

Chapter 26 – Thursday Morning

“Wake Up Little Suzie”

Luis

Earthquake? Damn, the world is shaking. Maybe Mt. Vesuvius and Mt. Etna are erupting at the same time. Shit! The lava flows will be on me in few seconds!

Then it stopped.

False alarm.

Maybe I'll just stretch these sore muscles of mine. I might be loose by game time.

There's a tightness on my chest. Not in it. My legs won't move forward...

Yet, there is this wonderful, soft ball I'm wrapped around, snuggled into my chest. It felt so good. Junior was perfectly fitted into this soft, warm, and moist crevice. My hand wrapped around something that felt so much like a massive tit.

With a hard nipple.

The quaking started again.

It will go away. It had to. My alarm hasn't gone off, had it? This wondrous feeling on my chest, in my hand, and around my penis was way too nice a dream to let go of.

The shaking, it had a voice.

That voice sounded a lot like my sister.

What's she doing in my dreams?

Am I getting pervy?

I let out a good, long sigh. It will go away. Let me cuddle into this warm, incredible thing in front of me.

SHIT!

The world still shakes.

And talks.

Nope. The voice is beginning to be rude.

And the shaking now pinches.

“Luis! Wake Up!” It hissed into my ear.

Damn, that hurts. The thing in my dream was twisting my poor, abused ears.

“You're late for your run! Jason's outside!”

That really did sound like Margie. The words sounded real. What is this delightful feeling in front of me?

Oh.

OH!

BECCA!

“Get up. Now!”

“Shit, girl. Give me a break,” I hissed at my little sister.

“Good, you're alive. Don't wake her. Get up, go on your run. We'll have breakfast for you and Jason when you get back.”

“Ugh!”

“Move, brother mine. Or...” I do wish she'd stop that pinching on my earlobes. The helmets do enough damage.

“Okay, okay! OKAY! Give me a friggin' minute to unravel. Okay?”

“Just get moving.”

“I know now why you get so much done. Brutal you are.”

She gave me a quick kiss on the lips. “Thanks, brother mine. Love you too.”

My sister, the new sexpot of the young century and current bane of my existence, vanished. Now, how to untangle myself? I'm wrapped around the sweetest, most wonderful creature on Earth...

Wait.

We just slept together.

All night!

WOW!

Okay, back to the mundane. Like emptying my bladder. How do I get up? Thankfully, T'ai Ch'i helps. This arm comes off, slowly. Let me pull the covers over her top. This arm... Slowly, slowly, slowly let me pull it out from under her neck. Done. Let me push the blankets around her as I move away. Carefully! Delicately. Slowly.

I'm standing. And looking down on that marvel in my bed. That incredible person. So loving. So giving. So... Perfect.

Talk about indecision. A huge part of me, including Himself, wants to crawl back into bed to snuggle, wake up together, and see what develops. A small part of my rational, responsible mind said running.

Damn the responsible part for winning. Now, do I leave a note? I noticed the flowers around the room for the first time. I took a single orchid and placed it on my pillow. Quickly, I wrote a note expressing my love.

Throwing on my socks and shoes, I headed out, figuring I can do my stretches and warm-ups after apologizing to Jason. In a fast walk I head up the driveway to find Jason

doing his own stretching.

I realized I'd left my music player. Oh well. Won't need it while running with Jason.

“Morning,” he said with a flat voice.

“Morning, Jason.”

“So?”

“So... what?”

“My sister.”

“She's sleeping. She crashed shortly after dinner. I think the week caught up to her.”

“Is she okay?”

“She's fine, other than being tired. I'm sure they'll have her up and around by breakfast. Why don't you join us.”

“I will. Remember what I said before.”

Damn! I held in a huge sigh. It was just easier to start my stretches and warm ups.

We finished our stretching and took off at an easy warm up lope. Jason never looked over at me and stayed quiet. I took the coward's way out and stayed that way myself. What a day to leave my music behind. About halfway through our run, our pace having picked up to a solid six minute mile, he started running ahead and zooming back. Taunting me like before, but without the verbiage.

I let him do that a couple of dozen times, then tackled him onto the grass.

“She's fine, dude. We ended up just sleeping last night, okay?”

“Seriously?”

“Yes.”

“I... I...”

“Look, Jason, I understand your concern. To a point. Okay?”

“But...”

“Yes, you're her brother. And, if I ever hurt her, I'll stand there and let you pummel me. Other than that, what we do—or don't do—is none of your business. Okay?”

“Yeah. I guess.”

“You'd better do more than guess. I plan on being in her life for a very long time. And, you and I need to be cool. Plus, we need to be right for tomorrow night.”

I stood and helped him up. He looked at me, the tension draining. “You know, I don't think I'd want Cherie's brothers to act the way I started to.”

He offered his hand. I smiled at his growing smile. Shook his hand and pulled him into a hug. We broke and I could feel a bond growing between us.

“Come on, I need to get our newest receiver into shape for tomorrow.”

“And I need to teach a mountain how to move.”

Laughing, we set off and finished our run at a solid, breath sucking pace. At least it was breath sucking for me. He seemed to have no problem finding the oxygen to taunt and bump and fake me and...

Rebecca

This boat I'm on is really rocking. Are we in a storm? Will my hunky, hero captain save me? While others would be hard pressed to see My Mountain standing tall, legs spread, behind the wheel of an old sailing ship, I had no problems. All her canvas flying, crew jumping at his commands, and the ship cutting through the waves proudly. Me, with my bodice nearly open, ankle length dress flying, his massive arm around me...

“Becky?” I swear that sounded like Margie, not Luis. What's she doing on our ship? What's she doing in my dream? What's she doing in my bedroom?

Room?

This doesn't feel like my room. There is no smell of paints. As I pry my eyes open to another round of the bed shaking and my name being called, I start to panic. This isn't my bedroom!

“What the—“

“It's okay, Rebbecca. You're in Luis's bedroom.”

“Oh. Yes. I-I-I...”

“It's okay, almost sister.”

“B-But...” My face started getting wet.

“What's wrong? Did he hurt you?”

“N-No!!” Someone was wailing. And shaking, because they were shaking the bed and me. Margie surrounded me in a big hug.

“Tell me.”

“I-I... I... fell... asleep on him!” The wailing was hurting my ears. I wish that person would stop. I couldn't say anything, I was starting to gasp. And cry.

“It's okay.” She was stroking my hair and letting me cry on her shoulder. She's naked. Wait. So am I. But, I feel asleep. In the middle of trying to seduce My Mountain. I looked through the tears around the room. Each burnt down candle made me cry harder. Each rose petal produced a gasp. Every flower a reminder of my failure.

I noticed every detail of the room. The soft sheets. The extra pillows. The spread that must be over a hundred years old and a delicate, hand-woven lace. All the love and care that Carmella and my Mom had put into this room. “And... A-And... I FELL ASLEEP!”

Margie continued to stroke and comfort me. Whispering calming thoughts into my ear

that didn't even register. Just the care and love, which made me cry harder.

“He must hate me!”

“Not from what I saw when I woke him up a while ago.”

“W-Where is he?”

“Running with Jason.”

“Oh. How did he look?”

“In love. All cuddled up to his sweetie. And when he opened his eyes, his first... second... third... hundredth look was at you. Nothing but love in his eyes. That boy has it bad.”

“B-But... I fell asleep.”

“Rebecca, think about it. Would that upset the guy you've know and fallen in love with?”

“N-No.”

“So? You'll have lots of times to seduce him. Which I don't think he really needs you to. Next time, he might be the one seducing you.”

“Oh! B-But... What our mothers did...”

“They did with love. They're not going to judge you.”

“H-How'd you get so smart?”

“Where do you think he gets it? Come on, let's get you ready to face the day.”

“Well, it's not like I have to dress for it!” That got us both giggling. “Oh, god!”

“What?”

“I need a whole new wardrobe. All my clothes are so...”

“Maybe not a whole new one. Just a few changes. You have a wonderful sense of style.”

“Comes with being an artist, I guess.”

“Well, a few changes, and we can have you looking sexy as hell.”

“You'd help?”

“A chance to go clothes shopping? I am female, after all!” That got us both laughing.

I managed to get out of bed, hit the bathroom, and take care of all those pesky morning details. Showered and feeling more human, I looked in the mirror as I brushed my teeth. “Okay, girl, you fell asleep. Would you have done that if you didn't love and trust him?”

The mirror didn't answer, but my entire being did.

Standing taller, I headed upstairs and into the kitchen. Hugs from both Margie and Carmella settled me.

“Don't worry, Rebecca. Everything will be fine.”

“Thanks, Carmella. I hope so.”

“Don't hope. Know.” Our future Inspirational Speaker and Queen of the Universe speaks, if she has time after organizing the world. Never mind, she'll just schedule it that way.

They pulled me into breakfast preparations. While it started out feeling weird and awkward, soon I was just one of the girls. The joking, the teasing felt good.

“Do you think Jason will join us for breakfast?”

“I-I don't know. I hope everything is okay between him and Luis.”

“Why don't we fix extra for him, just in case. I'm sure with the human vacuum cleaner around, it won't go to waste.”

“That boy can eat.”

“It's a good thing his football scholarship will cover his food through college. He'd better think about after, though!”

“Or have a famous, wealthy artist for a wife,” Margie faux-whispered to her mother.

While they laughed, the word wife rattled around in my head like a pinball. There were bumpers trying to reject the idea and scoring for that side. Bonus points being racked up in favor. I found my internal hands working the flippers. Was I aiming at success or failure? Then the ball was flung onto the upper platform ringing bells, flashing lights, twirling gates, and spinning the score in favor so hard, I couldn't see the millions digits because they were changing so fast.

“Rebecca? Are you alright?” Carmella asked. Margie looked concerned as well.

“I'm more than alright. Let's get that Mountain of mine fed!”

“We need to watch. If Luis brings Jason, he won't do his other routines. They will probably just shower and come up. If he's alone, we have at least 40 minutes.”

“Oh, his T'ai Ch'i!”

“She's learning!”

A couple of minutes later, we could see Jason and My Mountain jogging down the driveway. My sensors were up. How was Jase reacting to it all? He's such a good brother. Is he jealous that Luis is going to take me away from him? How will he handle that?

“Rebecca?” Carmella was standing in front of me, a hand on each shoulder. “It will be fine.”

“H-How...”

“I'm a mother, remember?” I chuckled. Margie laughed. Carmella just hugged all of us. “Why don't you take these sports drinks down to them, they'll need it.”

“Sure?”

“Go!” And, she swatted my butt as headed towards the stairs.

Luis

“You take the first shower. I'm going to do a short form of T'ai Ch'i.” I pointed to the bathroom.

“No problem,” Jason said. “Nice pad. Love the rose petals.”

“I'm in so much trouble, aren't I?”

“Would I say anything in the locker room? Me?” He laughed and headed to the bathroom. A hand appeared and handed him a bottle of sports drink. The hand turned into an arm, then turned into Becca.

“So, why do you think you're in trouble? Anything I should know about?” she said as she handed me another bottle of the drink and placed her fists on her hips.

“Ahem...” Okay, what did I do wrong?

“Yep. Trouble, mister.”

“Don't I get a last request before the firing squad does its job?”

“Certainly.”

“Hugs, kisses, and snuggles with you that last the rest of our natural lives?”

“Sneaky bastard, aren't you.”

She flowed into my arms. Her arms pulled my head down, like I was going to resist kissing my Becca. Mr. Einstein did his thing again. We both heard the shower turn off and pulled back to look into each other's eyes.

“You're not mad at me?” she said in a very small voice.

“Why?”

“F-For falling asleep.”

“What? You thought I'd be mad at you? Why?”

“I-I left you... frustrated. A-And we didn't... You know...”

“Becca, sweet Becca... When we make love, I want you looking me in the eyes. I want to see the joy in your eyes. And, most definitely, you didn't leave me frustrated. I went to sleep last night incredibly happy and satisfied.”

“Why? How?”

“I was with you and you loved and trusted me enough to fall asleep in my arms.”

No Einstein this time. More like Hawkins and one of his black holes. I was sucked into the vortex of love called Becca and we went hurtling down into our own special world.

“Ahem...” Came a strange voice. “I'd say get a room, but we're in yours.”

“Brother of mine, leave us alone.”

“Yeah, what she said.”

“Boy, get invited to breakfast then turned out on the street before the food.”

“Food. Yeah!”

“I guess I should get you growing boys fed.”

“If he grows any more...” He was holding his hands apart about Junior's relaxed length.

“JASE!”

We managed to get upstairs, fed, and off. We dropped Jason at their house and I drove my Becca to school. I found some soulful, romantic Motown to entertain us on the box. Temptations. Four Tops. Just another day in paradise. Well, with her by my side, how

could it not be?

When we got to school, Becca said, "I'm going to head over to the art building and see a Pixie about California."

"Would you go there if it weren't for me?" I wrapped her up in a hug. She felt so good against me, reminded me of waking up to her this morning.

"Probably."

"What about Texas?"

"Not without you. The light, to me, is all wrong there."

"What about the pollution in LA?"

"Well... Not the best, although it does soften the light!" We both laughed. "But, there are so many places around... And the ocean, the mountains..."

"Enough said!"

We kissed and she headed off. I headed straight to the whirlpool. I had an overwhelming need to play some ZZ Top this morning, so I went a disc with "Sharp Dressed Man" – damned appropriate for this week!

I slowly sank into the tub, thinking that this is probably how I'm going to feel every day thirty years from now. "Lineman's Lament", they call it. Knees, ankles, hips, and shoulders all shot. Coaching is looking better every day. Maybe just a few years as a pro would let me get there. Then again, there is always being the Noble Prize winner for the Unified Theory!

"Well, it's the rubber ducky man."

"Morning, Hollow Balls." Mike settled into the tub next to me.

"So, did you follow the Naked Week tradition and get laid last night?"

"Mike!"

“Well, either you did... Or you didn't.”

“Fuck you.” I started out of the tub to kill the bastard. He knew better than that. I don't talk about it. Even during Nekkid Week.

“Okay! Okay. Chill.” He took a hard look at my eyes. “Sorry.”

“Accepted.” We shook. “East?”

“Yeah! Have you seen how they line up their middle backers?” We fell into a quick analysis of their interior linebackers. Those guys responsible for sacking our quarterback would give Mike the most trouble, and would breakup short yardage passes over the middle. Mike had seen some holes.

Phil, Jason, and other key players on both sides of the ball joined us as we hashed out different things we'd see and how we'd deal with it, plus our surprises. We even talked about what they might do just for us, since they hadn't played anybody serious so far this year. They could be sandbagging us, just like we're doing to them.

Phil gave a quick report on the articles in the morning paper. The local sportswriters were calling this a war. A rowdy brouhaha and such. Most were predicting an offensive shootout. I kept my counsel, feeling in my bones this was going to be a war of attrition and the best defense was going to win a very low scoring game.

“Enough of this, we need to get to class,” I said.

“Yeah. Some of us have to, like, get dressed and all.” Thanks Mike.

As a group, we headed towards the classrooms, just a few minutes before the bell. It's good to have friends and the companionship of teammates.

Rebecca

Francesca was in her studio when I walked into the art room. Hard at work on one of her series pieces. She must have caught my entrance, normally she's very focused. Carefully, she set down her chisel and large hammer.

“Ah! *Buongiorno!*” She said after taking off her face mask – a necessity in her chosen medium.

“Why do I think you were expecting me?” I tried to strike a defiant pose, something new for me. And, hard to do when you're the only naked person in the room. At least, for me it was.

“*Folletto* tells me things. I listen.” We both laughed and hoped the pixies keep us in mind. In a good way. I talked to her about USC and UT, without letting her know about Luis's decision. She agreed that USC would be better for me.

“Rebecca-”

“I'm going to go by Becky now.”

“And Becca to a certain someone?” Damn, I've never noticed her wink before.

“Yep!”

“Becky... You're good. You have room to learn from others a few techniques, which I think you will continue to do all through your career. On the other hand, what you need is people to see your art. And you.”

“California.”

“*Si.*”

“And?”

“And... now that you aren't as invisible as you used to be-”

“I'd do well.” Did I just say that? Y-Yes... I did. I straightened my shoulders, which had an amazing effect on my chest. Damn! They really do stand out there, don't they? Not bad looking if I do say so myself. Luis seems to like them, just wish he'd spend more time with them. I pushed my shoulders back a bit more. Wow! Of all the art and photos I've looked at, I've never paid that much attention to my own body. Except to hide these massive things. I no longer think they're the problem they were-

“Becky? Earth to Becky!” Francesca's voice pulled me back to the moment. “Yes, you are, uhm... *bella ragazza* - beautiful. You never saw that before, did you?”

“No. I-I...”

“It's okay. You know it, now. And, I don't think it will swell your head, will it?”

“No. It is too easy to remember being ashamed of my boobs, of hiding. Being scared to show my art, and now...”

“Doing it for others now...”

“Y-Yes.”

“That's fine. But, that's what you need to do. Do your art for you or for someone you love. You're learning to share and that is good. Plus... I really think Luis will help keep you grounded.”

“That he will.” The heat I felt was not a blush. Something much deeper. Much more fundamental. And it spread through me from my deepest point.

“*Esattamente!*” Her smile was... kind. Loving. Supportive. “Why don't you help me with this sculpture for a bit, unless you want to work on your own.”

I smiled at her before I put on the face mask. We fell into a natural working rhythm. We had worked together many times, me as her assistant. It still amazed me to watch such incredible beauty emerge from a block of solid stone.

“You see how I have to allow the stone tell me what to do. So different from when you make the paint do what you want. I might see something in a stone, but I have to work with the stone, allow it to be, and compromise to make our mutual visions become a thing of mutual passion.”

“I do see it. It amazes me when you run across a vein like this one,” I reached out and ran my hand along a streak of darker stone that created a warm ribbon of caramel in the middle of a field of white. I watched as she turned this “imperfection” to her advantage, integrating it into her vision of the finished piece.

We worked for a bit more, the rough shapes emerging. Growing warm in appearance

compared to the coldness of the stone. Remove a piece, to the untrained eye it appears as just chisel marks, gouges in the rock. To the creator, the form is emerging. To the assistant, the utter magic of having the vision revealed a chisel strike at a time. Remove another piece of stone. The shape emerges and we begin the smoothing out, joining with other areas. Still a long way from the highly polished statues most people are familiar with.

Francesca set down her chisel and removed her mask. “You've got just enough time to wash that dust off of you before classes start.” I looked down at myself. The light dusting of marble had turned my skin into that of a simmering, moving porcelain doll. The dust from the dark vein was patterned across my breasts, accentuating my nipples and the curves.

“Would you take a picture of me before I do? I love this pattern across here.” I indicated my boobs. Gladly she did. I ran into her office and rinsed off quickly in the shower she has. A nice feature for a sculptor.

A couple of minutes later, I was approaching homeroom, with a few minutes to spare. In my mind, I was seeing the painting of my boobs with the marble pattern across them that I'd give to Luis.

“Becca!” Rosalee squealed as she ran towards me. Another place in my heart warmed up.

“I have a request.” It hit me, like a brick. Rashad.

“So do I,” came Susan's voice.

*** End of Chapter ***

“Wake Up Little Suzie” by the Everly Brothers

Coming soon : Part IV (Thursday) - Chapter 27 – “Teacher, Teacher”