

Ariana

Author: Gigi 2023-11-26 23:24:01

Kiara:

A scream tears through me as my eyes snap open, locking with the gaze of the blonde woman from yesterday. She screams as well, a reflection of my fear. I back away, but she seizes my hand and places a hand over my mouth.

“Why on earth are you screaming!” she exclaims in a voice barely louder than a whisper, her eyebrows rocketing towards her hairline. I shake my head incessantly, hoping she will remove her hand from my mouth. The moment she does, I back up until my body collides with the headboard.

With a hint of panic in her voice, she exclaims, “It’s six in the morning! Mr. Malibu is probably still asleep. Can you imagine the consequences if he were to wake up?” Her words linger heavily in the air as she paces nervously around the room.

“I don’t see how this is my fault. Weren’t you the one trying to kiss me?” I counter. She halts in her tracks, spinning around to face me. Her face is a mask of bewilderment.

“What?” she asks, her face scrunching up. “Ew!” she exclaims, and I swiftly spring to my feet as I feel something cold on my butt.

“Why would I want to kiss you? That’s the most ridiculous thing I’ve ever heard, and it would be best if it never comes up in conversation again,” she says, and my face reddens under the weight of embarrassment.

“Am I that hideous?” I ask as I reach for my butt to notice how wet it is.

The maid ignores me and walks to the headboard, then she collects a rag from it.

“No, you are not. I am totally gay, and I would consider you if you were a lone wolf,” she says, with a pause. “I was doing my duty as your maid, and I was trying to clean the headboard, but you had to wake up,” she says, tossing the rag into a bucket of water which I hadn’t noticed.

“But I love my life and job so much that I would never dare touch any of Zane Malibu’s properties,” she says, striding towards the closet. I trail behind her.

“I’m not anyone’s property, and…”

“You can assert that all you want, but as long as you’re attractive with a face like that, you’re here to stay. Zane will shatter you if you don’t toughen up, so I’d rather you prepare instead of living in a fantasy,” she advises, flinging a clean towel at me.

Did she just label me as hot? I hear that often from guys, but seldom from women. Back home, almost everyone despised me because I was mated to Blake, the alpha. But it feels good hearing it from her.

“I’ve never been called hot by a woman before,” I confess to her, and she shrugs, then resumes her work. The silence between us is intimidating, and I yearn to have a genuine conversation with her. Mainly because the house is boring, and I lack friends.

“So… what’s your name?” I inquire, and she rolls her eyes, marching to the bathroom without uttering a word. I tail her, but she rudely slams the door in my face.

A part of me is tempted to exploit her lower status to extract information, but then I recall Zane’s advice about setting aside my Luna title. I inhale deeply, a sense of unease settling in, and I wait for her by the door.

After what feels like an eternity, she emerges from the bathroom, her gaze carefully avoiding mine.

“Your bath is ready,” she announces, and I turn to face her.

“So, when do I get your name?” I inquire, trying to keep my voice steady. She responds by slapping the rag in her hands onto the table with a startling thud.

“If you’re trying to get me into trouble, it won’t work. I’m here to serve you, and I won’t be pulled into any alliance you’re trying to form,” she declares, her voice firm.

My eyes widen in surprise, her words striking me like a punch to the gut. Her words, so unexpected and defiant, strike the final blow to my dwindling patience. A wave of frustration washes over me.

“I’m not asking you because I want to form an alliance. You serve me, and I demand to know your name or you can kiss your job goodbye,” I declare, my voice echoing in the room, uncertainty creeping in about the extent of my power.

The room plunges into a tense silence, and I feel a compulsion to press on.

“My pretty face will keep me here, and it will be enough to kick you out too!” I threaten, my words hanging heavy in the air. She immediately crumbles to her feet, her body shaking with fear.

“I’m sorry, please. Don’t kick me out. This is my last chance to please Mr. Malibu, and he will slaughter me if he gets any negative report,” she pleads, her voice trembling. Her vulnerability strikes a chord in me, and I can’t help but chuckle.

She looks up, her eyes wide with fear, only to see my face illuminate with a smile. A glimmer of hope sparks in her eyes.

“So…”

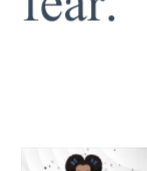
“I’m Ariana, and I’m just a common slave, please,” she admits, her voice barely above a whisper, her eyes pleading for mercy.

“Was that so hard, Ariana?” I ask, and she shakes her head, her gaze still fixed on the floor. “I think I’ll call you Ari,” I declare, strolling over to the bed and throwing myself onto it.

Just then, a knock on the door interrupts the silence, causing me to sit up abruptly. Ariana springs to her feet instantly and rushes to answer the door. She swings it open, and a male servant strides in, giving me a curt bow.

“Mr. Malibu requests Mrs. Blackwood’s presence downstairs for breakfast in ten minutes,” he announces, before turning on his heel and departing.

I swallow hard, my eyes locked on Ariana, whose face has drained of color, a clear sign of fear.



Gigi

Sorry that it took so long to update. My nal exams are coming up, and my attention is divided, juggling writing and reading, but once it is over, I will focus more.xoxo.

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