

REJECTED: CLAIMED BY THE ALPHA MAFIA

A WALK

Kiara's POV:

A few hours later, Zane is dressed, sitting on the bed in the room. I, on the other hand, find it difficult to pick out an outfit.

"How is this?" I ask, holding up a mini floral gown.

He gazes at me.

"You know you are perfect in whatever you wear," he says, and I sigh.

"Not helping," I say to him, then I find another black gown. "You are in black, so maybe I should put this on." I say, and he gets to his feet, walking up to me.

He grabs the purple floral gown from the couch, then closes in on me from behind, placing it against my chest as he peers into the mirror.

"It complements your skin, and I love the flowers," he says, and I peer at him through the mirror. "Put it on." His tone comes off more like an order, in a way that I like.

I turn around, facing him with my arms around his neck.

"Is that an order, sir?" I tease, and his lips curve into a smile. "Who says ruthless men don't blush?" I ask, and he hardens his expression, taking my hands off his neck.

"I was only smiling," he says, and I kiss his cheek.

"Sure," I whisper in his ear before pulling away, then I grab the gown, taking off the oversized tee I have on.

I put on the gown. Zane draws me to his chest by my waist, zipping up my dress and placing a kiss on my neck before letting me go.

"Thank you," I mutter, then walk to the closet and grab some black sandals, which I throw on.

I put on some perfume, and I apply lip gloss before I turn to Zane, who is watching me from where he is sitting.

I undo my hair, letting it fall to my shoulders.

"Done," I say, and he gets to his feet while I walk up to him.

He takes my hand.

"I might have to speed up my retirement plans," he says, causing my face to contort in confusion.

"Why?" I ask, and he plants a kiss on the back of my hand.

"There's nothing better than watching you every day. You bring me peace, and I want to be with you," he says, and my face instantly goes red, making me turn away.

"We should leave, or our plans might get canceled soon," I say to him, and he chuckles.

Walking around the town is blissful, just like Zane said it would be. It's more like a small village, with barely any cars on the streets. Most people are on foot, and others ride bicycles to get around. One might think they love suffering, but they're all fit, and that's a positive thing. The air is clean, too, with barely any cars to pollute it.

"Wow, I could live in this city forever," I say to Zane, and he shoots me a smile.

"You will, in a short time."

I'm about to smile when he says this, but then I remember Mindy is lurking around somewhere. It makes me wonder how the town is so calm with someone like her.

"Come to think of it, maybe Mindy is no longer the way you met her," I say to Zane, and he looks at me, one brow raised.

"People have redeemable traits, but not Mindy. Would you believe I tried to change her? But she ended up doing that to me, so please, I'll sit this one out," he says.

I'm about to speak when he tightens his grip on me, pointing at a stand across the road. It's a green bamboo stand, with a man wearing a pink flowery shirt and a bamboo straw hat.

"We should get a drink from that stand. The coconuts are fresh," he says, and I nod.

We wait for the people on their bicycles to pass, then make our way across the road to the coconut stand.

"Good day," the man behind the stand says, shooting me a smile, and I return it. "How may I help you, fine sir, and you, my beautiful lady?" My cheeks redden at once, and I glance at Zane, whose expression suddenly hardens.

"We'd like two coconut drinks, and fewer compliments for my lady," he says, and I put a hand on my lips to stop me from laughing, because I didn't want the man to think I am rude.

The man tries to uphold his smile as he goes about breaking open the coconuts with a machete while I stand there with Zane.

"You don't have to be mean to people all the time," I whisper to him, and he throws his arm around my waist, leaning close to my ear.

"Not when they want what's mine."

"It was just a compliment." I roll my eyes.

"And I'm not arguing," he says.

Soon, the man presents the coconuts to us on a wooden tray.

"That will be a dollar, please," he says, and Zane nods, reaching for his pocket.

His phone rings, and he pulls it out first. I watch his expression change as he ends the call, sliding it into his pocket. He pulls out ten dollars and hands it to the man, then grabs the coconuts from the tray.

"Keep the change. My girlfriend likes you," he says to the man, then he looks at me with a smile.

I try not to think about his phone, which keeps beeping with messages from probably whoever called. I sip my coconut juice quietly, letting the refreshing taste dance on my tongue, hoping it will wash away my curiosity. But soon, it's empty, and I pull my mouth away from the straw.

"You like it?" Zane asks, and I say nothing but nod.

Then he takes my empty coconut and hands me his, which is still half full.

"Have mine," he says, and I don't object.

We walk for a moment until we find a waste bin. By now, I'm done with the drink, so he throws it into the trash, and we make our way down the path until we spot a park.

"A seat would solve my problems right now," I say to him, and he nods, and we make our way to the park, which is lively with people sitting on the grass, savoring the cool evening breeze.

Around us, colorful patches of wildflowers bloom under a canopy of thick trees with branches that sway in the gentle wind. Birds chirp from the treetops, and the faint laughter of children playing nearby blends with the rustle of leaves.

"They take 'touch grass' literally here. Everyone loves connecting with nature," Zane says, and I shrug, walking to a bench to sit down.

I love nature, but there's no way I'll sit on the bare grass with my body covered in sweat. Zane sits close to me, putting his hand around my waist while I lay my head on his shoulder. He tilts his head, placing a kiss on my forehead.

It isn't even ten minutes since we got here, and the clouds darken. At first, we think it's nightfall, but the park becomes windy, and the people around disperse while I remain there watching them.

"Kiara," Zane calls out, and I raise my head from his shoulder.

"We should get going. The weather is changing, and we'll be caught in the rain if we don't leave now. Our house is far," he says, and I sigh, getting to my feet.

At that moment, there is a loud rumble in the sky, and a drop of rain touches my skin.