

AIDEN  
THE PLAYERS  
BOOK TWO



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Published by Blushing Books  
An Imprint of  
ABCD Graphics and Design, Inc.  
A Virginia Corporation  
977 Seminole Trail #233  
Charlottesville, VA 22901

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Aiden: The Players  
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EBook ISBN: 978-1-63954-408-0  
Print ISBN: 978-1-63954-409-7

Cover Art by ABCD Graphics & Design

This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only.  
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advocating any non-consensual sexual activity.

## CHAPTER 1



### Lovefool

AIDEN LISTENED TO THE PHONE RING AND DRUMMED HIS fingers onto his steering wheel.

“Pick up, pick up,” he murmured and squeezed his eyes shut as his headache became stronger.

“Hello?” Her sultry voice vibrated in his ears.

“Where are you? I thought we wanted to go to Peter’s birthday party together.”

There was a long silence.

“Keira?”

“Did you get me the dress I wanted?”

Aiden bit back a growl and glanced at the fancy carton on the back seat. “Yes. Do you want to wear it tonight? I’m outside your apartment. I can bring it up.”

Keira gave a musing hum before she replied, “No, I’m not coming with you tonight. Your family hates me anyway, and I don’t want the dress anymore. Bye.”

She hung up just like that.

“What the heck?”

Great, he thought bitterly and could already hear his siblings’ remarks about her whereabouts. She was right that his brother and sister didn’t like her very much but this behavior didn’t aid in them accepting her into the family. Aiden shortly considered going up to Keira’s apartment and convincing her to accompany him but he knew in her current mood, they would only end up fighting and saying things they didn’t mean.

Aiden started his car and drove to his brother’s home on the other side of Russlow. When he got there, he had already played through all the snide remarks and comments they would throw at him. He grabbed the present for Peter and headed over to his small house. His headache had increased on the drive here. He hoped the heat wave, the city was currently suffering through, would soon be over and the weather would have mercy on him. He pushed on the doorbell and waited for the door to open.

“Happy birthday, not-so-little brother,” he greeted Peter and entered the house after hugging the lanky alpha in front of him. He handed him the bottle of expensive scotch with a lopsided bow tied around the neck.

“Welcome, welcome.” Peter accepted the present with a wide smile and looked out to Aiden’s black car. “Thank you very much. This must have cost you a fortune. All by yourself tonight?”

“Yeah.” Here we go. “Keira wasn’t feeling well.”

Peter grinned. “What a shame. I had been looking forward to seeing her.”

“I will tell her that you wish her well.”

The brothers looked at each other for a long moment before Aiden let out a sigh and slumped his shoulders. “Can we not talk about her tonight?”

“Sure, I can’t speak for Juni though.”

“I will deal with our sister.”

Aiden followed his younger brother into the living room and greeted the other guests with a forced smile. The pounding in his head only got worse. The myriad of scents and the stale air did their best to torment him.

“Aiden!” came the high-pitched shout from Juniper. She had a glass of wine in one hand and a champagne flute in the other. She weaved her way through the guests and handed him the champagne. “Where’s your slut?”

Aiden ground his teeth. “Don’t call her that. I love her.”

“Mm, but does she return the favor?” she argued with a bittersweet smile on her painted lips.

“It’s none of your concern.”

“If you want to make her part of the family, it is my concern. I am the oldest after all.”

Aiden sipped his champagne and grumbled, “By four minutes.”

“Still the oldest, *little brother*.”

“Either way, I don’t want you to talk about her like that. I am planning to ask her to marry me on her birthday and I expect you to be nice to her.”

Juniper’s smile faltered. He knew what she was thinking. That Keira was just a gold digger and she was probably sleeping around. That he deserved better.

Maybe she was right but she wasn’t his mother. He would make his own decisions. Good or bad.

“You are serious about this?”

“Deadly.”

Juniper pressed her lips together in a thin line. “Is she pregnant? Why are you rushing?”

“No.” Aiden swallowed down the rest of the champagne. “We actually haven’t talked about starting a family yet.”

Why was he even telling her this? She would only use it against him at the right moment. "I need another drink."

"Did you drive here?" Juni asked and swirled her wine in her glass.

"Yes, why?"

"Then maybe you shouldn't hide behind a glass all evening. I don't think your sweetheart will come to take you home, or visit you in the hospital when you total your car."

"Are you offering to take me home instead?"

"No, I am offering to get shit drunk with you and share a taxi home," she replied with a laugh and followed him over to the makeshift bar in their brother's kitchen.

"The only problem I see is you'll get drunk much quicker than me." Aiden poured them two glasses of wine, raised it, and said, "Cheers."

"How's Bonnie?" Aiden asked and scanned the other guests. Many of them were Peter's hiking buddies and their respective partners.

"Bonnie is fine." It was all she said. As much as Aiden hated talking about Keira with his family, Juniper hated talking about Bonnie. Her long-term on-off-girlfriend was a whole chapter of its own.

"You leave me alone, I leave you alone," Aiden said with a shrug and winked at his sister.

"Touché."

Peter's party followed the same pattern as all of his previous birthday parties. The guests drank, after a while the music would be turned up, and eventually everyone danced, drank more than they should and eventually somehow got home. It wasn't any different this time.



WHEN AIDEN LEFT the taxi Juniper and he had shared, he needed to steady himself on the stone bannister that led up to his entrance door. He dug through his pockets for his keys and tried to enter his house, but the door opened on its own. "Took you a long time to come home."

His drunk mind needed a long moment to understand what was happening. Keira stood in front of him in lingerie. She was in his house. She must have used her spare key to come here and waited for him.

"What are you doing here?"

She answered by kissing him passionately, pulling him into the foyer of his home, and throwing the door shut behind him. Keira sank to her knees in front of him and opened his pants with hunger in her dark eyes.

"I'm too drunk," he said with a slurred voice.

"We'll see about that." Keira reached into his boxers and closed her fingers around his flaccid cock, squeezing and trying her best to get him hard. Aiden quickly stopped her.

"I am really too drunk, love."

Keira let out a frustrated huff and stood up. "Great, then why did I come over?"

Aiden cradled her face and kissed her. "I promise I will make it worth your while tomorrow morning."

"Let's hope, drunkard." She pulled away from him and headed up the stairs into his bedroom.

Aiden sighed through his nose and rubbed a hand over his face.

"I love you too," he mumbled and followed her into his bedroom.



A WEEK later Aiden watched his childhood friend Tom deal out the cards like a professional. It'd been years that the

group of five held these weekly poker nights and it allowed him to shrug off the problems of his daily life at least for one night. At least until someone reminded him again.

“Tell me again what she said?” Max asked and sipped his bourbon.

“What part do you want me to repeat? That she wasn’t in love with me anymore, or she would never want to ruin her body to have my children?”

Maybe he shouldn’t have come here so soon after the breakup.

“So sorry, man,” Roger mumbled and checked his cards, his wedding ring glinting in the lights hanging low above the table.

“I’d appreciate it if we could forget about it for tonight.”

“Sure thing.” Benny gave him a smile and patted his shoulder.

Aiden wanted to leave, but he didn’t want to go home yet. He had allowed Keira to pick up the few belongings she had at his house tonight. The last thing he wanted was to run into her.

It was bad enough that she was still working for him. Their relationship had only started because she was his secretary. Juniper would probably find a reason to fire her so she wouldn’t be able to weasel her way back into his private life in case she changed her mind.

“Any news from you guys?”

Tom huffed a laugh. “Still living my dream life as a wealthy bachelor.”

He proceeded to talk about his latest lays, one barbie look-a-like after the other. His friends, apart from Roger, were still going around hunting for meaningless sexual encounters. He envied the ease with which they walked through their lives.

“Have you thought about my offer?” Max asked and put



down two cards to request new ones.

“I have and I still need to talk to Juniper about it.”

“I always thought you were the boss,” Benny said in a singsong voice and smirked.

“Not in the mood for this shit,” Aiden growled and put down his entire hand of cards. No luck in love and no luck with the cards? Why did the universe hate him?

“Come on, we are just teasing. That’s what friends do.”

Aiden downed his whiskey and stood up to refill. “Juniper is also the boss. We both hold forty percent.”

Max shrugged. “If she disagrees, you could still ask your little brother. With his twenty percent you would have the majority.”

“Nope, if she disagrees, the deal is no longer interesting. I don’t walk over her like that.”

The other alpha pulled a face. “You are such a hen-pecked husband even for your sister.”

“Thanks, that’s exactly what I needed to hear tonight.” Aiden finished his second glass and ground his teeth.

“I think I’m heading out,” he eventually announced and turned to leave.

“Hey, come on, stay and play at least another round. We won’t tease you anymore.” Tom kicked Max underneath the table. “Right?”

“Promise,” Max pressed out through clenched teeth and glared at Tom.

“Nah, thanks, I’ve lost enough already. Goodnight,” Aiden said and made sure he had all of his belongings before he left.

Taking the elevator down into the underground garage beneath Tom’s apartment building, he leaned against the cool metal and tried not to think about Keira and the last week.

*He had told his family he wanted to propose on her birthday next week but when they were out for lunch at her favorite restaurant, he had seized the opportunity. Over the delicious food, he had*

*pulled her smartphone from her hands to gain her undivided attention.*

*Aiden had told her once more how much he loved her and she had only requested her phone back as if his feelings didn't matter to her. Well, they probably didn't, he just hadn't realized it yet.*

*His palms had been sweaty as he'd pulled out the small ring box, still keeping it hidden from her. She'd demanded her phone back once more. He'd told her he wanted to spend the rest of his life with her and start a family. That's when she had snorted a laugh and broken his heart.*

*"Why would I want to ruin my body to bear your children?"*

*Her words and especially the condescending tone she'd used was burned into his memory.*

*"Because you love me too." Aiden felt so stupid for saying those words. He had felt like a fool the moment he'd said them.*

*She had looked at him like he was a stupid child, her head leaned to the side with a patronizing smile on her lips.*

*"I like you. I like having sex with you. I like the gifts you give me. But that's all."*

Aiden swallowed against the wave of emotion that threatened to choke him. The elevator door opened and he made his way over to his car. He should probably sell it and get a new one. Keira and he had spent so many evenings entangled with each other on the backseat instead of going to dinner like they had planned.

With a sigh he unlocked the car and slid into the driver's seat. Thankfully the alcohol he'd consumed hardly had any effect on him as an alpha. He still sat there for a while and waited for the slight buzz to fade away before he started the car.

His options for the evening were limited. He could go home and see how many bottles of scotch he could drink before blacking out or he could try to clear his head while swimming.

The decision was easy. Now that he was no longer in a relationship, he should keep in shape for the next heartless slut he would lose his foolish heart to.

Aiden also concluded that after he was done swimming, he could still get shit drunk and wait for Monday morning to arrive.



AS MONDAY MORNING arrived Aiden was suffering from the worst hangover he had ever had. He rolled into work three hours late, shades hiding the redness of his eyes, and was relieved to find Keira's desk in front of his office empty.

You could trust in Juniper to get rid of someone she hates.

Aiden had just popped a Tylenol when there was a knock on the door.

"What?" he barked and groaned at the volume of his own voice.

"Morning, sleepy head," Juniper greeted him with a cat-like grin on her deep red lips.

"Mornin', what do you want?"

His sister sauntered over to him and pursed her lips. "How hungover are you?"

"I'm here. What more do you want?" he mumbled and rested his head on his hands.

"What date is today?"

His patience was already wearing thin. "I swear to God, Juni, if you don't stop with this kindergarten teacher bullshit, I will throw you out of the window."

"Okay, but only because you asked me so nicely."

Aiden glared at his sister over the rim of his sunglasses and let out a threatening growl.

"It's Monday, July 20th. This morning we had the semi-annual financial presentation and who wasn't there?"

“Fuck,” Aiden whispered and rubbed his hands over his face.

“Peter and I represented the family on your behalf.”

“Sorry, I completely forgot the presentation was today.”

She shrugged and sat on the edge of his desk. “Don’t worry. Everyone forgets stuff sometimes. I mean I already forgot who I had for breakfast this morning.”

“Who?”

Juni perked up at him like the cat who ate the canary.

He pulled a face. “Ew, I don’t even want to know.”

“Don’t look at me like that. I didn’t comment when you came into work smelling of your secretary’s slick.”

Aiden frowned thinking of the “happy” times with Keira.

“Speaking of secretaries, Peter wants one and I called an agency who is sending a replacement for the “slut-who-shall-not-be-named”. She will arrive in about an hour. You’re welcome.”

Juni slid off his desk and sauntered over to the office door. “Try not to fall for her too, okay?”

“Thanks for the advice,” he growled and leaned back in his chair. Aiden didn’t want a new secretary. He wanted Keira to come back and tell him she had been scared of taking the next step with him and it had all been a misunderstanding.

“Stop being such a fool,” he told himself and closed his eyes for a long moment. He had been a fool believing that Keira was the one to settle down with. He had made the same mistake with all of his previous girlfriends too. None of them were the right one. Maybe he was the problem. Was he too dominant? Not enough? Too clingy, maybe?

Aiden checked the time with a growl. He would have to make a good first impression on his new secretary who would arrive in 58 minutes. Why didn’t he just stay home?