

## THE RSVP Bonus Scene

### Harlow

This feels like my first time here.

It's not of course.

I've been to Paris many times. But I've never been here with Bridger and when we arrive at Charles de Gaulle, everything feels new and wonderful. Because I'm with him and I can't wait to show him the city I love.

Soon, we reach our hotel, put our suitcases down, and freshen up from the flight.

Then we take off and I'm thrilled the second we walk out the door, ready to take him everywhere.

Walking along the Seine on our first night here, he clasps my hand tightly, nods to the ribbon of water cutting through the city. "Do you remember the places where your mom took you? When you used to visit with her long ago?"

My heart squeezes from the moment and the memories. "I do."

"Will you show them to me? While we're here?"

He asks it so earnestly, so hopefully. Like it's a real question I might say no to. As if I could.

"You really want to see the places I liked as a little girl?" I ask because maybe I need to make sure too. To pinch myself. Is this real? This man who truly wants to know me this deeply, this well?

His blue eyes hold mine with his particular Bridger intensity. "Of course. I want to know you even better, Harlow."

Funny, but I wouldn't have thought that showing him places I visited with my mother when I was a child would be romantic. And yet it is.

So during our trip I take him to the Luxembourg Gardens. Even though it's December and most of the flowers are dormant, I still show him the places where I traipsed around when I was little.

"I fell in love with gerbera daisies here," I recall as we walk through the gardens.

"Your favorite flowers," he says and kisses my forehead.

We're both thinking of the first time he gave me flowers. I just know it.

The next day, we wander around Musée Marmottan Monet, where I show him water lilies and bridges and other priceless paintings. "Here I fell in love with art."

He hums softly. "It's like a Harlow retrospective," he says, tugging me close. Then he runs the back of his fingers against my cheek and he kisses me in front of water lilies.

Art and kisses. This is my kind of place. And Bridger is giving me a new set of memories. Ultraromantic ones imprinted on top of the ones I already have.

That night we go to the Eiffel Tower. "Everyone goes here. It's not unique to me," I explain as we stroll across the park toward the icon of the city. "But the first time I saw it wasn't like the pictures I'd seen. It was lit up in purple lights. And for the longest time I actually thought the Eiffel Tower was purple."

"Ah, that explains why you've always liked purple."

"Purple Eiffel Tower, purple shirt," I say. "It's a good color. Maybe once you wore that shirt I was destined to be a goner."

"Ah, so it was the shirt. Not the man," he says drily. So very him.

I tug on the collar of his shirt underneath his jacket—it's not purple, it's sapphire and I love this shade on him. "Yes, I was predisposed to like your shirts and someday I'll come out of my trance."

He closes the distance, kisses me again. "I'll just have to romance you all over again then. In all new ways."

My heart thumps, loud and powerfully as he kisses me in front of the tower.

I once dreamed of him while I was in Paris, back when I was in college. Now I'm here with him. I suppose life is funny that way if you chase your dreams.

## Bridger

Taking her to Paris for the holidays becomes a tradition over the next few years and I won't complain. We go the next year and the next and the next, and every time she takes me to different places. She's my own Paris tour guide.

On our second trip, she brings me to a perfume shop in Montmartre, where she spends nearly an hour checking out all sorts of gorgeous spritzers with delicate vines and flowers across the bottles. I buy her one. I can't help it. I love spoiling her.

That night she sprays the tiniest bit of a vanilla scent on her neck, and when I smell her, I lose my mind with desire.

But it's her. It's not the scent.

Still, we're late for our dinner reservation because I need to devour her first.

The next year she takes me on a tour of the covered passages around the city, showing me off-the-beaten-path places and quaint little shops. They feel like hidden gems all throughout the city. Like you have to know someone to find them. And I definitely know someone.

After that we go to chocolate shops, then to quiet little blocks that she's fallen in love with over the years. She shows me buildings she's adored, places she's imagined living.

And so a few years later, I return the favor on our trip here. I take her someplace special.

My pulse speeds up and my heart skitters a little faster as I scan the street in Le Marais, then push on a gate left open for me that leads to a tiny courtyard, framed by six-story buildings on each side.

It's quiet and cold. It's December, after all. But as she gazes up at the flats after flats that hug this courtyard, the white shutters and the iron lattice-work balconies, she sighs happily. "I love it here."

My heart settles just a little bit, warming up from those perfect words. "What would you say if I told you I had bought the top floor flat with the rooftop garden?"

She gasps, spins around and blinks. "You bought it?"

I nod, so damn pleased with this fit. "I thought it could be ours for when we come here. It's an early birthday gift if you like it."

"Oh my god," she says. "That's tremendous. And I know I'll love it."

"I have another present for you," I say, no nerves, only certainty.

I drop down to one knee, reach into my pocket for a velvet box, then flip it open. I look at her and already I see the answer in her beautiful green eyes. But I've longed to ask this question for years. "I love you madly, Harlow. Every day I grow more and more enchanted with you. Will you marry me?"

She falls to her knees, clasps my face, and says, "I will."

I slide a purple amethyst onto her finger and then I kiss her in the courtyard of our flat in Paris.

A little later, we go inside to our home in this city.

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