

The Billionaire's Baby Bargain Chapter 7

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Chapter 7 A Royal Adversary

Thinking about all the awful thing that had happened on the cruise, my heart ached and my eyes filled with tears. However, I knew I had to lie. I couldn't ruin their happiness, even if mine was.

"Oh yes! I'm very excited! I can't wait to be Robert's wife!" I said, trying to put as much joy into my voice as I could. It wasn't much, but I guess it satisfied my parents. They nodded, giving me bright smiles.

"Um, I know I just got home, but would it be okay if I went to my room and rested? I have work tomorrow and my stomach still feels a little queasy." At least that wasn't a lie. I really did feel sick to my stomach.

"Of course, dear! Go on and get your rest. If you need anything, just let me know."

I gave her a tight smile and disappeared into my room before she could say anything else. I face planted into my bed, wishing it would just swallow me whole.

My phone vibrated in my pocket. I groaned and brought it out. The flashing light told me it was Trevor, one of Robert's friends. Why was he calling me? "Hello?"

"Hey, Almara. You don't sound too good, honey. What's wrong? I hope you didn't get an STD from that cruise dick you sucked." Trevor laughed cruelly and I could hear more laughter in the background.

"What are you talking about?"

"Robert told us all about your first night on the cruise. You left him with a broken heart and he's run off. If I'd known what a little slut you were, I would have taken up Robert's offer a long time ago," he said and that caused another peal of laughter to erupt from his end.

"What? What offer? Where's Robert?" Trevor wasn't making any sense.

"I don't know where he is, but I do know that Robert's been trying to pawn you off to other members of the pack for years. That's how little you mean to him. So, how about it? Want to come over here and wrap those pretty lips around my cock? Or maybe -"

I didn't let him finish. I hung up the phone and threw it across the room. I curled into a ball and cried myself to sleep.

Being back at the restaurant made it seem like I had never left. Like last week had never happened. I could almost pretend that it hadn't happened. Almost. I had almost succeeded in forgetting about it. I threw myself into work,

keeping a happy smile for the customers as I took their orders and served them food. And then someone flipped the channel on the TV and she was all I could see.

“So, tell us, Ms. Pierce, how are you feeling about your upcoming ballet tour? You must be incredibly excited,” the interviewer asked the honey-blonde woman in the chair opposite from him. I recognized her immediately. How could I not?

“I am! This has been my dream ever since I was a cub. I can’t believe it’s finally coming true. I’ve just been so blessed,” Sofia said so sweetly that it made my teeth hurt. “And how do your parents feel about you being gone for so long? As a princess, there must be royal duties that you can no longer see to while you’re touring,” was his next question and I saw a slight narrowing of Sofia’s eyes. She hadn’t liked that question and I wondered if it was because it was yet another thing she had abandoned in the pursuit of her dreams. Princess? Lily asked, surprised. I didn’t feel that kind of power coming off of her.

I mentally shrugged. Honestly, it made sense. She seemed like the kind of person who was used to getting her way.

Sofia laughed. “Of course there are, but that is what the royal advisors are for. Besides, our pack is a humble size. My parents can easily take care of any problems that may arise in my absence. They are very supportive of my dreams.”

Ah. That’s why she didn’t feel powerful. Her pack is small. She’s probably a princess in name only, Lily commented and I raised an eyebrow.

Why do you care so much? I asked and I could feel her pull her lips back in a feral smile.

Because she’s the competition.

I snorted. Of course Lily was already staking a claim on Arthur. Even though she had no business doing so.

“And what of your relationship with the Alpha of the Hurricane Pack? Rumor has it that he’s asked you to marry him. Several times if I’m not mistaken,” the interviewer said and this time Sofia visibly stiffened.

“My relationship with Arthur is stronger than ever. The rumors are just rumors. If Arthur had asked me to marry him, I’d have said yes. He’s the love of my life. But he’s being a gentleman and waiting for me. Once my tour is done, I’m sure a wedding won’t be too far off,” Sofia said, eyes glittering with a false joy. I had to hand it to her. She was a good liar.

Alpha of the Hurricane Pack? We scored big time, Lily basically squealed and I couldn’t help but stand there in shock.

Everyone knew about the Hurricane Pack and its alpha. They were the most powerful pack in North America and the alpha was one of the richest men in

North America. He was the CEO of Wolf Pack, Incorporated, a business that sold sports equipment globally. He also had a reputation of being cold, ruthless and an extreme workaholic.

I have to tell him no, I thought, looking down at my left hand where the ring still sat on my finger. I'd turned it around so that no one could see the diamond. I hadn't wanted to take it off in case I lost it.

I don't think you have a choice, Lily said, listening to my thoughts as she so often did. One of the only downsides to having a wolf is no privacy.

I glanced back at the TV. Sofia was no longer on it, but a small piece of hope was trying to wriggle its way inside. Sofia would eventually come back. And maybe, just maybe, she actually would agree to marry Arthur then.

It would take time to get pregnant. Sofia would probably be back before then. If she agreed to marry Arthur, the contract would be null and void and it wouldn't even be my fault. I could get out of my debt without having to sacrifice everything I've dreamed of in the process.

"Almara, get back to work! Customers have been waiting for you while you've been off in La-la land!" my boss barked and I jumped. I felt my cheeks burn, but I got back to work with a small smile on my lips.

Robert:

Robert was pissed. He had thought he'd found a way out of his small town.

The woman from the cruise was supposed to be his golden ticket. It turned out she was just made of paper. And not the green kind.

They had both been deceiving the other. They had both pretended to be rich.

She had convinced him to spend so much money on the cruise. Not that it had been his to begin with, but the lies still stung.

And now without Almara's support, he was completely broke. He pulled his lips back in a snarl as he looked at the bar he thought he had abandoned. It was going to hurt his pride to go in there and beg for money, but it had to be done.

He smoothed his clothes out and ran a hand through his hair. Then he put on his best smile and walked into the bar. He was hit with the familiar scent of cigarette smoke and alcohol. It was hard to keep the disdain off his face when this place was so far beneath him.

"Andy! How's it going, buddy?" Robert called out, pulling out one of the stools at the bar and sitting down.

The bartender gave him a scathing look. It wasn't a secret that Andy didn't like him. He'd always been a little sweet on Almara and was jealous that Robert was with her.

"It was better before you showed up. What do you want? I thought you were long gone," Andy growled as he continued to work, cleaning the bar with a white rag.

“Yeah, well, you know me. I’m never completely satisfied. So, listen, I know I’m not your favorite person, but could you lend me a few hundred? I promise to make it worth your while,” Robert said, leaning eagerly on his elbows.

“You’ve lost your damn mind. You really think I’d come help you, especially after the way you treated Almara? You know, she came in here looking for you. You broke her heart. It was written all over her face. So you can go to Hell for all I care,” and with that Andy turned his back and wandered off to the other end of the bar.

Robert clenched his fists. How dare he talk to him that way? If he only knew who Robert truly was, he would never have treated him that way. He would pay for the insult, but later. Robert had a new task now.

He grabbed the vase full of roses off of the bar and strolled out, ignoring the shouts from Andy. If Almara had come looking for him, there was a chance she would take him back. Hell, it was almost a guarantee.

The girl was such a fool, but it worked in his favor. All he had to do was give her his puppy dog eyes and she’d come running back. She might not be going anywhere in life, but she was free money and free sex. He could have done much worse.

And right now he felt like he was at rock bottom. Almara would be a nice little rung on the ladder to success. Once they were married, he would take everything from her. And perhaps by then his father would acknowledge him. It was common knowledge that his father wanted heirs and it didn’t seem like his half-brother was anywhere near close enough to accomplish that particular goal. Especially if that interview with his would-be fiance was anything to go by.

As someone who lied for a living, Robert could always recognize them. He knew without a doubt that their relationship was not all that she had cracked it up to be.

Robert was going to go after what he was due. He’d marry Almara, get her pregnant, and then displace Arthur as Alpha of the Hurricane Pack. His half-brother would never know what hit him.

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