

The Wedding

“HELLO!” ANNI POKED her head around through the doorway of Tussi Attack just in time to see Kiara and Emily push Jasmin behind them.

“Out! Shoo!” Emily exclaimed bitchily.

“Excuse me, but since when am I not allowed in *my* fiancée’s store?” Anni hid her smirk. She knew exactly what they were doing in there. Jasmin had warned her to stay away that morning. Of course, Anni being Anni, she finagled some sweet sex out of Jasmin in order to agree. Best. Negotiation. Ever.

“You promised me!” Jasmin called out from behind her friends. “And, after what I did for you this morning, I expect you to keep that promise!”

Anni held up her hands and laughed. “Okay, okay. I’m going. But, how long are you going to be? I’m kinda bored. I thought maybe we could hang out. Get some coffee or something.” *Or something sounds much more interesting*, Anni thought with a smile.

“I could use some coffee,” Kiara said kindly.

There was just something about that voice that made Anni cringe. Not that it wasn’t pleasant. It was. But Anni couldn’t forget how Kiara had warned her with *that voice* that she’d be there, fighting for Jasmin, if Anni screwed up again. Spending time with the woman was *not* what Anni had planned or wanted.

“Um . . .”

“That’s a great idea, sweetie! Kiara has been here for hours. She needs a break. Would you mind?” Jasmin peeked between Kiara and Emily, giving Anni a sweet, pouting look. She wanted desperately for the two to become friends. She knew that if Anni would just give Kiara a chance it would happen. Unfortunately, Anni couldn’t get past the fact that Jasmin and Kiara had gotten close.

Anni sighed. She knew this was important to Jasmin. Why she had to be friends with the woman, she didn’t know. But she would do it. Love was all about compromise, right? “Yeah, sure. I’ll, um, meet you at Vereinsheim.” Without another word, she left.

“That went well,” Kiara chuckled.

“It’ll be fine,” Jasmin said, a bit unconvinced of that fact herself.

“I don’t know,” Emily chimed in. “I mean, you two almost slept together. I can’t imagine Anni getting over that.”

Jasmin shot Emily a look as Kiara raised an eyebrow at her. She had told Emily that in total confidence. She couldn’t believe Emily was bringing it up right in front of Kiara!

“Well,” Kiara cleared her throat, “I don’t want to keep Anni waiting and give her more ammunition to hate me. I’ll be back in a bit. If not, perhaps you should send a search party out for me.” She winked and grabbed her purse on the way out.

“I can’t believe you said that!” Jasmin hissed.

“What?” Emily shrugged. “I assume she *knows* she almost slept with you.”

“That’s not the point.” Jasmin huffed, then turned on her heel and stomped to the back room. Emily blinked. “Was it something I said?”



“WOULD YOU MIND if I sit here?” Kiara spotted Anni tucked away in a secluded corner as soon as she walked into the coffee shop. The “stay-the-fuck-away-from-me” aura around Anni kept everyone at bay. Everyone except Kiara. *Jasmin wants us to be friends, so that’s what we’re going to do.*

“I invited you, didn’t I?”

Kiara took a seat and crossed her long legs. “Actually, I invited myself. I’m sorry about that, but apparently it’s important to Jasmin that we get along.”

“And, you’ll do anything for Jasmin,” Anni said sarcastically.

“Yes.” Kiara sighed softly and leaned in. “I won’t pretend not to care, Anni. We’ve become close friends. I intend on keeping that friendship.”

“Close,” Anni scoffed. “Too close.”

“What happened, happened. There’s no changing the past.” Kiara sat back when Tuner walked up and asked for her order. After requesting a simple black coffee, she turned her attention back to a sulking Anni. “I’m sure there are things in the past that you would like to change.”

Anni glanced up sharply. “What did Jasmin tell you?”

“It doesn’t matter, Anni. This animosity you have towards me is misdirected. I told you, as long as Jasmin is happy with you, you have nothing to worry about from me.”

“I bet you’re just foaming at the mouth, waiting for me to screw up, aren’t you?”

“Actually, I’m rooting for you.” She smiled at Tuner as he handed her the cup. The look he exchanged with Anni was not lost on her. It would seem her and Jasmin’s indiscretion — as brief and non-existent as it was — had become common knowledge. “Look, I know the last thing you want is my advice. But, I’m going to give it to you anyway. It’s time to grow up. This grudge you’re holding against me is petty and childish. And, whether you believe it or not, it will harm your relationship with Jasmin.”

Anni snorted. “You think she’s going to take your side over mine if we don’t become best buds?”

“No. I think *you* will let this consume you until you convince yourself that you can’t trust Jasmin,” Kiara answered evenly.

Anni frowned. Was she right? There were moments when Anni knew that Jasmin was at the store with Kiara and she would feel that awful feeling of jealousy and fear. She *knew* Jasmin would never cheat on her. It wasn’t her style. *No, it’s just your style isn’t it, Anni?*

Of course, Anni being Anni, she let her pride speak for her. “You don’t know anything about me.”

“I know that you’re not living up to your potential,” Kiara countered defiantly. “I know that you have the talent to be standing on that stage singing your own music, yet you stay in the background. I know you can offer Jasmin much more than anyone else can because of the love you two have.”

Anni sat there speechless. Obviously Jasmin had talked quite a bit about her and their relationship. That knowledge did a lot to ease Anni’s insecurity. She took a deep breath and looked squarely at Kiara. “Thanks,” she said sincerely and saw the slight flicker of surprise in Kiara’s eyes. “I don’t want to dislike you. You seem pretty cool. But, you still want Jasmin. How do I get past that?”

“By knowing that I would never do anything to threaten a relationship that means so much to both of you.” Kiara took a sip of her coffee. “If it helps, I won’t be in Berlin much longer.”

This time, the surprise was Anni’s. “What?”

“I have a business to run. Tussi Attack is not my only client.”

“Does Jasmin know?”

Kiara nodded. “I told her this morning that I would be leaving for the States after your wedding,” Her coffee cup made a small clinking sound when Kiara set it on the saucer. “I, admittedly, should have waited for a better time to tell her. She’s already stressed with designing her dress. I think she’s a tad overwhelmed at the prospect of handling the business side of Tussi Attack.”

“Isn’t that what Emily is for?” Anni inquired genuinely.

“Yes, and I have gone over everything I can think of to help both of them keep their footing when I’m gone. I’m sure you can take care of Jasmin if she becomes a little too strained,” Kiara grinned.

For the first time since she met the woman, Anni felt a bona fide like for Kiara. Maybe it was because she knew Kiara was leaving. Or, maybe it was the innuendo. Either way, it was a step in the right direction.

“I can’t believe Jasmin is insisting on designing her own dress now,” Anni confided, speaking of Jasmin’s stress. “She had been against it before.”

Kiara shrugged a shoulder. “I would have tried to talk her out of it if I thought it would make a difference. But, ever since the two of you came back from visiting your parents, she said she knew exactly what she wanted. You can’t argue with a bride-to-be.”

“What if you’re the other bride?” Anni asked with a lopsided grin.

“Stale-mate?” Kiara chuckled.



“HONEY, I’M HOME!” Jasmin kicked the door closed behind her, arms full of “wedding stuff” as Anni called it. To Jasmin, it was all of the materials she needed in order to have the perfect wedding with the one she loved.

“Hey, babe.” Anni set her laptop aside and got up to help her fiancée. She gave her a sweet kiss before relieving Jasmin of her burden. “More wedding stuff?”

Jasmin shrugged. “Just some samples. We have most of the things we need. All of this is just extra. She smiled secretly when Anni groaned. Actually, everything was set for their wedding – thank goodness since it was less than a week away. She only brought more and more things home because it drove Anni crazy.

“We don’t need extra, babe,” Anni whined. “I thought we decided to have a small wedding.”

“We did. That doesn’t mean it can’t be nice.” Jasmin laughed when Anni threw everything on the couch. “Besides, you owe me. Big time.”

Anni’s eyebrows shot up. “Owe you? What did I do now?”

“You totally broke our agreement from this morning. I got on my *knees* for you to make sure you wouldn’t show up at the shop. But, you did it anyway.”

Anni grinned roguishly thinking of Jasmin on her knees earlier. *So worth it.* She sauntered over to her lover and pulled her close. “So? Are you going to punish me?”

“Oh, you would like that, wouldn’t you?”

“Well, I mean, I *did* break the agreement,” Anni shrugged. “It’s only fair. For you, of course.”

“Mmhmm.” Jasmin dipped her head and kissed Anni. “Punishing you sounds like a really good idea.” Just as she deepened the kiss, the front door opened and half of their roommates – which seemed to change every other week – walked in.

“Ugh! We really need a place of our own,” Anni complained, shooting dirty looks at everyone who dared interrupt them.

Jasmin’s eyes sparkled. She grabbed Anni’s hand and dragged her to their bedroom.

“Hey!” Tuner – a temporary new addition to the WG since Nele, Mesut, and Ayla moved out – called out. “Your stuff is all over the couch!”

“Move it! We’re going to be busy for the rest of the night,” Anni grinned.

“Just put it to the side,” Jasmin said. “Sorry!” She pulled Anni through the door and closed it, locking it.

Anni rubbed her hands together with anticipation. *This punishment is so going to be worth it!* She started undressing, but stopped abruptly when Jasmin picked up her laptop and opened it.

“Are you researching ways to punish me?” Anni asked, shivering a little with expectation.

Jasmin glanced up. The peek of Anni’s smooth skin almost had her abandoning her plans. Then she heard the loudness coming from the common room and patted the bed beside her.

“Nope, we’re going to find a place to live.”

“*Now?! But I thought we were going to, you know.*”

Jasmin smiled. “You’re so cute. We’ll get to that. Listen to that.” She gestured towards the door. “We’re getting married soon. *Very* soon. Wouldn’t you like to come home from our honeymoon to our *own* place? No roommates, no interruptions. We could walk around naked, make love on the kitchen counter, or do whatever the hell we wanted whenever the hell we wanted.”

Anni sat next to Jasmin and plucked the computer from her lap. “Give me that thing. What’s our budget?”



JASMIN AWOKE TO two conflicting sensations. Her body jerked involuntarily and she winced at the pain in her neck. Then moaned at the pleasure she felt quite a bit lower. She raised her head as much as she could and cried out at the touch of Anni’s tongue on a particularly sensitive part of her.

“Anni,” she breathed. It was a beautiful way to wake up even if it was from sleeping on the floor all night long. She had no idea how long Anni had been doing what she was doing, but Jasmin was ready to explode. “Don’t stop!”

Anni felt the change as soon as Jasmin woke up and amped up her efforts. They had, unfortunately, fallen asleep while searching for their new home. That meant no sex for Anni. Or, more importantly, no making it up to Jasmin for breaking their deal. When Anni woke up with Jasmin snoring softly beside her, the sight was so beautiful she couldn’t help herself. So, she helped herself to a taste of her favorite thing ever.

Jasmin’s moan came from deep down as the long, slow climax coursed through her body. Her body trembled from the aftershocks and she shivered when Anni slowly kissed her way up to her lips.

“Good morning.” Anni kissed Jasmin fully, knowing Jasmin found it erotic tasting herself on Anni’s tongue.

“Very good,” Jasmin agreed with feeling. “Thank you.”

“My pleasure. Literally.” Anni kissed Jasmin again, pulling away when Jasmin tried undressing her.

“Where are you going?”

“That was for you to make up for yesterday. No reciprocation needed.” Anni held out her hand to help Jasmin up.

“What if I want to reciprocate?” Jasmin asked sensually. “Which I really, really do.”

Anni groaned. “You’re killing me, babe. I want that, too, but we have an appointment.”

Jasmin frowned, mentally going through her schedule. “What appointment?”

“We’re going to check out that apartment we agreed on last night.”

Jasmin looked at her watch. “Just how long have you been awake?”

“Before I had you for breakfast?” She chuckled at Jasmin’s cute blush. “About fifteen minutes. I called the real estate agent, made an appointment, and put together some of the papers we’ll need if we really like it.”

Jasmin took Anni’s face in her hands, gazing into her deep brown eyes. “You really are amazing, you know that?”

Anni shrugged sheepishly. “You were pretty into that place and I thought it was cool. Might as well go see it before someone else snatches it up.”

“I love you.”

Anni smiled. “I love you, too, Tussi. You have thirty minutes to get ready.”

“Thirty minutes!” Jasmin pushed Anni away, almost tripping on her clothes that were around her ankles. She bent to pull them up, yelping when Anni slapped her ass. “I have to shower and get ready. We don’t have time for fooling around.”

“Ha! That’s what you think. Race you to the shower!” Anni took off with Jasmin hot on her heels. They both shouted a quick good morning to whichever roommates happened to be in their path before locking themselves in the bathroom. Thirty minutes was plenty of time for a little fooling around.



“WHAT ARE YOU laughing at?” Anni side-eyed Jasmin who sat in the passenger seat, snickering.

“Nothing,” Jasmin snorted.

“I will turn this car around,” Anni warned, causing Jasmin to laugh even harder.

“You sound like a parent!”

Curiously, Anni didn’t balk at that thought. In fact, it intrigued her. “Yeah, well, I will. Come on, what are you laughing at?”

“Now you sound like the kid,” Jasmin teased at Anni’s whining. “I was just thinking about how flexible you are.”

Anni winced, still feeling the aftereffects of their little adventure in the shower. “That was totally your fault!”

“How was it my fault? I told you not to spread your legs so far. I was doing just fine in the position we were in.”

“You didn’t listen when I told you I was slipping.”

“I was focused on something else,” Jasmin countered.

“Yeah, well, we need something on the bottom of that damn shower so we don’t slip when we’re trying to defy gravity the way we were,” Anni mumbled.

Jasmin laughed again. “We’ll be sure our *own* shower has everything we need. Deal?”

Anni glanced at Jasmin, then smiled. “Deal.” She heard the directions coming from her phone and made the turn onto what could possibly become *their* street. “Almost there.”

“Excited?”

“Oh yeah. You?”

“Absolutely. Having our own place is going to be amazing.” Jasmin peered out the window, taking in the neighborhood. It was quaint. Quiet. Beautiful. She was so caught up in her surroundings that she didn’t notice when Anni stopped.

“Jasmin?” Anni waited until she had Jasmin’s attention. “You’re sure about this, right?”

“Of course I am. Why? Are you having second thoughts?”

“Not even one,” Anni answered immediately. “It’s just, there are probably better choices for you than me.”

“Stop right there. I love you. And, you show me more each day how much you love me. There is *no* better choice.”

There was not an ounce of doubt or hesitation in Jasmin’s voice. No deceit in her warm brown eyes. Only pure love. Anni smiled as she reached out and caressed Jasmin’s cheek. “We’re here. Let’s go check out our new married life digs.”

“Don’t get your hopes up, honey. There’s always a possibility that we won’t get it.”

“Nope,” Anni shook her head. “I have a good feeling about this. It’s ours.”

Jasmin shook her head with a chuckle. “All right, then. Let’s go see our ‘new married life digs’.”



THE APARTMENT WAS perfect. The soon-to-be-married couple couldn’t have been happier with *everything* that came with it. Two extra bedrooms — “for our future kids” Anni explained — a balcony, large kitchen, and a master bedroom that was to die for. Though the price caused a bit of a disagreement when they first fell in love with it while searching online, Anni finally relented. Jasmin made it perfectly clear that the money she was making through Tussi Attack wasn’t just hers. It was Anni’s inspiration and support that helped Jasmin get to this point. Tussi Attack’s success was just as much Anni’s doing as it was Jasmin’s, Sophie’s and Emily’s.

“When did the agent say we could move in?”

The childlike enthusiasm in Anni’s voice moved Jasmin. It had been a long time since she heard Anni be so carefree and happy.

“We could start moving in as little as a week. That’s how long she said the paperwork should take.”

“So, just in time for our wedding night?” Anni wiggled her eyebrows.

Jasmin laughed. “We’re going to be on a plane on our wedding night, sweetie. But, I’m sure Katrin could, um, supervise some of our friends in setting it up for when we get back.”

“She seems happy for us these days,” Anni said carefully. It wasn’t *that* long ago that Katrin tried her damndest to get Jasmin and her ex-husband back together. Not for Jasmin’s happiness, but for pure selfish reasons. Anni was still on the fence about forgiving her for that.

“She is.” Jasmin knew Anni still had ill feelings towards Jasmin’s mother. She couldn’t blame her for that after everything that happened. But Jasmin truly believed Katrin had changed and was remorseful for her part in the whole “Kurt fiasco”. “I know it’s hard, baby, but you need to forgive her. She’s doing everything she can to show us she supports us. She’s even paying for the wedding and the honeymoon!”

“I know,” Anni sighed. *I just hope she’s doing it out of love for you and not some other greedy reason.* “I’ll make sure to be extra nice to her. I promise.”

Jasmin laughed. “How about you just be you. She’ll see through any of your fake niceties.”

“Hey! I can fake it!”

“No, baby, you can’t. And, you better not be faking anything with me,” Jasmin said, raising an eyebrow.

Anni leered at her fiancée a little too long to be safe while driving. “Baby, I do *not* need to fake anything with you. Our sex is too damned good for that.”

“Better believe it,” Jasmin muttered with satisfaction as she finished her text to Katrin about the apartment.

“Hey, can I ask you something?” Anni tapped her thumbs on the steering wheel, hoping her question wasn’t going to start an argument.

“Sure.” Jasmin tucked her phone away and focused on Anni.

Anni hesitated for a beat. “How do you feel about Kiara leaving?” she asked finally.

Jasmin studied Anni for a moment trying to judge the reasoning for the question. She decided it was just curiosity and answered honestly. “I’ll miss her. And, I don’t say that to hurt you, sweetie. It’s just that we’ve become good friends and I’ll miss our talks. And, of course, I’ve learned so much from her about the fashion business.” She shrugged. “But I think I’m ready to show that I can stand on my own with Tussi Attack. Well, with Emily, of course.”

“You can always talk to me,” Anni offered and received a sweet smile in return.

“I know.”

“I’m sorry she’s going.”

“Are you?” There was no malice in the question, just natural interest.

“Yeah. We had a nice talk when we had coffee,” Anni confessed. “She doesn’t sugarcoat anything, does she?”

“Nope, not at all,” Jasmin chuckled. “Kinda like you.”

“Yeah, well, we came to an understanding. A truce, I guess. I learn how to be less insecure and she doesn’t try to steal you away from me.”

“You know she couldn’t do that, right?”

“I know. I was joking about that part. Sort of. But, she said some things to me that made me think.”

“Always scary,” Jasmin teased.

Anni stuck her tongue out at her fiancée. “*Anyway.* I’m going to do something with my life, Jasmin. I’m going to make you proud of me.”

Jasmin placed her hand on Anni’s thigh. “I’m already proud of you, Anni.”

Anni patted Jasmin’s hand. “But, I have the potential to be more. I want to do that. Not just for you, but for me, too.”

“Whatever you decide, sweetie, I’m right beside you. Every step of the way.”

“I was hoping you’d say that. I don’t think this is going to be an easy road. And, I’ll probably lose my temper more than once.” She pulled into a parking space and cut the engine. She turned to Jasmin. “But I swear to you I will *never* do anything to hurt you or jeopardize us and our relationship. You are the most important person in my life. I fucked up before and almost lost you for good. I *know* I can’t live without you now. I don’t want to.”

A tear ran down Jasmin's cheek. "Then we don't let careers or people or anything else come between us. If we start to feel overwhelmed, we tell each other. If we need a little time alone, we tell each other. If we feel any kind of temptation," she paused when Anni muttered 'never going to happen', "we discuss it. There's no one else in the world I want to be with Anni. I've told you that many times. In order for this to work, love, trust, and communication have to be foremost in our relationship."

"I agree." She took Jasmin's hand in hers. "Less than a week, baby. Then you're all mine."

"I'm all yours right now."



"FOR THE RECORD, I do *not* agree with this," Anni gruffed.

"So you've said, sweetie. Many times," Jasmin said patiently. "It's just for a few hours."

"But why can't we go out together? We're *both* the brides. You're going to go see strippers . . ."

"We are not going to see strippers," Jasmin interrupted with a laugh.

"Right. I don't trust Emily."

Jasmin pulled Anni to her. "Then trust me. I'm not even going to drink that much."

"Ha! Since when?"

"Funny." Jasmin kissed Anni's pouting mouth. "I'm serious. Tomorrow is our big day and I don't want to have a hangover. I want to be of sound mind and body when I marry you."

Anni relaxed at the sincerity in Jasmin's voice. "Me, too. Maybe we should just stay in. We could watch TV." She began to push Jasmin towards the bed. "Or, we could cook dinner together." Closer. "Or, you know, get in bed and stay there until the very last minute before we have to get up in the morning to get married."

"Tempting."

"I can be even more tempting," Anni said sexily. She began unbuttoning the shirt that Jasmin had just put on. She was encouraged when Jasmin didn't stop her. "Wouldn't it be more fun to stay in and let me worship your body?"

"We're leaving the country in two days for a couple of weeks, sweetie. Shouldn't we spend time with our friends before we go?" It was a half-hearted argument and they both knew it.

"They'll still be here when we get back." Anni stopped disrobing Jasmin for a second. "Then again, I don't know who will be living here in the 'rotating roommates' WG by then. And, we'll be in our *own* apartment." She shrugged. "But, they'll be around. There will only be one night before our wedding. We need to take advantage of it." Anni smiled at her own cleverness.

Jasmin shook her head with a grin. "Just think of that one, did ya?"

"Maybe, but it's true." Anni feathered her finger down Jasmin's cheek. "Stay with me?"

What could be more important than spending the night before their wedding together? Their friends would understand. And, if not? To hell with them. This was her and Anni's time.

"Are you going to finish undressing me or do I have to do it?"



ANNI STRETCHED LANGUIDLY. Her body ached in places she didn't know she had and it was awesome! Last night was indescribable. Her and Jasmin's love life had always been incredible, but there was a difference

last night. Something shifted again. A peaceful sense of belonging washed over Anni when Jasmin made love to her. Something she had never fully felt before. Oh, she knew for a fact that Jasmin was the one for her. Now, she was certain she was the one for Jasmin. And she would spend the next fifty plus years proving that if she had to.

She rolled over and spent the next few moments staring at the woman she was about to marry. She felt like the luckiest woman in the world. Jasmin was everything anyone could ever ask for. Beautiful, talented, intelligent, funny, caring. Perfectly imperfect. Not only did she have Jasmin, Anni had her family back. Her parents had gotten into town a couple of days ago, and the time they spent together was fantastic. Her father was feeling much better, and he doted on Jasmin as though she were his own daughter. Anni supposed now that was going to be true.

Her mother got rid of her own insecurities and became much more open with both Anni and Jasmin. There was no sense of dread with them. No hiding who she was anymore. Just an open, loving relationship. She had Jasmin to thank for that. Her support and love helped Anni knock that damned chip off her shoulder and tear down the walls around her heart.

“*Baby?*” she whispered in Jasmin’s ear. She smiled when Jasmin swiped at her ear and grumbled in her sleep, trying to roll over. *Oh, no you don’t.* “Oh, baaaby. It’s time to get up,” she singsonged.

“Go away.”

“Okay, if that’s what you want. Guess I’ll have to find someone else to marry.”

Jasmin’s eyes popped up and she sat up abruptly, bumping heads with Anni. “Ow.”

“Geez, babe, I was just kidding.” Anni rubbed her forehead. *Hope that doesn’t bruise.*

“Sorry.” Jasmin rubbed her own head. “What time is it? Are we late?”

“Nope, we have plenty of time to wake up, eat, take a shower.”

Jasmin eyed Anni. “Remember what happened the last time we took a shower?”

“You bet I do. I’d do it all over again. Every morning.”

“You’re very chipper this morning,” Jasmin grinned.

“Yep. I’m about to put on an old ball and chain.” She oomphed when Jasmin hit her in the stomach. “It’s a good thing I’m seeing how abusive you can be before we get married!”

“Oh, poor baby. Here, let me kiss it and make it all better.” Jasmin proceeded to kiss Anni tenderly on the forehead, then moved down to kiss her naked belly. “Better?”

“Oh, yeah. But, I think you missed a spot.” She nodded to the “spot” a little further south.

“Fiend. Didn’t you get enough last night?”

“Did you?” Anni shot back playfully.

“Never.”

“Hey, did last night feel different to you?”

If she hadn’t felt something different, Jasmin would have been worried about Anni’s question. “Yes. At the risk of sounding too corny, it was pretty magical.”

“That’s not corny, baby. Just don’t say it in front of anyone else,” Anni teased. She dodged Jasmin’s attempt at swatting her again. “*I’m whole now,*” she said softly.

The words were said so quietly that Jasmin almost missed them. But quiet or not, the words were burned into her soul. “I love you.”

“I love you, too.” Anni looked at her watch. “I wish we had time to make love again. However, I think — *think* — I can wait until tonight to make love to my wife.”

Jasmin shivered with happiness. “I don’t know if I can, but I’ll do my best,” she confessed with a blush.

Anni hopped out of bed before she reneged on her “no time” comment. It didn’t help matters that both she and Jasmin were still completely naked. “Do I get to watch you get dressed?”

“Nope.” Jasmin threw the covers off her body, knowing exactly what affect she had on Anni. It was only fair since Anni was causing havoc on her hormones, prancing around in the buff. “I’ll take my shower first, then I’ll get dressed when you’re taking yours.”

“Wait, we’re not even showering together? Such a waste of water,” Anni shook her head.

“Sweetie, we use more water when we’re in there together.” Jasmin put her robe on and kissed Anni’s pout. “Ready for today?”

The pout turned into a huge grin. “You know it.”

“Good. In just a couple more hours we’ll be official!”

Anni looked at her watch again. “Couple hours, huh? You best get that sweet ass in the shower then.” She tapped her watch. “Time’s ticking!”

“You’re a brat!” Jasmin called over her shoulder as she ran out of the room.

“That just means you’re marrying a brat!” Anni called back, smiling when Jasmin’s laughter floated back to her. She loved that sound. She wanted to hear it for the rest of her life.



JASMIN PACED EAGERLY as she waited for Anni to come out of the bedroom. They hadn’t seen each other in their wedding outfits, yet, and she was anxious. She just knew Anni was going to look incredible. What was worrying her was what Anni would think of her dress. She had worked hard on it, wanting it simple, yet elegant. Something that would represent both her and Anni as they officially joined their souls.

It wasn’t conventional, but then, neither were they. Though it wasn’t her first marriage — sadly — she chose traditional white. Tradition stopped, however, when the buttery silk satin flowed into a gradient of rich red. A little tussi on top, a little rocker on the bottom. Jasmin was pleased with how it turned out. Now, if Anni would just hurry up and . . .

“You look . . . amazing.”

The sheer awe in Anni’s voice gave Jasmin goosebumps. She turned slowly and gasped at the sight before her. While Anni stared, taking everything in, Jasmin did the same. Her eyes roamed from head to toe. There her fiancée stood in a white silk button-down shirt with matching slacks. What blew Jasmin away was the untied bowtie she wore around her neck. The deep red matched Jasmin’s dress perfectly.

“God, you’re beautiful,” Jasmin whispered reverently. She walked up to Anni, taking the tie in her hands. “Did you know about my dress?”

Anni shook her head, clearly in a daze. “I had no idea. I just saw this color and thought it was,” she shrugged, “I don’t know, right, I guess. The white was for you. For us. The red was for me.”

“That’s exactly what I thought when I designed my dress.” Jasmin gently brushed Anni’s hair off her face. “We were meant to be.”

Anni smiled. “Then let’s go make it official!”



THEY STOOD IN front of friends and family, beaming at each other. They were so lost in each other that they barely heard the *Standesbeamtin* recite the words she had prepared for their union. When it came time to exchange their own personal vows, Anni insisted Jasmin go first. Her vows required a little more preparation.

Jasmin cleared her throat, trying to shrink the lump that had formed when the *Standesbeamtin* spoke of love and devotion. Her voice cracked when she had to respond to the question of loving Anni until death parted them. Not out of fear, but out of pure, unadulterated happiness.

“Anni.” Jasmin smiled tremulously when Anni reached up to brush a tear off Jasmin’s cheek. “I didn’t know who I was until I met you. Our first impressions weren’t so great.” She paused, laughing lightly at the thought of walking in on Anni in the bathtub as a camera crew followed. “Well, mine wasn’t. Yours was quite memorable. There was no way of knowing how important you would become to me, but that moment changed me forever.

You have been my rock. Challenging me like no other. Forcing me to grow and to become my own person. Inspiring me to live my dreams. It hasn’t always been easy for us. But the things in life that are truly worth fighting for never are easy. I will always fight for you and stand with you no matter what life hands us. Together, we can face anything. I think we’ve proven that we are stronger when we are united than we are apart. This world is ours to conquer. I couldn’t think of a better person to have by my side. Forever.”

Anni’s hand trembled as she wiped tears from her face. “I, uh, guess it’s my turn. I’m, um, not really good at this emotional stuff like you are. I’ve spent most of my life trying to turn the emotions off to avoid being hurt. You’ve taught me that loving and being loved is worth the risk and the payoff is awesome. Um, I kinda wrote something that I wanted to sing for you, if that’s okay with everyone.”

“It’s your day!” Emily called out, causing their loved ones to chuckle softly.

“That’s right,” Anni grinned. “Tuner?”

Tuner quickly left the room, returning just as fast with Anni’s guitar. He handed it over, smiling at the couple before taking his seat again.

“Okay, um,” she cleared her throat, “here goes.”

She began strumming a slow, beautiful melody and sang.

Take my heart in your hands

Take me away in sweet romance

Kiss me, show me we have heaven

As the moonlight washes over our souls

Show me the sweetest love I’ll ever know

I wanna be one with you

To feel you bringing paradise to me

Leaving nothing to desire

Doing things only you can do

I wanna be one with you

To feel your breath with mine

**Our hearts beat in time
Giving my love solely to you
I wanna be one with you**

**I see no one but you
You have my love for eternity
No one can love you like I do
I've opened my heart to love you unselfishly
Your love is all I need**

**We'll be safe in our love
Believe in me and you will see
The truth inside of me
Become one with me**



THE MURMURING OF voices around them held no distraction for the newlyweds. They were well into the reception; having had all the congratulations they could stand. It wasn't that they didn't appreciate it, just that people were cutting into "we-only-want-to-be-in-each-other's-arms" time. When they were finally able to get a moment, Anni pulled Jasmin in her arms and began to sway to the soft music that filled the room.

"That song was beautiful, baby," Jasmin said, still floating on air with joy.

"Thank you. Seems I'm not the only inspiration in this relationship," Anni grinned. "Say, when do you think would be an appropriate time to duck out of here?"

Jasmin laughed. "It has only been an hour. Jo spent a lot of money on this party."

"But it's our wedding night! I wanna get started!" Anni wiggled her eyebrows suggestively.

"Unless you want to join the mile-high club, that's going to have to wait, sweetie. We're off to the airport from here."

"Mile-high club, huh? I could totally get on board with that. So? How much longer?"

"You have the patience of a five-year-old!" Jasmin kissed her wife to take the sting out of her words. "A little more mingling and thanking everyone for coming, and then we can find Katrin to tell her we're leaving. Deal?"

In her mind, Anni calculated how long that could possibly take. "Good enough," she agreed finally.

"Look at that. Our first compromise as a married couple," Jasmin winked. "How about we make it even less time by thanking everyone at once instead of individually?"

"You mean, like, make a toast?"

"Exactly like that."

"Um, only if you're making it. I'm really . . ."

"Not good at this emotional stuff," Jasmin finished with a chuckle. "I seem to recall you saying that somewhere before."

“I can get everyone’s attention, though!” Anni took glasses of champagne from a passing waiter, clinking them together. “Excuse me! Jasmin has something she wants to say,” she called out when everyone gave her their attention. “From the both of us.”

Jasmin shook her head at Anni’s antics, patting her discreetly on the backside. “Yes, ahem.” She took a champagne flute from Anni. “*We* wanted to thank you all for being here to witness our wedding. Those of you who have been there from the beginning of Jasmin and Anni know that this journey was not smooth. But your continued love and support of us was never taken for granted. You rooted for us when we didn’t know if we should root for ourselves. You fought for us when we fought each other. You believed in us when we lost hope. Without you, we may not have been able to find our way back to each other. You all were our light when it was too dark for us to see our way. I – *we* – will be eternally grateful for that. There are no words, no actions that could possibly thank you enough. Except maybe one. We pledge to live our lives the best we can together. To support each other, love each other, and trust each other always. We gave each other our hearts, you gave us your blessing. We’re lucky to have you all in our lives. Thank you. Prost!”

“Prost!” Everyone called out in return, toasting the couple.

Anni downed her champagne. “Perfect toast, babe. Now can we go?”

Jasmin locked eyes with her mom in the crowd and received a smile that illustrated pride and happiness. Katrin raised her glass once more, this time for Jasmin’s benefit, and placed her free hand over her heart.

Life. It was a curious thing. Heartbreaking and soul-crushing at times. But, then there were moments like this. Heart-soaring and soul-mending moments of love that urged you to understand that every little moment, good or bad, was worth it in the end.

“Now we can go.”

The End