

Chapter 14: Dangerously Close

ETHAN

Even though I wasn't entirely sure what I was doing, it felt like a start. I needed to get her out of my system urgently, especially after last night.

And as much as she tried to appear indifferent, I knew she wasn't immune to me. Being alone with her would give me the chance to show her what she was missing.

"Why are you smiling?" she narrowed her eyes. "I'll get rid of you without any effort, besides just having to endure you for a few hours."

"We have a date."

"You call it a date, I call it a way to get rid of you," she smiled.

A breathtaking, cocky smile. The combination of her blue-gray eyes, dark hair, and pale skin with freckles scattered across her face tormented me. It made me want to pull her against my body, kiss her urgently, and then strip her clothes off.

This was bad. Very bad. Because it was exactly that face I imagined last night when I was on top of the blonde from the bar.

It didn't work out as I expected. My plan was to sleep with a beautiful woman to relax. But I only ended up more irritated and completely unsatisfied.

It was Miss Brown's face I saw when I closed my eyes, ready to come. And it was dark hair, not blonde, that I imagined spread across the sheets while I moved inside that woman.

I felt like an asshole for it, but it was the truth. It made me realize I had to end this as quickly as possible. It didn't make sense to be obsessed with a woman who said she hated me and whom I hadn't even touched yet.

"So, when will I be rid of you?" she asked, pulling me out of my thoughts.

"Are you eager?"

"To get rid of you? Isn't it obvious?"

"Miss Brown, I think you always say exactly the opposite of what you feel."

"Well, you're free and arrogant enough to imagine whatever you want."

"Tomorrow night?"

"I'll check my schedule."

Could she have something better to do on a Saturday night? Only if she was seeing someone. The idea didn't sit well with me; in fact, it was enough to make my blood boil, just like watching the bartender try to flirt with her right in front of me.

Which made me act like a jerk and give her the opportunity to call me an animal. Shit. How could I feel possessive of her when I hadn't even kissed her yet?

"Alright. Let me know," I said.

However, what I really wanted to ask was if she was seeing someone. But we had nothing, so I had no right to ask, and it would only give her a chance to kick me where it hurt.

"I don't have your number," she said.

"I have yours, I'll call you."

"You have my number?" she frowned in confusion.

"You gave me your card, remember?"

"I thought you'd only send an email."

"I saved it for work."

I was still trying to convince myself of that, so I didn't sound as convincing as I'd like. She nodded, definitely not believing a word I said.

"By the way, I'll reply as soon as I have all the information."

"Alright, though I'd prefer not to involve any work-related matters."

"I think I heard you're a workaholic," she said, staring at her glass, then her gaze met mine with amusement. "Would that make you feel dirty in some way?"

"I'm not a workaholic, but I don't usually joke around when it comes to my work. So, it would be better if this stayed just between us."

Okay, maybe that sounded worse than I intended.

"Wow! That was..."

"What I meant is... it's bad enough that my brother suggested Will should take over the case because you work in the lab. I just want to avoid giving him reasons to think I won't be able to do my job because I'm involved with you."

"Right. I didn't know. Although I also thought it would be better this way, but for different reasons. I thought you were only doing this to annoy me."

"I had no idea you worked there."

"I'm relieved to know you weren't stalking me."

How could she really think I would stalk her at work? Did she think I was obsessed? Maybe I was, a little. But not to the point of doing that. Maybe Miss Brown was just completely self-centered.

"You think you're that irresistible? You really are full of yourself, aren't you?"

"You have to admit it was too much of a coincidence."

"Well, it was really a surprise running into you."

She nodded.

"I think I better get back to the table," she said, standing up suddenly and giving me a good view of her cleavage.

Her white blouse had the first few buttons undone. Enough to wake up my cock.

"You should at least pretend you're not staring at my breasts," she said, shaking her head, and making me smile. "Jerk," she muttered, before rolling her eyes and turning away, drawing my attention to her perfect ass in those pants.

"Miss Brown?" I called, making her stop and turn back around.

"Yes?"

"Wear something nice for me tomorrow," I teased.

She forced a smile before flipping me off and returning to the table, leaving me both aroused and tormented. I could hardly wait to get my hands on her and make her beg.

I went back to the table after finishing the liquid in my glass; she didn't give me more than a glance the rest of the night.

I kept wondering if she had really agreed to go out with me just because she wanted to get rid of me. It couldn't be. All this tension between us must have influenced her at least a little.

I hoped, deep down, that she wanted this as much as I did. I needed to have her at least once. I needed to know what it was like to be inside her if it would be as good as I imagined.

I needed to taste her in my mouth and slide my hands over that pale skin in

a way that wasn't so gentle. No, I had no intention of being gentle. I wanted to mark her with my hands, my mouth, and my cock.

I managed to sleep a little better after imagining doing just that and knowing I was very close to achieving my goal.

ELLIE

My phone rang somewhere, waking me up on Saturday morning. I stared at the clock, which showed it was only eight a.m.

Who the hell was calling me so early? Anna knew never to call me before eight on the weekend. I reached out to grab it from the nightstand.

I stared at the screen, seeing an unknown number. I almost slid the button to hang up before remembering that Mr. Morgan said he'd call me. But he wouldn't call this early, would he?

"Hello?" I answered, stretching and sitting up.

"Don't tell me I woke you up?"

Yes, it was him, and he sounded strangely out of breath. What the hell was he doing?

"You know it's eight a.m. on a Saturday, right?"

"Yes, I know. I just ran ten kilometers with Ben."



Ten kilometers? What kind of people wake up early to run on a Saturday? Apparently, the Morgans and Will. Yeah, all of them are crazy.

"What do you want? A prize?"

"Are you serious? Because I have some ideas."

"Tell me what you want, Morgan, before I hang up and go back to sleep."

"Did you check your schedule?"

I tried to remember why I had agreed to his stupid idea. How had I gone from a plan to ignore his existence to going out on a date? God! I hadn't even been drinking.

"Are you still there?"

"I'm trying to remember why I agreed to go out with you. I think I had a momentary lapse of reason."

"The most likely reason is that you can't resist me. The less likely one is that you're trying to get rid of me. I prefer to believe the first option."

"I need to make sure, if I do this, will you really leave me alone?"

"I gave you my word. Of course, if you win the bet."

"Alright. And how many hours do you need for..."

"First, you need to start treating this like a date, Miss Brown."

"That wasn't a condition."

"I thought that, as a scientist, you'd take this experiment seriously."

"I'm just considering a hypothesis in this experiment, Mr. Morgan. And we both know exactly what it is. You're going to try to seduce me and fail, and then you'll realize all of this was a waste of time. We could skip to the conclusion, and you could simply forget I exist. That way, we save time."

"What time should I pick you up?" he asked, ignoring everything I had just said, making me sigh in frustration.

"You don't need to worry, I can drive."

"I'm trying to do my part; do yours. I'll expect a message with your address."

"This is a bit sexist, don't you think?"

"No. And, by the way, before you ask, I've already chosen the place."

"You're kidding? If you think I'll let you choose and end up in a room..."

"For God's sake! Just be ready and let me know the time, okay?"

"You're really a..."

"See you tonight, Miss Brown. Wear something sexy," he interrupted and then hung up.

Asshole. I saved his contact as Bastard Morgan.

Why the hell did I agree to this? Maybe I was going crazy. I should cancel and tell him to go to hell. However, it would only give him reasons to think I was scared.

It couldn't be that hard. I just needed to endure a few hours by his side. Or maybe I was throwing myself into a lion's den. I couldn't forget what happened in that closet, when my reason almost went out the window, and my whole body betrayed me, reacting to him.

This was a terrible idea.

Even if he didn't touch me, we'd still be close. That was dangerous.

Shit! What was happening to me? When did I start doubting my ability to maintain self-control? I was going to win this bet and get rid of that jerk once and for all.

I got out of bed. Hearing him say he had just run ten kilometers was enough to make me feel like a lazy slacker for waking up late on a Saturday, even after a long work week.

I showered and put on my workout clothes. Burning off some energy at the gym should also help me stay calm during the night.

After an hour and a half of intense training, which would probably leave me sore for the next few days, I decided to take the stairs up to my apartment.

When I reached the last step and entered the hallway, I nearly had a heart attack. Was I seeing things because of exhaustion? I leaned against the wall



with one hand, still out of breath.

"Ellie?" he said, turning his body toward me, holding a bag while trying to unlock the door to the apartment next to mine.

"Todd? What are you doing here?"

His expression was as confused as mine.

"Well, I live here."

Lissa Wallace

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Hahaha!! Yes! Now use that beautiful man to make your ex feel like the POS you say...

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