

Read Billionaire Baby Daddy online free by Claire Adams

Chapter Six

Andrew

I fumbled at the bedside table for my phone, only half awake but knowing that I needed to answer it in case it was something to do with work.

I frowned, unable to find the phone where I normally put it. As the thing continued to ring, I pried open my eyes and stared down at Lexi for a moment. She was still curled into my chest, and even though I normally didn't let women stay the night, I was irrationally glad to have her there still. She looked cute like that.

My phone.

I rolled out of bed and managed to locate the thing in the pocket of the slacks that I'd been wearing the night before, which I'd left in a pile on the floor. They were going to need a serious ironing before I could wear them again, I thought distractedly.

I picked up the call right before it rang over to voicemail. "Hello?"

"Still in bed, I guess," the woman on the other end of the call sniffed. "Should have expected that."

I glanced at my watch and groaned when I saw it was Saturday morning. "Katie, I can explain," I said.

“You can explain what?” my younger sister asked, her tone clipped.
“There’s nothing to explain. I know better than to agree to have breakfast with you. This isn’t the first time I’ve ended up sitting by myself in a café, and I doubt it’s going to be the last.”

“Something came up,” I told her, glancing back towards the bed where Lexi watched me uncertainly. She’d made no move to get up yet, though, and I moved back to the bed, sitting down next to her. I splayed a hand across her back and r

ubbed absently at her skin as I continued to talk to Katherine.

“What’s her name, then?” my sister asked mockingly. “You probably don’t even know.”

“It’s not like that,” I protested.

Katherine sighed. “Sure, it isn’t,” she said, and I could practically hear her shaking her head. “When are you going to settle down, Andy? Sleeping around like this isn’t healthy for you, or for the women that you’re with. You should know that by now. Anyway, you deserve better than that. I know you’ve been busy with work, but I’m sure there’s some beautiful woman out there who’s willing to put up with all the late nights and weekends away.”

I sighed. “I’m not looking for that,” I told her, momentarily ignoring the fact that Lexi, my latest conquest, was right there in the bed next to me. Based on my side of the conversation alone, she was probably smart enough to figure out what I was talking about, even if she didn’t know who I was talking to. But that didn’t really matter. I was never going to see her again. We both knew that.

“But the women that you’re sleeping with are looking for that,” Katherine insisted. “I don’t care if they’ve told you otherwise. Women

are always looking to settle down into a relationship with the right man. And despite all your flaws, you are a kind man, deep down.”

I snorted. “They all know exactly what they’re getting into,” I said, hating the defensive note that crept into my voice.

“I don’t think they always do,” Katherine sighed. Her tone was somewhere between exasperated and annoyed. “And even if they do, I’m getting sick and tired of always being stood up when we’re meant to meet up. You may not give a shit about any of them, but it hurts to know that you don’t care about me, either.”

“Katie, you know that’s not true.” I sighed, running a hand back through my hair. “Look, I’m sorry about this morning. We can reschedule. Let’s meet up for lunch instead.”

“The whole reason we agreed to meet up for breakfast, even though I knew you weren’t going to be there, was because my flight leaves at three, remember?”

“Oh, yeah,” I said, falling silent for a beat. “Well, I’ll see you when you get back. You’re only going to be gone for, like, a week.”

“Try three weeks,” Katherine said, sounding pained. “It’s not just San Francisco, remember? That’s just the first stop. Then I’m going to London for that work thing, and then I’m going to Barcelona to visit some friends.”

“Right,” I said. “But it’s not that long. I’ll see you soon, okay?”

“Sure, whatever,” she said, abruptly hanging up.

I winced, but there wasn’t much that I could do now.

“Who was that?” Lexi asked, sounding mildly jealous.

I suppressed the urge to roll my eyes. “My sister,” I told her, feeling irrationally annoyed at her for still being there, despite the fact that I’d been glad for it when I’d woken up. But now, it was all too easy to transfer the blame for that missed brunch meeting onto her.

I rolled out of bed and dug through my dresser for something to wear, beginning to throw clothing on. “Come on,” I said, glancing back towards the bed. “Hurry up and get your clothes on so that I can take you home.”

For a moment, her feelings were naked on her face. She was taken aback by my words, and she was hurt by them. I felt my lip curl at that. Like I’d said to Katherine, they knew that this was a one-night stand. Lexi, especially, must have known, because, beyond the vibes that I’d been giving out the night before, beyond everything that I’d said to her, there was also that small matter of the fact that she had done a presentation for me at work. I was under no illusions that she must have researched me prior to giving her presentation. She must have read all the newspaper articles.

She had known exactly what she was getting into. I felt no remorse.

She rolled out of bed without a word, though I could see the tightness around her lips. She yanked on her bra and panties and then pulled her dress on over her head, covering those curves. For a moment, I almost wanted to take her back to bed, to strip her down again and kiss apologies into her skin.

I wasn’t sure where that notion had come from. I shook my head, shook away the thought, and grabbed my keys, waiting impatiently for her to follow me out of the house.

As we drove, I drummed my fingers against the steering wheel, feeling a surge of pent-up energy course through me. “Look, I don’t care if you want to tell your friends about this,” I finally told her.

“What?” she asked, looking aghast.

“I know there are certain bragging rights that come along with sleeping with me,” I told her, speaking slowly, as though she were dumb. “I don’t care if you want to tell them all about how good I was in bed or about what my place looks like. I don’t care if you want to share those photos that you took last night. I do ask that you don’t talk to the press about it. I’m not going to make you sign an NDA because you can’t tell them anything that they don’t already know. But you also can’t talk about this to anyone at your office, for obvious reasons.”

She scoffed, and out the corner of my eye, I could see the way her hands clenched into fists against her thighs. “Sure,” she said, sounding bitter. “To be honest, there wasn’t much to brag about.”

“Oh, come on,” I said, rolling my eyes. “I’m not going to insult your prowess in bed, and you don’t need to insult mine. It’s nothing personal. Hell, you’re beautiful, and you’re great in bed. I haven’t come that hard in forever. You interest me in ways that most women never manage to.”

“But,” Lexi spat, looking angrily out the window.

“But,” I sighed. “Lexi, I just can’t commit to anyone at the moment. I made that very clear before we slept together. I can’t be your boyfriend. I’m sorry. We had a great night, but it can’t happen again.”

“I’m not asking you to be my boyfriend,” Lexi said, sounding irritated. “A couple dates, or a few fucks, doesn’t make you my boyfriend. I’m not asking you to commit to me or anything even remotely like that.”

“In my books, that’s exactly what a couple dates mean,” I told her peevishly. “A couple dates is a commitment that I can’t give. A couple dates, and you’d probably be expecting me to text you every morning when you woke up and every evening when you got done with work. A couple dates and you’d probably be expecting me to whisk you away to some romantic weekend retreat. A couple dates and you’d be telling your parents all about me. I know what a couple of dates means to a woman.”

Lexi snorted derisively, but she didn’t respond.

We continued the drive back to her place in silence. I switched on the radio and then punched it off again when I could only find mid-morning talk shows on the air. I continued to drum my fingers against the edge of the steering wheel, not sure why I felt so upset. It didn’t really matter what she thought. I was never going to see her again, unless our paths happened to cross again at Orinoco or Albright.

I pulled up to her apartment building and idled on the curb, waiting for her to get out. She took her sweet time doing so. Before she closed the door, she leaned down and stared at me. “You’re kind of an asshole,” she said.

I rolled my eyes. “Sure, whatever,” I snapped in response. “Think whatever you want about me. Tell all your little friends whatever you want about me. I’m still not going to see you again.”

“A couple dates isn’t commitment. A couple dates can just be two people enjoying one another’s company and having good sex.”

“Okay,” I said heatedly, tempted to reach over and pull the door shut since she clearly wasn’t about to close it. But part of me wanted to hear what she was going to say next.

She snorted. “You’re probably just a coward. You’re so afraid of having a woman find out that dating you isn’t all that it’s cracked up to be, that you don’t even give her the chance. Because as soon as she found out how uninteresting you really are, she’d dump your ass. You’re just trying to protect yourself against being dumped, aren’t you?”

Her voice was taunting, and I felt anger surge through me. “You done, Dr. Phil?” I asked, trying to keep my own tone level so that she couldn’t tell that she had hit a nerve with that one.

Finally, she slammed the door shut, harder than was strictly necessary, and stomped off. I watched her head up the steps and into her building, thinking over what she had said. It might be true, or it might not be. Either way, I wasn’t really concerned.

It was the same as her comment about art and wine or about the house. Did it really matter if I showed interest in the arts just because I wanted to show off my wealth? Did it really matter if I was hardly ever at home in my beautiful house? I was supporting the local economy either way, and wasn’t that more important than whatever my personal motives were?

So, too, with this. I showed women a good time for a night. When it was a woman like Lexi, I gave them a little taste of what the other side, the high-class culture, was like. Did it matter if I was dumping them after one night because I wasn’t interested in anything more, or because I was scared they wouldn’t be interested in anything more? I didn’t think so.

Anyway, I wasn't about to change the way I lived just for some random woman who I'd met at work.

I put the car in drive and headed to the office to continue looking over the details of the Albright acquisition.