studying him curiously. “You really enjoy working with your hands, then.”

He nodded. “I do. I’ve entertained the idea of carpentry, like the kind where I build that bookcase you love so much from scratch.”

“Have you tried it?”

“Shit no. For that sort of thing, I’d need to be an apprentice--” He laughed when she excitedly hit him on the arm.

“Jon! The antique shop probably knows people you could learn from!”

He shrugged and looked towards her apartment. “We should measure the door.”

“Wait. What just happened? You just deflated before my eyes.”
He shrugged again. “I don’t know...I guess I just...have doubts.”

“About?”

“My abilities.”

“You haven’t tried. You have to try something first.”

He sighed. “Yeah...”

“Don’t give up before you try it. Jon, you may not believe this, but you’re probably the most determined and stubborn young man I’ve ever met.”

Young man? he thought. She made him sound like a kid. Like she was Mrs. Robinson with a twenty-something age gap instead of nine simple years. He decided to let that go for now.

“I think you could start with refurbishing a few pieces to build up some confidence and perhaps study the structure of the furniture or something? I don’t really know how it works, so I might just be talking out of my ass.”

He burst out in a laugh. “I never thought I’d hear Miss Stark say ‘talking out of my ass’.”

She giggled. “Miss Stark isn’t always so proper.”

He grinned mischievously. “I’m looking forward to seeing all the ways she isn’t.”

Their eyes met and held for a brief moment, and it made Jon inwardly sit up and take notice. Something had just passed between them. An electric current. A burst of heat. And now she was pushing her door open while blushing and saying, “We should really measure that door.”

Don’t do anything stupid now and fuck it all up, Jon thought as he pushed open his door and followed her to the apartment. She opened the door and stepped inside, rambling about the measuring tape being in a kitchen drawer.

Jon took one step inside and stopped. He felt like he shouldn’t go any further unless she said it was okay. He didn’t know why, but this was Sansa’s home. Her inner sanctum. It felt like going into her home meant something more than them just seeing how things went between them that day. It felt like more. It felt intimate. If Sansa allowed him inside, she was letting him see pieces of her, just as letting her in his home was letting her see pieces of him.

She stopped rummaging and looked over her shoulder at him. “Are you coming in?”

He shuffled on his feet. “I didn’t want to, you know, overstep my bounds or anything.”

She pulled her hands from the drawer and turned to him. “What - are you a vampire? Come in, Jon.”

He shuffled further in and his eyes were drawn to the magnets on her fridge across the room. Then the blue and green ceramic mug on her counter next to her coffee pot that had dried coffee dribbled down the side of it. Was this a mug she always used?

She turned back to rummage in her drawer and his gaze now drifted to the line of her neck. He wanted to walk up behind her and bury his face in the crook of it while wrapping his arms around her.

He’d taken another step towards her when she exclaimed, “Found it!” and held it up. She looked
up at him triumphantly and he smiled.

They measured the door, or rather he did and she wrote down the measurements. Then he pocketed the tape while she pocketed the measurements. “Come see where I want to put it,” she said and led him through the kitchen, down a hall and then into the living room.

It was open and airy with hardwood floors and two windows at the front, one in the corner next to a cushioned rocking chair patterned with birds and flowers. A green afghan was slung over the back that matched the green in the rocking chair perfectly. In the middle of the room was a long overstuffed cream sofa facing a small stand for her TV and a round cherry coffee table in between. There was a coaster on it, and a bag of Swedish Fish next to it. A pair of flats were under the coffee table.

Sansa walked over to the corner and pressed her back to the far wall next to the window. The only thing on the wall was a framed picture of Monet’s Water Lilies. “Right here,” she said. “There is nothing on this wall except for that picture, and I have my chair right there and this little window. It could be my reading nook.”

Jon nodded. “It’s perfect.”

Sansa crossed the small space to the chair and sat down. She gestured to the spot under the window. “I could put a little end table here, put a lamp on it, and from here…” She sat back and looked at the wall. “See my books.”

Into Jon’s head popped an image of another chair sort of kiddy-cornered to hers where he could sit and have her feet on his lap while they read together. “You should definitely have that bookcase.”

She smiled. “Let’s go measure it.”

The apartment smelled like her perfume and something just Sansa and he breathed deep, wanting to remember it as he followed her out of the house.

He shut the door to her apartment behind him and she turned abruptly toward him and knocked into him. Her hands flew to his arms and he gripped her elbows to steady her.

She looked up at him and he saw the surprise in her face. Another electric current. Another burst of heat.

“I need to lock the door,” she murmured. “I almost forgot I got so focused…”

He nodded, but didn’t let her go. She kept staring up at him.

Make the move, Sansa, he thought. Or give me the signal you want me to kiss you and I will. Please, baby, please, let me taste you…

She jerked away and stepped around him. “Excuse me,” she mumbled.

He shut his eyes and sighed inwardly. So fucking close…

Okay, calm down, he told himself. This is progress. Don’t blow it.

She skirted around him, heading for the truck, and looked over her shoulder at him. “Coming?”

Hopefully one day soon, he thought as he followed her back to the truck.

*******
Sansa concentrated on calming her racing heart on the drive back to the antique shop. She stared out the window and thought - *I should really say something and fill this silence* - but all she could think about was how full Jon’s lips were.

When they got to the antique shop, she hurried inside ahead of him. She had nervous energy to burn and the scent of his cologne was starting to do stuff to her.

She kept silent as he measured the bookcase and she jotted down the numbers, doing a jig in her head because it would fit through her door and it would be perfect against that wall.

“As much as I would love to say let’s move this thing in today, I think we might need another set of hands,” Jon told her.

She nodded. “We need Robb.”

“Yes.”

“Let me at least buy it, and then we can call him...or we could look around for a bit and maybe tomorrow if you’re not busy, you and Robb could do it after work?”

“I don’t have plans,” he murmured.

“I’ll call Robb after I pay for it and see what works for him.”

“Sounds like a plan.”

She started for the exit and then stopped, turned, and looked up at Jon. He was watching her curiously with a spark of...hope? in his eyes.

“Thank you,” she said, “for showing me this beautiful bookcase.”

He smiled and she felt her insides melt a little. “You’re welcome.”

Later, Sansa would wonder if she’d lost her mind completely for she stepped into his space, and leaned up to press a kiss to his cheek. “Later, let’s ask if they know any carpenters. Sound good?”

He looked a bit dazed as he looked down at her and nodded. Was it wrong that she kind of liked having that effect on him?

She might have been stupid for what she’d just done, but at the moment? Well, she didn’t care all that much.
Sansa didn’t tell Robb that she was with Jon when she called. And she put her fingers to her lips to silence Jon while she called her brother. She simply told Robb that she had found a bookcase and needed help getting it home and if he was free tomorrow perhaps he could ask Jon if he could help.

Robb agreed with minimal grumbling and some light teasing: “Sure, just make me do more heavy lifting after work, San."

Then he proceeded to ask her why she asked for Jon.

“Because I’ve met him I guess?” Sansa said, brows furrowing.

“You met a few of my guys though,” Robb said. “You even went out with one.”

Jon’s head snapped up at that. Apparently he’d heard that.

Sansa turned away and walked away from Jon, feeling her face heat. “Yeah, well, I guess Jon is still fresh in my mind.”

She heard Jon laugh softly behind her. She moved further away from him to an intricately painted bureau that had caught her eye. She ran her fingers over the painted designs, hoping to feel some raised paint under her fingertips when she felt Jon come up behind her - as in right behind her. She could feel his body heat and his breath on her neck. He placed one hand on her hip and reached out his other next to hers and ran his fingers over the paint above hers. His hand on her hip felt as though it was burning its way to her flesh. She was so aware of it and of him and his goddamn cologne...she felt a moan threaten its way out as her heart raced in her chest.

Then he shuffled away and she wondered if she’d imagined it. She turned and found him engrossed in a hutch - opening the glass doors on the side, pulling the drawers open.

“I’ll ask him tomorrow. If he can’t do it, I’ll find someone who can,” Robb said.

They set a time to meet at the shop and Sansa hung up.

Jon turned and looked at her. “All set then?”

“Prepare to be asked tomorrow if you’ll help,” Sansa said with a nod.

He nodded. “So, who did you go out with?”

“Oh, um, Torrhen.”

Jon nodded slowly. “What happened?”

“It didn’t work out. We just went out once when I moved back from Dorne. He’s a nice guy, but there was no spark. We parted as friends.”

“Did he ask you out?”

“Robb set us up, actually.”

“A blind date?”
Sansa looked at him in exasperation. “What is this fascination with one date I had with Torrhen?”

“I’m just curious,” he said with a shrug.

She rolled her eyes. “Well, it was barely noteworthy.”

Jon nodded slowly again, and it looked as though he was filing this information away. “Shall we look around some more?”

“Sure,” Sansa agreed, though admittedly, she rather wanted to get away from Jon and the completely inappropriate and utterly inconvenient attraction she felt for him.

Jon found himself wanting to ask Torrhen about his date with Sansa the following day. Had it been a blind date? What did they do? Had Torrhen felt anything for Sansa? Had he fucked it up somehow?

Jon wanted details. He wanted to know what Torrhen did wrong so that he made sure he never did it. It was inconceivable to him that anyone could be around Sansa and not fall for her.

“Jon, favor to ask you per my sister Sansa,” Robb said over lunch. “She has some bookcase at this antique shop she loves so much on hold for her. You mind helping me after work getting it for her and bringing it to her apartment?”

Jon smiled. “Not at all.”

“Kiss-ass,” Ygritte said.

Jon looked across the table at her and fought the urge to tell her to shut up. She arched a brow at him as though challenging him to do so.

She’d learned through the grapevine that he didn’t have a girlfriend and hadn’t taken it well. Instead of confronting him about it though, she had opted to go with a few snide remarks here and there.

Jon ignored her, which seemed to irritate her more. He knew she was upset he’d lied to her, and he also know that she still wanted him. The way she eyed him every time he walked in the trailer told him as much. There was a certain whiff of desperation that Jon got from her that reminded him of Ros at the Home.

“Jon is not a kiss-ass,” Robb said as he stood and dumped his paper bag lunch in the trash.

Ygritte looked as though she wanted to say something to him, but Jon got up and followed suit by dumping his lunch in the trash and heading outside after Robb.

Maybe he was a bit of a kiss-ass, but he figured it could only work in his favor when the day came that he and Sansa started dating for real. He did wonder just what he would be up against with Robb. How protective was he of his sisters?

“What happened to the boyfriend? He not available to help?” Jon asked as he latched his tool belt around his hips.

Robb handed him a hard hat and then donned one himself. “They broke up,” Robb said.

“Oh. She ok?”
“Yeah, I think so. She didn’t seem very heartbroken. He’s lucky for that.”

“Oh?”

Robb shrugged. “I would have beaten him to a pulp if he hurt her in any way.”

All right, so Robb was definitely a protective older brother. One that might have some issues with him if he knew that Jon was the reason Sansa had left the Home. So, his original assessment of he and Sansa pretending they hadn’t met before the family dinner stood. But first, of course, he had to convince Sansa to keep seeing him.

He smiled to himself as he thought of their time together the day before. There had been moments between them, moments he knew Sansa had felt something for him.

She probably hadn’t been aware of the look in her eyes, but he had been. It had taken everything not to grab her and kiss her.

She was attracted to him. She might even, dare he hope, want him.

He grinned, hoping there might be some room for more moments that evening….

xxxxxxxxxx

All day Jon had been on Sansa’s mind. She kept going over their day at the antique shop. The moments when she’d felt that pull toward him…the way he’d so casually touched her, his breath on her neck and the warmth of his body against her back.

She lost her breath each time she thought of it.

And she swore she could feel his hand on her hip still.

She had lunch in her office that afternoon and she’d journaled about it.

_I’m attracted to him_, she wrote. _He’s an attractive young man, and a young man is exactly what he is. Nothing can come of this, and it could very well be that I am still feeling vulnerable about Dickon, not to mention hurt. Of course, I would gravitate to Jon who looks at me as though I am everything he’s ever needed or wanted in the world. But it doesn’t mean anything. It does not mean that I have to follow through on anything or that I will. Because I cannot. He was under my care. He’s younger than I am, and I still maintain that he sees me as some sort of savior/mother figure. I just need to admit to myself that I am attracted to him so that I can work on putting it behind me. And now I’ve admitted it._

She would tell a client to redirect their attention to healthier things - their job, their family and friends. She’d also tell them to list the qualities they wanted in a mate and consider whether the person they were having attracted to actually had any of those qualities. And consider whether it was the idea of the person or the person as they were that they truly wanted. She’d tell them to list all the possible consequences of what would happen if they gave in to their attraction.

That was easy. She risked harming Jon. Giving into his misplaced feelings for her and further feeding the illusion he had of her and what she represented to him.

There was no future for them. There was no fling or relationship to be had. She could be attracted to him until the cows came home, but it changed absolutely nothing.
But no matter how many times she told herself that throughout the day, she still found her heart racing when she was about to see him. And couldn’t stop herself from bypassing Robb completely when they stepped out of Robb’s truck and focusing on Jon.

She cursed herself for it, and then reprimanded herself for drawing so much attention to it. The more attention she gave it, the worst it would get so it was best not to beat herself up for these things. Gentle redirection and loving kindness, that’s how she had to treat herself in this.

She focused on the task at hand and not on how his being dirty from work somehow turned her on. From wondering how he looked in a hard hat. From thinking about his muscles in that tank top. Perhaps she should have had sex with Dickon. Clearly, she needed to get laid.

“Good to see you again, Sansa,” Jon said with a little smirk.

Sansa’s face heated. “Hi, Jon. How are you?”

“Great, thanks for asking.”

“I’m starving,” Robb chimed in. “Can we do this?”

Sansa rolled her eyes and led them inside, though Jon knew the way. She swore she could feel his eyes on her though it was probably all in her head. Robb was with them for crying out loud. But, when she glanced back, he smiled at her, his gaze firmly on her.

Crap.

She wondered if he knew…

He had to. After yesterday, how could he not?

Double crap.

The whole affair didn’t take long. It took them almost no time to get the bookcase loaded in Robb’s truck and then in her house. While Robb took a call outside with Margaery, Jon and Sansa stood in front of the bookcase and just admired it.

“It looks good here,” Jon said. “It belongs here.”

She smiled gently. “It really does. Thank you for bringing it to my attention.”

She felt his arm brush hers and it felt as though she was about to burst into flames. She felt as though she was moving underwater as she slowly turned to look up at him. Her heart began to pound as she looked into his gray eyes.

“Jon?” Robb called out. “You ready to go?”

Jon tore his gaze from hers and looked toward the doorway just as Robb poked his head inside. “I’m ready,” Jon said, and he sounded reluctant.

Sansa was half-disappointed and half-relieved. Yes, he needed to go. He needed to go before she did something really stupid like kiss him.

“See you later, Sansa,” Jon said softly.

“Thank you, Jon, for your help.”
He grinned. “Anytime.”

“Do I get any thanks?” Robb asked with a slight pout.

Sansa laughed, thankful her brother was there to diffuse the tension. It brought her back down to reality and she needed that. She had somehow lost the plot entirely and was heading down a path of recklessness. It was so unlike her to give in to base desires like that. Or to have them really…

She hugged her brother and thanked them both again as she walked them to the door.

Once gone, Sansa shut her door and sagged against it. She went to the fridge and plucked out a tupperware bowl of leftovers and shoved them in the microwave. While the leftover meatloaf heated, she went to the living room and pulled a box of books closer to the bookcase and started to fill it.

Twenty minutes later she had forgotten about the leftovers and was engrossed in filling up her bookcase while most definitely not thinking about Jon, when her doorbell rang. She dragged herself up, remembered the meatloaf when she walked by the microwave, and opened the door.

And there Jon stood.

“Sansa.” That was all he said.

It was all he had to say. All those thoughts, all those troublesome feelings? They rushed through her and she leaped forward. He caught her easily in his arms just before their lips met.
Chapter 18

Jon was beside himself. He couldn’t get over the feeling of Sansa in his arms. He couldn’t get over the fact that this was something she had initiated. He’d seen the intent in her eyes before she’d leaped into his arms, and his heart had soared. Now, with his arms around her and his lips fused to hers, Jon felt almost overwhelmed by it all. This was his dream come true. This was real, not just some feverish fantasizing in his bed at night.

This.
Was.
Everything.

Did she know? Did she have a clue what this meant?

Lifting her up in his arms, Sansa wrapped her legs around his waist and he groaned. He couldn’t get enough. Her lips, the feel of her breasts pressed against him, her scent…

He was drowning in her.

He moved further inside the kitchen, his hands holding her under her ass and he squeezed. She moaned.

Jon kicked the door shut with his foot and tore his mouth away long enough to watch where he was going. He moved her to the wooden round kitchen table which, thank the Gods, was bare. He set her down on top of it and claimed her lips hungrily while pushing her back onto the table.

Their first kiss had been amazing, but nothing could have prepared him for this. This kiss, she’d started. He was starved for the taste of her and he thrust his tongue in her mouth to taste her deeper, and fuller. This thing he felt for her, it was growing inside him minute by minute, and it felt as though his body could not contain it. Soon, it was going to spill over and swallow them both whole.

What a way to go.

When her hands found their way into his hair and pulled the elastic he used to pull his hair away from his face, he thought he might just cum right there in his jeans. He was so hard for her and every touch, sigh, and moan she made drew him closer and closer to the edge. She buried her fingers in his hair and pushed her body against his.

Jon slipped his hands under her shirt and he felt a shiver go through her. He smiled into their kiss and then groaned as he spread his hands to feel the softness of her skin.

Fuck.
Christ.

“Silk,” he muttered against her mouth. It came out almost like a whine. “Your skin is like silk…”

She hummed and gripped his hair in her little hands.

I love you, he thought.
Somehow, this surprised him.

Was this what he’d been feeling? He’d known he wanted her, craved her, needed her, but love? He didn’t think he was capable of such a thing, yet now that he’d thought it, he couldn’t shake it.

Love. He must love Sansa.

He kissed her harder and slid his hands up her sides until he felt her bra. He slipped his hands over the mounds and squeezed gently.

More, more, more.

“Jon,” she gasped, tearing her mouth from his. Her blue eyes were indigo as she looked up at him. She wanted him. Sansa. Wanted Him.

“I want to taste you,” he whispered as he slid his hands out from under her shirt. He rose and stared down at her, pinning her with his gaze. She was panting, her breasts rising and falling as she stared back up at him.

When his hands went to the snap of her pants, she groaned. God, she was so responsive and all he’d done was undo her pants!

His hands shook as he managed to undo the zipper and then pulled her pants down and off. He was mesmerized by her lace-trimmed pink panties and he reached out to trace the edges of it.

“Jon,” Sansa moaned.

Licking his lips, Jon pulled them down and off - and then stuffed them in the back pocket of his jeans. He gazed down at her pink glistening pussy and lost his breath. She was so fucking beautiful it made him ache. Her legs were so long and her pussy...fucking hell.

Reaching out, he used the pad of his thumb to delve inside her pussy from bottom to top just to feel her wetness. Her body jerked at his touch and she gasped.

“What am I doing?” she whispered in awe as she watched him.

He sucked his thumb into his mouth and moaned at the taste of her desire. He then lifted one leg over his shoulder and kissed her ankle softly. “You’re letting me love you,” he murmured and proceeded to spread her legs open.

Jon pressed hot, open-mouthed kisses along each calf, then along each inner thigh. He could smell her arousal and feel the heat of her. It made his mouth water. He felt her fingers in his hair and grinned when she thrust her pelvis forward, letting him know where she wanted him.

He didn’t make her wait long. He licked up her slit, gathering her essence on his tongue, and then he set about teasing her clit, swiping his tongue up and down and back and forth.

“Jon,” she pleaded. “God…”

How many times had he dreamed of this? Of her writhing before him as he touched, caressed, and tasted her? Reality was infinitely better than his dreams. They couldn’t compete with her flavor on his tongue, the smell of her, and the feel of her silken skin. Of her open and spread for him so wantonly.

This had to be love. It had to be. He’d never wanted to bring a woman such pleasure before in his
life. He wanted her to cum so hard she wouldn’t remember her name.

Using his fingers to spread her pussy lips apart, he slipped his middle finger inside her and groaned at how tight, and hot, and wet she was. His cock throbbed in his jeans and he wanted to be inside her so badly.

But he wanted to bring her this first. He wanted her pleasure before his own. So, he used his other hand to rub against his hardness for some kind of relief.

As he curled his finger inside her and moved it slowly in and out of her, he began to trace his name on her clit. It was his brand on her, his claim.

She wet his beard before he could finish his last name. She lifted her hips and squeezed his head between her thighs as she cried out. He groaned as he came in his pants. He couldn’t help it. Hearing her peak, feeling her pussy squeeze his finger, with her juices coating his tongue...it was too much.

This woman undid him.

Gently, Jon laved at her until she whimpered. He then ran his hands over her thighs and pressed them down. He left a kiss on her mound, and trailed kisses up along her stomach through her shirt, between her breasts, along her neck and then finally, her lips.

She looked up at him, dazed.

“Hi,” he said softly.

“Hi,” she replied weakly.

“You okay?” he asked, caressing the side of her face.

“I think so,” she murmured and her eyes darted away.

“Sansa, look at me, please,” he said calmly and yet firmly. Her eyes skittered back to his. “There’s no going back after this,” he said. “You know that, right?”

Her eyes widened, and she looked, for all intents and purposes, like a deer caught in the headlights.

“I want inside you,” he said softly and then stared at her thoughtfully for a bit. “But I don’t think you’re ready for that yet.”

She shook her head and swallowed.

“But I still want in your bed,” he said huskily. “So I’m going to stay here tonight with you. Say yes.”

“Y--yes.”

He smiled and helped pull her up to sitting. “I’ll need to use your shower. I’ve made a mess in my jeans.”

“Y--you did?”

He smiled reverently and leaned down to brush a kiss against her lips. “Hearing and feeling you cum sent me right over the edge, sweet girl.”
He scooped her up in his arms. “You’re gonna have to tell me where to go.”

Sansa felt a tad awkward having him carry her while naked from the waist down. In fact, she was having a difficult time catching up to all that had just happened. Had Jon just really gone down on her? Had she really thrown herself at him? Had she really just agreed that he could spend the night with her? Had she really cum harder than she ever had in her life?

The answer to all of that was yes, yes, yes.

In fact, that was exactly what she’d been chanting in her head as she’d laid back against the table.

Had he gotten all that experience from Ros? How many girls had there been exactly because, well, damn.

As soon as Jon placed her on her feet in her bedroom, he kissed her hard. The hunger from earlier had not abated and Sansa found herself clinging to him, naked from the waist down be damned.

“I’ll be right back, sweetheart,” he murmured and kissed the tip of her nose before heading to the bathroom.

Sansa dove for her nightstand where she kept her panties and drew on a pair. Then she plucked her gray pyjama bottoms off her bed and slipped them on followed by her nightshirt. She kept her bra on.

Why? Who knew. She didn’t even know. A barrier maybe until she could get her head on straight? Flimsy barrier that was. It wasn’t as though her bra had stopped him from going down on her for Christ’s sake.

When Jon returned, he was holding his damp black boxers in his hand. “Do you have a bag I could put these in?” he asked.

“Do you want to just throw them in the wash?”

“Sure, that’d be great, thanks.”

Was this happening? Was he doing laundry here now?

“I think I have a pair of sweatpants Robb left here once if you want to wash your jeans, too,” Sansa said. Okay, what the hell, Sansa? Do you just want to ask him to move in next?

He grinned. “Thank you, Sansa. Could I wash my tank, too?”

Sure, she thought, why the hell not? Why don’t we both just strip down and run around naked at this point?

She nodded, bewildered with herself, with what was happening - all of it. What had happened to strong-willed Sansa from earlier that day? The Sansa who had been approached this with logic and a firm plan?

Was she putty in the hands of any man who moved a bookcase into her apartment?

“You hungry, sweetheart?” Jon asked as she went to her closet to rummage for the sweatpants.

“I think so,” she replied and yanked the pair of black sweatpants down from the top shelf. She turned and nearly lost her breath.
He’d taken off his tank top and holy mother of God, Jon was a beautiful man. Six pack abs that made her want to run her fingers over them and Jesus, was it hot in here or was that just her?

“You think so?” Jon asked as he ambled closer and took the sweatpants from her. He was grinning knowingly. Little shit knew exactly what he was doing to her.

Her stomach answered for her, grumbling loudly. He grinned. “I’d say you are. How about a pizza? My treat.”

She forced a smile and nodded. “Sure.”

“Good, let me just shower real quick and I’ll meet you in the kitchen?”

She nodded again and left her room, heading down to the kitchen where she pulled the menu for the pizza place off the fridge and placed it on the counter. She glanced out of the corner of her eye at the kitchen table.

She was never going to be able to look at that table the same ever again.

Chapter End Notes

Who's ready for Possessive Jon? (I mean more so now lol)
Chapter 19

Chapter Notes

So the last chapter was all right then? LOL

Standing in Sansa’s shower with the hot spray beating down his back, Jon found himself picking up the various bottles of shampoo, conditioner, and body wash that lined the edge of the white porcelain tub. There was shampoo and conditioner that made one’s hair voluminous, one that gave it added moisture, body wash that was supposed to smell like the ocean, another that was supposed to smell like sweet peas, and yet another that was supposed to smell like coconuts. There was a loofah and, a razor, and a blue poofy thing that he knew girls used with the body wash.

He typically used a plain old washcloth. Had one kind of body wash, and one kind of shampoo and conditioner and he had no clue at all what it did for his hair. Just that it got it clean and tamed his curls a bit.

He now found himself wondering if he should ask Sansa what would be best for his hair. Best for making her want to grab it and run her hands through it.

He grinned, thinking of how she’d done just that earlier.

Jon chose a bottle of shampoo - he went for the one that moisturized and was supposed to smell like lavender. He opened the bottle and took a whiff and had to admit it smelled pretty good. Now he wanted to sniff Sansa’s hair to find out which combo she’d chosen that day.

Lathering up, it struck Jon that all this time his fantasies had revolved around Sansa in his home, but not of any in hers. Part of that, he supposed, was that he’d never been in her home before yesterday. So, he hadn’t been able to build a clear picture of what that would be like. Somehow, even when in her hometown he had managed to put her in his world.

But she had a world of her own.

And hadn’t that been just what she’d been trying to tell him all along?

This, being in her shower, was intimate. She stood naked in here. And now he was naked, too. Spending time with her in her space was intimate as well, and then later, when he was in bed with her, holding her in his arms as they drifted off - that was intimate, too. They would both be at their most vulnerable while sleeping. She would trust him not to hurt her or take advantage and Jon felt the weight of that. The importance of it.

He would honor that trust; he would treat it like the gift it was.

He was in her world now. He knew what the inside of her shower looked like. He knew what she chose to wash her body with.

He wanted more. He wanted to study her walls and her books and her knick knacks. He wanted to look inside her fridge and see what she put in her body. He wanted to watch her get ready for bed and learn her routines. He wanted to know where they were the same and where they were different, and what sorts of things they could mesh together in the future when they built
themselves a home.

He loved this woman, and he had much to learn still.

And now, after what they’d just shared, he wasn’t going anywhere.

He washed up quickly and then used the soft blue towel on the rack above the toilet. Blue was the color of choice in the bathroom, and beyond that a nautical theme as there were wire starfish hung on the little wallspace Sansa had, and the shower curtain was of a nautical compass. The walls were a dark blue with a white trim.

So. Sansa apparently had an affinity for the ocean. Good to know. He filed that away to ask about later.

Jon threw on the borrowed sweatpants after drying off and hung the towel next to another towel on the rack. He then picked up his dirty clothes and headed down to the kitchen found Sansa leaning against the sink with the menu open in her hand and staring at the kitchen table.

He hid a smile as he sauntered in. “All done. Thanks for that.”

She looked at him, wide-eyed still. “You’re welcome.”

“Can you show me where the washer is so I can toss these in?”

“Oh, I can do that. The washer and dryer are in the basement.”

“I don’t mind doing it,” he told her.

She shook her head. “Order the food. I like anything but anchovies and sausage.”

“How about just cheese and pepperoni?”

She nodded. “Perfect.”

She took his clothes and folded them over her arm in front of her. Jon watched her go and then used her landline phone to call in the order. After, he ran out to his truck to grab his wallet and phone. Sansa was peering into the fridge when he returned.

“I have water, Orange Dry Seltzer, milk, OJ, and white wine,” she said and looked up at him. “I also have tea. And coffee. What would you like?”

“Water is fine for me,” he said. “Why don’t you pour yourself a glass of wine?”

She blinked. “Why?”

“Because it seems like you need it.”

She shut the fridge door and looked at him. “I don’t. I’m fine.” She sighed. “I don’t know what I am.”

Jon gently reached out and grabbed hold of her hand. He drew her into his arms and wound them around her. He pressed a kiss to her temple and smiled when he felt her arms tentatively wrap around him.

“Let me guess,” he said softly, “you regret what happened.”
“Yes. No. I don’t…” She shook her head. “I don’t know...I’ve never just done something like that before.”

“Never let someone go down on you?”

“Not like that.”

“Define ‘like that’.”

She pushed away from him and rubbed at her forehead while looking down at the floor. “In broad daylight,” she murmured. “On my kitchen table.” She looked up at him. “Jon, I know that I am attracted to you but all the reasons why this cannot and should not be still stand--”

He pulled her to him and kissed her to stop her from saying more. “No,” he said matter-of-factly. “They don’t. Not anymore. Not after that. I told you - there is no going back now.”

“Jon, please listen to me--”

“Well, I have listened to you. I listened to you when you told me it couldn’t be. I listened when you listed all the reasons why, and when you called me out on my terrible behavior. I listened and I waited and I’ve tried everything in my power to make you comfortable and to make you see that we belong together. That I want you. That I…” He stopped, heaved a deep breath, and continued. “I think it’s time now that you started listening to me.” He ran a hand through her hair and caught a whiff. It was the lavender.

“And”, he went on, “to what you really want.” He leaned in close and kissed her. “And you want me,” he whispered.

She wanted to slap him for that comment, and he must have seen her distaste for it because he ducked his head in apology. “I’m sorry. That was a bit crude.”

A knock at the door, no doubt the pizza, halted further conversation. Sansa was glad for it. She had no idea what to do or say at this point. He wasn’t listening to her, if he ever really had, though she did think he might have at one point. Or had he just been paying her lip service with empty promises to do better when she’d call him out?

Regardless, there was a difference in Jon from just yesterday and Jon today.

Jon yesterday was still trying to convince her that they could be friends - and what crap that was. He didn’t want to be friends with her, and her attraction to him made it difficult for her to be just “friends” with him.

Jon yesterday wanted her. Jon today had her.

Or at least, he’d had a piece of her.

And she’d let him have that piece.
All because she was apparently hard up for sex and, well, the blunt truth? She desired him in a way she had desired no one else. She’d given to Jon what she’d never given to Dickon. Dickon got kisses, Jon had his mouth on the most private part of her. Jon made her cum.

*Hard.*

And she’d be lying if she didn’t at least admit to herself that she was quite curious as to how it would feel to have his cock inside her.

Oh, but he had made love to her like a dream. It had all been about her. And, never ever had a man cum just from pleasuring her.

The caveat to this whole mess too, was that she genuinely cared about Jon and his well-being. She worried about him and wanted him happy and *healthy*. She wasn’t convinced that his fixation on her was at all healthy and that in the long run, would do either of them any good.

But, as she watched Jon pay for the pizza, she realized that she most likely wasn’t going to get anywhere tonight with him. She might just need a different tactic.

She felt funny about allowing him to stay the night and share her bed considering she was thinking they needed to pump the brakes, but…but...what?

But maybe they could have tonight.

Maybe for tonight she could put a pin in all of it and stop thinking so much. Before Jon could put the pizza on the table, Sansa grabbed it from him and put it on the counter. She smiled. “Let’s eat in the living room.”
All thoughts of putting a pin in everything for the night went right out of Sansa’s head when it came time to for bed.

She wasn’t ready to share a bed with Jon. She wasn’t ready to sleep beside him all night.

She probably hadn’t been ready for him to go down on her, but that had happened and there was no going back. But this, she could change.

She’d dated Dickon for months and never had sex with him - or even slept in the same bed as him - but after hanging out all of twice with Jon she had let him go down on her and was now letting him spend the night?

Although “letting him” seemed a bit of a loose term. He’d pretty much told her what he was going to do and she’d agreed in a post-orgasmic haze that had been slowly turning into shock.

His clothes were cleaned and dried, and he was currently wearing a tank top and boxer shorts, his shirt and jeans neatly folded on her bureau with his socks on top and his work boots on the floor. This was an intimacy she wasn’t ready for.

“All of it?” she thought. I feel like I’m going down the first hill of a roller coaster and I’m not strapped in. “I don’t want you to spend the night. I know I said yes, but you - you tricked me--”

His eyes narrowed. “I tricked you?”

“Yes! You told me what you were going to do and then told me to agree. I went along with it, but now I can’t because it’s too much too fast.” He sighed and nodded slowly and Sansa glared at him. He was acting as though he was dealing with a child. “You have to leave now, Jon,” she said.

“You’re scared,” he said.

“Please don’t argue with me on this,” she said softly. “Respect my wishes, Jon, please.”

He stared at her for a long while, then nodded, and made his way over to her bureau and started to dress.

Now she felt a moment’s panic that he was leaving.

Did she even know what she wanted anymore?

Once he was dressed, he came over to her and held out a hand. “May I hug you?” he asked gently.

She nodded and allowed him to gather her in his arms. Tears stung her eyes as she wrapped her
arms around him and rested her chin on his shoulder. She didn’t know what she wanted. All she knew was that he made her feel not so in control and he made all logic leave her....and she didn’t like it. And yet she did because it was so heady to just follow his passionate lead, but then reality came crashing down and -

ARGH!

He kissed her temple and pulled away. “I can see myself out.”

She nodded, feeling...ashamed? Embarrassed? Like a fucking headcase? Scared? Uncertain? Sad?

“I’ll text you tomorrow,” he said and then walked out.

It wasn’t until she heard the front door close that she let out a long breath as though she had been holding it the whole time.

She sat down on her bed, pulling at the hem of her t-shirt and tried not to cry. She didn’t even know why she wanted to cry. Perhaps because she couldn’t think clearly when it came to Jon and he made her feel too much. Maybe because all those things he made her feel felt impossible considering their history.

What would Melisandre say if she knew what was going on between her and Jon?

Oh, she could just hear her old boss now telling her how wrong this was, how Jon’s fixation on her was not healthy and no relationship between them could last.

Or, how a relationship should not even be pursued or thought of.

Tomorrow, I’m going to call Melisandre, she thought. I need someone to put me on the straight and narrow here and she’s just the one to do it.

For now, Sansa crawled into her bed and shut out her light. She held no hope for sleep coming any time soon, but she craved the quiet and the dark. She shut her eyes and attempted to focus on her breathing and listening to the sounds from her open window - the cars going by, the crickets, and the rustling of the trees when the wind blew. Practicing mindfulness had never been so hard when her mind just kept drifting right back to Jon.

What was this power he had over her? Was she so hard up that she was ready to toss all her morals aside?

Admittedly, she wasn’t great at relationships. She’d dated a lot of duds, and her sexual experiences to date hadn’t been much to write home about. There had been one guy in college, Daario, who had rocked her world. She’d had a crush on him all through sophomore year and they’d flirted in their psychology class all the time. Then, one night, they’d met up at a party and Sansa had gone to his dorm with him. He had been her second sexual experience and it had been all she’d hoped her first experience would have been. Then, in the morning, his girlfriend - who was not attending college - showed up at his dorm.

She had been devastated. She’d felt awful and stupid, and it had broken her trust. Her mother had always told her she was in love with love. Sansa hadn’t understood what that meant for quite some time.

She had always been a romantic at heart, and she had always been one to see the “potential” in some guy. That was a nice way of saying she dated losers and put the blinders on to what they really were until she was getting screwed over.
She’d pumped the brakes on relationships some time while working on her Master’s and after watching her friends go through one turbulent relationship after another, she’d thought long and hard about what she wanted.

She wanted someone with direction and goals. A job and a car. Someone kind who made her laugh. Someone understanding and smart. She wanted someone who wasn’t selfish and narcissistic - someone giving and attentive and affectionate. Someone who wasn’t selfish in bed and knew how to get her off.

And after a lot of reading on the subject, she’d come to the conclusion that she wanted to get to know someone - really know them - before she had sex with them. Sex clouded things and being the girl in love with love, she didn’t want to mistake sex for love.

So, she had set out to do just that with Dickon and take her time. Perhaps she had waited too long. Or, perhaps she hadn’t been able to have sex with him because she simply hadn’t wanted to.

Now there was Jon who stirred something in her that rather scared her. It was such a cliche, but it was true. She wasn’t prone to impulsiveness - her night with Daario notwithstanding - but something about Jon made her throw caution to the wind and let him eat her out on her kitchen table. Something about him made it difficult for her to say no to him. Something about how he would get a little (little, Sansa?) demanding, turned her on.

Who was she?

After a while, she managed to finally release the tension in her body and sink into the bed.

When sleep finally came, she dreamt she was drowning.

Mel sounded happy to hear from her. Sansa smiled into the phone as she sat at her desk the following afternoon while Mel exclaimed over what a nice surprise this was.

They chit-chatted for a bit about the Home and Sansa’s new job, and Sansa felt as though they had just spoken yesterday. She wondered why they hadn’t kept in touch since just hearing Mel’s voice filled her with a calmness she desperately needed.

“Mel, I have a bit of a...well, a problem,” Sansa began when there was a lull in the conversation.

“I was wondering why I heard from you out of the blue,” Mel said with a laugh. “What is it?”

“Jon Snow. Or rather, Jon Targaryen now.”

Mel sighed heavily. “He’s in Winterfell, isn’t he?”

“How did you know?”

“Lucky guess. It’s not like I forgot he was a large reason why you left, or that he was obsessed with you. What’s going on? Have you got a restraining order on him? Are you okay?”

“No, I… God, Mel, why didn’t you warn me?”

“What? That he’d go to you? Sansa, you had to know there was a definite possibility he’d hunt you down.”

Sansa winced at the phrase “hunt you down.”
“I guess I didn’t think he would,” Sansa said softly.

“You haven’t lost that trusting nature, I see.”

Sansa frowned. She didn’t know about that.

“What do you need?” Mel asked. “I’ll help in any way I can.”

Sansa swallowed, feeling that perhaps sharing with Mel wasn’t such a good idea. She already felt chastened and she hadn’t even confessed yet.

“I’m afraid I’ve let him in,” she finally said. “That is to say, we’ve seen each other. I’ve spent time with him.” He went down on me and it was fantastic.

Silence. Silence so thick and judgmental, Sansa hung her head. “Mel?”

“When you say spend time…”

Sansa sighed. “We went to an antique shop together. He, um, he had me over for dinner…”

“He has an apartment there?!?”

Sansa winced again. “Yes.”

“I thought he might’ve come for a visit, I didn’t… oh, God, Sansa. Why? Why did you go to his home for dinner? What are you doing? His attachment to you was always unhealthy, but this…he’s basically stalked you. I fear for your safety here.”

“I don’t think he’d hurt me,” Sansa said, and even as the words spilled out of her mouth, she realized how she sounded like a woman defending the man who would soon smack the shit out of her.

“Sansa. Are you considering dating him? Are you already dating him?”

“No, Mel, I - we kissed, but--”

“Sansa Stark, he was a boy under your care!”

“I know,” Sansa whispered and she started to well up in tears.

“You’ve put me in the position of wondering exactly what sorts of things transpired between you while you were still here.”

“Mel, my God, I never did anything with Jon. Never. I never led him on…” Oh, wait, there was that kiss before I left…

“Sansa, you know the reasons you cannot continue on this path with Jon. You were in a position of power over him, and that set up the parameters of him as subordinate to you. This could be seen as you taking advantage of him. He suffered, or rather suffers from transference when it comes to you. This is not healthy base for a relationship. What would happen if things went badly and he decided to hurt you by making allegations against you when he was in your care? Your career would be ruined.”

Sansa nodded, tears tumbling down her cheeks. “You’re right, you’re right, I know you’re right.”

“This has to stop now.”
“Yes.”

“Sansa,” Mel’s voice softened. “What can I do?”

“You’re doing it. You’ve done it. I needed someone to put me straight.”

“I know how charming Jon is. I know how good-looking he is. And I know he knows how to use both of those things to get what he wants. But it’s not healthy for you and it’s not healthy for him.”

“I know, I know. I really do know that.”

“Listen, I have to go right now. I’ve got group. Can I call you later?”

“Of course. Let me just give you my new number.”

Sansa hung up with Mel after giving her former boss her new number, and of course, a text from Jon came in right after: Hey. How are you doing? Okay, I hope. I was wondering if maybe I could come over and we could talk later?

She fired off a text quickly: I don’t think that’s a good idea. I’m sorry, Jon, but this is over.

It came as a surprise when the quick reply she expected didn’t come.

Nor did it come 5, 10, 15 minutes later.

And she kept checking. And checking.

A client came and left, and still no text.

Who is the obsessed one now? she chastised herself. She forced herself to put her phone in her purse and shut off the ringer before leaving the office and heading home.

And as she pulled into her driveway and found Jon sitting on her stoop, she wasn’t all that surprised.

Chapter End Notes
Jon stood as soon as Sansa climbed out of her car. He stepped down onto the driveway and waited for her, blocking the path to the steps that led onto her porch.

“I’d say this is a surprise, but it’s really not,” she said.

“I think you like to drive me round the bend.”

She shook her head. “That’s not true.”

“Then how do you explain that text message?”

“Trying to do the right thing.”

He looked angry; his jaw clenched and he looked away as though trying to rally his patience.

“Sansa,” he said, looking back at her, “Stop trying to bullshit me.”

Her mouth fell open. “What?”

“Do you know what you said to me last night?”

“I said a lot of things last night. None of which you wanted to listen to,” she retorted.

“When we went to bed, you said you weren’t ready. Not that you couldn’t sleep with me because of my age, or our history, or that I’m a fucked up foster kid, but that you weren’t ready.”

“Now, hold on a second--”

“I’m not finished.”

A sound to her right caught Sansa’s attention and she looked over to the neighbor’s, their property only divided by a thin row of bushes in need of trimming. She caught sight of said neighbor, female, on the porch with another woman and they ducked their heads as soon as Sansa looked at them.

Great. Now she and Jon were the entertainment.

“Let’s go inside,” Sansa hissed.

Jon shot the neighbors a glare which actually suited Sansa just fine, and they headed inside.

Once the door was shut, Sansa put her purse on one of her kitchen chairs and said before Jon could say a word, “Why did you say that? Fucked up foster kid. Why would you say something like that?”

“That’s what it all comes down to, doesn’t it? Jon Snow, the punk whose Mom didn’t love him.
enough to get clean. Whose father denied his existence until he was on death’s door. Grenn warned me that’s all you would see when you looked at me.”

“You’re not Jon Snow anymore,” Sansa said softly. “You’re Jon Targaryen.”

“What does that matter, Sansa? I change my last name but I’m still a former foster kid that no one wanted.”

“Jon, no, that’s not true. You know it’s harder for kids who are older--”

“Save it, please.” He looked pained; she could see it in his eyes. He wasn’t playing with her; he was truly upset. “It’s why you keep using the same excuses, isn’t it? Because you don’t know how to tell me that I’m nothing and I’ll always be nothing no matter what I do or how hard I try.”

“Jon, no, that’s not true,” she said, reaching out and placing her hand on his arm. “You are not nothing. I won’t allow you to say that about yourself.”

“Be honest with me, Sansa,” he said, looking down at her hand on his arm.

“I am being honest,” she said earnestly. Her hand slipped from his arm and she sighed as she took a step back.

Jon watched her, waiting.

“Okay, honesty then,” she said. “I am attracted to you. I like spending time with you, and yesterday on that table was...amazing.”

His mouth twitched as though he wanted to smile.

“All the concerns I’ve expressed to you are not lies, Jon. I am worried about your attachment to me. I am wary of the fact that I am older, and I am afraid that seeing you - dating you - whatever you want to call it, will cause problems. Namely, the fact that I used to be in charge of you. To enter into a relationship with a former client is never a good idea and Melisandre reminded me of how things could go wrong with that today--”

He straightened. “Wait. You spoke to Melisandre about us?”

Sansa wanted to correct him on the usage of “us”, but what was the point? In a sense there was when it came to her and Jon.

“I needed advice,” she said softly. “Someone to put my head back on straight because - you know, the whys don’t really matter. The fact is--”

“The why matters to me, Sansa. Remember: no bullshit. Honesty.”

She pursed her lips together. “Because you make it hard for me to think clearly.”

“Because you are attracted to me,” he said.

“Yes.”

“Because you want me.”

She heaved a sigh. “Yes.”

“Because you have feelings for me?” He sounded hopeful.
“My feelings for you...are complicated.”

He cocked his head to the side. “Explain, please.”

She shot him a glare. “You’re really not going to make this easy, are you?”

He snorted. “About as easy as you’ve made it for me.”

“I have always cared about your welfare, Jon. In the Home, I only wanted the best for you. That didn’t change after I left. I felt like I failed you. I felt like I did something wrong by making you feel the way you felt about me.”

“Feel. The way I feel, Sansa.” He stepped closer to her and ran a hand through her hair. “You didn’t do anything wrong. You didn’t fail me. Because of you I got a job and saved up money, and now here I am with a car and a job I like and an apartment. I’m even looking toward the future on other things I can do. That’s all because of you, Sansa.”

“But not all of it were with the purest intentions for yourself, Jon. I feel like most of that was all just to get here to me.”

“Do intentions really have to matter that much?”

“Sometimes they really do matter. Doing all those things for me is not healthy. It shows me that what you are is obsessed with me. That’s not the basis for any kind of relationship. It’s a recipe for disaster and then what? You decide to slander me and ruin my career? Or you end up falling back to that angry young man I knew at the Home.”

“I’m still angry, Sansa. That hasn’t changed,” he said softly. “I’m in a better place than I was at the Home, but that doesn’t mean I’m not angry at the world for what life dealt me. You’re the one who told me that it doesn’t matter where I came from, it only matters what I do now. Well, now I am trying to build myself a new life. And I want you part of it.”

She was in his arms in the next second, and his lips were on hers. Instinctively, she held onto him and he moaned as he deepened the kiss, licking inside her mouth with his tongue.

Sansa felt the moment she started to get swept away by him and she forced herself to break the kiss. She hung her head, breathing heavy, and Jon lifted her face, cupping it in his big hands.

“Sansa,” he murmured. “Please, love...”

“You need to see a therapist,” she blurted out before he could kiss her again and scramble her brain.

He blinked. “What?”

“If you - if I - if we - you need a therapist. And I want you to approach therapy with the same determination and gusto that you approached getting a job and an apartment.”

He dropped his hands and nodded. “Okay.”

“I mean it, Jon,” she said, her tone brooking no argument.

“I know. I’ll do it.”

Well, okay then. Well, Sansa figured, she had gone this far. Why not a little further? “And I want you to spend time with people other than me. You need friends.”
He smirked. “Like Robb?”

She made a face. “I don’t want to discourage you befriending your boss, but maybe some others too?”

“I can do that. I’ll go out with the guys I work with when they ask me.”

“Good. You should. You’re too much of a loner, and I can’t be the source of your only entertainment.”

His breath hitched as he gazed at her with hope blaring away from his eye sockets. “Sansa, are you saying—?”

“I’m saying we take this slow. I’m saying that you need a therapist and friends, and while I’d prefer you want those things on your own, for now I’ll say screw intentions and get you on the path you need to be on.”

He lunged at her, gathering her up in his arms and pressing kisses all over her face. She giggled when he tickled her neck with his beard and he lifted his head and beamed down at her.

“You remind me of a Care Bear right now,” she said with a laugh.

He laughed. “How so?”

“Just radiating all this joy and lo—happiness.”

“Love,” he said quietly, meeting her eyes. “Radiating joy and love and happiness.”

She nodded, finding herself at a loss for words. Was he saying what she thought he might be saying…?

He leaned down and kissed her, slowly and almost tentatively. He broke the kiss and smiled down at her. “Can I take you out? I want to take you out.”

“Where?” she asked, feeling already that she was in over her head. Truthfully though, hadn’t she always been with Jon? After she’d spoken to Melisandre she had been so resolved

“To dinner, the movies, a park, the grocery store, I don’t care.” He laughed, sounding downright giddy, and kissed her again. “Anywhere. Everywhere. I just want to take you out on a date.”

“I’m not sure about the grocery store,” she said with a laugh. She pushed out of his arms and sighed. “It might be tricky, going out on dates. My family - namely your boss and my brother - none of them know you’re from the Home.”

“They don’t have to,” Jon said. “I told you before, we could just tell them we just ran into each other and I asked you out and you accepted.”

“I’m not sure I can lie to them.”

“Then we’ll keep it quiet for now. You want to take it slow? Then we’ll take it slow and keep it between us for now. Just until you’re more sure of me.”

She bit her lip and nodded, while inside she freaked out about the whole thing, and what the hell was she thinking? What was she doing? This couldn’t end well and why oh why oh why could she not just end it? What power was this that he had over her?
Then he was kissing her again and making her weak in the knees and she remembered - oh yes, this was the power he had over her. His passion swept her away. It made her reckless. But...maybe she could do with a little reckless? It was obvious he wanted her and had feelings for her, and he was indeed the first guy in a very long time that made her want to throw caution to the wind. Her experience with Daario should be the cautionary tale she dredged up now to remind herself of what happened when you were reckless, but now, looking into Jon’s gray eyes so full of adoration for her, she couldn’t bring herself to care.

Instead, she kissed him. “How about I meet you at your place in an hour?” she said, toying with the top of his tank top. “I know a great restaurant the next town over where we could have dinner if you’d like?”

He beamed. “Yes. But I want to pick you up and make this all proper.”

She laughed. “The woman can take the guy out too, you know.”

“And you can eventually.” He bent down and nuzzled the side of her face and dropped a kiss on the corner of her mouth. “But I’ve imagined this for so long...do you mind?”

She shook her head, speechless again.

He kissed her again, holding her tight in his arms and then when she was properly breathless, he parted and held onto her hand as he walked backwards toward the door. One more step and their hands would break apart, so Jon kissed her fingers and, with a grin, left.

Before she could have second and third and fourth thoughts, Sansa ran to her bedroom to choose an outfit to wear for dinner.
Thank you to asongforjonsa for her help with this chapter AND for the lovely lovely banner moodboard! :)

#1 Crush
by Janina
This was happening. It wasn’t a fantasy, or some fevered dream. Sansa was giving him a chance. Giving *them* a chance.

Jon was so happy he had been close to twirling her about in her kitchen with pure unrestrained joy. When he’d gotten in his truck to rush home and get ready, he had laughed like a maniac and punched the roof of his car with his fist while shouting, “Yeah!”

He was a fool; he knew it. He didn’t care. Sansa was finally within his grasp now and with enough time, she would become irrevocably his.

When he arrived home, he bounded up to his apartment as though on a cloud and rushed to the shower. He washed up in record time and then quickly made his way to the closet, a towel wrapped around his waist and water dripping from his curls.

He realized he had no idea what to wear because he didn’t know where Sansa was taking him. He laughed again with pure giddiness and sent her a text asking if he needed to dress up.

She replied back no, and he went for a pair of faded skinny jeans and a black Henley. He threw on a black hoodie to go with it, and slipped on a pair of black Chucks. He left, whistling to himself, and headed back to Sansa’s.

When she opened the door, wearing a pair of jeans so tight they appeared painted on, and some kind of flowered top that was longer in the back than in the front, Jon wanted to put her back on her kitchen table and go down on her again. In all fairness though, she could wear a sack and he’d still want to go down on her.

It was the shy smile she greeted him with, he decided. He waited patiently while she grabbed her purse and locked up, and when she turned around, Jon smiled at her. “Hi.”

“Hi,” she said softly and then reached up and touched his hair. “Your hair is still wet.”

He moaned as he leaned in and kissed her. He hummed as he broke the kiss and licked his lips. He offered his arm to her and she accepted it and allowed him to lead her to his truck. “Dammit,” he muttered as he opened the door for her.

“What’s wrong?” she asked.

“I should have gotten you flowers or something. Isn’t that what you’re supposed to do on a first
date?”

She placed her hands on his shoulders and looked him right in the eye. “You don’t have to bring me flowers. Don’t be nervous. This is a date, but it doesn’t have to follow some script where you bring me flowers and wear a suit—”

“But I want to do that,” he said. “I mean, not now obviously, but I want to do all that. I want to take you somewhere fancy eventually.”

She smiled. “Just tell me when. But, no pressure.”

“You’re a Queen, Sansa. You deserve to be treated like one. Now get in the car.”

She laughed and climbed in. He leaned in and kissed her before shutting the door and making his way around to the drivers side. He started up the truck and put it in reverse. “Okay, love. Where am I going?”

She directed him to a little diner the next town over that boasted about their five dollar breakfasts and hot roast beef sandwiches on a weathered sign in the front window. It was called “Hot Pie Diner” in red scrawl above a brick building. Jon looked at her a bit suspiciously and she smiled. “I know it looks like a real dive, but I swear the food here is fantastic. And the breakfast is amazing.”

“Sure this is safe for us?”

“I’m sure.”

Jon didn’t care one way or another but he knew Sansa did. If she said it was safe, well he’d follow her lead. He pointed at her after parking the truck near the front. “Stay.”

“Yes, sir,” she said and mock saluted him.

“I told you I might get used to that,” he teased and jumped out of the truck to run around and open the door for her.

“You’re going to spoil me,” she told him as she slipped her hand into his and stepped out.

He shut the door and pulled her against him. “That’s the idea, Sansa,” he said huskily.

She pulled away from him with a small smile and tugged on the sleeve of his hoodie. “Come on, handsome.”

He grinned like an idiot as she led him inside.

It was a classic diner set up - a place to sit on cushioned twirly stools at the front, and red booths lined up one after another with formica tables against the wall, each with a window view. There was even a little jukebox at each table. The floor was checkered with black and white tile, and Jon noted how clean the place looked.

They were seated in the very last booth, tucked into their own little corner. Instead of sitting opposite her, Jon slid in right next to her. She looked at him in surprise and he grinned as he stretched his arm behind her on the booth. “I want to be close to you, baby.”

She blushed prettily and pulled a menu that was leaning against the wall with a salt and pepper shaker, ketchup and mustard bottles propping them up.

“What do you suggest?” he asked, noting that she did not grab a menu for herself.
“I’m going to have an open roast beef sandwich with gravy and mashed potatoes,” she told him.

He shut the menu and pushed it to the middle of the table. “I’m going to have the same.”

“You sure?” she asked with a bit of a frown.

“Why not? Breakfast and roast beef sandwiches seem to be their speciality.”

“They really are, but everything is good here.”

The waitress came over then to take their order. They both decided on water and Cokes for their drinks and once again they were alone.

“Sansa, I really hate to ask this,” Jon began.

“Uh-oh.”

“What did Melisandre say to you?”

She sighed and started to toy with her paper napkin on the table. “She was afraid that you were a danger to me,” she murmured.

“What exactly did you tell her?”

She looked up at him. “That you were here. There wasn’t much else I had to say to her for her to be concerned about your intentions.”

“This is my intention,” he said gesturing around them.

“To take me to a diner for roast beef sandwiches?” she teased.

“Yes. It’s been my lifelong goal to find the best roast beef sandwich.”

She giggled.

“What else?” he prompted.

She sighed again. “I told her we’d kissed.”

He snorted. “Oh? Did you also tell her--”

She smacked his chest lightly before he could finish that sentence. “She said that she had to wonder if anything did happen between us at the Home,” she said with a frown.

“She’s such a bitch,” Jon muttered.

“Jon.”

“Well, she is,” he said a bit defensively.

“She’s really not. You just don’t like authority figures, and Melisandre ran the Home and enforced the rules.”

“You all enforced the rules. She just had it out for me.”

“And you didn’t break the rules ever just because you could?” she asked pointedly.
“She hated me, Sansa, and you’re not going to convince me otherwise. Why did you have to call her out of all people?"

“Because she knows you and she knows me and she knew the situation.”

“You wanted her to tell you all the reasons why you couldn’t be with me even though you’ve told them all to me before.”

“Well...yeah. But she had a few more I hadn’t considered.”

“Like?”

“Like what if this went south and you decided to get back at me by saying I took advantage of you while you were under my care.”

He looked at her, aghast. “Sansa, I would not do that to you.”

“You say that now.”

“I say that always,” he said vehemently.

“There is plenty wrong with this, Jon,” she said softly.

He put his hand on the side of her face and turned it to look at him. “But you want me. And you care for me, and you like me. You’re here with me now and we’re not going to think about what could wrong, but all that can go right.”

Her mouth twitched into a bit of a smirk. “Such as?”

He drew her closer and whispered into her ear. “Like how you’ve got someone who adores you. Who wants to treat you like a Queen and pamper you. I want to know everything about you, Sansa, and I want all the bits you love and all the bits you hate. I want to learn your deepest desires and darkest fears. I want to know how you take your coffee, if you like lemon in your iced tea, and what you think about as you’re falling asleep.” He pressed light kisses along her cheek and kept his face to close to hers as he continued to speak. “I want to touch every inch of you, kiss the inside of your elbow, tickle the back of your knee and--”

She pressed her lips to his hungrily and moaned. Jon clutched at her as he matched her fervor with his own.

The waitress clearing her throat behind them made Jon growl in warning. Sansa pulled back, panting, and asked the waitress, much to Jon’s surprise, if they could get their order to go.

It was the second best thing Jon had heard all night.

Fifteen minutes later, their food was in containers in the backseat, Jon had his seat reclined back as far as it would go and Sansa was on top of him, straddling him, with her hands in his curls and her mouth fused to his.

He’d practically torn out of the diner parking lot and swerved onto a road when Sansa pointed to it that led to parking for a nearby hiking trail. It was them and another car in the lot and Jon imagined they were up to the same thing as he and Sansa.

“What is it about you?” she muttered against his mouth as she rubbed herself against him, “that makes me act like this?”
Jon groaned and gripped her hips tightly. “I don’t know, but if you figure it out let me know.” He sucked on the base of her neck. “So I can keep doing it.”

She laughed throatily as she pulled her head back to look at him. She licked her lips. “Did you know,” she said quietly, “that you are a beautiful boy?”

“I prefer man.”

She smiled. “Man. A beautiful man.” She bent her head and kissed him, a teasing kiss that she would not allow him to deepen.

“Sansa,” he groaned. “I need more.”

She bit her lip and met his gaze. “I want to give you some more.” She slid her hand down to the snap of his jeans and his eyes went wide.

“Sansa,” he gasped.

“Sssh….” she hushed and then kissed him as she undid his jeans and pushed them down.

“Sansa,” he gasped again, when she pulled his member out of the slit in his boxers.

She spit into her hand which Jon could not figure out for the life of him why that was so fucking hot, and then wrapped her hand around his erection. He pushed himself into her hand and moaned. “Sansa, baby…”

She flicked her tongue out and licked at his lips. Jon grabbed her face and lifted his head to kiss her as deeply as he wanted as she stroked his shaft.

“I’m not going to last,” he breathed. “You’re touching me - I can’t - oh, fuck! Sansa!” He erupted, spilling over her hand, and she pulled it away slowly. “Tissues,” he managed to get out. “Glove compartment.”

He reclined there, spent, listening to Sansa clean herself and then felt her rub part of his boxers. He looked down to see her wiping away some of his cum from them, and then her shirt, too. “Sorry,” he said.

She looked up at him in surprise. “For what?”

“Getting cum on you.”

“It’s not like I didn’t know that could happen,” she said and wadded up the tissues and stuffed them in an empty plastic coffee container. She moved over to her seat and adjusted her clothes. She stared straight ahead. “I can’t believe I just did that.”

Uh-oh.

Jon quickly put himself back to rights and put the seat back up. “Sansa, what’s wrong?”

She looked at him, eyes wide. “I just gave you a handjob in a car.”

“So?”

“So?! Jon, I don’t - I’ve never done that before.”

He smiled. “I’m not complaining.”
“Well, of course you’re not,” she said with a roll of her eyes.

“Why is this upsetting you exactly? This is the sort of thing people do when they’re dating, isn’t it?”

“Not on the first date! I let you go down on me already - you just - you make me do these things. I don’t like it to just jump into sexual activity. It’s why Dickon dumped me, because I wouldn’t have sex with him.”

He looked at her. “That...is...the third best thing you’ve said to me today.”

She looked at him. “What?”

“That you didn’t have sex with Dickon. That’s the third best thing you’ve said today.”

“What were the other two?”

“That you’d give dating me a try and that you wanted to take our food to go.”

She buried her face in her hands. “What are you doing to me?” she whined.

He reached over and pulled her hands away from her face. She looked at him, albeit reluctantly. “Maybe you just never met someone you wanted as much as you want me,” he said matter-of-factly.

She opened her mouth as if to argue and then slammed it shut. She pulled her hands away and settled back in her seat. “This wasn’t taking things slow and I think we should get back to that plan.”

“You think you can wait?” he teased.

She shot him a glare and he held up his hands. “I’m kidding.”

She laughed. “No, you’re not.”

He shrugged a shoulder. “I won’t lie and say it doesn’t make me happy that you want me enough to break some of your own rules.”


“No, it’s not,” he said, a bit harshly. “We’re both adults, Sansa.”

“But sex always mucks things up. It gets in the way of making informed decisions. It just pumps you up full of all these endorphins and it makes you ignore things that could mean you’re not compatible with your partner--”

“We have enough obstacles, let’s not add compatibility to them. We’re compatible.”

“How do you know?”

“Trust me.”

“Famous last words.”

“Sansa, if you want to pump the breaks on sex, we can do that. But I’m not going to sit here and let you feel bad about the things we’ve done already. There is nothing shameful about wanting to
express your desire for another person with that person.”

She nodded slowly and stared straight ahead again, seeming to mull it over. “Okay,” she said after a long while. “You’re right. Just from now on I think we focus on getting to know each other before going any further sexually.”

“I can still kiss you, right?”

She smiled. “Yes.”

He breathed a sigh of relief. “Good.”

“Just contain all that mojo you got going on over there,” she said, wagging her finger at him.

He laughed. “I’d ask you to do the same, but I love how you drive me wild for you.”

She blushed and ducked her head.

“You want to eat now?”

She bit her lip and nodded. “Sure.”

Grabbing the cartons in the back, Jon brought them forward and they dispersed their now nearly warm Cokes, plastic forks and knives.

Sansa dug in with gusto and he did as well.

“You know,” Jon said, a few minutes later, “this is the best goddamn roast beef sandwich I’ve ever had.”

She beamed. “Isn’t it?”

“I can’t wait to try their breakfast,” he said mischievously.

For that, he got a napkin tossed at him.
Sansa woke up the next morning before her alarm went off. She’d had some difficulty sleeping, but she was wide awake. The reason for her restlessness laid squarely on Jon’s shoulders.

Not even getting herself off with her trusty vibrator before bed had helped ease the tension inside her.

Her dreams had been sexual in nature when she had slept, and though the man she’d been with had been faceless she knew it was Jon she dreamt of. And when she laid there in the wee hours of the morning, it was Jon she thought of. She kept replaying their makeout in the car. How’d she’d held him in her hands. How hard and hot he’d been, how smooth...how his was the first dick she’d ever thought beautiful and wanted it inside her so badly she ached.

She couldn’t get him out of her head.

She wanted him.

She yearned for him.

All her ideas about pumping the brakes were slipping right out the window. In the dark of the night, and now, in the bright light of morning her only regret was not putting her mouth on that cock of his and tasting him.

She rolled over with a sigh and started to reach for the drawer in her nightstand her vibrator was in when her phone buzzed. She picked it up and smiled. It was from Jon.

Jon: Good morning, beautiful. Sleep well?

Did she go for the lie or honesty? Honesty. She was feeling a bit frisky after all and didn’t he deserve to know what he did to her?

Sansa: Not really. I kept having sexy dreams.

Jon: Oh? Please, do tell.

Sansa: There was this guy...he was really hot and he kept doing stuff to me.

God, she felt so naughty. And she loved it!

Jon: Funny, there was this woman in my dreams last night. She kept doing stuff to me, too.

Sansa: What was she doing?

Jon: She gave me a handjob. And then she went down on me to get me hard again.

Sansa: Sounds like she might have an oral fixation. I definitely went down on the guy in my dreams...

Jon: I used my mouth and my fingers to bring my woman off. She came so hard and wet my beard.

Sansa: Did you fuck her?

She reddened as soon as she sent the text and burrowed under the covers. Oh my God, she thought,
who am I?!

Jon: *Fuck, Sansa... Baby, I want to see you so bad right now.*

Sansa: *What are you doing to me?*

Jon: *The same thing you've been doing to me. Can I see you tonight? I want to see you.*

Sansa: *I'm having dinner with my friend Margaery tonight.* *(pout)*

Jon: *Robb's girlfriend?*

Sansa: *Yep*

Jon: *Can you get out of it?*

Sansa: *LOL No. Besides, waiting will make it even better when we see each other again.*

Jon: *I'm dying here, Sansa. Give me something, baby.*

Sansa: *I draw the line at nudes.*

Jon: *LOL. OK, how about something just before the line then?*

Sansa: *Let me think about it lol.*

Jon: *I'll be waiting. I gotta go now so I won't be late. Don't want to piss off my boss.* *(grin)*

Sansa: *Tell him to shove it lol.*

Jon: *I don't want to give him any more reason to kick my ass. Besides, I like your brother and my job.*

She smiled as she texted, *That makes me happy to hear.*

Jon: *Have a good one, Sans.*

Sansa: *You too. Bye for now.*

She sighed, smiling giddily, and lay back clutching her phone to her heart.

Christ. She had it bad. And she was probably driving Jon nuts with how back and forth she was with the physical side of their relationship. Stop - go - stop -go. Let's take it slow, but yet she basically just sexted him.

She just felt so much, and the trouble was she was having some difficulty compartmentalizing all these new feelings. How much was lust? How much was genuine affection?

And so the doubts come marching in…

Sansa sat up before they could weigh her down. She woke up feeling so good and her conversation with Jon made her feel so happy and giddy and light and Gods, was it so wrong to want to hold onto that for a while longer?

She clambered out of bed and rushed to the shower as if she could outrun the doubts clamoring for her attention. She washed quickly, and got ready in record time.
She left the house, a spring in her step, and drove to the local coffee shop where she planned to get herself, and Robb a coffee. Then, she was off to Robb’s site to hopefully catch a glimpse of her boy.

Jesus. *Her boy.*

It was entirely possible that she had it bad for Jon.

Just a possibility though.

xxxxxxxx

Jon saw Sansa’s car pull up before anyone else did.

His heart started to race. It was really her, right?

She stepped out, hair pulled back in a ponytail, wearing black jeans, black flats, and some kind of flowing black and white top. She wore sunglasses and she just looked so fucking hot he couldn’t stand it.

“Robb, that your sister?” he called out to his boss.

Robb, who had been using the nailgun, turned and pushed up his safety specs. “Yeah, that’s her.” He waved to her and she waved back. “Take a break, guys!” he called out.

He started up towards Sansa and in a rush decision, Jon took of his own specs and tossed them on a nearby tool bench and followed Robb. How could he not? He was fairly certain Sansa was here to see him anyway. This, seeing her in the flesh, was better than nudes.

Robb glanced over at him in surprise and Jon said, “I want to ask about her bookcase.”

Robb just looked at him a bit oddly, but Jon ignored it. The closer he got to Sansa, the more his gut twisted with the need and anticipation of seeing her up close.

God, he wanted her. He wanted her so much his palms ached and his cock twitched. *Not now, Johnny,* he thought.

Was it totally cliche and cheesy to think that she was like an oasis in the desert? He kept his gaze on her, unable to look away. She passed Robb an iced coffee which he took happily.

“What do you want now?” Robb asked before taking a long sip of his coffee.

She laughed and Jon stuffed his hands in the pocket of his jeans. He just wanted to reach out and grab her and kiss her senseless.

“What do you mean what do I want?” Sansa said, laughing a little. She looked at Jon and smiled a bit shyly. “Hi, Jon.”

He smiled back at her. “Hi. How’s the bookcase working out?”

“Quite well, thank you.”

“It’s a gorgeous piece of workmanship.”

“It really is.”
“Sansa? What brings you by?” Robb asked. “Everything okay?”

Sansa tore her gaze from Jon to look at her brother. “I can’t just stop by and bring my brother a coffee on the way to work as a thank you for the other day?”

“What about Jon?” Robb asked with a smirk.

“I don’t know how he likes his coffee,” she said and looked over at Jon. “But I did bring him a doughnut.”

Jon grinned. “Thanks, Sansa.”

“Boss! We got a problem over here!” Torrhen yelled out.

“Shit,” Robb said. He looked at Jon. “Did I not tell them to take a break?”

“You did,” Jon replied.

He swore again, kissed Sansa’s cheek, and then passed his coffee to Jon. “Take a break, Jon. Have your doughnut.”

Jon wanted to thank whatever Gods had allowed for this window of opportunity. His mind raced - how to get Sansa alone?

“I have to kiss you,” he told her. “If I don’t, I’m pretty sure I’m going to be struck down right here.”

She bit her lip and looked at him coyly. “Is this better than a nude?”

“So much better,” he breathed. “Fuck, Sansa, I need you right now so bad. Follow me. There’s a way to get into the trailer from the back. Ygritte won’t see us and neither will anyone else.”

“Won’t someone see us going in through the back?” she asked.

“They’re busy,” he said quickly and began to reach out his hand to her. She shook her head, her eyes wide, and he dropped his hand. “Follow me now,” he said and took off.

She started after him and then exclaimed, “Oh wait! Your doughnut.”

“Sansa, hurry,” he said urgently.

She leaned into her car, grabbed a small paper bag and then followed Jon, who tried to walk and not run to the trailer.

He took on a circuitous route so that Ygritte wouldn’t look out and see them, and once they were in back of the trailer, he led her to the back door. He put Robb’s coffee on the ground and took the bag from her with his doughnut inside and placed it down next to the coffee. His hands were shaking with need as he pushed off his hard hat.

Then he pushed her against the trailer, entwined their hands, and pinned them to the wall of the trailer. He kissed her hard, his tongue seeking entrance. Her mouth opened for him and she moaned.

“I want you so bad I can’t stand it,” he said hoarsely, his mouth inches from hers. “I feel like I’m going to die from it.”
“You won’t,” she promised.

“You drive me insane,” he whispered, his eyes black as his gaze bore into her. She leaned in and brushed her lips against his gently and then licked at his lips.

Jon groaned and kissed her again, pushing himself into her, letting her feel how hard he was for her. She whimpered, squirming against him and he reached down to lift one of her legs over his hip. He ground his erection against her. “Feel what you do to me?” he asked raggedly.

“Yes,” she breathed, and kissed him.

“I need to see you tonight,” he rapped. “I have to see you, Sansa. I’ll go mad if I don’t.”

“I’ll call you when I’m done with Margaery,” she said, licking her lips as she stared at his.

“Make it fast,” he said it came out like an order.

Surprisingly, she didn’t call him out on it. Instead, she nodded. “I will.”

“Promise me.”

“I promise.”

“No taking it back.”

She shook her head. “No.”

“Where will you be with her?”

She blinked. “Uh, The Tavern. At six.”

He nodded and then kissed her again. “You have to get back,” he whispered. His hands tightened around hers. “ Fucking hell, I don’t want to let you go.”

She kissed him again and then pushed back with her hands. “I have to go.”

“I know,” he muttered and slowly released her hands while continuing to hold her gaze. “I’m so hard for you right now.”

“I’m wet,” she said softly. “Does that help?”

He looked pained. “Yes and no. I can’t do anything about it and I want to more than I want my next breath.”

“I know,” she rasped. “Let’s go.”

He nodded, and grabbed his doughnut, hard hat, and Robb’s coffee and led her back around the trailer and to her car.

“I’ll text you,” said as she got in her car.

“I’ll be waiting,” he said, watching her.

She waved and drove away and Jon willed his erection down. He scarfed down the doughnut and helped himself to a sip of Robb’s coffee before heading back to work.
“You’re in a good mood,” Margaery said when they’d sat down to dinner at The Tavern.

Sansa looked up from her menu and smiled the smile of someone with a secret. “Am I?”

Margaery narrowed her eyes. “Don’t get all coy with me. What’s going on? Dickon come back or something?”

Sansa’s smile fell at the mention of Dickon. “No, he didn’t. And you know,” she said as she closed her menu and sat back. “I don’t think I really liked him all that much anyway.”

“You seemed to. You spoke highly of him.”

“I think I wanted to because on paper he fit all that I was looking for, but after I realized he wasn’t really what I wanted.”

Margaery rolled her eyes. “On paper? Did you have him fill out a resume?”

“No, but you know what I mean - smart, good-looking, but in that bland kind of way, ya know? Like that boy-next-door type. He didn’t really get my motor revved.”

“So that whole bit about not having sex with him because you wanted to get to know him was just bullshit?”

“No, not bullshit per se, but maybe I need to rethink things? There is something to be said for raw animal attraction.”

Margaery sat back. “Uh huh. Okay, spill. Who is he?”

“What?”

“Who is he? This guy you have a raw animal attraction with. My prim and proper Sansa doesn’t just come out with ideas about ‘raw animal attraction’. That’s usually my forte.”

Sansa made a face. “Can we not talk about that in regards to my brother?”

“I’m just saying. I’m all about it and you’re not. So you must have met someone that you have this raw animal attraction with. And, by the way - it’s about fucking time.”

“I don’t, I’m just…” Sansa trailed off when she caught sight of black hair in a man bun in the lobby of the restaurant. She pulled her focus in on the man bun to take in the full view and...found...it was in fact Jon.

“San?” Margaery prompted while Jon was seated close by their table. He sat facing the two women, his back against the wall. “What are you looking at?” Margaery turned around in her chair and took a gander at Jon. She turned back around. “Wow. Okay, holy shit that guy…” She looked
up and gave the thumbs up. “Well done.”

Sansa tried not to focus on Jon though every part of her was hyper aware of him. What was he doing here? She remembered him asking where she would be having dinner with Margaery and she’d offered up the time she was meeting as well...but that hadn’t been an invitation to show up.

There was part of her that was pleased to see him, but there was the other part of her that was a little...well, freaked out about it. It reminded her of that evening she’d opened the door to find him standing there announcing he’d just moved to Winterfell because of her.

“Do you know him?” Margaery asked, jerking her thumb in Jon’s direction.

Well, fuck. How did she answer that? She was certain Margaery and Jon would cross paths at some point considering Jon worked for Robb. “He, uh - yeah. I met him a couple times. He works for Robb.”

“He works for Robb?!” Margaery exclaimed.

“Geez, say it louder why don’t you?” Sansa muttered, shifting in her seat. “I don’t think the people in the kitchen heard you.”

Margaery turned around again and looked right at Jon. “Hi,” she said, loud enough for Jon to hear her, “You work for my boyfriend. What’s your name?”

Sansa put her elbow on the table and leaned her forehead into her hand. She sighed and looked up at Jon as he approached the table looking at her cautiously.

She wondered if her disapproval for his showing up like this showed. Yes, she had been wanting to see him all day after she’d left the site, but this was not how she had wanted to see him. It felt like an invasion. It felt like he was checking up on her, or pushing her through her time with her friend.

“I’m Jon,” he said and held out his hand. “You must be Margaery.”

They shook hands and Margaery then gestured to Sansa. “You know my girl here.”

Jon looked at Sansa, trepidation in his eyes. “I do. We met at her mom’s and then I helped Robb move a bookcase into her apartment. How are you, Sansa?”

“Swell, thanks,” she said, sitting back in her chair and pursing her lips together.

The waitress came over then to take their order and asked if Jon was going to be joining them.

“Uh, no,” he said, glancing at Sansa. “I’m actually going to get a to-go order.”

“Good idea,” Sansa said and Margaery looked at her in question.

“Nice to meet you, Margaery. See you later, Sansa,” Jon said.

“Mmm-hmmm,” was all Sansa replied with.

He frowned and headed back to the lobby, and Margaery started to give the waitress their order. Sansa followed suit, and when the waitress collected their menus and strode off, Sansa found Margaery studying her closely. “You okay? I feel like something just happened here, but I’m not sure what.”

“I’m okay. What were we talking about?”
“Boys.”

Sansa laughed softly. “Oh yeah.”

“No, but seriously, San. Do you not like that boy or something? You were acting weird with him.”

Sansa wanted to tell her to stop calling Jon a boy. It made her feel gross. And old. And she wasn’t old. “No, it just caught me off guard is all, seeing him here.”

Margaery kept watching her as though waiting for her to say more. Normally at this moment, Sansa would spill all. She didn’t this time.

Thankfully, Margaery let it go and launched into a story about work.

Crisis averted for now, Sansa attempted to give Margaery her full attention while in the back of her mind she was telling Jon he wasn’t allowed to stalk her like that ever again.

xxxxxxx

Jon knew he’d fucked up. He could tell that immediately by the look on her face. He’d upset her by showing up like that. For a brief moment, the look of fear that she’d given him when he’d showed up at her doorstep to announce he was living in Winterfell had flashed across her face. It was quickly replaced by annoyance.

Now he found himself feeling like a caged animal in his apartment waiting for Sansa to call. If she called. If he hadn’t fucked everything up.

He’d had the purest of intentions, too. All he’d wanted was to tease her. Entice her a little. He hadn’t meant to scare her.

He shoved away his half eaten meal and carried it into the kitchen to toss. He came back in the living room and checked his phone. No call yet. He checked the ringer - the volume was all the way up. He opened his messages and started to type her one, but then deleted it and put his phone down. Then picked it back up and started to pace.

It was seven now. Sansa should be wrapping up dinner. But, she was with a friend, so it could go until at least seven-thirty. Possibly eight. He’d wait until eight and text. Maybe…?

He carried his phone into the kitchen and set about cleaning up his dishes from the night before after propping his phone up on the windowsill so he could see any incoming calls.

What if he’d just set them back? What if he’d scared her away? What if --

His phone chimed and he lunged for it.

A text from Sansa!

Sansa: I’m outside in your parking lot. Can I come up?

Jon put his phone down on the counter and lunged for the door. He ran out onto his porch and looked down. Sansa stood outside her car, one arm wrapped around herself and the other holding her phone up. She was staring down at it.

“Sansa,” he called out.

She jumped and looked up. “Jon--”
“I’m coming down,” he called to her and started for the stairs.

“No, no, I’ll come up. Just wait.”

He waited, feeling anxious with every second that passed.

As soon as she rounded the corner on the landing just before his, he blurted out, “I’m sorry.”

She paused, looking up at him. She appeared a bit peeved. “Why did you show up like that?”

“I wanted to tease you is all. Get you hot.”

Her shoulders slumped a bit. “It felt a bit like an invasion. Like you were stalking me.”

“I know that now,” he said. Unable to take the distance between them any longer, he jogged down the steps to her. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to make you feel that way. I just wanted to tease you. Entice you.”

“Please don’t do that again,” she said, her brows squeezed together. “It made me feel crowded.”

Jon reached up, his hand shaking, and touched the side of her face just barely. He was afraid she’d bat his hand away. She didn’t, and he pressed it firmer against her cheek as he moved in closer until their bodies brushed against each other. “Forgive me,” he said softly. “I’m sorry.”

She shut her eyes, but didn’t look up at him and Jon drew her face up to his. “Sansa, please…”

Her eyes opened and finally, finally, she looked at him.

“Can I kiss you?” he asked raggedly. He didn’t know what he’d do if she said no.

She nodded and then breached the distance between them. He moaned when their lips met and he used his other hand to pull her against him, keeping his hand at the small of her back. “Sansa,” he groaned.

She wound her arms around him and pressed herself against him and Jon broke the kiss long enough to pant, “Wrap your legs around me.” He lifted her and she did. He carried her carefully up the stairs, his hands under her ass and her mouth tugging on his earlobe. He managed to get them inside his apartment and she reached back and pushed his door shut for him. He pressed her back against the door and kissed her, made it a few steps into the kitchen and then pushed her against the fridge and kissed her, then in the hall to his bedroom, and then, finally, he set her down on his bed. She kicked off her flats and then looked up at him and licked her lips.

“Take your shirt off?” she asked.

“Yes,” he agreed and discarded it followed by his shoes.

He pushed her back onto the bed and she scooted back, him following her, until she was in the center.

“You made your bed,” she said, looking down at it.

“I make it every day,” he whispered. “Christ, I can’t believe this.”

“What?”

He looked her over from her gorgeous face down to the tips of her pink toes. “You’re in my bed,”
he whispered. “You’re here.”

She reached up and pulled him down to her. She pulled the elastic out of his hair and carded her fingers through it as she lifted her hips and rubbed herself against his thigh. He swore he could feel her heat through his jeans and he groaned.

She pushed him off of her and onto his back and she sat up, straddling him. Jon lifted his hips, grinding up against her ass and she moaned as she spread her hands slowly from the top of his jeans up to his shoulders.

Then she leaned down and licked along his right collar bone. Jon gripped his bedspread in his hand and wondered if this could kill him. He’d forgotten how to breathe.

“You’re gorgeous,” Sansa murmured and bit at his shoulder.

“Am I?” he asked shakily.

She lifted her head and smirked down at him as she brushed his nipples with her fingers. He shuddered under her touch. “Keep touching me,” he begged.

She smiled and leaned down again and licked along his left collar bone.

“Sansa,” he gasped and shut his eyes tight.

She trailed hot open mouthed kisses over his pecs and then licked one nipple, and then the next. Jon’s hands went to her top and he gripped it hard in his hands. He was pretty certain he wasn’t going to make it through this.

Now she licked and kissed along his abs, tracing every ridge with her tongue. His stomach quivered, his cock strained against his jeans, and he was still having difficulty breathing. When she got to the snap of his jeans, she looked up him through a curtain of hair and undid it. Then she pulled the zipper down and he moaned as she slowly peeled his jeans down over his hips. His boxers followed.

He was hard and leaking and wondering if he’d died. If this was real. How could Sansa actually be in his bed about to go down on him? How many times had he dreamt of this moment? Fantasized about it.

Then she was moving off the bed and he lurched up to grab her. “Sansa!”

She laughed gently and proceeded to pull his jeans down his legs, and then his boxers. He felt a bit silly reacting so desperately as he had, but thankfully Sansa didn’t seem to mind.

And then...and then she took off her shirt and bra and dropped them to the floor.

“Sansa,” he breathed. “My God...you’re perfect.” And she was. He couldn’t take his eyes off her tits, plump and pink tipped, her nipples hard. He wanted them in his mouth.

She blushed as she climbed back up on the bed and knelt at his feet. “Spread your legs for me, Jon.”

He leaned back on his elbows and spread his legs. It felt like a dream watching her move onto her stomach between his spread legs. She licked her hand and then used the palm to gather some precum on her hand before stroking down his shaft.
She looked up at him. “Breathe, Jon.”

“I don’t remember how,” he gasped.

She laughed softly again and then licked around the crown of his dick. Jon fell back onto the bed. “FUCK!” he shouted.

When he felt his entire dick slip into the hot cavern of her mouth, he gripped the comforter again and shouted, “Sansa, fuck!”

“You’re going to piss off your neighbors,” she told him lightly.

“I don’t care. Fucking hell, Sansa, you’re in my bed blowing me - Christ!”

She hummed as she bobbed up and down on his dick and then sucked hard at the tip.

On arms that felt weak, Jon lifted himself up and watched her as she flattened her tongue against the underside of his cock and stroked him with it. He reached down, tangling his hands in her hair. “Sansa, it feel so good, baby. I love that mouth…” And I love you, he thought but wisely did not say. Not yet. She wasn’t ready to hear it.

She smiled and took him in her mouth again, this time she went down as far as she could until she gagged and Jon’s hands gripped her hair tightly.

She lifted her mouth off and spit down on his cock which was somehow the hottest fucking thing he’d ever seen and he nearly went cross-eyed.

“Honey, you’re gripping my hair too tight,” she told him.

“Sorry, I’m sorry,” he mumbled and loosened his grip.

She bent her head and this time she sucked on his balls.

“Sansa, fuck, I’m going to cum,” he said urgently.

“Where do you want to come, baby?” she asked. “My mouth? Or on me?”

He looked at her with wide eyes. He had options? “On you. I want to cum on you.” Perhaps it sounded ridiculous, but the idea of his cum on her brought something primal out in him. He wanted her marked as his.

She got up on her knees and wrapped her hand around his cock. She jacked him off until he shouted, “I’m cumming!”

She pushed forward, aiming his cock in her direction and he erupted in five shots on her tits.

She leaned down and gave him one last suck. Cum dribbled out in her mouth and he moaned, unable to believe any of it. She sat up on her heels and he grabbed her and yanked her to him, pushing her onto the bed and kissing her voraciously.

“Jon!” she squeaked. “You’re getting cum everywhere!”

“I don’t care,” he growled. And he didn’t. The love of his life, his dream, his fantasy, his obsession, was in his bed and had just gone down on him.

“How long until you’re ready again?” she asked breathlessly.
He lifted his head and gazed down at her passion-filled eyes. “You--you want me to make love to you?”

She nodded, rubbing his chest.

“Sansa,” he whispered in awe.

“I know I said last night we should slow down but I just - I don’t want to. I want you, Jon.” She looked at him as though she thought he might not want to.

And he did. He wanted to make love to her badly, but…

“I love that you want me to make love to you,” he said and ran a hand through her hair. He gazed down at her, hoping she could see how much he loved her even if he feared saying it just yet. “But that date I want to take you on? The one where I bring you flowers and we get dressed up? I want that. And I want that night to be when I make love to you for the first time.”

She stared at him, blinked. “You want to wait?”

“I want it to be perfect. I want to spoil you and woo you. And I want you to be sure of me.”

“You want to woo me?”

He nodded and ran his fingers along her cheek reverently. “I want us both to remember it always. I want to undress you, kiss and touch and lick and taste every inch of you.” He bent his head and captured her lips in a heated kiss. “Please don’t be upset.”

She shook her head, her eyes welling up in tears.

Sheer terror coursed through him. “Sansa? Sansa, talk to me. Baby, what is it? Please, sweetheart, please don’t think I don’t want you. I want you so much. You have no idea how much!”

She pushed him away and rolled onto her side, crying softly.

“Sansa--”

“No one has ever wanted to do those things for me before,” she cried into his comforter.

So she wasn’t upset with him?

“You’re not upset with me?” he asked, uncertain how to tread here.

“No, I’m not upset with you. I’ve just never had anyone care about me the way you do.” She turned her head to look at him. She had tears in her eyes and on her cheeks. She sniffled. And he fell in love with her even more. She was showing him a part of herself he bet she didn’t show very many people. She was vulnerable and open and she’d allowed him to see it. This was the real deal. Did she know that? Did she see it?

He wrapped himself around her, holding her close, feeling like he just wanted to shield her from anyone or anything that could possibly hurt her. She was his to protect, to cherish, and take care of.

“I always will, Sansa,” he vowed. “You are everything to me, love.” He kissed the back of her neck.

She turned in his arms and faced him. “Thank you,” she said in earnest.
“Don’t thank me,” he murmured.

She kissed him instead. Jon clutched her to him and kissed her slowly. He pushed her gently onto her back and gazed down at her. “Let me make you feel good.”

She laughed, wiping her tears away. “Silly boy. You just did that!”

He smiled. “I want to make you cum, love. I want to taste you.”

She nodded and lifted her head to kiss him and he smiled into the kiss, his heart feeling full.

He kissed his way down her body, licking at her nipples, sucking on them and then proceeding down down down. He rid her of her jeans and panties and loved her with his mouth slowly, wanting to love her gently and hopefully show her just what she meant to him.

When she came, it was with an arch of her back and his name on her lips. He kissed his way back up her body and then wrapped her in his arms. He kissed her forehead and she kissed his chest.

“You’re an amazing man,” she murmured.

Now he wanted to cry. No one had ever called him amazing before. And God knew he’d never felt particularly amazing.

“Thank you,” he said softly.

She moved her head up to look at him. “Don’t thank me,” she murmured and then kissed him.
thank you israfel00 for your help! ;)

Y’all might need to see a dentist after this chapter.

It had started raining at some point and with Jon’s window open in his bedroom, a slight draft of cool air swept through the room. He’d asked if she wanted him to close it, but Sansa said no. She liked it, the sound of the rain and feel of the air. It gave them an excuse to draw the covers over them and snuggle in.

After they’d both cleaned up, Jon had given her one of his t-shirts to wear since she didn’t feel like leaving just yet - or not at all maybe - and didn’t really want to get fully dressed to lay in bed with him. He’d tossed on a shirt and his boxers, and now they were curled up on their sides facing each other, each with two pillows.

It felt as though they were in their own little bubble and Sansa felt so close to him in that moment, and it had nothing to do with anything sexual they’d shared thus far. It was what he’d said to her about waiting. It was about how he made her feel. It was the man she could see him becoming, and it was even the boy that he’d been. He’d always invoked her protective and nurturing nature, but now...now she found him taking care of her, too.

“Sansa,” he asked softly, as though he was aware of the bubble around them, too, and was afraid if he spoke too loudly he’d pierce it.

“Hmmm?”

“Have you…” He frowned as he trailed off, and she could see him working out how to word whatever he was about to ask. “Have you not had good experiences in the past? With relationships, I mean?”

She smiled. “What gave it away?”

He didn’t smile. “Can you...tell me?”

She started with Daario. Jon scowled and called him a dick.

“It’s always been in my nature to be a caretaker of some sort,” she said. “Helping people, it’s what I do. And that extends into my romantic relationships, too. I was always the one to see the ‘potential’ in some guy, which means I’ve been taken advantage of. I’ve put my all into guys who only gave a shit about themselves and I did the whole - oh, he’ll change once he gets on his feet. And if they did manage to get on their feet, they walked right out the door to someone else.”

“They’re stupid then, not to see what they had,” Jon said and reached out to twirl a piece of her hair around his finger. He heaved in a deep breath and she could see he was gearing up to say something quite serious. “Sansa, I might be...well, I mean, I am I guess fucked up in a way?”

“You’re more together I think than you realize. And more so than I’ve given you credit for. You
have accomplished so much, Jon. A job, an apartment…” She laughed softly. “You have a car. You have more than some of the men I’ve dated.”

He made a face. “Sansa...no.”

She laughed. “I know, right? It’s so wrong. Then there was Dickon and now when I look back on him, I think - God, he was so boring.”

“I’m not boring. I have that going for me, too.”

She laughed again. “Definitely not boring.”

He reached out grabbed the hand currently not under her cheek and squeezed it. “All this time you have been trying to take care of me. Trying to protect me from the dangers you see in our involvement. Stop it. I don’t want you to see me as someone you have to take care of, Sansa. Not the way you’re thinking. From what I understand, namely from books and movies because as you know I’ve not had any good role models, there is an element of give and take in a relationship and taking care of the other person because you love them.”

“Yes, that’s true. Relationships, in order to work, have to have reciprocity.”

“Well, I want that. For us to take care of each other because we care about one another, not the other way where we fix the other person. Don’t fix me, Sansa. I don’t want you to fix me.”

She slipped her hand from his and ran it through his hair, pushing some from his face. “I suppose no more telling you to see a therapist then?”

“I’m going to,” he said. “And maybe, yeah, it is because I know it’s what you want, but you won’t be doing the therapy and you won’t be actively involved in how it’s going. I don’t want to be like those other guys to you.”

“You’re not,” she murmured and leaned in to kiss him. “Though you’ve always brought out the protectiveness in me.”

“Yeah, you were always looking out for me.”

“You were my challenge,” she said with a laugh. “And yeah, there was that whole aspect of seeing the potential in you.”

“I know. You said it to me more than once at the Home. Hence my worry that that’s all you see now.”

She shook her head. “No. Not anymore. Not...okay, so maybe some? But not all. You’re changing… we’re changing…?”

He nodded and smiled. “Yes. We’re changing.”

They met in the middle and shared a kiss, both grinning like fools when they parted.

Gently, Sansa scratched at his beard. “Was there ever any other girl aside from Ros?”

Jon blanched at the mention of Ros. “Ros was never even a thing, Sansa. She was just, okay, this is going to sound terrible, but she was just someone I fucked.”

“Yeah, that is terrible.”
“At the time I didn’t care. I just wanted to have sex.”

“As any teenage boy would.”

He made a face. “Yeah.”

“So was there anyone?”

He looked at her so reverently, Sansa struggled to maintain eye contact. “You,” he said hoarsely. “There was only you.”

She rolled into him and buried her face in his chest.

Jon wrapped his arm around her and kissed the top of her head. “Did I just overwhelm you?”

She nodded.

Jon decided maybe now was a good time to distract her. “So, about our date…”

“Yeah?” she said quietly, still burrowed into him. God, he loved her so much. His heart literally ached.

“Is there any preference you have on where we go? Is there anything off the table?”

“No preference...and no pool halls.” She looked up at him, her expression excited. “Can we go dancing?”

He frowned. “Like to a club?”

“No, like a nice place that has dancing.”

He bit his lip. “I don’t know how to dance.”

He got whipped in the face by her hair when she flew off the bed. “Where are you going?”

“I’m going to teach you how to dance,” she said as she grabbed her pants off the floor and pulled them on. “Do you have something we can play music on?”

He sat up. “My laptop? Is that ok?”

“Perfect! Where is it?”

“In the living room on the coffee table.”

“Come on!” she said eagerly, and barrelled out of the room.

Jon loved her exuberance, but he hadn’t been ready to leave the cocoon of his bedroom yet. Especially to learn how to dance. But, if that’s what Sansa wanted, then that’s what Sansa would have.

He pulled on his jeans from the floor and then headed down to the living room where he found her hefting up his laptop and the charger.

“Where are you taking it?” he asked.

“The kitchen. I had this totally brilliant, cheesy romantic movie idea.”
He laughed. “And that would be?”

“You balcony. We dance on your balcony. There’s another balcony overhead so we won’t get wet. My God, it’s so tooth-rottingly romantic I am making myself sick.”

“I think it’s a great idea,” he said huskily.

“Of course you do. You’re a romantic at heart, too.”

He followed her into the kitchen and she placed it on the counter near the door. Jon grabbed a chair and put it on that instead, and then plugged it into an outlet not from the door.

“You’re brilliant!” she squealed and clapped her hands together excitedly.

He grinned, loving this side of her, and opened the laptop. He leaned over and brought up Pandora. “So...what are you thinking?”

“Something slow and sultry.”

“I’m not sure that is an option. How about love songs?”

“That’ll work.”

“We might get a fast one here and there, but we can work with it. 80’s or 90s?”

“Both.”

He typed it in and waited. A slow song came on. “Done. Let me just turn up the volume....” He adjusted the volume, and then stood and held out his hand. “Ready, beautiful?”

She smiled. “Yes, handsome.”

He grinned and led them outside and then adjusted the chair closer to the door.

When he turned, he found Sansa near the railing, peering out into the parking lot. She turned suddenly, and held out both hands to him. She was smiling so brightly, Jon found himself doing the same.

He took her hands and she placed them on her hips. Then she wound her arms around his neck and drew up close to him. “Just sway,” she said. “No fancy dance moves. Just sway. That’s all I want to do with you.”

“This I can handle,” he murmured. “You didn’t really have to teach me this.” He bent his head and kissed her. “But I’m glad you did.”

She smiled, her eyes still closed and he kissed her again. With a soft sigh, she placed her head on his chest and he held her closer. A fast song came on, but still they swayed.

“We’re so disgusting right now,” Sansa said softly.

“You love it.”

She giggled. “I do.”

They lasted for only two more songs before Sansa said she was cold. They headed back in the apartment and while Jon put the laptop and chair back, Sansa used the bathroom. She came out,
biting her lip and looking at him hesitantly.

“What is it, love?” he asked.

“Do you have a spare toothbrush by any chance?”

“I do actually. They came in twos when I bought - Sansa, are you going to stay here with me tonight?”

She bit her lip again and shifted on her feet. “I know just a few nights ago I freaked out about you staying over and all, and that last night I was all we need to slow down before I just, like, jumped you today, but...yeah. I mean, if you want me to.” Her eyes went wide and she took a step back from him.

Alarmed, he took one closer to her. “What is it?”

“I just, oh my god, I just totally assumed I could just stay without even asking you! I’m so sorry!”

He lunged toward her and snatched her into his arms. “Do you honestly think I would say no to you spending the night?”

“You could be really tired,” she said in a small voice. “You could be sick of me.”

“Never,” he rasped and kissed her. Then he lifted her up in his arms and carried her to the bathroom. He set her down and then rummaged in his cabinet drawer for the extra toothbrush, that he may or may not have been hoping would be hers one day.

He grabbed the package that had one missing (his) and handed it to her.

“Oooh! Blue! My favorite color.”

He may or may not have known that, too.

“Mind if I join you?” he asked.

“You’re gonna brush your teeth with me?” The look on her face could only be described as horrified.

“Too soon?”

“There is nothing glamorous about brushing one’s teeth.”

He laughed. “I’ll wait my turn then.”

Fifteen minutes later, they were back in bed, her in just his shirt and her panties, and him in his boxers. The alarm was set for when Jon had to get up for work, and this time he was spooned up against Sansa’s back.

“I still can’t believe this,” he muttered and kissed her shoulder.

“What?” she asked sleepily.

“You’re here. And in my bed.”

“You keep saying that,” said in amusement.
“Because it’s all my fantasies and my dreams come to life.”

“You need to get out more.”

He laughed. “Sometimes in them you’re tied to the bed so there’s that. I mean, there is room to grow here.”

The both of them broke down into laughter together.

She drew his hand up from where it rested against her stomach and kissed the back of it. “Good night, Jon.”

“Good night, Sansa.”

Sleep took a while in coming though. His dreams now had some tough competition.
Gorgeous moodboard by the lovely and talented @asongforjonsa! Thank you for all the moodboard and your help, my dear! :)

When his alarm started blaring, Jon reached over and slammed it off and then collapsed back into bed and reached for Sansa. He was tired; he knew work might suck a little since it took him so long to fall asleep, but it was worth it. It was worth everything to have Sansa next to him in bed.

He swallowed back his fear that she’d regret everything in the light of day and breached the space between them and curled up around her. He pressed a gentle kiss to the back of her neck and curled his arm around her.

She moaned as though pained. “Six is an ungodly hour to get up,” she croaked. “I’m going to have to talk to Robb about this. I think it falls under cruel and unusual punishment.”

Jon grinned and kissed her shoulder. This didn’t sound like a woman who regretted last night. “Good morning,” he said, his voice hoarse from sleep.

She rolled over to face him, her eyes at half mast. “Hi.”

He smiled. “Hi. Sleep okay?”

She nodded and then yawned and stretched, arching like a cat. He kept his hand on her belly as he watched her.

“You can stay here for as long as you want,” he told her when she’d curled back up. “You can go back to sleep until you have to go.”

She smiled sleepily. “That sounds nice, but I think I’ll leave with you.”

“You could take a shower with me if you want,” he said with a grin and waggled his brows.

She laughed softly. “No.”

“Not yet? When you’re ready to brush your teeth in front of me maybe?” he teased.

She laughed again and then reached out and ran her hand through his curls. “Did you sleep okay?”

He didn’t want to tell her it took a long time for him to fall asleep because he’d just lay there, holding her in his arms and watching her sleep while filing away how exactly it felt to have her there.

“I slept great,” he said. “I’m going to make coffee. You want some?”
“Mmm, yes please. I’m going to brush my teeth while you do that.”

He grinned and leaned in to kiss her and she reared back, her eyes wide. She grabbed the sheet and put it up to her mouth. “Morning breath!”

He laughed and pulled the sheet away. “I don’t care.” He kissed her and she returned it, melting against him. He smiled as he broke the kiss and then kissed the tip of her nose.

Reluctantly, he rolled over and climbed out of the bed. He gazed down at his girl and found her giggling. “What?”

“Your curls,” she said. “You have bed head. It’s nice to know you don’t always look so perfect. Though, still quite close.”

He couldn’t help the grin of pride that came. “You think I look perfect?”

She rolled her eyes. “You know you’re gorgeous.”

“It’s still nice to hear.”

“Jon. You are gorgeous.”

He smiled again. “Thank you. So when do you plan to get up and brush your teeth?”

“When you leave the room,” she laughed. “I don’t want you to see my bed head.”

Jon burst out laughing. “Okay, okay, just let me use the bathroom and I’ll let you know when you’re in the clear.”

She grinned. “Thank you.”

Sansa snuggled back into bed, watching him leave and thinking - that is some ass right there. God, she was depraved. And she was more than okay with it.

Well, sort of.

There was a part of her that couldn’t believe how bold she’d been the night before, and how afterwards, she’d just laid herself bare for him and told him all that stuff about her past relationships.

If she wanted to get super sciencey should would say that it was all chemical - when a woman had an orgasm the oxytocin released in the brain made them feel closer to their partner. And what happened when a woman felt closer to their partner? They shared secrets and thoughts and feelings.

And if she wanted to go with how she felt, then she would say that part of dating someone was sharing information about past relationships. Plus, he’d asked and she felt, dare she say it, comfortable enough with him to tell him. It seemed only fair considering how much she knew about him and his past.

No one had ever put her feelings first and went out of their way to make her happy the way he did. He’d made her dinner for crying out loud. Found her a bookcase. Saw to her pleasure...

He’d stopped them from making love. And she was thankful for that because he was right. As certain as she had felt in the moment, she wasn’t sure she would have felt so certain after.

Then, there was this fear she had that everything was going to fall apart and this giddiness she felt
right now would come crumbling down around her. Wasn’t that the way it typically went? The
euphoria would give way to red flags she’d ignore and then things would start to disintegrate until
finally it just ended horribly and she was heartbroken yet again and wondering how a woman with
a degree could be so epically off the mark. In therapist mode she would tell a client who was
perpetually fearing the other shoe dropping that sometimes bad things happened, but that their
happiness did not mean impending disaster was just around the corner to take them down.

Besides, as bad as it sounded, Sansa thought, with Jon there had already been red flags. She’d
pointed them all out already - and to him. In the past, she’d keep them to herself. But she’d called
Jon out already on his questionable behaviors.

Perhaps they were healthier than she’d thought?

She sighed. *Don’t get ahead of yourself,* she told herself.

“Sansa, I’m heading to the kitchen now!” Jon said as he passed by the bedroom.

She smiled and climbed out of the bed. She stretched again and then made her way to the door and
then out of it. She had just turned to get to his bathroom when she heard him say, “A-ha!”

She jumped a mile and spun around, her heart pounding. She put a hand to her heart and found Jon
looking mighty proud of himself and laughing. He pointed at her. “Your bed head is adorable.”

She narrowed her eyes at him. “You’re gonna pay for that, Targaryen.”

He grinned. “Promise, Stark?”

“Perv!”

“You know it, baby.”

She shook her head at him, but her wisp of a smile gave her away. Her boyfriend - boyfriend? - was
a little shit.

He knew it, too. Sansa found herself smiling as she plucked what was now her toothbrush from the
toothbrush holder. She looked at herself, thinking she might actually be glowing.

“I make myself sick,” she muttered and grabbed the toothpaste.

xxxxxxxxxxx

Jon whistled as he entered the trailer later that day to grab a water from the fridge. He ignored
Ygritte as he passed by.

“You’re in an awfully good mood today,” she said.

“Am I?” he asked as he opened the mini-fridge and pulled out a water.

“You get laid last night?” she asked with a smirk.

Instead of telling her it was none of her goddamn business, he decided instead to fuck with her.
“Close enough.”

She scowled. “Well bully for you.”

He pointed the top of the bottle at her. “You know, Ygritte, that didn’t sound very sincere.”
Her eyes narrowed and her lips curled up into something that was half a smirk and half a sneer. “Was it Robb’s sister?”

Jon lowered the bottle from his mouth slowly. “What?”

“The one that came by the other day. Sansa.” Now she looked triumphant. “I saw you.”

“Saw me what exactly?”

“Sucking her pretty little face off. She had her leg up on you like a bitch in heat—”

She had the sense to look genuinely afraid when Jon set the water bottle down, came over to her desk, and slammed his hands on the top of it. He leaned his, jaw clenched, and spat, “Don’t you dare talk about her like that, and don’t you fucking dare say a word to Robb or anyone about what you saw.”

She rolled her chair back. “You’re a fucking psycho,” she said.

He stood, cracked his neck. “Maybe. Do you want to find out?”

Just then the door opened behind him and Jon casually turned to see how it was.

Robb stood there, looking from Ygritte to Jon. “Did I interrupt something?”

“Not at all,” Jon drawled. “Just chatting.”

Robb shrugged and headed for the fridge. “Lunch time,” he said. “I’m starving.”

The rest of the crew started to file in and before Jon went to join them he looked at Ygritte warningly. She glared at him and stood. “I’m going to go out for lunch today,” she muttered and grabbed her purse.

Jon made his way over to the fridge again to grab the lunch he’d packed and sat down at the end of the table. Robb nodded to him as soon as the door slammed shut, signaling Ygritte’s departure. “You two have a lover’s spat?” Robb asked.

Jon did a double take. “Pardon?”

“You and Ygritte. It looked really intense in here when I walked in. And it’s obvious she’s got a thing for you and I thought maybe you were interested, too...so, lover’s spat?”

Tormund, one of Jon’s favorites on the crew after Robb, reached over and slapped him on the back. “You’re a lucky one to have that spitfire,” he said.

“I don’t have her,” Jon snapped. Tormund looked at him in surprise.

“Sorry,” Jon said. “It’s just that nothing is going on and I don’t want a rumor starting that there is.”

“Sorry, my bad,” Robb murmured. “She does like you though. I can tell.”

“I’m not into her that way,” Jon told him. “She kind of rubs me the wrong way to be honest.”

Robb grinned. “Sometimes that’s how it starts. It did with me and Margaery.”

“No,” Jon said with conviction.
“Ygritte or no, you still should get your dick wet,” Tormund said. “You play pool?”

“Some,” Jon said. There had been a pool table at the home and he’d been pretty good at it, but it had been a while since he’d played.

“Come out with me tonight. We’ll see about getting you a woman.”

“I don’t need help getting a woman,” Jon told him.

“Well la dee da! Come out anyway.”

Jon hesitated. He wanted to see Sansa tonight. Though when they’d parted that morning they hadn’t made plans, but Jon wanted to make them as soon as he could get a minute to text her.

Yet, she did want him to go out and make friends, too…

He could always see her after.

He nodded. “Sure. I’ll go out with you tonight.”

Tormund grinned and nodded to Robb. “Gonna join us?”

Robb shrugged. “Why the hell not?”

*Friends, Jon thought. Check.*

xxxxxxx

“You don’t mind staying in and watching a movie, do you?” Margaery asked later that evening as she and Sansa pored over take-out menus in Robb and Margaery’s kitchen. They were currently leaning over the island in the middle of the expansive kitchen.

Sansa shook her head and reached for the chinese food menu. “Why would I mind?”

Margaery shrugged. “I don’t know. It sounds so tame compared to what Robb said he was doing with the boys tonight.”

Sansa looked up at her. Jon hadn’t mentioned anything but them playing pool. “You said they were playing pool.”

“Yeah, they are, but that kid from last night? Jon?”

“Yeah?”

“Well, I guess Tormund is determined to get him laid.”

Sansa found herself staring at her friend. “What?”

Margaery made a face. “Boys are so gross. You done with that menu?”

Jon hadn’t mentioned anything about Tormund wanting to get him laid. Why hadn’t he mentioned that? Maybe he didn’t know?

“Sansa? You okay?”

“What? Oh, sorry.” She passed the menu over to Margaery and straightened. “I’m just going to use the bathroom. I want number eight with chicken fingers.”
“Sure thing,” Margaery murmured as she pored over the menu.

Sansa made her way down the short hall to the bathroom and once inside, shut the door and dug out her phone. She started to send a text to Jon, asking him what the hell was going on when she stopped, put the phone on the sink, and sat down on the closed toilet seat.

Fact time.

Fact: Jon had told her he was going out with some of the guys from work to play pool.

Fact: He hadn’t mentioned anything about them trying to get him laid.

Fact: He wanted to see her after he was done with them.

He might not know anything about their plans, and Robb could have told Margaery the plan without cluing Jon in.

And if he did know about them?

Well, it didn’t make sense for him to want to see her after. Why would he bother if he had some girl waiting in the wings?

Fact: Jon had moved to Winterfell to be close to her.

That was not the action of a man who was planning on fooling around on the side.

“San? You fall in?” Margaery called out. “I called in the food.”

“Coming!” Sansa called back and stood. She grabbed her phone and slid it into her pocket. She wasn’t going to send Jon an accusatory text. She’d wait until she saw him tonight and ask what was going on, but she wasn’t going to fly off the handle now.

She would act like a trained professional who would give the same advice to a client - and a friend: stay calm until all the facts are in.

Inside though...well, inside she was feeling rather anxious and her mind was already on later and not the present moment.

“So, I was thinking,” she said as she met Margaery back in the kitchen. “Let’s do a comedy. My brain is fried today and I definitely need something I don’t need to concentrate so heavily on.”

“Already there with you, babe,” Margaery said. “Let’s check out Netflix while we wait for the food to arrive.”

The two glasses of wine had done them both in. Sansa didn’t know what Margaery’s excuse was, but for her part she had been up quite early that morning. So, when Robb thought he was hilarious by banging a wooden spoon against a pan to wake them up, she jerked awake and then flipped him off.

Robb laughed and put the pan and wooden spoon on the coffee table before sitting down next to Margaery on the couch. Margaery sleepily told him he was an ass. He drew her close and kissed her forehead and murmured something to her that Sansa couldn’t hear and probably didn’t want to hear. She was certain of that when Margaery kissed him and giggled.
Sansa pushed herself up out of the recliner and dug into her pocket for her phone. Sure enough, Jon had texted at least three times already asking where she was and if she was ready for him. The last said he was just coming over because now he was worried.

Quickly, she texted him and told him she was Robb’s and would be home soon.

“So, did you get that boy laid?” Margaery asked.

Sansa’s ears perked up and after she sent the text, she sat back down in the recliner and pretended to be fiddling with her phone while she listened.

“Nah, he wasn’t into it. Tormund tried, but Jon wasn’t having it,” Robb said.

“Was Jon aware you were trying to get him laid?” Sansa asked.

“Well, Tormund said that was his plan,” Robb said with a roll of his eyes. “I’m not sure how serious Jon took him. He found out later that he was quite serious.”

*Phew,* was all Sansa could think as a rush of relief went through her.

“Frankly, I think he and Ygritte might be heading toward something,” Robb said.

*Robb giveth and then he taketh away…* Sansa thought.

“She likes to antagonize him,” Robb said and then looked down at Margaery with a grin. “Reminds me of someone.”

Margaery pushed at him playfully. “Shut up.”

“She drives him as crazy as you drove me,” Robb said and then tackled her to the couch, tickling her while she squealed.

Sansa jumped up. “And that’s my cue to leave…”

Neither of them noticed until she had her shoes on and was saying goodbye. They both got up and walked her to the door, bidding her good night.

Sansa checked her phone again when she got in the car.

Jon: *Hurry, Sans. I want to see you, baby.*

That did not sound like the text of a man interested in another woman.

She pondered how she was going to approach the topic of tonight with Tormund trying to get him laid and then Robb’s mention of Ygritte. She didn’t want to play games. She didn’t want to beat around the bush and trick him into anything; she just wanted to ask and be done with it.

When she pulled into her driveway, she wasn’t surprised to see Jon sitting on her steps. He got up when he saw her car and smiled wide. *That was not the smile of a man interested in someone else,* she told herself. Okay, that wasn’t necessarily the case, but he looked at her as though he was looking at everything he’d ever wanted in the world. He looked at her the way she’d look at someone who just told her they’d paid off her student loans.

He was right there by the time she climbed out and gathered her in his arms. She hugged him back and he pushed her car door closed. He framed her face in his hands and bent down to kiss her, but before he could get a word out she blurted out, “What’s going on with Ygritte?”
He reared back and looked at her. Was that worry in his eyes? “What?”

“What’s going on with Ygritte?” she asked again. He dropped his arms and she felt a little panicked now, judging by the look on his face.

“How do you know about that?” he asked.

“Robb,” she croaked. *I will not cry. I will not cry. I will not cry.*

His brows furrowed. “There’s no way Robb could know and not say something to me about it,” he said. He grabbed her arm before she could escape, which she had been trying to do. He turned her to face him. “Sansa, what did Robb say to you?”

“That he thought something could be going on between you and Ygritte,” she said, her voice shaking. Her whole body shook. Her flight response had kicked in and all she wanted to do was run in the house and hide from this. “Just tell me if you have an interest in her—”

“Sansa, *God no,* we’re talking about two different things here.”

“What--what are you t-talking about?” she asked.

“I’m talking about Ygritte telling me she saw us kissing behind the trailer.”

Sansa’s eyes went wide. “She did?”

“Yes.” He frowned. “You thought I was talking about Ygritte having a thing for me?”

“And you maybe having one for her,” she said softly.

“Sansa, really?” He yanked her into his arms and held her close. “Sweet girl...How in the hell could you even *think*...?” He framed her face with his hands again and lifted her face up to look at him. “I’m yours. All yours. Only yours.”

She bit her lip, placing her hands over his. “I know, I mean, after all you’ve done to be here with me...”

“Yes,” he murmured and kissed her slowly. After, he placed his hands on her hips, and kept her close.

“I jumped to conclusions,” she muttered. “The look on your face when I said Robb told me about Ygritte...it had me worried there for a minute.”

“So was I.” He laughed nervously. “I thought maybe he was planning on finding some way to kill me with a nail gun tomorrow by keeping it secret that I had words about you with Ygritte today.”

“What kind of words?”

“I told her not to say a fucking word about what you saw,” he said.

Her eyes narrowed as she studied him. “I feel like you’re leaving something out.”

“I might have scared her. On purpose.”

“Jon!”

“I don’t want her blabbing her mouth off to Robb before you’re ready to tell him about us, Sansa!”
“Did you threaten her?”

“Well...she told me I was a psycho and I asked her if she wanted to find out.”

“Jon!”

“Sansa, I’m not going to let her fuck this up for us.”

“She has a thing for you. That’s true, isn’t it?”

“I guess.”

“Why did you never tell me that?”

“Because it doesn’t matter to me? Because I don’t care?”

“It matters to me!”

“Why?” he asked incredulously.

“Because you’re my boyfriend!”

He gripped her hips hard. “Sansa,” he breathed.

“That just came out,” she backpedaled.

“No take backs,” he said and captured her lips in a deep kiss. “Let’s go inside.”

She dug into her purse for her keys and they both all but ran to her door.

Once inside, Jon had her pressed against the door and was undoing her jeans and shoving them down while licking inside her mouth with his tongue.

She dropped her purse to the floor and wound her arms around him. “We have things to talk about,” she panted.

“And we will,” he muttered and shoved his hand into her panties. He groaned. “Oh, baby, you’re so wet….”

“Jon,” she whimpered as he began fucking her with his middle finger.

“Boyfriend.”

“I’m not...ahhh...going to just call you….that… Oh, right there!

He grinned against her cheek and added another finger to her cunt. “I’ll call you Girlfriend.”

“That...is...oh God!...ridiculous…. Then she moaned.

His thumb began to circle her clit and she gasped as her body lurched up. She gripped his hair tight. “Oh, God, Jon...I’m gonna…”

“Cum for me, sweet girl. Cum all over my hand, come on...cum, Sansa.”

She did, her knees giving way as her eyes rolled up. He caught her against him by the waist and pulled his hand from her. He licked her juices off his fingers while she watched, dazed. Then he hefted her up in his arms and carried her to her bedroom.
Jon lay her down on her bed and took off her shoes. Then he kicked his off and then climbed over her, bracing himself on all fours. He grinned down at her. “You’re all flushed, sweet girl.”

“Mmm, I wonder why,” she murmured and then dragged him down by the front of his shirt to kiss him.

He rolled off to the side, dragging her with him and tangling a hand in her hair. “I can’t believe you thought I’d want Ygritte,” he murmured and nipped at her lips.

“She is rather pretty,” Sansa said reasonably.

“Yeah, but...you.”

Sansa smiled and kissed him and then leaned back to look at him. “Jon?”

His eyes were closed, his expression one of bliss as she played with the curls at the top of his head. “Mmm?”

“What exactly was the exchange between you two?”

He groaned and opened his eyes. He sighed, and recounted for her what had happened.

“Jon, I appreciate you defending my honor - and I am rather upset about the fact that you had to, considering I’ve never been anything but nice to Ygritte, but I’m not sure that was the best way to go about handling the situation.”

“Maybe not, but she could stand to be put in her place.”

“I’m not sure being afraid of you is putting her in her place.”

“She’ll keep quiet, won’t she?”

“Maybe. You could have just made her mad to the point that she rebels.”

His jaw clenched. “She won’t.”

“You don’t know that.”

“Would it be so terrible if people found out about us?”

“Depends. How do you feel about staying alive?”

Jon barked out a laugh. “Okay, so Robb might freak, but I mean he set you up with Torrhen that one time....it was one time, right?”
She rolled her eyes. “Yes, it was one time, but it’s...well, the sneaking around bit--”

“I’d like to state for the record that I did say we could have told people before we started seeing each other. As in as we started seeing each other.”

“I know, and I’m sure you’ll never let me forget that, but Jon it’s not just that you work for my brother and you’re younger, it’s that--”

“I’m the reason you left Dorne.”

“There were other factors involved,” she said lightly.

“You don’t have to sugar coat it.”

“I’m not,” she protested. “When have I ever sugar coated anything with you?”

He laughed. “While in Dorne? Always. Since then? No, you haven’t.”

“I was always honest with you in Dorne,” she said with a pout.

“You were, sweetheart. But in your sweet and gentle Sansa way. Only when I pissed you off did you give it to me straight.”

“You could try the patience of a saint.”

“Is it too late to apologize?” he asked huskily.

“I think you have already...” she murmured and kissed him.

Before they could go any further Sansa pushed at him. “So how did Operation Get Jon Laid go tonight?”

He groaned and rolled his eyes, dropping his head down against her chest and nuzzling against her breasts. “From this position I’d say it’s going pretty well,” he said.

She swatted him on the arm playfully and he chuckled. Rolling onto her back, Jon followed, using her breasts as pillows as he wound his arm around her. “Robb told you?” he murmured.

“He did. Why didn’t you?”

“Because I told him when he asked me if I wanted to play pool I didn’t need help. I thought he’d let it go.”

“What happened?”

“He tried to get me to talk to a couple girls at the pool hall. I told them and him I wasn’t interested. I was nice about it to them, though. I didn’t want to make them feel bad. Finally, he gave up.” He raised up, leaning on his elbow and ran his thumb over her bottom lip. “You’ve no reason to ever be jealous, Sansa. Not of anyone. There isn’t anyone else for me.”

“How can you know that?” she asked softly. “You’re still so young.”

“So are you. But...” He placed his hand on the side of her face and looked at her in earnest. “Sansa, you’re mine. I think it’s only fair that I should warn you that I’m never letting you go.”

A flicker of surprise flashed across her face and her mouth fell open a bit.
She bit her lip, her brows slightly pinched together. “You mean that.”

He nodded slowly, allowing her to see how serious he was.

“I should tell you how a person doesn’t belong to another person,” she said, sounding a bit nervous. “And that by saying I’m yours and you’re never letting me go is exhibiting possessive behavior.”

“But?”

“Good Lord, what’s wrong with me?” she whispered in wonderment.

Jon grinned and moved to push her back down on the bed. “Nothing is wrong with you,” he murmured and kissed her long and deep. “Besides, don’t you know I’m yours? I belong to you and you belong to me. That’s how this works.”

She licked her lips and then kissed him again.

“Can I stay the night?” he asked softly, as he began to trail kisses along her neck.

“Mmmmm….no.”

His head popped up. “What?”

She grimaced. “You get up too early. And I’m exhausted.”

“Sansa,” he whined.

“Jon,” she whined back.

He flopped back on his back and looked at her with puppy dog eyes.

“Nope,” she said.

He sighed and rolled onto his side facing her. “Can I at least then stay until you fall asleep?”

She looked at him warily. “How will you not find yourself falling asleep too?”

“Trust me.”

“How about no on that and we, I don’t know, just make out for a while?”

He pulled her to him with a growl and she squealed.

Shortly thereafter, she moaned…

xxxxxxx

For the following week, Sansa felt as though she was drifting about on a cloud. She was quite certain she didn’t know what the word “grounded” meant any longer. She and Jon spent every spare minute together. And it wasn’t all making out and groping each other either.

They visited the antique shop again, went to a movie, sat in the parking lot of a fast food restaurant and munched on fries and sucked on milkshakes late one night. They talked about anything that popped in their heads. Jon was curious about her family and so she answered any and all questions he had about them. When she shed some tears talking about her father’s passing and how hard it
had been on all of them, Jon held her.

“I feel guilty talking about my family,” she admitted to him one night while they sat talking on her couch.

“Because mine was shit?” he asked. “Don’t feel guilty about that, Sansa, please. It just makes me feel like I’m someone to be pitied and I don’t want that.”

“Can’t I feel that you got a shitty deal though? And that you deserved so much better than what you got?”

“Christ, Sansa,” he muttered and unwound his arms from her and angled his body away from her.

“What is it? Did I say something wrong?” she asked worriedly.

“No,” he said and his voice cracked.

“Jon, honey, will you look at me, please?”

He did and she saw the tears in his eyes. “Talk to me,” she murmured.

“I’ve spent my whole life thinking I wasn’t enough, that there had to be something fundamentally wrong with me that my Mom couldn’t be bothered to get clean for me, and my father wouldn’t even claim me.”

“Jon, no…” Sansa murmured. “What they did was their failure. There was nothing wrong with you. Nothing at all. You were an innocent.”

“Unwanted. I was unwanted.”

It broke her heart to hear him talk this way though she knew it was something he carried with him. Most foster kids did.

“If they couldn’t see what they had in you—”

“Don’t Sansa, please,” he said quietly. “I know you’re trying to make me feel better but don’t say something Melisandre would say. Be real with me; that’s what I want.”

He was right. It was trite, what she’d been about to say and he trite wasn’t what he wanted or needed. He wanted honesty.

“Okay,” she said with a nod. “They sucked, Jon. They sucked so hard for not putting you first.”

Tears spilled down his cheeks, but he laughed softly. “Fuck, yes! They sucked so fucking hard.”

“Up one side and down the other.”

He laughed again and she drew him into her arms. He nuzzled into her neck and wound himself around her.

“Is it painful to admit that about your Mom?” she asked gently.

“Yes. But it doesn’t make it any less true,” he replied. “Speaking of...I found a therapist.”

She felt like clapping. “You did?”
He nodded. “His name is Tyrion. I see him next week.”

“I’m so glad, Jon.”

He lifted his head and smiled at her soggily. “I figured you would be.”

“All these things you have inside you that hurt won’t heal unless you work on them. No one should be walking around feeling there is something wrong with them and that they’re not enough.”

“Am I enough for you?” he asked, sounding as uncertain as she’d ever heard him. He wouldn’t even look at her.

“Jon? Look at me, please, honey.”

He did. She smiled. “You are. You absolutely are. More than even.”

He broke into a smile and sank back into her embrace. “Will they ever really heal though, Sansa? All those wounds my mother inflicted on me? Will they ever go away?”

“No,” she said honestly. “They’ll scab over though. It’ll take time though because the thing is...well, it’s probably going to get worse before it gets better.”

He sat up and looked at her incredulously. “What the fuck? Worse before it gets better? What the shit is that about?”

“Sometimes, in cases like yours, there’s a period of anger that comes. Anger you might not realize you had buried deep inside you over your Mother and Father. It’s anger that might be, as far as your Mom is concerned, be buried right now. Or displaced.”

“I feel like I spent all my time in Dorne being angry.”

“That’s the anger that needs to be dealt with.”

He looked at her hopefully. “I feel less angry now.”

She smiled sympathetically. “I’m glad you made an appointment.”

He nodded. “Me too. Even if I’m kind of scared. You’re the only one I’ve dealt with.”

“You’ll be fine. Just remember that if you don’t like him, you don’t have to continue seeing him. You can always find someone that fits you better.”

He sighed and leaned back against the couch. “San?”

She smiled at her shortened name. “Yes?”

“Can we talk about something else?”

“Of course. Like what?”

He grabbed her hand and entwined hers with his. “Like how I found the place I want to take you for our date and if you’re ready for it, I’d like to take you out this weekend.”

She stared down at their hands. She could feel him watching her, but it wasn’t with pressure. Sansa knew that whatever she decided he would go with. He wanted her ready; he’d said that once already.
Was she?

Listening to her heart was hard. She listened to a lot more before she’d been burned so many times, and before all her training. Now she tended to use her head instead of her heart, unless it was for others. Always for others.

So, was she ready? Was she ready to take this step with Jon? To make love with him? There was finality in this. If, or rather when, they did this, there was the sense that this was it for both of them. He’d already said she was his, but she thought perhaps there was still some wiggle room. But, once they had sex…well, she was pretty certain there was no turning back after that.

And it wasn’t as though she wanted to turn back now. She was so far in with him already, it was hard to remember when she wasn’t. What had all her hang ups and reservations been about? They seemed so far away now.

She felt the answer in her gut. She had long thought her gut had shit for brains, but maybe it wasn’t so off the mark. Her whole being felt as though it was vibrating with her answer.

She looked up at him. “I’m ready.”
Chapter 28

Chapter Notes

Thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you to israfell00 for all your help on this ginormous beast of a chapter. You get me. :-) 

Thank you sooooo much to asongforjonsa for the lovely moodboard and for your support with the laborious writing of this chapter.
The days leading up to their big date, Jon set all the plans he’d been making while waiting for Sansa to be ready in motion.

His plan was this:

1. Send flowers to Sansa from a Secret Admirer. (He knew this could be risky if anyone was around to ask, but once the idea was in his head that he wanted to start the day with sending flowers to her, it wasn’t going anywhere).
2. Get her the wrought iron candle holders she’d seen at the antique shop but did not buy. Also, get the beeswax candles she liked.
3. Pick her up at seven for the date at the restaurant he’d scoped out that was built in the 1700s (she’d love the old feel of it and the architecture), and also had dancing.
4. Take her home.
5. Make love to her as she’d never been made love to before.
6. If they could still move after - draw a bath for them (he’d learned she loved baths).
7. Make love to her again.

He made the reservations. He set up the delivery of the flowers (a bouquet, not just all roses). He got himself a suit jacket. He got a box of condoms.

The night before the big day while Sansa went out with Margaery, Jon ironed his outfit and got an overnight bag ready because Sansa had told him he could stay the night. In the morning, he’d get his hair and beard trimmed, and then he’d get the candleholders.

Soon, it would be go time.
Sansa woke the next morning feeling like Snow White. Not in the an-animal-just-poked-me-awake kind of way, but in the I-just-woke-up-with-an-actual-smile kind of way.

She couldn’t remember the last time that had happened.

No, wait. She could. Just the day before. And the day before that.

Basically, since she’d started seeing Jon. Oftentimes, she looked like she slept with a hanger in her mouth.

It was so disgusting and teeth-rotting and so has-everyday-always-been-so-beautiful?

Plain and simple: Jon made her happy. She enjoyed spending time with him. He had a sense of humor rarely seen at the Home and he made her laugh, he was thoughtful in conversation, and despite the fact that he still had some things he needed to work on (like scaring Ygritte), he was a lot more relaxed and happy than he was before.

So many kids in foster care didn’t make a go of it after they aged out. It was a sad state of affairs, but Jon, he was thriving. It was wonderful to see.

And, tonight was the night.

She let out a little giggle as she rolled onto her side and thought about all she wanted to accomplish for today before they went out...before they made love.

First, she wanted to change her sheets. Then she wanted to get some candles set up for when they made it to her bedroom. She needed to shave, exfoliate, polish, tweeze - she needed, basically, to do it all.

And she needed to get a dress for the occasion. Jon had told her to get dressed up, but not prom or wedding party dressed up, a little less than that, but still dressed up. Apparently, there would be dancing, too (squee!) and so she wanted something flowy in the skirt department.

He’d also told her to get something he could easily get off of her.

He’d been bewildered by her needing to know what color he was planning on wearing (navy), and she hadn’t bothered to tell him that she wanted to get something that would be a little matchy matchy.

With the day ahead of her, Sansa threw off the covers and climbed. A big breakfast, shower, and then off to get a dress and do all the things she needed to do before the big night.

Jon checked his phone before he headed into the antique shop. No word from Sansa. Okay, that was odd. He’d gotten a message from the flower shop that her flowers had been delivered and he’d fully expected a text, if not a phone call.

She might be out. She did say something about getting a dress. That was it. She was just out and about doing her thing before tonight.

Feeling better, Jon went inside to get the candle holders.

And ten minutes later, discovered they were gone.
Okay, he thought, *just... regroup.* Sansa had liked many things the last time they were here, he just needed to remember what they were.

He wandered about, eyeballing everything and feeling a big of panic take over him. He didn’t see anything that jumped out and said “Sansa liked me! Buy me!” Nothing small anyway. All the things he saw were the pieces of furniture. He wanted to woo her, but showing up with a fucking Anwar as a gift was a bit extreme, even for him.

In the end, he found a pair of nice candle holders, but they weren’t the ones she’d pointed out so he couldn’t help but feel he’d failed in some way.

And then he went to get beeswax candles and found the store closed.

*Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck!* he screamed in his head.

He sat down on the curb outside along the main strip in downtown Winterfell and started Googling places on his phone that might have candles. Or maybe he could just get something else, why did it have to be candles? He could have gotten her a book or something.

Well, he was in this far…

And where the hell was she anyway?

He texted her. *San, where are you?*

He waited for the ellipses to appear. They didn’t. And he sure as shit couldn’t just sit here all day on a fucking curb and wait.

So, he hauled himself up and went back to Google.

The third dress Sansa tried on was the one. It was gray, off the shoulder with short sleeves, and the bodice appeared as though the material wrapped around her. There was a small shiny silver studded belt, and then it gave way to knee length flowy skirt.

She loved it. It was simple and yet elegant and she had just the right pair of earrings and shoes to match. She didn’t even look at the price when she brought it up to the counter. Today was all about treating herself.

Next on the list was getting a bikini wax.

She floated out of the boutique, smiling happily despite the torture that awaited her.

Candles in hand now, though it took some searching - apparently beeswax candles were not that easy to come by - Jon checked his phone.

Still no answer.

Figuring he’d quit while he was ahead, Jon forewent the haircut and beard trim. With the way things were going this morning, he was afraid to risk it. He could just do it at home...or leave it alone.
He started up his truck, ready to head out of the parking lot and felt something funny going on with it. With a heavy sigh that masked the scream ready to burst forth, he slammed the truck in park and climbed out.

He had a flat.

xxxxxxx

When Sansa got home, her shopping excursion completed successfully, she dabbed the little red area where she’d gotten waxed with Tea Tree Oil and made lunch. She checked her phone for messages and realized she’d had her ringer off the whole time.

She had a few messages from Jon wondering where she was, and she quickly sent him a message telling him she’d had her ringer off while she’d been out, but she was home now and getting ready.

I hope your day is going better than mine, he texted.

She frowned. What happened?

What hasn’t? Sigh. I’m at a garage right now getting a new tire.

Her eyes went wide. You got a flat?!

Yeah, it’s been a day.

She pouted.

Good Christ, I can’t wait to see you. Did you like your flowers?

She frowned. What flowers?

The flowers I had delivered this morning. San, don’t tell me you didn’t get them.

She headed to her door just to make sure… and then did a loop around the house.

San?

I didn’t get them, sweetie.

The ellipses didn’t pop up and Sansa made her way back in her apartment, sat down on her couch and waited...and waited.

Jon?

I can’t believe this day, Sansa. So many things have gone wrong and now I’m worried about our date.

Our date is going to go fine. I’m having a good day, maybe my good day will cancel out your bad one.

Or my bad day will just continue and cancel out your good one.

Impossible. We’ll be together. What could go wrong when we’re together?

Wow, had she come far.

All right, my car is ready. I’m going to go home and have a snack, and then wash this day off me
and get ready to see you, sweet girl.

See you soon!

She sat back, eyes wide. She’d almost typed ‘I love you’.

Oh boy.

She picked up her ham sandwich and fixated on the TV. It was just...something. A fluke? It was something she would type to her siblings, so it meant nothing.

Liar, the little voice in her head said.

It was too soon! They’d only been together for two weeks!

But circling each other for a lot longer.

Too soon, she thought. Too soon.

She was pretty certain that sex with Jon was really going to push her over the edge.

xxxxxxx

Right at seven, Jon knocked on Sansa’s door. He was here now, and nothing else had happened once he’d gotten home so he had high hopes that the night would go well. It had to. He’d only wanted to take Sansa out like this for...forever. He felt as though he’d been preparing for this night since he’d met her. It had to go perfectly even if there were facets of it that were most certainly not. From here on out though, it had to.

When she opened the door and smiled brightly at him, he lost his breath.

“God, you’re gorgeous,” he breathed. The dress was perfect. It was just so Sansa - understated and yet elegant and fun, too. He thrust forward the boxes that held the candles holders and candles.

She took them, grinning, and stepped aside to let him in. “And you look gorgeous too, Jon.”

“I wanted to trim my hair and my beard, but after the morning I had I was afraid of what would happen,” he said as he stepped inside.

“You still look gorgeous.”

He smiled and nodded to the gifts in her hands. “Open them.”

“I thought the flowers were supposed to be the only gift?”

“Well, that didn’t quite work out, did it?”

“Jon,” she chided gently, “You didn’t have to to get me anything.”

“I know, but I wanted to. Open them. Start with the shorter one.”

She smiled as she tore into the gift and when she extracted the holders, she gushed over them.

“The ones you saw the last time we went were gone,” he said with a sigh. “So I looked all over for something else you might like. I wasn’t about to lug a piece of furniture in here, so that’s what I came up with.”
“I love them!” she said excitedly and then she tore into the next one. “Beeswax candles!”

“The place you like to go to was closed. So I had to find a new place...are those okay?”

She put the candles down and turned to him, placing her hands on his shoulders. “Jon, I love my gifts and I love -- I love that you went through all this trouble for me. Stop sounding defeated because they aren’t the exact candles and candle holders I liked. I love them just the same.”

His mind raced to catch up with her words because for a second there he’d lost his breath thinking that she had been about to tell him she loved him.

It had to be wishful thinking.

“I just wanted everything to be perfect,” he finally said.

“Nothing is ever perfect.”

“You are.”

She laughed and shook her head. “No, not by a long shot, but thanks for saying so.”

He reached out and took her hand and brushed a kiss across her knuckles. “Let’s go. I made the reservations for seven-thirty.”

She grabbed her purse off the counter, and he held out his hand for her to take. She slipped her hand into his and kissed his cheek.

Jon’s mouth fell open as he stared at the host of the restaurant he’d chosen for he and Sansa. “Excuse me, what?” he said. “You don’t have my reservation anymore?”

“I deeply apologize, sir. We had you down for seven.” The host at least had the decency to look afraid. As well he should because I’m going to noose him with that fucking bowtie, Jon thought.

“Jon, honey, what’s wrong?” Sansa asked as she came over to stand beside him. She’d been distracted by the piano being played in one of the rooms.

Jon wanted to cry. He wanted to kill the host and then he wanted to cry.

What the fuck else was going to go wrong? Christ. Was he not going to be able to get hard? Prematurely ejaculate?

“There was a mix-up,” he said, trying to sound calm and thinking he was probably horribly failing. “Our reservation was given away.”

“Oh,” Sansa said. “How much of a wait is there?”

The host cleared his throat and he darted a worried glance at Jon. “An hour.”

“Oh,” Sansa said softly. She looked up at Jon. “Let’s just go somewhere else then.”

Jon nodded dumbly and allowed Sansa to pull on his arm and lead him back out the door.

Once they got back in his truck, Jon slumped against the wheel.
Sansa rubbed his back. “Jon, it’s okay--”

“It’s not okay!” he burst out. He sat up and looked over at her. “I’m sorry; I’m not upset with you. It’s not even you I’m shouting out. It’s just this day has sucked so fucking hard, Sansa. I wanted everything to be perfect for you. I wanted everything to just go smoothly and the day has been one cockblock after another.”

“How so? I still plan to have sex with you,” she said with a little laugh. “Jon, I think your mistake was in wanting everything to be perfect. There’s no such thing.”

“Okay, but the flowers? The flat tire? Now the reservations - I can even understand the candle holders to a point, but the rest? It was like the universe was conspiring against me today.”

“I will give you that you did have some epically bad luck today. And I don’t blame you for being frustrated. I would be, too. But let’s not let it ruin the rest of the night.”

“I don’t know where to go,” he said and it came out like a whine. “Where do I take you now?”

“I know the perfect place. It’s cozy, it has the right atmosphere, and it’s close to a bed.”

He looked at her, his expression hopeful. “Where?”

She smiled. “My place.”

He gestured to her. “Sansa, you’re all dressed up. You got a dress for this. You should be able to show it off.”

“I got it for you, not for a bunch of people in a restaurant.”

“I know, but--”

She put her finger to his mouth. “No buts. Let’s go to my house. We’ll get a pizza.”

“A pizza?! He looked and sounded absolutely horrified by the prospect.

“Chinese?” she suggested meekly. He just stared at her incredulously. “Jon, trust me to make it romantic and all the things you wanted this night to be? Please?”

“San.” It sounded like the beginning of a protest.

“Hey.”

He looked at her in question.

Leaning across the consul, she grabbed his face and laid a kiss on him that left no doubt of where her mind was at and what she wanted.

When she broke the kiss, they were both breathless. Jon leaned forward further, seeking more. She laughed and pushed him back. “Drive. Take us to my place.”

He sat back, studied her briefly, and then started up the car and headed home.

xxxxxxxxx

In the end, they ordered baked ziti. It was fancier than Chinese and pizza to Jon, so that’s what they went with. And he asked her to place it as a pick-up order so he could stop by the grocery
store on the way back and get some damn flowers.

While he waited to get their order he watched her set up the kitchen table with the candles and candle holders he’d gotten her. She turned only the light over the sink on so it was dimmer by the table, and she set up her phone to play soft music.

She gestured to the set up. “Yes?”
He nodded, smiling now. “Yes,” he agreed.

“So no more brooding.”
He sighed. “I’m still going to make this all up to you.”
“Jon, there is nothing to make up.”
“I disagree.”
“You’re stubborn.”
He gaped at her. “Hey, kettle, this is the pot. You’re black.”
She laughed. “Okay, okay, okay. Good point.” She glanced at the clock on the wall. “You better get the food.”
“I’m on it,” he said and kissed her quickly before heading out.
Sansa poured them wine while he was gone and then lit the votives in her bedroom, and the few she had in her living room. After dinner, they could do some dancing there.

By the time Jon came back, everything was all set.
She laughed when he came in with the food and a bouquet of assorted flowers. “You never give up, do you?”
He shook his head. “Never.”
She grinned and kissed him gently before grabbing the flowers. “You dish out the food. I’ll get a vase for these.”
Ten minutes later, they were seated at the table and just grinning at each other.
“Are we gross?” she asked.
“You keep saying we are,” he replied. “But I don’t think we are. Or maybe we’re just the right level of gross?”
She nodded. “I like that.”
He reached a hand across the table and she slipped hers into it. He lifted it and kissed her knuckles while looking at her under his long lashes. “I’m glad to be here with you tonight, Sansa. Maybe I did get too attached to how things were supposed to go, but right here and right now, I’m happy.”
She smiled. “I’m glad. I need to eat now before my stomach eats itself.”
He laughed and they both dug in.
Jon finally felt himself relax. Sansa told him about her day which was the exact opposite of his, and he told her about the fight he thought was going to break out between the mechanic and a customer at the place he took his car to get a new tire.

Conversation carried through to cleaning up and then Sansa grabbed her phone that was still playing music, took Jon’s hand, and led him into the living room. She put the phone on a nearby end table and Jon’s mouth turned up into an indulgent smile. Feeling a frisson of anticipation course through her, Sansa lightened the moment by kicking off her shoes. He laughed softly and did the same, followed by the removal of his socks.

Then he pulled her against him and she waited for his kiss. But he didn’t give it. Instead, placed his hands on her hips and she wound her arms around his neck. He watched her, his gaze smouldering and making her skin tingle with awareness.

“All I wanted all day was to be with you,” he said deeply as he rocked them gently to the music.

“Same,” she said softly. “And I know I’ve said it already, but I didn’t need the flowers, or the candles and candle holders or even the restaurant to make tonight special. I love that you put so much thought into tonight, Jon. I really do. It means so much to me that you went through all that trouble. But tonight has been perfect. Maybe not your version of it, but it has been mine. You know why?”

“Why?” he croaked, looking at her in that intense way he had when he was feeling emotional.

“Because I’m with you,” she said simply.

It wasn’t easy, baring herself in this way. Being honest in her feelings considering all the time she spent trying to repress and deny them. It felt right though, to tell him. Jon made it so easy to for her to be open and vulnerable with him because he was always so open and didn’t shy away from showing her his own vulnerability.

He stopped swaying, cradled her face in his hands as though she was something precious, and kissed her long and slow and deep.

“Thank you,” he rasped.

“It’s true.”

He smiled faintly, his eyes darkening, and he slowly laid kisses along her jaw, her chin, the corner of her mouth. He could feel her hot breath on his face and he turned his head. Their lips were just a hairsbreadth apart and Jon flicked his tongue out and licked across the seam of her lips. Her mouth opened and he kissed her gently, so gently it was as though their lips barely touched.

He heard a whimper escape her and that was all Jon could bare. He pressed his mouth firmer against her, tasting her deeper, his tongue tangling with hers.

He broke the kiss, shaking, and pressed his forehead against hers. “I’m nervous,” he whispered.

“So am I,” she whispered back.

“I want to make it good for you.”

“Same.”

He groaned and kissed her again, hotly. Then, he stepped back and with his hand trembling from
need and want and so much love he felt it like a living thing inside him, he held out his hand to her. She sealed her fate when her hand slipped into his. He’d never let her go now.

Jon led her to her bedroom, his heart pounding hard in his chest. He gasped when he saw the room lit up with candles on her bureau and the little table in the corner of the room. “Sansa.”

“Do you like it?”

He turned and kissed her hungrily, practically launching himself at her. “I love it,” he muttered against her lips and gathered her in close. “I love you.”

God, he hoped he hadn’t fucked it all up by saying that. But it was hard to contain it. So many times he wanted to say it and didn’t. And now, now with this step, it felt like the right time. Or so he hoped.

She looked up at him in surprise. “You - you do?”

“You had to know.” He ran a hand through her hair, gazing at her in wonder. “How could you not know?”

“I don’t know,” she whispered. “Will you say it again?”

He framed her face in his hands. “Sansa Stark, I am in love with you.”

She pushed forward to kiss him. “Jon Targaryen, I am in love with you, too.”

Jon felt his breath leave him and he gazed at her searchingly. “Sansa,” he croaked. “Did you - did you just say--”

“I love you,” she confirmed and then laughed, a look of pure joy on her gorgeous face.

“Sansa,” he rasped and then lifted her up in his arms and twirled her around, laughing.

“Jon!” she squealed, laughing as well.

He placed her down on her feet and kissed her fervently. “Sansa, my Sansa.”

“Yes,” she murmured. “I’m yours. And you are mine.”

“Always. Forever,” he said hoarsely. He wound his arms around her tightly, breathing her in. She loved him. She loved him. Had anyone ever…?

“Jon, I can’t breathe!”

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry,” he said quickly, loosening his grip on her.

“Are you okay?” she asked gently, peering up at him.

“I think I might cry,” he confessed on a self-deprecating laugh.

“It’s okay to,” she said and ran her fingers along his face.

He shook his head. “No. Instead, I want to know how to get this dress off. I want to make love to you, Sansa.”

She smiled and stole his heart again. She turned and peered over her shoulder at him. “It unzips.”
His hands held a slight tremor as he slowly pulled the zipper of her dress down. He pressed a kiss between her shoulder blades and then down her back. When the dress met her hips, she pushed it down and stepped out of it.

She turned to face him in a pair of white lace panties with a black bow in the center. Her strapless bra matched. Jon’s mouth watered and his palms itched as he reached out to her. He couldn’t not touch her. He had to or he’d die. “Sansa, God, you’re so beautiful,” he gushed.

He kissed her hard, his tongue stroking against hers as he undid her bra. It fell to the floor and he slipped one hand down to her breast and cupped it in his hand. Just a little more than a handful. He teased her nipple with his thumb, swiping it back and forth until hardened. She moaned, pushing herself into him. “Jon,” she muttered urgently and pushed at his suit jacket. “Take this off.”

He complied, helping her discard it. Then she worked on the buttons of his white shirt and then tugged it free from his pants. He stilled her hands with his. “Slow, Sansa. I want to savor this.”

She nodded and pushed his shirt from his shoulders. Then, she leaned in and licked at a nipple and then sucked. Jon groaned and tangled his hands in her hair. She kissed her way to the next nipple and repeated the action while one hand slid down his pants to his erection. She stroked him and he pressed himself into her hand eagerly and groaned.

Her deft fingers undid his pants and pushed them down followed by his boxers. He bent and rid himself of both and then reached for her. “Time for the panties to go,” he said roughly, and lifted her up in his arms and carried her to the bed. She sat down and leaned back on her elbows. Lifting her legs, Jon took great pleasure in pulling her panties down her legs.

Before she could go anywhere, Jon went to his knees before her and spread her legs. He leaned in, breathing in the scent of her as his hand went down to his cock to stroke it.

“I can smell you,” he murmured. “You’re aroused aren’t you?”

“Oh, God, is the smell bad?” she asked, looking a little worried.

“Fuck no. I love it. It gets me high and makes me hard.” To prove his point, he leaned in again and placed his hands on her thighs as he licked up her slit.

“Jon,” she whimpered.

“Oh, baby, you’re wet,” he muttered and rolled his tongue around her protruding clit. He swiped his tongue back and forth and up and down and then licked deep inside her. This time he started to spell out ‘Sansa belongs to Jon Targaryen’. After every word, he sucked on her clit.

Her hands speared through his hair and tugged. He grunted. A little pain with his pleasure. He liked it.

“Jon Jon Jon Jon,” she babbled. Her face was turned on the comforter and she rubbed her cheek against it as she moved her hips, thrusting against his mouth. He had just started on his name when she came, crying out, and pulling his hair. She fell back on the bed, limp.

Jon licked at her gently, soothing her taut legs and enjoying the feel of her silken skin under his hands. He stood, gazing down at his woman. She was the picture of bliss, laying there with her chest heaving and her hair splayed out on the white comforter. Her cheeks were flushed and her lips were swollen from his kisses.

“Fuck, you’re gorgeous,” he muttered. “And mine.”
She blushed prettily and sat up, and beckoned him closer with a wave of her hand. He followed her summons and nearly came when she bent her head and took his cock in her mouth. He went cross-eyed and his hands went in her hair. “Fuck,” he muttered. “Sansa...” She hummed and his knees nearly buckled as the sensation went straight through his cock. When he looked down to watch, he noticed her touching herself and nudged her shoulder. “Sansa, stop. I don’t want to cum in your mouth, baby. I need inside you now.”

She moved back and licked her lips. He groaned. This woman was going to be the death of him.

She scooted back to the middle of the bed and Jon started to climb onto it. Shit. Condoms.

“Condoms, in my wallet,” he told her. He felt a bit out of sorts. His pants were on the floor, but where in the mess of clothes, and could he manage to even get them out his pockets with his hands shaking and his woman waiting for him on the bed. He could smell her arousal in the air and he needed her now.

“Also in the top drawer of my nightstand,” she told him.

He shot her a grateful look before diving for the nightstand. There were right on top and he dug in the box and yanked one out. He tossed it on the bed beside her and climbed over her. Bracing himself on one hand, he slid one hand along her left leg, up over her stomach, and then between her breasts. He then put his hand back down on the bed and leaned down to suck at her left nipple. Her hands went to his hair again and she moaned, arching her back and pushing her chest up.

“You have the sexiest tits,” he told her.

“Jon, don’t say tits,” she scolded gently.

He laughed. “What do you want me to call them then?”

“Breasts.”

“They’re tits. Beautiful tits with nipples that are begging to be sucked.”

He made his point, by bending to the other breast and tending to it as he had done the other.

“Do you have any idea how fucking gorgeous you are?” he asked as he lifted up to look her over. “Fucking hell, Sansa. You are a work of art.”

“So are you, sexy man.”

“I’m okay,” he said with a chuckle.

“Okay?” she said incredulously. “Jon, have you seen you? Those abs, that ass.”

“Now Sansa, you shouldn’t say ‘ass’. Say buttocks.”

She laughed. “Oh, fuck you.”

They laughed together and then Jon bent down and kissed her ravishly. She pulled him down to her by his shoulders and he went happily. He loved the feel of her body against his, all that softness against his hardness, the silken feel of her skin, the pebbled buds of her nipples, her scent in his nose.

She was a feast for the senses.
Her hands slipped over his ass and pushed him into her. He gasped at the feel of her wet core and she moaned, “Jon, now.”

Yes, he thought, now. He was at the point that if he couldn’t have her, he would lose his mind. He got up on his knees and she tore open the condom wrapper for him and tossed it away. He took the condom and rolled it onto his length, gasping when Sansa stroked him.

He took a moment to just look down at her. Their eyes met, she nodded, and bent and spread her legs. Kneeling between them, Jon took hold of his cock and placed it at her pussy.

“Yes,” she whispered, nodding.

Slowly, Jon eased the crown inside her. She was so fucking tight. He pushed further and shut his eyes tight. “You’re so tight and hot,” he breathed.

He started to use short strokes to ease himself further inside her. Sansa whimpered and moaned, her hands fistng the comforter under her hands, her brows scrunched tight. “You’re so big,” she gasped.

“Am I hurting you?” he managed to get out.

“No, keep going. Don’t stop, please.” She sounded needy, as though she might perish (or strangle him) if he stopped. He understood. He didn’t know what he’d do if she asked him to stop now. Thankfully, that wasn’t going to be a problem.

After a few strokes, he was finally seated firmly inside her.

He stared at his cock inside her cunt and couldn’t believe it. He was inside her. He was inside Sansa. Finally. How many nights had he dreamed of this? Fantasized about it? Ached and yearned for it until he thought his heart might shatter? Just being with her, in any capacity, knowing that she wanted to be with him and now, now she’d said she loved him. Sansa Stark was in love with him and he was making love to her.

And all his fevered fantasies had not prepared Jon for how amazing it felt to be inside her. How she sucked him inside her, and how he felt as though he didn’t know where she ended and he began. He hugged her bent knees to him for leverage and, his eyes on her dazed ones, began to move.

He watched her, how her breasts moved with each thrust, how her mouth parted and little whimpers escaped her throat, and then he watched where they were joined and was amazed by the sight of his cock disappearing in her cunt.

When her pussy tightened around him, he growled. “Do that again.”

She did and he stopped moving.

“Why did you stop?” she gasped.

“I don’t want to cum yet,” he told her.

“Come here,” she said holding out her hands. “I want you.”

“Oh, baby you have me,” he said as he covered her with his body and pressed his forehead against hers. “You have me. Tell me what you want, what you need.”

She slid her hands down his back and over his ass.
She was hinting, but not saying. He wanted her to say it.

“Tell me, sweet girl. Tell me what you need. Harder? Faster?”

“Yes,” she croaked.

“Both? You have to say it, San.”

“Both. Harder. Faster.”

He was happy to comply. He thrust inside her hard, and she gasped. Pulling out slowly, he thrust back in just as hard and repeated that until she was clawing her nails up his back.

She was close. He wanted her closer because he couldn’t hold on much longer. He shortened his thrusts and shifted them so that her ass was up. He bent her legs back and began to pile drive inside her.

“Jon,” she panted. “Oh God, right there, right there, don’t stop!”

He was lost to this, he couldn’t even think or speak. His body was ready and he wanted Sansa with him.

“Jon!” she screamed as her legs went taut. “Jon, Jon, oh God, Jon…”

The sound of his name on her lips as she came pushed him right over the edge. That, and the clutch of her pussy. He threw his head back, grunting, and then gasped. “Sansa!” as he came. He didn’t think he’d ever stop.

Spent, and a little dizzy, he collapsed against her. They both breathed heavy together, and after a few, Jon found the energy to roll off of her. He pulled Sansa with him and she burrowed into his side, one arm draped across his chest. She was slick to the touch, but then so was he. Pleasure rippled through him like he’d never known before.

“How do you feel, sweet girl?” he asked softly.

“Wow,” was all she said and then laughed giddily.

He broke into a smile and moved down until they were face-to-face. He kissed her, holding her face in place with his hand. “Wow, indeed,” he agreed. “Let me take care of this condom,” he said. “Want to take a bath?”

“Maybe later,” she said, surprising him. “I like that I can smell you on me right now.”

His dick twitched at that and he groaned. Reluctantly, he got up and then pointed at her as he stood by the bed. “Don’t you dare move.”

She smiled. “Yes, sir.”

Feeling a thrill at her words, he hurried to the bathroom to dispose of the condom. It wasn’t going to be very long until he was ready again.
Chapter Notes

For all my lovely supportive friends. I love you all so much! Banner by @asongforjonsa who is an amazing human being and professional sweetheart.
Sansa lay on her side, curled up almost in a ball with her hand under her cheek as she watched Jon sleep. He was on his back, head up, one hand on his stomach, his curls all in disarray on her pillow, with the sheet down to his waist.
It was morning and she was still tired from the night before - they’d made love three times in all. Her muscles were sore, but pleasantly so. The kind of sore where you knew you had a workout...and sex was indeed a workout. She blushed, remembering how Jon had taken her in the bathroom over the sink after they’d brushed their teeth. And she’d even brushed in front of him.

She felt happier than she’d been in a long time...maybe even ever? She was downright giddy, truth be told. There was that sense, too, of free falling and the helplessness that comes with that. Giddy and terrified. Those went together, right?

She loved Jon and she wanted to keep Jon and she wanted everything to be okay. Okay as in he healed from his horrible upbringing and the pain caused him by his parents, and she found a way to tell her family about him.

Maybe she could just not tell them she knew him in Dorne. Maybe that would be better...? They could just pretend they’d met for the first time at family dinner. That’s what Jon had suggested already.

But could she really keep all that a secret? It felt like a betrayal to her family in some way by keeping it from them, and did that mean Jon would just lie about the circumstances of his life before Winterfell completely? That didn’t seem right. After all he’d gone through and survived it felt wrong somehow.

She was so proud of him and what he’d become. He was a success story.

And now she wanted him awake. Reaching out she used the tip of her finger to gently stroke down his nose again and again. His nose twitched and she swallowed a giggle and stopped until he settled again. She did it again and then squealed when he grabbed her wrist and pulled her to him.

He rolled on top of her and blinked still drowsy eyes at her. “What are you doing?” he asked, his voice rough from sleep and a little smile on his lips.

“I wanted you awake,” she told him with a grin.

“Why?” His lips curled into a smirk.

She pushed him off her and onto his back. Straddling, him, she entwined her hands with his and pushed them to the bed.

“No worries over morning breath? Or did you already brush?” he teased her.

“No worries,” she chirped. “Our breaths can stink together.”

He laughed. “How romantic.”

She leaned down to kiss and muttered against his lips, “I’m growing.”

“Speaking of growing,” he muttered back and lifted his hips, letting her feel his erection against her ass.

She moaned and kissed him, rubbing herself against his hard shaft. “You’re still up for more?”

He spun her onto her back, resting between her legs. His eyes had darkened and the look of hunger on his face was unmistakable. “With you? Always.”

“Condom,” she managed to say before they were past the point of no return. And that was coming closer and closer like a fast-moving train.
He groaned as he leaned over to her nightstand to grab a condom. Sansa giggled. “Jon, you’re going to fall off the bed!”

“I trust you won’t let me,” he told her and she lifted her knees and squeezed his hips with them.

“Got it!” he announced and knelt with his legs spread over her.

Sansa snatched the condom from his hand and undid the wrapper. As she sheathed him with the condom she said, “I went on the pill again last week. I’ll let you know when it’s safe.”

His smile was smug.

“What?” she asked curiously.

“Just that you went on the pill last week knowing that one day soon we’d be here, but you didn’t go on it for what’s-his-face.”

She laughed. “Yeah, I guess that’s telling isn’t it?

He took hold of his cock and teased her slit, running the length along her clit. “Mmmm… very telling. You knew you were my girl before you were officially my girl…”

“Jon?”

“Yes?”

“Will you fuck me now?”

Jon kept his eyes trained on her as he pushed inside her. “Yes.”

Sansa lifted her arms, reached for him. “Come here.”

He bent to kiss her and she ran both hands through his hair and then wrapped her arms around him.

“I love you,” she whispered.

His head dropped and his nose skimmed against the top of her breast. “Fuck,” he muttered.

“What’s wrong, love?”

“Christ, Sansa,” he gasped.

She tugged on his hair. “Talk to me.”

He looked up at her, eyes shining. “Just...you said it last night and I thought maybe it was just the moment.”

“I said it a lot last night.”

“We had a lot of moments.”

She smiled. “We did.”

“But now you’re saying it in the light of day.”

“Because I meant it each time I said it.”

“I know,” he said hoarsely. “And it’s amazing to me. No one has ever said it...I mean, my Mom -
and God, I don’t want to be thinking of her while I’m inside you, but she never… anyway, you - you mean it.”

She nodded. “I do.” She kissed him lovingly and then pushed him. “On your back.”

He complied happily and she straddled him and placed him inside her. She leaned down and brushed her lips gently against his. “Let me love you, Jon. Let me show you what it means to be loved by me.”

He gripped each ass cheek in both hands. “Yes,” he growled. “Show me. All the time, every day. Please.”

“I promise I will,” she murmured and began to ride him slowly.

“More, Sansa, I need more, baby,” he moaned and pulled her down to him. He kissed her hard and started to thrust up inside her. She leaned forward so that her breasts were in his face and her hands were on the headboard behind him. She lifted up and let him lead.

Her eyes fluttered shut at the feel of his mouth on her breasts, sucking at each nipple, and pinching them with his hands while he fucked up into her hard and fast.

“On all fours,” he rasped and pulled her off of him. He arranged her how he wanted her, her legs spread obscenely wide as he planted himself between them from behind her. She loved this.

“Spread your ass for me,” he rasped when he’d already started a steady rhythm. “I want to see that little rosebud.”

*Oh my God,* she thought. “Jon!”

“What is it, sweet girl? That too dirty for you?”

“Yes!”

He chuckled. “It’s me, Sans. It’s us. And I want to see.”

Mustering her courage, she rested the side of her face down on the mattress and then reached behind her and slowly spread her cheeks. She shut her eyes, as though that would somehow stop him from seeing.

“Yes, that’s it. That’s my girl,” he murmured and caressed that spot with his hand. Her eyes flew open. What was he doing?!

“Anyone ever take your ass before, Sansa?” he asked, fucking her harder.

“No--no,” she grunted.

“How about smacking this ass? Anyone ever do that?”

“No!”

And then he did. She gasped.

“Did I hurt you?”

“No,” she whimpered.
“Do you want me to do it again?”

“Yes,” she admitted.

He did. Twice more.

And then she came hard, screaming into the mattress while his thumb stroked her rosebud.

Jon grunted. “I can feel it. I can feel you cumming...tightening around my dick...squeezing me, sucking me inside you...you want my cum, Sansa?”

“Yes,” she whimpered again. “Cum, Jon, cum…”

He came with a roar, gripping her hips and thrusting three times inside her, and then holding still as he emptied into the condom.

Sansa fell to the bed, her knees weak and Jon followed her down. He curled himself around her, holding her against his front. “My sweet Sansa,” he murmured, kissing her shoulder. “My sweet girl.”

She nodded, feeling as though she needed a nap. “Yours,” she murmured.

xxxxxxxxxxxxx

Let me know how it goes

Jon smiled as he texted Sansa back with a quick I will. He turned off his ringer and slipped it into his pocket as he headed down the hall to his therapist's room.

“Ready?” Dr. Tyrion Lannister asked, smiling as he stood before his open office door.

Jon nodded. “Ready as I’ll ever be.”

“Nervous?” Tyrion asked as Jon passed by him and entered the office. It was a narrow room with a love seat against a large window at the other end and an end table with a tissue box on it. Tyrion’s desk was against the wall to the left and a small table sat against the wall opposite his desk. There was a rather large plant that looked almost fake on the table, but upon closer inspection was actually real.

Jon sat down on the loveseat and sort of sank into it. The room smelled of lavender, which made Jon think of Sansa. She had this lavender room spray she used sometimes in her apartment.

“A little nervous,” Jon admitted and crossed one leg over his thigh. He jiggled his foot.

Tyrion looked down at it as he took his seat. “Maybe more than a little?”

Jon stopped jiggling his foot. “Maybe.”

“Tell me what made you make an appointment to see me, Jon.”

Jon liked that Tyrion used his name and he smiled. “My girlfriend.”

Christ. Saying it out loud made it even more real. Sansa was his girlfriend. Sansa was his. “Your girlfriend made you make an appointment?” Tyrion asked with one brow raised.
“Well, see…” He paused. He didn’t want to do this part. He heaved a sigh. “I just got out of foster care a few months ago and she thought I might have some things to talk about.”

“Oh?”

“Well, yeah, she’s a therapist, too.”

“I see,” Tyrion said and grabbed a legal pad off his desk and started to take notes. Jon felt himself tense. He would do it when Sansa did it in the Home, too. The idea of these notes being written down about him that led to someone making assumptions about him, or piecing him together like a puzzle felt odd. Intrusive, even. He understood it, but that didn’t mean he was ever comfortable with it.

“What does that mean?” Jon asked, feeling a bit edgy now.

“What does what mean?”

“That you see?”

Tyrion smiled gently. “It meant nothing.”

“Then what did you write down?”

“That you have a girlfriend, she’s a therapist, and you just came out of foster care. Tell me, did you age out of the system or were you placed in a home?”

“Aged out,” Jon said tightly. His foot started to jiggle again.

“What put you in foster care?”

Jon’s jaw clenched. “My Mom.”

“Can you tell me about that?”

Sansa checked her phone again as she sipped her hot chocolate. His session had to be over by now, what was taking him so long? She sat back against her couch, trying not to worry.

The past few days had been blissful. They had barely been apart except when they each had to work, but they kept in touch via text all through the day as time allowed.

Jon had slept over every night since they’d first been together, and even though she was admittedly a little tired from his early mornings, she still wanted him there.

A knock on her door had her shooting up from the couch and running to the door. She just knew it was Jon.

When she flung the door open and saw him standing there, she had just started to say, “How did it go?” when he grabbed her into his arms and held on tight.

“Jon, honey?” she asked softly. His shoulders started to shake. He was crying. Sansa squeezed him into her. “What happened, baby?”

“Just talking about all that shit with my Mom,...rehashing it…” he murmured into her neck.
She knew that was going to be hard for him. It was part of the process though. It was something he needed to go through in order to get out the other side. But instead of saying any of that, Sansa just held him in her arms as he let it all out.
Thank you for your help @asongforjonsa!

AND for the gorgeous moodboard!!
darling,

I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you.
Jon steered Sansa backwards into her apartment, his hands on her hips. Once fully inside, he kicked the door shut with his booted foot and then spun her so she was against the door. His face was still wet from tears, but the need to be one with her was strong. He wanted her, and he wanted her now.

He kissed her hard and she moaned and pulled her head back, breaking the kiss. “Jon, we should talk about this.”

“Later,” he said gruffly. “Need you now.”

What followed next was an urgent yanking, tugging, and pulling off of clothes all between hot open-mouthed kisses. When Jon finally had Sansa naked, he reached for her, intent on picking her up and fucking her right there.

She stopped him with a hand on her chest. Her eyes dark with lust she rasped, “Condom.”

He swore and yanked his jeans up off the floor and dug into his front pocket for his wallet. He pulled it out and tossed his wallet to the floor. He didn’t care. He was nearing the point of no return and from the way Sansa was rubbing her legs together, so was she.

His hands shook when he tried to roll the latex down his length and Sansa took over and did it for him. She was in his arms a second after that and he scooped her up so that her legs were around his waist. He shifted her, found her wet heat, and then slid himself home while pushing her back against the door. Her head went back against the door and her eyes rolled up. “Jon,” she gasped.

“My sweet girl,” he muttered. “I love you so much.”

“I love you,” she breathed.

It took a lot for him to stop in that moment, and Sansa looked at him incredulously as he slid himself out of her and set her down on her feet.

“Turn around,” he rasped.

She did as he asked and put her hands on the wall. She looked at him over her shoulder.

“Hands up,” he ordered and she slid them up to just above her head.

Jon took over, grabbing both hands and pushing them up until her arms were straight and her wrists were crossed. “Like this, San. Don’t move.”

“Hurry,” she whimpered.

He liked it, the surge of control he felt in that moment. He’d never abuse it, never use it to hurt Sansa - never that - but maybe...tease her?

“Bend a little,” he said. And she did. Her ass stuck out just enough that it caused a lovely arch in her back. Her tits were pushed against the door while her long, slender arms were raised above her head.

“Fucking hell, you’re a picture,” he muttered.

“Don’t take a picture of me like this!” she exclaimed and started to move.

“Don’t move,” he growled.
She paused, seeming to think over that command coupled with his tone and slowly got back into position. Then she looked at him again over her shoulder and blinked, eyes wide and innocent.

Jon growled again, gripped her hips, and slammed back inside her. She gasped and just when he worried he might have hurt her she moaned, “More.”

And so it was off to the races. He fucked hard. He fucked her fast. He reached around her and worked her clit, alternating between pinching it and stroking it.

“You know what I think?” he said in her ear, sweat beading on his forehead.

She moaned.

He smacked her ass and took a risk. “I asked you a question.”

She gasped. “What?”

“I think you like it a little rough. I think you like it when I tell you what to do.”

She didn’t answer him.

“Answer me or I stop fucking you.”

She nodded.

He slowed his pace and she let out a strangled cry of frustration. “Now now, my naughty girl,” he cooed as he rubbed the side of his face against hers, his body molding itself against hers. “You have to say it. Tell me you like it when I’m in control of you.”

“I like it,” she said softly, almost a whisper.

“Tell me you want me to keep fucking you, Sansa.” He wanted to make her say it and he fucking hoped she did so, and quickly, because it was a strain to not move inside her.

“I want you to keep fucking me,” she sobbed. “Please, Jon.”

“Good girl…” he said and started to move, but slowly. “Good, good girl…”

“Jon,” she mewed, “Faster, please…”

“Oh, I like it when you beg me, sweet girl,” he said darkly into her ear. “My sweet sweet Sansa...you are my Sansa, aren’t you?”

She nodded.

“Say it.”

“I’m yours, Jon, I’m yours.”

“Are you close, my love?”

“Yes,” she sobbed again.

“So am I.” And he quickened his pace, his fingers on her clit.

Soon, she was screaming her release and Jon was right behind her, roaring out his release. “I can’t wait to cum inside you,” he moaned into her neck. “Fuck, I want to see my cum dripping out of
She shuddered and he grinned. “You like that idea too, don’t you? My naughty girl, my good girl, my dirty girl…”

Her arms dropped slowly and she leaned back against him. Jon spun her around and swept her up in his arms. “Let’s get cleaned up,” he said and carried her to the bathroom.

“Look at you getting in the shower with me,” Jon teased when they stepped into the shower together.

Sansa made a point to look at him while standing under the spray. “I told you I was growing,” she said, managing to spray water on him as she spoke. He laughed and pulled her against him.

“I love you,” he murmured helping her get the water out of her eyes.

“I love you, too,” she said with a bright smile.

“I didn’t hurt you at all, did I?” he asked.

She shook her head. “No. Well, I mean, it stings a little when you smack my ass.”

He looked horrified. “Then I’ll stop.”

“No!” she burst out. She bit her lip and looked up at him coyly. “I like it.”

“Intriguing,” he said on a low rumble. “What else do you like, Sansa?”

“I...well, I mean, I kind of like it when you’re all forceful and growly and telling me what to do and moving me the way you want me…” She buried her face in his bare chest. “I know I shouldn’t be embarrassed by the fact that I have some kinks, I just didn’t know I had them until...well, you.”

Jon considered this. “I didn’t know I had them either until you. Well, I mean, I think I had an idea? I’ve always thought I could be a little dom-ish. Sansa, look at me, baby.” She looked up at him, her cheeks red, and he grinned. “I like going a little dom on you. So you must like being my sub?”

She wrinkled her nose. “I’m not sure I’m comfortable with that label. I don’t know why.”

He laughed. “I know why.”

She narrowed her eyes. “Do I want to ask?”

“Probably not. It includes the words control and freak.”

She tugged on his hair lightly. “Pot. Kettle.”

He laughed again and then kissed her softly. “Tell me though…”

“Yeah?”

“How far does this reach?”

“So meaning?”

He trailed fingertips down her back, making her shiver. “I mean, can I try other things?”
“Like…?”

“Like tying you up.”

She shivered and he grinned. “So, that’s a yes. Perhaps some toys?”

She frowned now. “Am I boring you already?”

“God, no! *Fuck* no. I just - I want to do everything with you. I want to explore with you.”

“Maybe not all at once?”

He made a face. “I’m doing it again, aren’t I? Jumping ahead?”

“Yeah, a little. If you can handle a little vanilla now and then I think I’d like that.”

“Nothing about us coming together is vanilla, Sansa,” he murmured and then kissed her long and deep.

His stomach rumbling caused Sansa to giggle. “Let’s wash and eat, lover.”

He tapped her ass lightly with his hand when she moved past him to get the shampoo. She squealed and glared playfully at him over her shoulder. He grinned in response, and then the two began to wash up.

About an hour later, the two sat at Sansa’s kitchen table with a pizza and a couple waters between them.

“Do you want to talk about your session?” Sansa asked him gently.

He chewed on a bite of his slice and shook his head. “No, not yet. I mean, you know it all already. All Dr. Lannister did was ask about my history - my mom, my Dad, foster care...it was just talking about it and reliving it in my head. You know it kicks up at me from time-to-time, but I thought on some level I was putting it behind me.”

“And you’ve realized that you haven’t.”

“Not yet.”

“It will take some time.”

“I know, and I want to be able to share things that we talk about with you but just not all the time. I want to keep it separate because I don’t want you to put your therapist hat on and be that for me, too. You’re my girlfriend and when I talk to you about it, I want you to listen and respond to me as a girlfriend, not a therapist. Does that make sense?”

She smiled and nodded, reaching across the table to squeeze his hand. “Perfect sense.”

“I haven’t told him about us yet,” he said. “That the girlfriend I mentioned and the one who was my social worker in Dorne are the same person.”

“Are you afraid to?” she asked cautiously.

He sat back, folding his arms across his chest. “How do I answer that…”

“Oh my God, is it possible you finally see what I tried to tell you?” she asked incredulously.
He sat up and held up his hands. “Now don’t get all excited yet.”

She raised her brows and pursed her lips as she sat up straight and folded her hands on the table. “Yes?”

“I don’t think that there is anything wrong with our relationship, Sansa. But today it did occur to me that others, like your family, might not see it that way. I’ve spent enough time trying to convince you that we belong together, I don’t want to have to go through all of that with your family once they find out I’m the asshole who made you leave Dorne.”

“You’re not an asshole.”

He shrugged. “I can be. I’ll own that.”

“So then what are you saying then?”

“I think we should lie.”

Sansa sat back, brows knit together. “Lie.”

“I know you don’t feel comfortable doing that, but it won’t harm anyone to tell them what I suggested before - we ran into a few times and I asked you out.”

Sansa frowned. “Maybe we should say I asked you out sometime after you moved my bookcase in. Robb will just get pissy that you didn’t ask him if you could date me first.”

“Whatever you think is best.”

She scrunched up the side of her face, and peered at him through one eye. “You sure you’re not afraid to tell Tyrion?”

He sighed. “I suppose it’s occurred to me that he could have the same reservations about our relationship that you had. But Sansa - I’m not ashamed of us. We know what the deal is. We love each other and this is working, yes?”

“Yes,” she agreed with a nod and a smile. “But if my family did know they might not understand.” She sighed. “Not many would actually. They’d see me taking advantage of you. They’d see boundaries being crossed.”

“And I don’t want that.”

Her smile was soft. “Are you trying to protect me?”

“Yes. And us. I don’t want anything to ruin what we have, Sansa. It’s…” He sat back again and held out his hand. “Come here, please.”

She got up and made her way over to him. She took his hand and he pulled her down onto his lap and kissed her. “You are everything to me, Sansa,” he said hoarsely. His hand was tangled in her hair at the back of her head and he pressed their foreheads together. “I can’t lose you. I won’t.”

She ran her finger down the slope of his nose. “You won’t,” she promised. “I want to protect you too, you know. I don’t want them to think you’re an asshole.”

“I’d prefer they didn’t think that either.”

“But I don’t want to lie about your past either, Jon. You have come so far and accomplished so
much. I don’t want you to be ashamed of any of it. None of it was your fault.”

“I know,” he croaked. “We can just tell them I was in foster care already or something. Can we just...think about that later?"

She nodded and kissed him softly. “When do you want to tell my family we’re together?”

He let go of her hair as he looked up at her. “It’s up to you. I wouldn’t mind having you to myself a little bit longer.”

She smirked. “You find sneaking around kind of hot, admit it.”

He laughed. “I do; I admit it. But you know what I want?”

“What’s that?”

“To be at work one day when you call Robb and ask to talk to me.”

She furrowed her brow. “What?”

“One day while I was at work, I was in the trailer with Robb and you called to tell him to hurry up and get down to The Wall to meet you, he-who-shall-not-be-named, and Margaery. I imagined you calling one day and after talking to Robb, asking to talk to me to tell us both to hurry up and meet you and Margaery.”

“You little shit!” she exclaimed. “You knew about Dickon already?!”

“All based on that phone call and Robb telling me about him,” he said with a grin. “I couldn’t tell you all my secrets considering you were already pretty freaked out about me being here to begin with.”

“You are nothing if not determined,” she said with a snort.

“I know a good thing,” he murmured and kissed her.

“Speaking of good things...” she purred and slipped her hand under his shirt.

His eyes darkened. “Do you have any idea how much it turns me on when you initiate sex?”

She met his gaze straight on while running her nails lightly across his abs. “Show me how much?”

With a growl, Jon slid one arm under her knees and braced the other against her back. He stood and she squealed happily.

“Let’s go, my little vixen,” he said as he started for her bedroom.
Chapter Notes

thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you thank you israfel00 for all your help with this chapter! Seriously, thank you so much!

Gorgeous and perfect moodboard by @asonforjonsa!
“Hello, Sansa, it’s Melisandre. I called a couple times and haven’t heard back and I just want to know how you’re doing and how things are going with you-know-who. Give me a call, would you? Thanks.”

Sansa sighed as she deleted the message and then set her phone down on her desk. She sat back and then opened her laptop and signed onto her email.

It was true, Mel had called a couple times in the past couple weeks, and Sansa had not returned the calls. She hadn’t even listened to the messages. This time she did. She couldn’t ignore Mel forever. Even if she wanted to.

She was afraid if she talked to her, Mel would somehow hear it in her voice that she and Jon were together, or she’d ask questions that would force Sansa to lie. She wasn’t good at lying. Lying to her family was going to be rough, but she would do it. Lying to Melisandre, who was a bloodhound, would be harder. She’d once caught Jon out for spray painting at school based on his tone of voice when asked about it. She knew the tells.

So, she sent an email instead.

**To: Melisandra**
**From: Sansa**
**Re: Hello**

*Hello, Mel!*

*I’m sorry I haven’t called back! Things have been crazy here.*

*I just got your message and since I have a busy day with clients starting very soon, I thought I’d email you while I’m thinking of it.*

*Everything is good. No need to worry. The Jon situation is under control. I told him it was done and over with and after some back-and-forth, he finally stopped coming around.*

*We don’t talk at all, and we don’t see each other. It’s over.*

*Let me know how things are on your end!*
Sansa

Short and sweet and hopefully convincing?

Shutting the lid on her laptop, Sansa grabbed her file for her next client off the desk and read over the notes she’d made last session to prepare.

xxxxxxxxxx

Tyrion looked pointedly at Jon’s bouncing leg. “Nervous again today, Jon?”

Jon shook his head. “Antsy. We’re getting to the end of the house we’ve been working on at work, the outside anyway.”

“Ah, just in time. Soon it’s going to get cold. The winters here can be brutal.”

“So I’ve heard,” Jon said. “Anyway, everyone was all excited at work today and I had that feeling of accomplishment, ya know? That feeling that I helped create this structure that over the next few months will have an inside soon, too.”

Tyrion smiled. “That feeling of accomplishment - it feels good, doesn’t it?”

Jon nodded. “It does. I never really had that before. It wasn’t until I got a job while in the Home that I got that feeling. And then when I came here and got a job and an apartment...it felt good to have something of my own.”

“Things like that give you a sense of security and self.”

“Yeah, and God knows I didn’t have much security growing up. Sometimes what I have now doesn’t feel real. Sometimes I still dream I’m at the Home or I’m with my mom, and I wake up and have to remind myself that I’m here in Winterfell, and I have a place of my own. That I have a car and a job and a girlfriend who loves me.”

“Can you tell me more about your girlfriend?”

Jon’s mouth stretched into a lazy and affectionate smile, the way it always did when he thought of Sansa. He slumped down a bit in his seat. “What do you want to know?”

Tyrion smiled. “Anything you want to tell me. I can tell she definitely makes you smile and from the looks of it, relaxes you.”

“Relaxes me?”

Tyrion pointed to his legs. “You’re not bouncing your leg anymore.”

Jon laughed and sat back up in his seat. “Yeah, she’s...everything to me.”

“Define everything.”

“My whole world? She always believed in me and fought for me and I knew then that I wanted her. But it wasn’t until I got to know her, really know her, that I fell for her. Hard.”

Tyrion’s brows furrowed. “How long have you been dating?”
“Just a little over a month now.”

“And how long have you known her?”

Jon fell silent.

“Jon?” Tyrion prompted.

Jon leaned forward, elbows on knees. “Can I ask you a question?”

“Of course,” Tyrion said, but he sounded and looked a bit worried.

“Have you ever dated a client? I mean, a former client?”

Tyrion blinked. “Jon, was your girlfriend your therapist before me?”

Jon sat back. “Yes and no?”

“Can you explain that?”

Jon looked away and he started bouncing his leg again.

“Jon?”

Jon looked at Tyrion. “The thing is, she warned me about this and I was so focused on her and convincing her to be with me that I really didn’t think about what she was telling me. I kind of steamrolled right over it. See, I’m really good at coming up with counter-arguments. Some people call it playing devil’s advocate and others call it manipulation. My girlfriend calls it manipulation and she made me stop doing it. But I got her, see? I wasn’t about to give her up after all the work I did to get here. I did all of that for her. I mean, yeah it benefited me too, but I set up the life I have now to make her want to be with me. To show her that I could make something of myself just as she told me I could.”

Tyrion held up a hand. “Jon, what was your girlfriend to you before she became your girlfriend?”

Jon sighed. “She was my social worker at the Home in Dorne.”

Tyrion let out a long sigh as he sat back and studied Jon. “Jon, that’s...that’s crossing a line. A line no social worker and therapist should ever cross.”

“That’s what her argument has been.”

“So then what changed her mind?”

“I wouldn’t give up.”

“No matter if you wouldn’t give up, she should not have given in. How old is she?”

“Twenty-seven.”

“So, she’s young herself still, but that is a considerable age gap still.”

“Whatever,” Jon scoffed, “It’s not like I’m a typical eighteen-year-old. Not after all the shit I dealt with as a kid. I had to grow up pretty fucking fast to take care of myself since nobody else was going to.”
“Jon, calm down—”

“No, I don’t want to calm down. You’re making it sound as though what Sa—my girlfriend and I have is wrong.”

“Were you involved when you were under her care?”

“No, of course not,” Jon spat. “She would have never - she left Dorne because of me.”

“How so?”

“Because I wanted her and I was determined to have her. I kissed her. I tracked her down at her house.”

“You scared her.”

“And I know that it was wrong. I scared her away. She left to get away from me.”

Tyrion pursed his lips together. “And where did she go?”


Tyrion’s expression turned to stone. “Jon, I’m going to ask you again to calm down. If you can’t, then you’ll have to leave.”

Jon jumped up and glared down at Tyrion who stared back up at him, showing no fear whatsoever. Jon stomped to the door and left, slamming the door behind him.

He stormed out to his truck and once he was inside, he pulled out his phone and texted Sansa. You home?

It took a bit for her to text back and Jon felt his impatience grow with every minute that passed. He was about to call her when her text came through: I’m out with Margaery. What’s up?

“Fuck!” he shouted. He raked a hand through his hair, trying to reign in his temper and frustration and the worry growing inside him. Can I see you tonight?

He thought, Like fucking now.

She texted back quicker this time. You okay?

No, he fucking wasn’t okay. He wanted to cry and rage at the same time. He wanted to hit something.

And he wanted to fuck Sansa until she was crying out for him. He wanted to stake his claim on her. Make her never forget that she belonged to him and he would never ever let her go.

I just miss you, baby.

He tapped his hand on the steering wheel, waiting for her reply.

I’ll text you when I get home, okay?

He shook his head, despite the fact that she couldn’t see him. Just come over to my place when you’re done.
He wanted her in his apartment. In his bed, in his sheets, her head on his pillow. He wanted inside her, lodged there so deep that she could only feel him and see him. He wanted his scent on her. His mark upon her skin.

If he could he’d lock her up there and never let her go.

_No_, he thought. _Sansa wouldn’t like that._

He was aware of the fact that he was going down the rabbit hole at the moment, so he figured the least he could do was do it at home while he cleaned for Sansa’s arrival.

So, fifteen minutes later as he scrubbed and vacuumed and washed the dishes, he attempted to do break it down into bits in his mind, just as Sansa had once tried to get him to do at the Home when he had been spiraling over something else.

Tyrion’s comment about how being involved with Sansa was crossing lines - namely for her - was upsetting to him. He felt it as soon as Tyrion said it, that this big button had been pushed.

“And why, Jon?” he muttered to himself. “Because despite all the times she’s told me she loves me, and no matter how many times we are together, I don’t trust it.”

It wasn’t that he didn’t trust _her_. It was that he didn’t trust anything good in his life. He feared it all being taken away from him. He feared it was some kind of drawn out joke that he’d forged this life for himself and got the woman of his dreams only to have it all taken away from him.

_I don’t deserve any of it_, he thought miserably. _I’m the son of two junkies. They didn’t want me. They didn’t love me. How could anyone else possibly love me? How can Sansa?_

He threw the sponge in the sink and started out the window. He’d known it was a possibility that Tyrion would react that way. Sansa had even asked him not that long ago if he was afraid to tell Tyrion for this very reason.

He sure as shit knew he wasn’t going to tell Sansa what Tyrion had said. She knew what others were going to think if they knew, she’d told him as much, but hearing those fears confirmed would be different than just sort of assuming.

It could make her doubt again, knowing what another therapist thought. Make her rethink things. Make her worry that she could be found out, though Jon had made sure to keep her name out of it. If Tyrion ever saw them together though…

“Fuck!” Jon shouted. He raised his fist, ready to slam it into the cupboard next to him.

He stopped himself, shoving his hand down to his side. If he punched the cupboard, he’d break his hand. He might do some damage to the cupboard, too, but it looked sturdy enough that he might do nothing to it all. A broken hand without a dent in the damn thing - not what he wanted. It would just piss him off more.

And it would make Sansa worry and ask questions.

“Reign it in, fucker,” he told himself.

He went to take a shower, wanting to wash the day off him and hope that maybe it would calm him down.

He washed his hair, soaped up and rinsed and then just stood under the spray letting the water
cascade down around him. He wasn’t sure how long he’d stood under there as he had zoned out just listening to the water rushing by his ears when he heard movement outside the shower.

He stepped out from under the spray, wiped his eyes clear, and snatched the curtain back.

Sansa let out a shriek as she spun around, the towel he’d placed on the counter in hand. She put her hand over her heart. “You scared the crap out of me!”

He laughed. “You scared me first!”

“I tried texting. You didn’t answer. And your door was unlocked, so…”

Jon reached over and shut the water off. Sansa stretched the towel wide in her arms and hands and smiled big. “Come on, big boy,” she said.

Grinning, Jon snatched the towel from her hands.

“Jon!” she protested. “You’re ruining all my fun!”

He chuckled and quickly dried off. She snatched the towel back and attacked his curls with the towel. By the time she was done, they were both giggling like kids.

When Jon got the towel back and started to spin it around, Sansa shrieked again and ran out of the bathroom. He dropped the towel and stalked off after her.

She ducked into his bedroom, which was exactly where he wanted her, and when he entered, she flung her shirt at him. He caught it, dropped it to the floor and then pointed at her. “Strip,” he commanded.

She let out a little sigh that sounded like anticipation and slowly reached behind her to undo her bra. She flung that at him as well when it was off.

His cock rose as he watched her strip before him and when she was completely bare, he was on her in two strides. He snatched her up in his arms and kissed her thoroughly, making sure to leave her breathless.

She looked at him, dazed and he cupped the side of her face in his hand. “Sansa,” he rasped. “You love me, right?”

She nodded. “More than anything, Jon,” she promised. She reached up and rubbed the spot between his brows. “Are you okay, love?”

He nodded and leaned in, pressing their foreheads together.

“Tell me, Jon. Was it your session today? Did something upset you?”

“I just...I sometimes worry that you’ll be taken away from me. That I’ll lose everything.”

“You won’t,” she said adamantly. “I won’t let that happen.”

“Sometimes I dream I’m with my Mom again and I’m alone. I wake up scared and have to convince myself that I’m here, that I’m with you.”

“Oh, baby,” she murmured and wound her arms around him. “It’s normal to have those dreams. When you feel more safe and secure in yourself and where you are in life, the dreams will go away.”
He nodded and kissed her again, and then pushed her back to his bed. “I need you,” he whispered. “Can I have you, Sansa?”

“Yes,” she whispered back.

She sat down on the bed and scooted back hurriedly to the middle. Jon climbed on and crawled to her on all fours. When he was above her, she looked up at him with her big blue eyes so big and trusting and innocent.

“I don’t even know where to start,” he said softly.

“Since when?” she teased.

“Since I want you so much I can’t see straight. I want to do it all at once.”

“Do I get a vote?”

He smiled. “Of course.”

“In that case, how about you let me drive for a bit?”

“Oh?” This was intriguing.

“On your back, mister.”

Grinning, he did as she asked, thinking this was good. He needed to gather himself.

He moved onto his back and Sansa got up on her knees.

He’d gathered himself a lot quicker than expected for he blurted out, “Sixty-nine me, Sansa.”

She looked at him in shock.

He grinned. “Come on. I want that pretty pussy on my face.”

She bit her lip. “Um...okay.”

Gingerly she maneuvered herself over him. Any reservations she had seemed to go out the window the minute he put his mouth on her. She moaned and then soon his cock was in her hot wet mouth.

He spread her pussy lips with his fingers and swirled his tongue around her clit. She moaned and sucked his cock harder. He started to spell “Mine” on her clit over and over with his tongue and after the third pass, she cried out, lifting her mouth off his cock on which she had had a Hoover-like suction on him. “Jonnnnn!” She moved her hips back and forth and he licked at her, teasing her as she came. She shuddered and then moved away out of his reach.

“Stay,” she said and turned so that she was straddling him. He reached for her and she shook her head and twitched her finger from side-to-side. She then entwined their hands and pressed his to the bed. “Keep them right here.”

“Sansa,” he whined.

She smirked and arched a brow. “I’m driving, remember?”

He nodded, sighing. “Okay.”
With one finger she swept her hand down between his brows, down the length of his nose and then swept three fingers over his lips. “Jon?”

“Yes, baby?”

“You know I’m yours right?”

His eyes widened. His throat clogged with emotion. He nodded dumbly.

She smiled gently and scratched gently through his beard and then used the tips of her nails to scratch gently down the center of his chest. His stomach muscles clenched and his hips jerked up, seeking friction.

“Sansa,” he gasped.

“Don’t move those hands,” she said. Bending down, she licked at his nipple and then swirled her tongue around it. She then looked up at him, her chin on his chest. “Do you have any idea how much I love you, Jon? How much you mean to me?”

His eyes shut tight. He would not cry. He would not cry. He would not cry.

His eyes flew open when she treated his other nipple to the same treatment and then bit at it gently. His hands flexed, making the motion of grabbing and he grunted with the need to touch her.

She sat back up and lightly scratched over his nipples and then down his stomach. His body jerked up again and she went back down, entwining their hands again. Her hair fell like a wall on either side of them and she nipped at his lips. He lifted his head, straining to reach her lips.

“Lay back, my love,” she told him gently.

He lay back, watching her.

“You are everything to me, Jon,” she whispered.

“Sansa.” He was going to do it; he was going to cry.

“I love you so much that sometimes it hurts. Do you understand? Does that make sense?”

He nodded. “Yes. I feel that all the time.”

“See? You’re not alone. You have me. You’ll always have me, Jon.”

Her voice was soft and melodious. Calming. It was as though she was reading him a story before bed. His focus was completely on her, she made it that way. Her scent filled his nostrils, the taste of her was in his mouth, the softness and the wetness of her pussy was against his cock. Her hair brushed his shoulders. All he could see and feel was her.

She bent her head and nuzzled at his neck and he arched it back, giving her access. And then he felt her latch onto it. His eyes went wide when he felt her sucking on him.

She was marking him; giving him a hickey.

He couldn’t stop himself from clutching at her. She didn’t seem to mind though. She didn’t stop until the spot she was sucking on ached just a little.

She lifted up and stared at the spot, looking mighty proud of herself. And then she took his hands
and put them on her breasts. He had to stop himself from squeezing. His heart was racing, his cock was aching, and he was feeling so many things in the moment he felt as though he just might burst from it all.

She moved over him and reached down to place him inside her. She sank down slowly, keeping her gaze trained on him and then took his hands and entwined them with hers yet again.

She pressed them back to the bed and started a slow rise and fall. She brushed his lips with hers, kissed his cheeks, his nose, his forehead, his eyelids. When he opened them and she saw the tears in his eyes, she looked worried.

“Kiss me, please,” he begged.

She kissed him lovingly, licking her tongue inside his mouth and then sucking on his.

She broke the kiss and their eyes locked and did not move. “I love you, Jon. I’ll tell you a hundred times a day if you need me to.”

“I need you to,” he said. His voice was thick with emotion.

She brushed her lips against his again and whispered, “Mine.”

“Yours, Sansa, yours, oh God help me, I’m yours.”

The tears spilled down his cheeks, but he didn’t care. All he cared about was this moment, her claiming of him, her promise to never leave him. Her vows of love.

It filled the pockets of worry inside him that Tyrion had exposed that day. He knew it was a temporary break, and they’d need filling again, but he’d worry about that later. Having them exposed like they had been had shaken his world and he couldn’t stand the sense of uncertainty.

Sansa put his feet back on the ground again.

This wasn’t about sex. It wasn’t about chasing an orgasm. It wasn’t about control either. It was about love. It was about connection. His whole body quaked with it and it felt as though she could see his insides, every part of him felt exposed to her loving gaze. It left him feeling raw and open.

But there was acceptance in it. She saw him, all of him, and she loved him still.

When their crisis came it wasn’t with a shuddering violence, but a rolling tremble that caused them to whimper and tighten their joined hands.

Sansa curled up on top of him, nestling into him with her hands on his chest and her face in his neck. Jon wrapped his arms around her and held her tight against him.

“Am I crushing you?” she asked softly after some time had passed.

“No, love,” he murmured and squeezed her gently. “Stay.”

He felt her smile against his chest. “Okay. I will.”
Jon felt bad enough a few days after he’d calmed down to send Tyrion an email, apologizing for his behavior. He made sure to add:

*I love my girlfriend very much. And she tells me and shows me that she loves me, too. It’s hard for me to accept that she is here to stay. I don’t always trust it. Not because of her, but because I’ve never really had anything good in my life, never mind someone.*

*Our relationship isn’t dirty. She hasn’t taken advantage of me. It’s important to me that you understand that. She is an amazing woman and an amazing therapist.*

*I want to keep seeing you, Tyrion. I think it’s good for me to go despite how much I protested about*
the idea when my girlfriend suggested it. I just don’t want you to try to get me to break up with her. It’s not going to happen. Ever.

So, if you can accept my apology, and I am really sorry, then I hope we can move forward from here.

Thanks,

Jon

Within minutes, Tyrion had written back.

Jon,

I do accept your apology, but if you have an outburst like that again, I won’t be able to see you anymore. You’ll have to find some way to keep your anger in check. It’s okay to get angry; it’s not okay to attempt to intimidate me. This was apparently a trigger for you, our discussion of your girlfriend, and I do want to explore that and what you said in your email further.

I am, unfortunately, attending a conference next week, which I had planned to tell you before you left last session, so we’ll have to make an appointment for the week after. Let me know if you will be available on our usual day and time.

Tyrion

A couple days after that, Jon mentioned to Sansa that he would be free the night he typically would see Tyrion since Tyrion had a conference he was attending.

Sansa, her legs over Jon’s lap while they watched a movie in his apartment, looked at him with narrowed eyes that were quizzical instead of accusing.

“What?” Jon asked.

“Tyrion is going to a conference next week? Did he say what it was?”

Jon frowned. “No. Why?”

“Because I’m going to a conference next week, too.”

Jon half-turned on the couch to look at her. “Are you telling me you’re going to be gone all week and I’m just hearing about this now?”

She laughed. “No, it’s only an hour away. I’ll be traveling each day.”

“Oh. Okay. I can deal with that then.”

She giggled. “And if I was going away?”

“Then I’d have to find my way up there.”

“I’d be busy all day!”

“But I’d have you at night.” He grinned. “Come here.”

Smiling like an idiot, Sansa got up and straddled him. Their hands entwined and while Sansa tried to push his hands down to the couch, Jon tried to push hers down to her sides.
“Just think of it, Sans,” he said. “You’d be out all day learning—”

“More like numbing my brain. You start retaining less information after about a half an hour and yet they schedule lectures and activities right on top of each other with a break for lunch only. It makes no sense. Especially since most of the people there know this.”

“I’m setting the scene here, do you mind?”

She laughed. “Sorry, go ahead.”

“You’ll be gone all day, your mind’s all numb when you return, and I’ll be there, naked and hard in your bed and waiting for you to jump on it.”

“Jump on it?” she said and started to laugh.

Jon wiggled under her. “Yeah, you know my fuckstick.”

“Oh my God, please please please never say that again!”

“I can’t believe I said it at all,” he said and they both dissolved into giggles.

“That’s gonna be my nickname for you now: fuckstick,” Sansa told him.

He pointed at her. “That’s Mr. Fuckstick to you, young lady.”

She wrinkled her nose. “Does that make me Mrs. Fuckstick?”

The both of them froze. Stared at each other. Then, Sansa ducked her head and buried her face in his neck. “I didn’t mean it that way. It was a joke. I didn’t mean to insinuate that I was - that we were - you get that, right?”

Jon wound his arms around her and kissed the top of her head. “Do you ever think about it? Being...Mrs. Fuckstick?”

Sansa lifted her head and placed her hand over her chest. “Jon, I can say from the depths of my soul that I have never thought about being Mrs. Fuckstick. But I have thought about...you know, being Mrs. Targaryen.”

Jon grasped her face in his hands and kissed her hard. “Tell me what you thought about it,” he rasped as he pushed her shirt up. Since she was in her pajamas, she was braless. Jon growled softly and leaned forward, sucking the left nipple into his mouth. He flicked his tongue against it, making it harden, and then sucked on it more.

Sansa’s fingers carded through his hair and she moaned. “I thought...what it would be like…”

“Tell me,” he urged and went to work on her right breast.

“Just...how...it would be to come home to you...every day...oh, Jon, I love your mouth.”

He lifted his head and drew her face down so he could kiss her. His tongue delved inside her hot cavern and tangled with hers. “I’ve thought about it, too,” he whispered when he broke the kiss, panting. “Fuck, baby, I need you now.”

She nodded and climbed off of him on shaky legs. Jon got up, too, and they tore at each other’s clothes. When they were both naked and their clothes were in a heap on the floor, Jon sat back down and pulled Sansa on top of him.
“Jump on it,” he said with a grin.

Taking him in her hand, she teased her slit with the head of his cock, making sure to rub it right at her clit. “Can you feel how wet I am, love?”

He groaned, his head falling back against the back of the couch and his eyes rolling up. “Yes. Put me inside you, Sansa, please.”

Biting her lip, Sansa pressed him against her hole and slowly impaled herself on him. With her hands on the back of the couch by his head, she started to ride him slowly, and he moved deeper and deeper and deeper inside of her.

“I want forever with you,” he breathed. “I want everything.”

She nodded. “Me too. Not...oh God... not yet, but one day.”

“Yes,” he hissed gripped her hips. “Fuck, squeeze me again with that pussy again, Sansa.”

“Smack my ass,” she said, swiveling her hips.

He grunted. “Do that again.” And then he smacked her ass.

She swiveled her hips again and Jon growled and stood, causing Sansa to squeal. He placed her down on the couch, seated, and spread her legs further. He leaned in and licked up her slit. “Fuck, you taste so good,” he groaned.

“Jon, eat me,” she murmured, lifting her legs so that her feet were planted on the couch, and she was spread obscenely for him. She dug her fingers in his hair to keep him at her core. He flicked his tongue against her clit in a swiping motion, and then up and down, and around.

“Jon, Jon, Jon,” she babbled, gripping his hair tighter.

He knew the signs of Sansa close to orgasm, and he lifted his mouth up off her and drew her down at an angle he could penetrate her in. She was so wet he slid in with ease. She squeezed him again with her cunt muscles and he growled.

Sansa framed his face in her hands. “I love you, Jon.”

“I love you,” he gasped. “You are my world, Sansa.” He placed his thumb over her clit as his thrusts increased in pace. “And now I need you to cum. Cum all over my dick, Sansa.”

She gripped his shoulders, digging her nails in as she climbed higher higher higher -

“Jon!” she cried out, her toes literally curling as she came. “Oh God, oh fuck, Jon…”

“I can feel you tightening on my dick,” he muttered. “ Fucking, bloody hell - fuck!” He held himself inside her as he came, his body jerking with each spurt.

Spent, he slumped against her, his head on her breasts and his arms wound around her. Sansa drew her arms around him and after a few moments she said, “Take me to bed, Mr. Fuckstick.”

“Happily, Mrs. Fuckstick.”

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Jon hoped asking Tyrion what conference he was going to in his email confirming that their usual
time was good for when he returned didn’t come off as too odd.

Tyrion never even answered him when he replied saying he’d see Jon when he returned.

Sansa informed him that the conference was for psychologists and social workers, and that if she did happen to discover who Tyrion was, she wouldn’t say a word to him.

“I am of course curious about who he is,” she told him. “But it’s not like I’d introduce myself. That would be weird.”

Jon hummed in agreement as she played with his curls while his head was in her lap the morning before the conference began.

“I never told him your name,” Jon told her.

“Did you tell him about our history?”

“A little.”

“What did he say?”

“I don’t want to talk about it.”

“Ah. So it didn’t go well.”

“What do you want for breakfast?” he asked.

“And that abrupt subject change says it all,” she sighed.

“Don’t worry about it, San. I got this handled,” he told her.

“I expected it,” she murmured. She had that sound in her voice. The sound of her mind wandering to places he didn’t want it to wander to.

So, he sat up and tackled her to the bed and then started to tickle her. By the time he was done, she was a squirming, breathless, giggling mess. Tyrion was forgotten. Or, maybe it wasn’t, but she didn’t bring it up again and Jon was willing to settle for the pretense for now.

Sansa yawned as she patted the name tag onto her shirt. She thought three things - 1. She hated name tags like this and 2. This would make it a lot easier to identify Tyrion and then 3. She was glad Jon never told Tyrion her name.

There weren’t a lot of Sansa’s in the world. None that she knew of anyway.

The conference was being held in the bowels of a chain hotel. Several rooms were reserved for different sessions people could attend, and this room, the big ballroom, was the place where everyone would congregate for opening remarks and lunch.

It was a huge room, taken up now by large round tables with scratchy white tablecloths and a number on each table. Against the wall was a row of tables that had muffins, bagels, doughnuts, fruit, coffee, tea, and condiments for the muffins and bagels.

Sansa adjusted the strap of her tote on her shoulder and made her way over to get a coffee. She’d had to get up with Jon that morning to make it in time for this, and honestly, she just didn’t know
how anyone sane could be a morning person. The nice thing was, it took her only forty-five minutes to get there and she was already thinking how she might be able to get an extra fifteen tomorrow morning.

After filling a mug and grabbing a muffin, Sansa ambled over to an empty table and sat down. She took out the schedule for that day to mull over what presentations she wanted to attend when she felt a hand on her shoulder.

She looked up and her mouth dropped open.

Mel smiled broadly at her and then sat down next to her. “Hi, Sansa. I’m so happy you’re here. I was hoping you would be.”
Chapter Notes

Two fabulous banners. The first one by @sweetaprilbutterfly and the second by @asongforjonsa! Thank you, my darlings!

Also, thank you @israfel00 for helping me with this chapter! (and for listening to me whine about writer's block).
Recover, recover, Sansa thought after she was sure her expression had morphed into the horror and shock she felt at seeing her former mentor. “Hi! Oh my God, it’s so good to see you!” Sansa exclaimed and leaned over to hug her.

Mel hugged her back, laughing softly. When she pulled back, she was smiling broadly. “I was going to look you up if you weren’t here since Winterfell isn’t very far from here.” She looked mischievous as she wiggled in her seat. “I looked it up.”

Sansa wasn’t sure how to react to that and so she just nodded, her big fake smile still plastered on. “Did you?”

Mel nodded. “Of course! I wanted to see you. It’s been a while.”

There was an elephant in the room and it was sitting on the table and staring them down.

Sansa partially wanted to keep up the pretense that Jon was a non-issue and they were two old friends and co-workers who were catching up and nothing more, and she partially wanted to know if Mel had made this trip specifically to track her down.

What was it with people stalking her?

Did Mel have an angle here, or was it all just innocent? It was plausible that she’d moved on from her worry about her and Jon and took that voice mail message at face value that nothing was going on at all, or she saw through the bullshit and flew out to check for herself.

Well, good luck, I say, Sansa thought. You won’t get a thing out of me.
“It has been a while,” Sansa said, hoping she sounded just the right amount of chipper, but not overly so. “How was the flight over? Are you staying here at the hotel? When did you get in?”

Mel laughed. “One question at a time!”

“Sorry, sorry. Okay, how was the flight over?”

Small talk ensued for a few minutes until more people came to fill up the table. Sansa felt the blessed relief of being saved by the proverbial bell. The host of the event had just gotten up to the podium for opening remarks when Mel leaned over and placed her hand on Sansa’s arm. “Before we possibly get split up for the day, can you stay after and have dinner with me? My treat.”

Sansa nodded even while screaming, No! No! What are you doing?! in her head. She told herself it was inevitable that she’d have to have dinner with Mel at some point this week, possibly even more than once, but she had been hoping to put it off for at least a day so she could mentally prepare for it. And tell Jon about it.

But, she had a hard time saying no, and she’d always had a hard time saying no to Mel.

So, this was going to happen.

Sansa reached for her cup of coffee and then let her hand drop to her lap. She was wide-awake now; she could practically feel the adrenaline pumping through her. Coffee would just make her even more jittery than she felt in that moment. She glanced at her muffin. Nope. Her appetite was gone.

What she wanted to do was dig out her phone from her purse and text Jon, but that was going to have to wait. And never, ever around Mel.

Jon was going to flip when he found out his favorite person in the world was here with her, and only an hour away, too!

Sit back and relax, Sansa told herself. She knows nothing and you’ve given nothing away. It’s not like she can sniff Jon on me for Christ’s sake.

Heaving in a deep breath, she let it out slowly, and rolled her shoulders back.

Everything was awesome.

(It wasn’t. Not even a little bit.)

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Baby! How’s the conference? Jon texted when he managed to get away for a few minutes during lunch break. When you coming home? I was thinking we could get subs or a pizza for dinner. What do you think?

His phone rang, causing him to jump, and he saw that it was Sansa. He headed for his truck while answering. “Hey, Sans.”

“Mel is here.”

Jon stopped walking abruptly. “What?”

“Mel is here,” she hissed.
“Melisandre?”

“No, Mel Brooks.”

“What the fuck is she doing there?” Jon demanded. “Did you talk to her again? Did she know you were going?”

“No, I haven’t talked to her since that day. I mean, she called and left a couple messages and I emailed her a quick message back and told her that everything was fine and you were...well, I told her that you were no longer an issue.”

“Thanks,” he said drily.

“Sorry.”

“And you haven’t heard from her since then? How long ago was that?”

“A few weeks ago. I had no idea that she was going to come. I remember she went once when I worked with her, but it wasn’t here it was somewhere else--”

“San. I don’t care about past venues. Where are you?”

“I’m outside. We’re on a lunch break. I came out to get some fresh air and call you.”

“Where is she?”

“Standing right next to me listening to every word I’m saying. She’s inside talking to some guy, where do you think?”

“Okay, I can do without your sarcasm.”

“Well why would you ask me such a thing?” He could practically see her throwing her arms up in exasperation.

Jon sighed and raked a hand through his hair. Mel shows up and they start snapping at each other. Great. The woman was a disease...a parasite. She infected everything.

“I’m around the corner of the entrance to the hall we were just having lunch in. I’m standing out here watching the door like a hawk like I’m some kind of criminal.”

“When’s the last session or lecture or whatever?”

“At four,” she said, sounding calmer.

“Are you in any of these things with her?”

“Just one this morning. Another this afternoon.”

“Can you get out of it? Go to another one?”

“Jon, it doesn’t matter.” She sounded tired now. Defeated.

“What does that mean?”

“It means she asked me to have dinner with her after all this and I said yes.”

“What?!?” he exclaimed, and then looked over his shoulder. No one was there. He moved forward
again to his truck.

“I know, I know. I just - I buckled. I couldn’t help it. It was going to happen at some point this week, maybe even more than once. I knew that immediately.”

Jon climbed into his truck and rubbed his forehead. “San, I just want you to come home now.”

“Jon, I can’t do that.”

“I don’t want you around that woman!” he burst out. “I don’t want her prying into our business!”

“She’ll ask. I know she’ll ask. And I’ll tell her what I told her in the voicemail I left her - I told you we couldn’t see each other anymore, we argued about it, and then that was it.”

Jon snorted. “Yeah, something tells me she won’t believe that.”

“Why not?” she asked, exasperated.

“Because she’s a fucking bitch and she’s here. She had to know it was a good possibility you’d be going to this thing.”

“Yeah, she hoped I would be here,” she said quietly. She sounded small. Tired. “She was going to look me up if I wasn’t.”

“Baby, come home. Say you’re sick or something. Come home.” He was aware that he was begging.

“I can’t do that,” she sighed. “And it would look even more suspicious.”

“We’ve done nothing wrong,” he said fiercely. “We love each other. You’ve done nothing wrong, Sansa.”

“She won’t see it that way if she knew and you know it.”

“Then she won’t know,” Jon said simply, but with conviction.

“I better get back. I’ll call you when I’m on my way home.”

“Tell me you love me, Sansa,” he commanded.

“I love you, Jon,” she said gently.

Jon shut his eyes and let that settle over him. “I love you too, Sansa. So much, baby.”

“See you soon, Mr. Fuckstick,” she said and ended the call.

She turned so that she was leaning against the brick wall of the building and sighed.

“I’m going to assume that the Jon you said you love is Jon Snow?”

Sansa jumped and her head snapped to the side.

Mel was there.

Where had she--? Sansa let her gaze drift beyond Mel. The front of the hotel. The entrance was right behind her.
“How--how long have you been standing there and listening?” Sansa asked, feeling as though she couldn’t breathe. There was a ringing in her ears and she felt at once as though she was moving underwater and hovering over her body and not in it at all.

“I heard you from the I love you bit.” Mel frowned and folded her arms across her chest. “I came to find you so you wouldn’t miss the session starting soon.” She pursed her lips together and arched a brow. “He went away, huh?”

“Mel--”

“Did you really think I believed all that anyway? That Jon Snow just ‘stopped coming around’ after he moved to Winterfell to be near you?”

“Targaryen,” Sansa said without thinking and then inwardly winced.

“His last name is hardly the issue here, is it?”

“Is that why you’re here? To see if something was going on?”

“Partly, yes. It did help me make the decision to come. I called you, Sansa. I called you twice and you took two weeks to get back to me. I’m not stupid. I knew then.” She shook her head and turned her head toward the parking lot. She sighed.

In that moment, Sansa oddly thought of her father. How the worst thing she and any of her siblings wanted to do was disappoint their father. When being disciplined, their mother would yell at them and bring down the punishment. But Ned, all he had to do was look at them the way Mel was looking at her now and that was the real punishment: disappointment.

Sansa had always struggled with being a disappointment to her father, her teachers - to any authority figure, really. And Mel had been her mentor. Mel had given her a job straight out of school and trusted her. She felt as though she owed her in some way. And now she felt as though she had let her down despite the fact that she loved Jon with all her heart and soul.

She felt like a little girl again in that moment. So it was no surprise that she started to cry.

Mel studied her, frowning. “I think we have some talking to do.”
“You do realize the ethical not to mention the moral implications of involving yourself with Jon, don’t you?” Melisandre began as soon as she and Sansa sat down for dinner.

The rest of the conference had been a muddle, Sansa barely remembered any of it, her stomach twisted in knots the entire time. A few times she thought she might throw up.

“Wow, we haven’t even ordered drinks yet,” Sansa said shakily in her lame attempt at humor. “You’re just getting right into it, eh?”

Melisandre frowned and a waitress appeared to take their drink orders. Sansa wondered if she could order the entire bar…

In the end, she got a white wine and a water. Rolls appeared seconds later. Sansa grabbed a roll and tore off a chunk. It tasted like ash in her mouth.
“You don’t have personal relationships with clients,” Melisandre began again.

“Well, that’s bullshit,” Sansa blurted. “You can’t do what we do and not form attachments.”

“Sansa, you know very well what I mean. You don’t fuck your clients!”

A hush fell over the tables around them and Sansa shot Melisandre a glare. “You want to say that louder?” she hissed. “I don’t think they heard you in the kitchen!”

Mel looked surprised by her response and plucked a roll from the basket. She sat back, assessing Sansa, as their drinks arrived. Mel sipped her red while Sansa attempted to not guzzle her white wine. She had to drive home. If she got drunk, she couldn’t, and if she had to get a room at the hotel, Jon would lose his mind.

“You have an obligation to your clients, both present and former,” Melisandre said, sounding as though she was readying for a lecture. “The obligation is that you act in their best interests and don’t do anything to jeopardize their health - and that includes their mental health. You know as well as I do that by the sheer fact that they’ve had to come to the Home, they’ve had it hard. Those like Jon have known little love and only harshness. They’re looking for love--”

“In all the wrong places?”

Melisandre glared at her. “This is what you want to do right now? Make jokes?”

“I’ve been through all this!” Sansa burst out. “I know being with Jon is questionable--”

Mel dropped her roll in her side dish and leaned forward towards Sansa. “Not questionable, Sansa, that makes it sound as if there is wiggle room here to work with. There is none. This is wrong. What you’re doing is wrong. Jon was a damaged young boy when he came to the Home. His mother chose drugs over him, and his father didn’t want to claim him. Nor did anyone else in his family. You know as well as I do what that does to a person - especially to a child.”

She sat back, sipped her wine. Sansa stared at the table cloth, chagrined.

“I watched Jon grow up. I saw the toll it all took on him. And I saw how he changed after the incident with the Hitchcock family when the father came after him. It was a terrible situation all around and I blame Jon for none of it, but he wasn’t the same after that. He started causing a lot of trouble. He needed help and he took to you.”

“What exactly is it you’re trying to say here, Mel?” Sansa asked. “That Jon just attached himself to me because he wanted to fuck me or because I managed to help him in some way?”

“Both. You did do good for him, Sansa, I do want to make that clear. I saw how he tried for you, and how he listened to you. He was still a hellion, but I saw something in him that I hadn’t seen since he came to us: hope. I believe you gave that to him and I think it all became muddled in his brain - his want of you as a woman and his need to have a mother-figure.”

“This is getting a little more Freudian than I feel comfortable with,” Sansa muttered. She picked up her menu. “Can we put a pin in this and maybe look at the menu?”

Sansa’s head was spinning. She knew all this, she did. She’d already been over it a thousand times in her head. But hearing it out loud...and hearing it from someone she thought of as a mentor was jarring.

After they’d set down their menus and ordered, they sat together in quiet for a minute before Mel
“Jon needs help,” Mel said.

“He’s getting it,” Sansa said quickly. “He’s seeing a therapist. Not me, obviously.”

“How long do you think it would take someone like Jon to be ready for a healthy relationship with a woman that wasn’t about fulfilling his lack of maternal love?”

Sansa wanted to say that she and Jon took care of each other. It wasn’t all one way. But the words died in her throat.

“If a person had to wait for all the issues they had in life to be resolved before they got into romantic relationships, then no one would ever be ready for one,” she managed to say.

“But do you think engaging in a relationship with someone who used to see him professionally is a good idea? Do you think it’s helpful for Jon? What happens when you have an argument and he makes you angry? You know his triggers, Sansa. Either intentionally or unintentionally you could manipulate him into behaving in a certain way or to do what you want.”

Sansa was horrified. “I would never do something like that to him!”

“You might not even realize it when it happens. Or, maybe if you were angry enough you would.”

Sansa clamped her mouth shut. She felt dirty. She felt like a monster. Like a monster that was single-handedly ruining Jon’s life.

Had she done anything of the sort already and not realized it? She racked her brain, going over the conversations they’d had recently. She couldn’t think of anything she’d said or done to manipulate him into anything. And she couldn’t imagine being so angry with him she would even employ a tactic like that.

“I can’t imagine using what knowledge I have of Jon’s past to do something like that to him. No matter how angry I might get with him,” Sansa croaked.

“You say that now, but one never truly knows do they, how angry one can get?”

Jesus, she sounded cryptic.

It was annoying.

When their food came, Sansa picked at it. She was feeling rather drained at the moment. Her wine gone now, she wanted another few...dozen glasses.

“There is of course also the matter of Jon getting angry enough with you to tell everyone who will listen how you were his client when he was underage,” Mel said after a while. “He could lie about what exactly happened between you, or just the fact that you’re involved now would cast sufficient doubts. What if he told his therapist your name? How many Sansa’s are out there in this field? What if he or she decides to blab to someone about it? It could be harmful for you and your career, Sansa. I told you already that it made me wonder about what exactly happened between the two of you when you still worked for me.”

“Nothing,” Sansa mumbled.

“But the seed was planted nonetheless.”
“Okay, I just - I need for you to stop now,” Sansa said weakly.

Mel looked at her in surprise.

“You made your point and I need you to stop now,” Sansa said, firmer this time. She picked her purse up off the floor. “In fact, I’m done here. I can’t...do this anymore.” She rummaged in her purse and took out her wallet and dug inside for cash. She dropped some on the table and stood. “I’m sorry, but I have to go now.”

“Sansa, wait,” Mel said, and her tone was kinder, calmer, even gentle.

Sansa shook her head. “No. You wanted me to feel like an utter fucking monster and you’ve succeeded. I’m a terrible horrible person who fell in love with her former client and I’m fucking him up even more and possibly fucking myself too. I got it loud and clear and now I need to go.”

“Sansa--”

But Sansa didn’t wait to hear anymore. She hurried out of the restaurant and to her car before Mel could come after her. She practically peeled out of the parking lot, desperate to get away and put this day, and Mel, behind her.

She wasn’t going to return to the conference tomorrow, that was for damn sure.

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It wasn’t incredibly late by the time Sansa got home, but Jon had almost fallen asleep on her porch a couple times waiting for her call or for her to pull in the driveway.

When he saw her pull in he was kind of pissed that she hadn’t called to tell him she’d been on the way as she had promised to do. He got up to greet her and the first thing he noticed when she came close enough to him was that she looked tired. And, it was possible that she’d been crying too.

She sighed as she looked at him. “How long have you been here?” she asked, sounding rather put out by finding him waiting for her.

“Since I got off work. You said you’d call on your way home.”

“Jon, that was three hours ago that you left work. Did you eat anything?” Now she sounded exasperated with him.

“I got a pizza. It’s in your trash bin. Sansa, why didn’t you call?”

“Because I just didn’t. Listen, I’ve had a really crap day and I just want to go inside, take a hot bath and crawl into bed.”

“Sansa, you spent the day with Melisandre and had dinner with her. I want to know what happened.”

She shook her head but Jon could see her lower lip trembling and then, the tears. He moved towards her and she started to sob. “I’m bad for you! I’m immoral and unethical and I’ll ruin you and you’ll ruin me.”

Jon reached for her and when she tried to ward him off, he deftly moved her hands away and pulled her into his arms. “She knows doesn’t she? Did you tell her?”

“She overheard the tail end of our conversation on the phone,” she cried into his chest. “She
figured it all out.”

“And that’s what she said to you? That we’ll ruin each other?”

She lifted her head to look at him. “You never told Tyrion my name, right?”

“No! I never told him your name. What the fuck did she say to you, Sansa?”

“A lot of things.”

“Start from the beginning.”

“I don’t want to right now,” she said, leaning into him. “I’m tired and I’m emotional and I just want to go inside and wash the day off me and not think.”

“You can do that. We’ll draw a bath--”

“Jon,” she began and Jon knew, just knew she was going to send him away.

“Don’t do it, Sansa,” he said warningly. “Don’t send me away.”

“I’m not- not the way you think. This is just one of those time where I need alone time. It doesn’t have to mean anything catastrophic.”

“It is when it comes to Melisandre and the crap she comes up with!”

She put her hands on his face and made him look at her. “Jon. Please. I have nothing to give you right now. It’s been a long stressful day and after having to deal with Melisandre for over an hour at dinner, I am maxed out. I don’t want to have to talk. I don’t want to have to listen. I just want to be alone with my thoughts and quiet. Please try to understand that.”

His jaw clenched. He didn’t like it. Not one bit. He was afraid that this meant the end. That Melisandre had gotten into her head enough to push Sansa back on the “We shouldn’t be doing this” train.

“Are you going back tomorrow?” he asked.

“No,” she said with a snort. “I’m not going back there. I don’t care how much money I just ate.”

“Can I see you tomorrow?”

“You have work.”

He rolled his eyes. “After work.”

“We’ll see. Text me.”

“We’ll see. What the fuck was that all about? he thought.

He leaned in and kissed her ardently. She moaned and, encouraged, Jon tried to lift her up in his arms so he could take her in the house.

“No, Jon, no,” she murmured and pulled away from him.

Jaw clenched, he watched her go up to the door and just as she opened it he said, “Sansa.”

She turned. “Yeah?”
“I’m not letting you go. Not ever. I hope you understand that.”

She nodded, and he worried that was just to appease him.

Heading to his truck, his hands balled into fists, Jon thought that while Sansa wasn’t going to attend the conference tomorrow, he certainly was. He and Melisandre were overdue for a nice long chat.
It wasn’t hard to find where the conference was. Jon remembered Sansa telling him the hotel it was being held in, and from there it was just a quick look at the internet to find out the address, the name of the conference, and the time everything started.

Jon sent a message to Robb early in the morning telling him he wasn’t feeling well and would be staying home that day, and then he headed out. He wanted to catch Melisandre before the
conference started.

Once he arrived at the hotel, an hour before everything was set to begin, Jon went to the front desk and asked if he could get Melisandre’s room number. That was a no; they wouldn’t even confirm that she was there. He knew she had to be though. It was the only hotel in the city.

Thinking fast, he asked if there was somewhere in the hotel he could get a coffee. He was directed to the hotel restaurant which was located on the floor below them. Jon thanked the woman behind the desk and headed off to the restaurant on the off chance Melisandre was getting breakfast there.

He stepped into the slightly dark restaurant and figured this was more a nighttime kind of place than day time. He was asked by the host at the front if he wanted a table or a booth, and Jon said he was looking for someone he was supposed to meet up with and could he take a look around?

The host offered to help him, but finally Jon was able to shake him off and go alone.

It was set up in a circle, with a bar in the middle of it all, and booths and tables along the sides and at the back. Jon had just made it down one side when he saw her, tucked into a corner, sipping coffee. She looked up and their eyes met.

Hers went wide and she put her mug down as he moved forward. He wanted to just scream at her but knew he couldn’t. He wanted to say his piece and not get kicked out.

“May I?” he asked, but didn’t wait for her to answer. He just pulled out the chair opposite her and sat.

“You’ve seen Sansa,” Melisandre said matter-of-factly.

“I have.”

“Did she end things?”

“No, though I’m sure that’s disappointing for you to hear.”

“She’ll do the right thing eventually.”

Jon slammed his hand down on the table hard. The plates wobbled, the silverware jingled. Some coffee spilt from her mug.

When he saw the fear building in her eyes, Jon thought of his blow-up in Tyrion’s office. Tyrion hadn’t shown any fear, but that didn’t mean he hadn’t been afraid that Jon might hit him.

And then he thought of Ygritte and how he had definitely scared her - he’d meant to. But Sansa hadn’t liked that and she wouldn’t like it if Melisandre told her he’d scared her too.

Jon held up his hand in surrender. It was shaking from the force of keeping his temper intact. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry.”

A waiter came over. “Is everything all right? Ma’am, are you okay?”

“We’re fine, thank you,” Melisandre said, keeping her gaze on Jon who lowered his hand to the armrest of the chair. “Could you give us a few minutes, please?”

“Of course,” the waiter said and hurried off.

“Have you come here to threaten me, Jon?” Melisandre asked after the waiter was gone.
“No.” I was, but now I’m gonna try something else, he thought.

She didn’t look like she believed him. “Then what? Does Sansa know you’re here? Did she send you?”

“No. She has no idea.”

“Then what do you want?”

Jon leaned forward. “Why do you hate me so much?”

“I don’t hate you, Jon.”

“Yes, you do. We’re not at the home anymore, Melisandre. You don’t have to pretend. Just say it. Just say you never liked me and we’ll move on from there.”

“My not liking you has nothing to do with the cold hard facts about your relationship with Sansa,” Melisandre said forcefully.

Jon gestured to her. “There it is. You hate me. You always have.”

“Jon, hate is a strong word. I don’t hate you and I never hated you, but you did make my life and my job very difficult at the home. When you first got there, you were such a sweet boy.”

“A scared boy” he corrected. “I was a scared lost little boy. Are you saying that you liked me better that way?”

“See? This is what I mean. You constantly question everything I say and do. You challenged me at every turn --”

“Look, I know I never made things easy on you. I know I was a shithead a lot of the time. Do you want me to apologize for all that?”

“It’d be a nice place to start.”

“Then I’m sorry.”

Melisandre sighed. “Thank you.”

“Did you think I stopped being scared just because I didn’t act it?”

She looked at him, but didn’t reply.

“I was scared all the time,” he told her. “I still am. I’m afraid that everything I have now - my job, my apartment, the life I have here, Sansa - that it could all be taken away from me. I live with that in the back of my head all the time because I learned real young that good things don’t happen to kids like me. And there’s always a catch if they do. Oh, Mom made dinner for me - well, that just means she’ll be out all night partying.”

“Jon--”

“And nobody wanted me in those homes. I was a way for them to make money, that’s all. You think I didn’t know that?”

Melisandre pursed her lips together in a thin line. They studied each other silently for a few minutes. Finally, Melisandre said, “Your relationship with Sansa isn’t healthy. Not for you and not
for her. It won’t last. It can’t. Sansa is a smart woman. She’ll figure that out.”

“You don’t know anything about my relationship with Sansa and I’m willing to bet you never let her even get a word in edgewise to tell you.”

“I don’t need to hear what your relationship is like. You were in her care, Jon. It’s not right. I’ll tell you what I told her - she knows your triggers. What if you got into a fight and she was so angry with you she used them to manipulate you into doing what she wanted you to do?”

Jon shook his head. “Sansa wouldn’t do that.”

“She might not realize it when it happens.”

“No, but see, I know my girl. She’s fucking brilliant and she overthinks everything.” He laughed, a genuine laugh of adoration for his Sansa. “When Sansa and I have a problem, we talk about it.”

“You’re already having problems?”

“Growing pains, that’s all. Nothing to get excited about.”

Melisandre rubbed her forehead. “You’re exhausting.”

“Yeah, I know,” he said, proud of himself though he knew he shouldn’t be.

“What did you think to gain from coming here? Did you think I’d give you my approval if you told me how you talk your problems out? I won’t. I can’t. It’s not right. Morally and ethically, it’s not right.”

“Maybe it isn’t. Maybe it’s all questionable. Maybe we’re both utterly fucked.”

“Do you want Sansa to lose her job?” Melisandre demanded as she leaned forward, her eyes blazing with fury.

“She won’t. You think you have it all figured out, how this is all going to work. You don’t know at all. I don’t care if you approve, Melisandre. We don’t need your blessing.”

“Sansa thinks of me as a mentor, you know.”

Jon narrowed his eyes. “And you didn’t waste any time using that on her, did you? Or the fact that you know Sansa only ever wants to do the right thing.” It was on the tip of his tongue to tell her to fuck off, but he didn’t want to give into the urge. “And here you were afraid she’d use all she knew about me against me when you did that very thing to her.”

He stood, bracing his hands on the table. He leaned forward and Melisandre narrowed her eyes at him. “I’m not going to threaten you, Melisandre, all I’m going to ask is that you leave Sansa alone.”

Melisandre continued to look at him, but didn’t say a word and her expression gave nothing away.

Jon pushed away from the table. “I sincerely hope I never see you again, Melisandre.”

“Ditto,” was all she said, but Jon didn’t care. He was already heading out, ready to go home and see his sweet girl.

*******
It was the sound of knocking that woke Sansa from her deep slumber. She squinted at the clock and saw that it was eight. Only eight? She had at least another two hours in her. In fact, she had planned on sleeping all the live long day after her nerves had been completely shot the day before.

Just as she had told Jon the night before, she had taken a long bath and went straight to bed. She’d passed out in no time flat.

“Sansa!”

She stopped mid-rub of her eyes and realized that was Robb’s voice. All she could think was her mom, something had happened to her mom. She scrambled out of the bed and rushed down the hall to the kitchen. She flung the door open and barely noticed the chill that crept in and then smacked her in the face. “What is it? What happened? Is Mom okay?”

Robb’s expression went from furious to confused. “Mom? What’s wrong with Mom?”

Sansa gestured to him. “That’s what I’m asking you! Why else would you be knocking on my door like a madman and shouting my name?”

“Mom’s fine. Did something happen that I didn’t hear about?”

Sansa rolled her eyes. “No, you big idiot. Why are you here?”

His jaw set again and his eyes narrowed.

“Jon here?” he asked leaning against the door frame.

“No, Jon isn’t here,” Sansa said in mock disbelief. “Why would you ask me that?”

Robb shook his head. “The jig is up, Sansa. I know you’re dating him.”

Sansa opened her mouth - no sound came out.

He pointed at her. “A-ha!” He pushed his way past her into the house. “Jon!” he called out. “Come out come out wherever you are!”

“He’s not here, Robb!” Sansa shouted at him as she pushed her door closed. “Did you see his truck in my driveway?”

“He could have parked around the block.”

Sansa folded her arms across her chest. “Fine. You’re right. I am dating him. How did you find out?”

“How long has this been going on?!”

“How did you find out?”

“Answer me first.”

“Nope.” She jutted her chin out stubbornly.

Realizing she had resolve face, Robb sighed. “Ygritte told me.”

“Three excellent questions. She said it ‘slipped’ out. I have my doubts. When I told her Jon wouldn’t be in she asked me if he was playing hooky with you.”

Sansa rolled her eyes.

“She pretended to be freaked out and sorry that she ‘let it slip’.”

“Not that good of an actress?”

“No, not at all. I asked her how long she knew about this and she said she saw you two the day you came to the site with donuts.”

Sansa winced. “Yeah, Jon told me she saw us.”

“Did he tell you he threatened her? Because that’s what she told me.”

“He did, but he didn’t really - I mean, he tried to scare her--”

“Sansa.”

She threw her arms up. “I know! I already lectured him about it!”

“I can’t believe you! All this time you’ve been dating Jon and neither one of you thought to tell me?”

“I didn’t realize I had to clear it with you first! Who I date is my business, Robb!”

His shoulders slumped. “But--but you’re my little sister. Dad’s not around, I have to look out for you.”

“Don’t pull the Dad card. You were threatening to beat up boys who came sniffing around me in high school.”

He shrugged. “I’m your big brother. It’s my job.”

She sighed. “I know, but Jon and I wanted time to ourselves. Time to get to know each other.” It wasn’t a complete lie.

Robb scratched the back of his neck. “He really not here?”

“No, he’s really not. He called out?”

Robb nodded.

Sansa bit her lip. “I should call him.”

Robb shuffled his feet. “I should get back to work.” He started for the door and then stopped and turned to look at her. “Hey, Mrs. Robinson?”

Sansa glared at him which just caused Robb to grin. “When you gonna tell the family?”

“I don’t know yet,” she said. “Don’t you dare say a word.”

Robb mimed making an x over his heart. “Cross my heart.”

“Yeah, yeah, off with you.”
With one last grin and a wave, Robb left.

Raking a hand through her hair, Sansa marched to her bedroom to get her phone and call Jon. She picked it up and saw a text from Mel: *You can call off your watch dog, Sansa. I won’t bother you anymore.*

Watch dog. Jon calling out sick. He *hated* Melisandre and had been so upset last night.

It didn’t take a rocket scientist to put it all together. Jon had gone to see Melisandre.

“Jon,” Sansa said out loud. “I’m going to fucking kill him.”
Chapter 36

Chapter Summary

Gorg banner by @asongforjonsa! Thank you, sweetums!

And thank you to @israfel00 for your encouragement.

This chapter is dedicated to @danidanisara for asking so nicely for an update. :) 

It wasn’t a good sign for Jon when Sansa was already glaring at him when she opened the door.
“You went to see Melisandre?!” she shouted.

He frowned. “How did you…?”

“She told me I could call off my ‘watch dog’. It doesn’t take a genius to figure out what you did. I know of only one person she’d be telling me to call off and that’s you.”

He sighed, raking a hand through his hair. “You’re angry.”

“What gave it away?!”

He winced. “You’re shouting at me.”

She heaved a sigh, clearly trying to rein her temper in. It wasn’t really working as far as he could tell. She was still a bit red in the face. “Can I come in?” he asked softly.

“No.”

He blinked. “Excuse me?”

“I said no. I’m really annoyed with you right now I’m still tired because Robb woke me up because he knows about us thanks to Ygritte, and I’m still thinking.”


“Yes! And she told him you threatened her, too.”

“Fuck.”

“Yup.”

He looked at her, at the tears in her eyes, and he reminded himself to stay calm. “Sansa, please let me in so we can talk about this.”

“Why did you do it? Why did you go see her? Did you threaten her, too?”

He shook his head. “No, baby, I didn’t.”

“Don’t call me baby.”

He frowned. “I thought you liked it.”

“Right now it just sounds degrading. Like I’m literally a baby you feel the need to coddle.”

He pointed at her. “That sounds a lot like Melisandre in your head.”

“She’s not in my head,” Sansa said defiantly while wiping away tears that fell onto her cheeks.

“Liar. Sansa, sweetheart, I didn’t go see her all because of what she pulled on you yesterday. I mean, yeah, that was part of it, but honestly - Melisandre and I had some stuff to talk about.”

“Like what?” she asked, sounding as though she didn’t quite believe him.

“Like how she hated me when I was there.”

She frowned. “And what did she say to that?”
“She didn’t come outright and say it, but she didn’t deny that she wasn’t my biggest fan.”

Sansa’s frown deepened. “Oh.” She shifted on her feet as she looked down and then after a beat looked up. “Exactly what did she say?”

He rolled his eyes up attempting to remember the exact phrasing, and then looked at her. “She said that I made things difficult for her and that when I first got to the home I was such a sweet boy. I told her I was scared and she didn’t outright say she liked me better that way but then she told me I exhausted her so I got the idea that yes, she did.”

“Oh. Well...that was shitty of her.”

“So is her trying to tell you how to live our lives and acting like she knows just how our story is going to end.” He put his hand on the door frame. “Sansa, I know she got in your head. I know she scared you. She made you doubt us. She made you doubt yourself.”

She sniffed and looked past him, tears brimming in her eyes.

“Sansa?” he prompted.

“I don’t want to cry,” she said, her voice wobbling. “I don’t want to do you any harm, Jon.”

“The only harm you’ll do me is if you get it in your head that you have to end things because of Melisandre,” he said, and found his own voice beginning to wobble. “You promised you weren’t going anywhere, Sansa. You told me you loved me.”

“I do,” she insisted. “But what if--”

He couldn’t take it anymore, Jon pushed his way inside the house and she let him. “Fuck the what ifs,” he said fiercely. He nudged the door shut with his foot and walked toward her while she moved backwards. When she hit the counter, she stopped and just gripped the counter behind her as she looked up at him.

Jon leaned down and captured her lips in a deep kiss. She moaned and gripped his arms and he hefted her up into his arms, her legs wrapping around his waist.

“You know the what ifs backwards and forwards, sideways and upside down. You could recite them in your sleep and because of you, I can too. I don’t care. I don’t care what Melisandre thinks. She’s not in our relationship, Sansa. She doesn’t know us. Fuck, she doesn’t even know me. Not the real me. Not the one you know. Not the one that can fall apart in your arms, not the one that fears this life I have now is just a dream, not the one that fears you leaving me…”

He began to carry her to the bedroom. “I love you and you love me and the rest will sort itself out.”

She opened her mouth and he stopped walking to kiss her. “Don’t speak,” he muttered against her lips, “if the next word out of your mouth is but.”

She clamped her mouth shut and he almost laughed. Instead, he kissed her again.

When he got to her bedroom, he put one knee on the bed and went down on top of it with her. He lifted up on his hands and peered down at her. “Tell me you love me.”

“I love you,” she said dutifully.

“We need this off,” he whispered as he sat back on his heels and pushed her pajama top up. She
helped him discard it and then he bent down and suckled one nipple into his mouth until it was hard, and then the next. For good measure, he bit down lightly on it and she gasped and thrust her hips up.

He sat back and looked her over, heat in his eyes. He then met her eyes as he reached down and yanked his shirt off, tossing it somewhere over the bed with hers.

“We have so much to talk about,” she protested weakly even as she reached for him. He tugged her hands to his mouth and kissed one palm and then the other and then placed them on his chest as he descended upon her.

“Jon,” she gasped, and then moaned.

“Yes, sweet girl, I know what you want,” he murmured.

He rolled off of her and tugged at her pajama bottoms just as she reached for the snap of his jeans. Letting out a huff of frustration, Jon rolled fully onto his back and quickly rid himself of his sneakers, socks, jeans and boxers while Sansa rid herself of her pajama bottoms and panties.

“Hurry,” she muttered, pulling him to her. “Hurry--”

He was on her and then in her moaning as she let out an“Ahhhhh….”

It was slow, the slip and slide of their bodies. Jon held her close. Sansa clung to him. They murmured to each other as they moved, touched, caressed. Words of love and endearment. The pin was in the problem for now, and they both knew it. For now it was out the door, even out the window, to be picked up later.

But in that moment, it was just them and the soft glow of love that surrounded them like a bubble.

“You’re never going to leave me, are you, baby?” Jon asked softly, nuzzling at the side of her face. Sansa shook her head, her nails digging into his arm.

“I need to hear you say it, Sansa,” he said, a hint of a demand in his voice as he looked at her full on.

She met his gaze. “I am not going to leave you, Jon.”

He moved harder, faster, his hand going to her clit as he thrust. His release was imminent. Sansa’s was, too. She carded her hand through his hair and drew him down for a kiss. She nipped at his lip and then licked it soothingly. “I do love you, Jon,” she whispered.

“Sansa, fuck, come for me!”

She came with a silent cry; Jon with a roar. He fell against her and then rolled to his side, dragging her with him. He held her close, unwilling to let go. Sansa held on just as tight and he stroked her hair. Soon, she fell into sleep and Jon followed, their limbs still entwined.
Jon curled his body around Sansa as she slept on. He was worried what would happen when she awoke, if she’d take everything back. His Sansa, always trying to do the right thing, worrying too much about what everyone else thought, so afraid to be a little selfish…

He kissed her shoulder and she stirred. “Jon?” she said sleepily.

“Were you expecting someone else?” he teased.

“No,” she said and stirred again. He kept his hand on her belly and smiled when she covered his hand with hers. She sighed.

Jon waited.

“I just wish you’d told me you were going to see her,” she said finally.

Here it came. All the things left outside the door had crept in.
“You would have told me not to,” he said. “And I had to. That message she sent you - it was her one last play. Her one last hope to make you question everything. She’s not happy with your decision, Sansa, how are you going to handle that?”

“What do you mean by that?” she huffed.

“I mean, you’ve always looked up to Melisandre as a mentor. You’ve always done what she asked.”

“I’ve always done what any authority figure asked of me. It’s how I was raised.”

“But you have authority over yourself. You seem to forget that part.”

She sighed again - the sigh of someone who hates that the other person is right.

“I just -- I can’t shake the feeling that I’ve done something wrong.”

“You think loving me is wrong?” Okay, so that hurt.

She turned now to face him and looked up at him, carding a hand through his hair at his temple and frowning thoughtfully. “I want you to understand that when I say that, it’s not that I think it’s wrong for me because you are very good for me, but I fear it’s wrong for you.”

“We’ve been over this, Sansa,” he said impatiently.

“I know we have, but let me get my thoughts in order?”

He nodded.

She chewed on the inside of her cheek as she played with his hair absently. “My parents were always about doing the right thing, especially my Dad. And I was Daddy’s girl, and I always wanted to please him. He taught me to stand up for what was right and to help people whenever you could. He gave of himself a lot, and I think it exhausted him. He was forever looking the other way when someone wronged him and I learned to do the same. Which is how I ended up in terrible relationships. I was always seeing the potential in others, always thinking I could help them and fix them while they just took and took and took. It exhausted me. And I never got what I needed out of those relationships.”

“Do I exhaust you?” he asked gently.

She stared at him. “No,” she said, and it sounded like a revelation. “It was one of my fears. That you’d see me as the same Sansa you knew in the Home and not as the person I am. That you’d rely on me for help…”

“But I haven’t.”

“No,” she said. “You got help on your own.”

“Yes.”

“And you...you make me feel things I’ve never felt before. You make me feel alive and happy and loved all the things I’ve always wanted but never thought I could have. For me, relationships always meant that there had to be a lot of work and I could never figure out why I never got anything back despite how much work I put into those relationships.”

“Sounds like you dated a lot of asshats.”
She burst into surprised laughter. “I did! I so did! I’ve always been a people pleaser because my Dad was and I knew that thought I was changing things - I mean, how could I be a therapist and not fix it?”

Jon pressed a kiss to her forehead. “You’re human,” he whispered.

“I should know patterns. I should know about how a person’s childhood can affect them as an adult. The influence parents can have…”

“This is going to sound odd, but...did you kind of see Mel as a father figure?”

She sighed and nodded. “I think I did. She gave me my first job out of college, she took me under her wing, she showed me the ropes, and she was so pleased with my work - I wanted to make her happy and proud of me.”

“And so when she very clearly disapproved of you...?”

“I thought I must be wrong. That what I’m doing is wrong.” She looked up at him imploringly. “Please understand that I am not saying on some level this is okay.”

“But we’re not how she thinks we are either,” Jon said. “You know that, right? Maybe it’s not right for others, maybe if there are others like us it’s all fucked up. But we’re not them. We’re us. And you can’t really classify what could be the norm for others and apply it to us because what if we’re the exception? Sansa, I’ve told you before how you’ve changed me and helped me and made me believe in myself, but I don’t make you be the one to do all the work for me. As you like to remind me, I got my job on my own. I got the apartment. My motivations for doing those things were because I wanted to be with you and have something to offer you, but does it really matter? I’m here now. I got those things, and I want to keep them - if Robb doesn’t fire me after this anyway.”

“I don’t think he will.”

“But even if he did I’d find another job. You taught me how to keep going and to keep trying and how to give everything my all. I love you for several reasons, Sansa, and not all of them are related to Sansa the therapist. That is a part of you, but in the time we’ve had together I’ve learned about other parts of you - and all of them I love. Some of them even drive me batshit crazy like when you overthink - ow!”

He rubbed his arm and pouted. “You pinched me.”

“You deserved it,” she retorted, but it was obvious she was teasing.

He grinned. “You love me.”

She snuggled into him, burying her face in his chest. “I do. So much it scares me.”

“I can’t tell you how happy that makes me to hear.”

Silence fell, but not a worried silence, a contemplative one. Finally, Sansa lifted her head and moved back a little on the pillow to look at him. “You’re right,” she said. “You’ve been right...I just - I worried too much and I let Melisandre get in my head.”

“I know,” he murmured and pushed her onto her back. He made himself comfortable between her thighs. “It didn’t make me happy, but what you said about always wanting to do the right thing - that’s just you. And I love that about you even if it drives me nuts sometimes. It means you’ll never take advantage of me and my ‘triggers’ the way you think or the way Melisandre thinks,
because you won’t ever use my past against me to get what you want. You’re not wired that way."
She nodded. “We just have to continue being honest with each other as we have been.”

“Haven’t I been saying that?”

She poked him in the side and he winced even as he laughed.

“You know,” he drawled, “you now get to be selfish. All those other relationships you were selfless, always giving, but I like to think I give back…” He leaned in and nuzzled under chin. “I give you what you need.” He rocked against her, letting her feel his growing erection.

She moaned and wound her arms around him, playing with the hair at the back of his head.
“Yessss… I guess I’m just not… Oh, yeahhh…” she mewled when he closed his mouth around her nipple.

Jon lifted his head, letting her nipple go with a pop. “You’re not just…?”

She looked at him, dazed. “What?”

He smiled. “You were saying you guess you’re just not - and then I distracted you.”

She grinned. “You’re really good at that.”

“So maybe I have found one way to manipulate you.”

She poked him again. “I know.”

He laughed and then took her wrists with a little bit of wrestling and laughing, and pinned them up by her head. “You were saying,” he said, looking rather triumphant.

She squirmed under him. “I was saying,” she said as she hooked a leg over his hip, “that I’m not used to being selfish.”

Jon rubbed his cock against her wetness. “Well, get used to it.”

No words were needed for a while, not any that didn’t involve the words love, need, want, and a few salacious phrases uttered in the heat of passion.

After, they lay together on the bed on their backs, their arms touching as they panted from their workout and came down from their high.

“You know what’s next?” Sansa said.

“What, baby? Can I call you that now?”

“Yes, you can.” She rolled onto her side and he rolled onto his and gathered her close. Their bodies were slick with sweat, but neither cared.

Until Jon’s stomach growled. Sansa giggled and pulled away from him. “Come on, I’m hungry, too.”

Jon sighed as though it was just too much work to move, and in a way it kind of was. Jon pulled on his jeans, Sansa grabbed her robe. She headed for the kitchen with Jon behind her when she heard him groan.
She looked over her shoulder at him as she made her way to the fridge. “What is it?”

He held up his phone. “Robb. He wants to see me tomorrow morning first thing.”

“With no one around?”

“Sansa, he’s not going to hurt me.”

“I don’t know man, there’s a lot of tools that can double as weapons.”

“Sansa,” he said, laughing. “Don’t freak me out.”

She closed the fridge, a bottle of OJ in her hand. “In all seriousness though, we have to tell my family before Robb does. The boy can’t keep a secret to save his life.” She put the OJ on the counter. “So.” She put her hands on her hips. “You free for family dinner on Sunday?”
Chapter 38

I'm thinking one more chapter after this.

Jon stood in front of the trailer at work and heaved a sigh for courage. Robb was on the other side waiting for him and though Jon wasn’t a stranger to “getting in trouble”, he wanted to keep this job and was afraid Robb would fire him.

Sansa had told him that whatever happened they would deal with, which helped make him feel better. She also helped him figure out what to say to Robb about what he did.

He opened the door and there was Robb, sitting at Ygritte’s desk, looking at her computer and moving the mouse around. He looked over at Jon and swiveled the chair to face him. He nodded to the chair opposite the desk. “Have a seat, Jon.”

Jon sat, hands twisting together. “I just want to say that I know what I did to Ygritte was wrong and I’m sorry. I have no excuses for my behavior.”

Robb nodded slowly, hands folded on the desk. “Why don’t you tell me what happened? I want to hear your side.”

Sansa thought he might ask that, and told Jon to just be honest and don’t put any excuses or added comments in his relation of events. So, he told Robb the facts as they happened.

Robb was frowning by the end. “She asked you if you got laid?”

Jon nodded.

Robb sighed. “That was inappropriate.”

Jon didn’t say anything or nod or make any move.

“I know the guys can get pretty raunchy,” Robb sighed. “But it does sound like she was harassing you, too. Mind you, that does not at all excuse you threatening her in such a manner.”

“You’re absolutely right.”

“I’m glad you know that. I can’t have you doing shit like that, Jon.”

“I know.”

“If you ever attempted to scare my sister like that I’d skin you alive. There are a lot of tools around here that could be used as weapons. I could make it look like an accident.”

Jon normally wasn’t threatened easily. In fact, he was used to being the one making threats, and if he was on the receiving end of one, he usually answered with his fists.

However, Robb, he admitted to himself, could be downright scary when he wanted to be. Also, he was a brother looking out for his sister, and the boss looking out for one of his employees - a
woman, in fact, that Jon had purposely intimidated.

Sansa had explained to him that men were intimidating to women as it was, and what he did was exactly why.

“Do I intimidate you?” he’d asked worriedly.

“You have scared me,” she’d told him. “I told you so when you showed up here on my doorstep, remember?”

He did remember. And then he’d felt shameful and apologized all night to her for that. Wisely, he didn’t mention having essentially stalked her for a while.

“Ygritte quit,” Robb said, bringing him back to the present.

Jon’s eyes widened. “Because of me?”

“Maybe. Maybe not. It could have been because I told her I didn’t appreciate her exposing my sister’s secrets to me like that.”

Jon didn’t know what to say. He squirmed instead.

“You know, Jon...Ygritte...she had a thing for you. That was obvious to all of us. And if she was saying stuff to you in private then you should have come to me about it. But intimidating her like that...that’s not good. Honestly, it raises some red flags for me.”

“I know. Sansa explained it to me last night and I know what I did was wrong and I do feel terrible about it.”

“So, here’s what we’re going to do,” Robb said. “You’re going to take a week off. Unpaid.”

Okay, that was going to hurt, but he wasn’t going to argue. He hadn’t lost his job at least.

“And I’m going to send you to a seminar on anger management and sexual harassment.”

Jon nodded. “Okay.”

“And if I think for one goddamn second that you are doing anything to hurt my sister, I will make it so you never walk again.”

Jon nodded. Yup, Robb was scary. “I would never hurt Sansa, Robb. I love her.”

“And this is where I ask you as a friend - what the hell, man? Why didn’t you ever say anything? Don’t you know you’re supposed to ask me first? I mean, I am her big brother.”

“I...don’t think it’s really up to you?” Jon said carefully.

Robb laughed. “I’m kidding. Sort of. When did this happen?”

“Sometime after we delivered her bookcase. We kept running into each other and then it just...happened.”

Such a far easier story than the truth. Robb would kill him on the spot, and yet Jon had to admit that it did feel wrong to lie about this.

He liked Robb. He looked up to the man and if all went according to plan, they’d be brothers-in-
law one day. Would the truth one day bite them in the ass? And if it did, how would that go down? Hopefully by then, he and Sansa would already be married so it wouldn’t be a huge deal. Oh, God. But for all the crap he did, he would get his ass kicked. And he’d deserve it, too.

“Well, if she’s happy I’m happy. Sansa has a big heart. Please don’t take advantage of that, ever.”

“Never,” Jon said with a firm shake of his head.

The door burst open behind them and Tormund came in. “Fuck, it’s cold,” he said. He looked from Jon to Robb. “We havin’ a meetin’?”

“Nope. Jon just got here early. He’s going to be taking some time off next week.”

“Already?” Tormund teased.

And just like that, things were back to normal.

**********

“So, how bad am I going to be teased today?” Jon asked as he and Sansa made their way up the driveway to her mother’s door.

“You?” Sansa said incredulously. “No, honey, they are not going to be teasing you half as much as I’m going to get teased.”

“Nine years isn’t a huge age difference, ya know,” he said as they now stood in front of Catelyn’s door.

Sansa reached out and patted his cheek gently. “You’re adorable.”

The door opened and Arya stood there, grinning. “Did you have to help her up the walk, Jon? She is getting on in years.”

“You do realize we’re only a few years apart, right?” Sansa said with a scowl. “And let me guess - Robb just couldn’t keep his mouth shut.”

“Of course,” Arya said. She pointed at her sister. “And you’re still older than me.”

Sansa shooed her. “Go, get out of our way and let us in.”

“Okay, but for real - I do have a question.”

Sansa arched a brow. “What?”

“What time does Jon have to be home for curfew?”

Sansa took a threatening step in her direction and Arya laughed and ran off down the hall to the kitchen.

Jon was laughing behind her and Sansa sent him a look of pure betrayal. He pulled her into him and kissed her forehead. “Sansa, after all we’ve been through, do you really think a few cracks about our age difference really makes a difference to me?”
Sansa fell in love with him a little bit more after that. She leaned into him and smiled. Hand-in-hand they made their way into the kitchen and Sansa’s eyes went wide when she saw her old Hanson and Leonardo DiCaprio poster displayed on the sliding glass door with a sign between them that read in Robb’s slanting scrawl: *Things You Need to Know about Your Girlfriend.*

Bran, Rickon, and Robb popped up from the hall, all three of them giggling like kids.

“You’re dead!” Sansa shouted at them, and charged toward them.

“Scatter!” Rickon yelled.

It was Robb that Sansa went after, knowing he was the mastermind behind all of it. Jon just grinned like a fool while watching her give Robb chase.

“Jon,” said a voice behind him.

He jumped and turned, not realizing that Catelyn was there in all the commotion. She smiled at him.

“Hi, Mrs. Stark,” he greeted her. “Can I help you with anything?”

She beamed at him. “Yes, actually. I’d love some help setting the table.”

“Just tell me how to do it. I haven’t had much practice.”

“First, let me know you where the silverware is…”

She showed him where the silverware was and told him the number of forks and knives he needed. Once he had them out, she showed him to the dining room and showed him how to lay them out on the folded napkins. They set to work amidst shouting, laughing, and a thump here and there from upstairs.

“Jon,” Catelyn said once they were done setting the table.

“Yes, Mrs. Stark?”

She waved a dismissive hand. “Call me Catelyn.”

“Give me some time to get used to that.”

She smiled as she made her way over to him. She looked up at him imploringly. “My Sansa...she’s dated some real duds. Men who just took advantage of her kind nature. Robb tells me you’re a good guy and hard worker and I like that. Sansa needs that. Please be good to my daughter.”

“I promise I will,” Jon vowed. “I care for your daughter very much.”

Catelyn nodded. “Good. But just in case? I have a very sharp carving knife. It can cut leather it’s so sharp.”

Jon gulped.

She smiled. “If you hurt her, I will end you.”

Good to know the scary ran through the family. He nearly shivered at the thought of what Ned Stark, may he rest in peace, would have threatened to do to him.
And thank God the real story of how they met hadn’t come out. He had a feeling if it had, his head would have been mounted on the wall in the kitchen for all to see - for future warnings of possible boyfriends for Sansa should they dare to enter the den of wolves.

Jon shook his head. “I promise I won’t. Not intentionally - never intentionally.”

She patted his shoulder. “Good. Now come and help me get the chicken out of the oven.”

“ Anything you need,” he said and hastened to follow her.
Chapter Notes

Well, what a ride this was! And how long it took me to finally post the epilogue. Thanks to israfel00 and asongforjonsa.

Kelly - your lovely banners were most inspiring and gorgeous treats to look at. I hope you like what I did in this last chapter.

One Year Later

“How’s it going so far?” Robb asked Jon as he shuffled some papers on his desk.

Jon shoved his water bottle, half-full, in the fridge. “It’s only been the weekend,” he replied.

“Yeah, and look at that shit-eating grin,” Robb said with a laugh. “Ya know, part of me wants to punch you because I know that grin and what it means, and the other half is just happy to see Sansa
happy.”

Jon’s grin bloomed into a full smile. “How about we just focus on the part of you that’s really happy to see Sansa happy?”

“Has she done anything to annoy you yet?” Robb asked.

Jon laughed. “I just moved in three days ago!”

Robb was about to respond when his phone rang. “Hello, Robb speaking...Hey, San...why are you calling me and not lover boy?” He grimaced. “Yeah, I can’t believe I said that either and it won’t happen again...sure, hold on.”

Robb extended his hand. “Guess who?”

Jon took the phone, grinning. “Hey, baby.”

“What’s wrong with your phone?”

Frowning now, he dug into his pocket and extracted it. “Um, it needs to be charged.”

“Will you be home soon?”

“Robb and I were just closing up the trailer for the night.”

“How’s the new site?”

“New,” he said with a shrug.

She laughed softly. “I’ll see you soon. Love you.”

Would he ever get tired of hearing that? Probably not. “I love you too, baby.”

He handed Robb his phone back, thinking of that first day when he’d come looking for a job and Sansa had called. How he’d wanted to hear her voice, how he’d strained to hear it, and how he’d fantasized about her one day calling for him.

“Better get home,” Robb said. “Before she calls again and you get into trouble.”

Jon just smiled, saluted him, and left.

*******

“Honey, I’m--” Jon stopped abruptly in the doorway and took in the scene before him.

Pasta in the center of the table. Candles lit. Lights dimmed. A beer on the table, and a wine glass already full.

Sansa, his gorgeous girlfriend, getting up from one of the chairs and launching herself at him.

He caught her easily and moaned when she kissed him thoroughly, clinging to him.

“Hi,” she whispered.
“Hi,” he whispered back, wrapping his arms around her. “This looks familiar.”

“Doesn’t it?”

He nodded toward the table. “Baked ziti?”

She nodded. “Do you want to take a quick shower first?

His stomach let out a loud rumble and they both laughed, heads bent together, foreheads touching. “How about I just wash up a little and later I’ll try to coax you into taking a shower with me?”

“Do you think you’ll find me coaxable?”

He captured her lips in a deep kiss and she melted into him. He was smug by the dazed look in her eye when he broke the kiss. “Yeah, I think so.”

She shot him a look that held no heat. “Go wash up. I’ll serve.”

He kissed her again quickly and hurried to the bathroom to wash up.

Sansa smiled as she set about dishing out baked ziti - that she actually made herself! - onto their respective plates. When Jon returned, smelling less like sawdust and sweat, and changed into his favorite worn jeans and a black tank top, they sat down together and tucked in.

They chatted about their day as they ate and sipped their drinks, and at one point Sansa’s feet ended up on Jon’s lap. Comfortably full, they sat and talked some more until Sansa got up and went to the counter to pull something out of a plastic bag.

With a proud smile she plopped it down on the table in front of Jon.

Brows furrowed, he picked it up and looked at her in question. It was ribbon. Red ribbon.

“What’s this?” he asked, fingering the satiny material.

“So I have this wonderful Japanese-American client who told me this story about the red thread of destiny. Her grandmother had told it to her when she was a child and it stuck with her and - okay, well, her story doesn’t matter right now. What matters is the symbolism of this red ribbon. It’s actually supposed to be red thread, but they were sold out at the craft store - can you even imagine? - , so I got the ribbon.”

“What’s the story?”

“I guess it’s more of a belief than a story.”

He laughed softly. “So, then what’s the belief?”

“The belief is that there is a matchmaker god who ties a red thread around the ankles of two would-be soulmates, and the idea is that though the thread may stretch and get all tangled up, the two people who have the red thread are destined to be together and no matter what, they will find each other.”

“Do they have matching red thread then?” he asked.

“I don’t know, I asked the same question, but that’s not the point. The point is that once you find the person with the red thread that you’re meant to be with, you’ve found your soulmate. Your destiny. What I’m saying is - you’re my destiny, Jon.”
Jon picked up the ribbon, his expression solemn. “In the interest of not tripping…” he murmured and reached over to loop a piece of the ribbon around her wrist and then around his. He placed the rest on the table. “Sansa Stark,” he declared, “You are my destiny.”

She smiled and gripped his hand. “I love you.”

He squeezed her hand. “I love you. More than you could possibly know.”

Feeling a bit emotional, Sansa began pulling the ribbon from their wrists and wrapping it back around the spool. “I thought we could put this in that chest you made me. The one at the foot of our bed? I thought maybe that chest could be where we put special things that mean something to us - of our life together.”

“To pass down to our kids one day?” he asked softly.

Her breath caught and she looked up him. “Yes.”

He sucked in a sharp breath and stood, pulled her to her feet and into his arms. “Let’s go to bed.”

“Bed? What about that shower?”

“Can’t wait,” he muttered and lifted her up so that her legs wound around his waist.

She giggled and kissed him quickly. “I’m so glad you’re here,” she whispered.

“And do you know where here is?”

She lifted her head and looked at him questioningly.

He smiled. “Home.”

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