

Billionaire's Accidental Wife

Chapter 17

It would only take two days to change Catherine's life forever. An unnoticed tremor began in her heart and rose in her mind. It happened so quickly that she had the courage to ask Hugh, her yoga instructor, to assist her with his problem with Shawn, and they pretended to be a couple madly in love with each other when Shawn came to visit her apartment last night. Yes, it was uneventful because his boss, er, husband, vanished after Hugh opened the door wearing only a towel. Yes, it was that hot... Those bulges were to die for. However, it was

entirely Catherine's idea. After all, what could possibly go wrong? Hugh was gay. And guess what else? He never confided in anyone but her, and she couldn't blame him; she ended up pouring her heart out to him before he did to her; it was a win-win situation; Hugh would help her, and she would help him.

To put it mildly, the man had feelings for one of his roommates. It was a farce to say that Catherine was disappointed. She was extremely surprised; she had been daydreaming about Hugh and then mistaking him for a straight man. What a waste, she thought, but he had helped her get rid of Shawn, so next week it was her turn to help Hugh, and she would go to his apartment and pretend to be his ex girlfriend just to let his roommates know he wasn't gay, and yes, it was that pathetic, but what could she do? Hugh was in love and she was now his best friend.

Presently, she was in her own room, inside Shawn's mansion, and to say that she was mildly disappointed was a lie. Of course she was not expecting a red carpet welcome, but no one did welcome her, not even the butler or the mansion staff. Shawn just left a message to the security at the gate and let her in, and now, three hours later, she was done arranging her things. She had already called Jane and Chelsea twice and they had arranged a girl's night out on Friday. To say that she was exhausted was an understatement.

She picked up her white bedroom sleeper, walked away from her tea, and heaved it onto the bed.

The butler appeared at the door to let her know food was waiting on the porch. Not the least bit eager, she thanked him anyway. The last thing she could think about was eating. "I'm fine. But thanks."

The old silver-haired man hesitated. His gaze bounced from the tea back to her as he leaned deeply. "Food is good, you're not eating enough. If you don't mind me saying that, you look too skinny."

Skinny? Wow! Nobody told her that. Wow! She liked this man.

"I am not skinny, Eddie," she mumbled as she couldn't help but smile. The man just made her day. Even though her belly roiled at the thought, Catherine couldn't argue it'd do her good. She needed to keep up her strength. "...But anyway, thank you. Okay, I'll come." She was rewarded with a show of sweet fatherly smiles. "I will make a special banquet for you, milady."

The sight facing the garden side of the massive area could've been out of a travel pamphlet.

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The place was everything she wanted in her dream house. Her last hours spent at her

apartment had done nothing but worry about her brother and daydream, which had nothing to do with the mansion landscape and everything to do with the owner. She knew working here at the comfort of his home was a bad idea, but she needed a job. A girl could complain later, but not now.

However, part of her wished she was asleep on a plane heading to Scotland. Confront her brother? She almost laughed out loud. What for? Because a wild piece of her wanted to be here with Shawn, just like in Vegas. His arms were around her. Touching her. Needing her, tasting her, and teasing her. How hard could that be? She thought to herself, is one night stand the answer?

She gave herself a mental slap. The only reason she came here was to work and nothing else. But if she agreed for a one-night stand, her brother would receive the help he needed. Nothing else matters, right? But how about her heart? No use for mending the broken pieces?

Besides, maybe she could salvage it by f*****g her accidental husband? Maybe she could convince him to get a divorce? Did she really want it? Would he agree?

A spark of hope lit in her chest. Why not? If he was this desperate to get rid of whatever he was trying to get out of his system, then maybe he would have agreed to a divorce as well? She knew him by heart anyway. The man was nothing but a playboy who would f**k some willing duck if she was wearing a f*****g skirt.

When the butler announced the feast was ready, she went to the porch, ate with gusto, and looked around after the second cup of tea, smiling at the wonderful view. When the tiny hairs on the back of her neck tingled, she turned to make eye contact with Shawn. Her radar had grasped his presence before she'd heard a sound.

There he stood. Eyes glaring and furious? Why? Yet, he looked incredibly s**y, but she was too exhausted from their last interaction to be mad or even talk to the man. So, on autopilot, every vigor in her body went on full attention, compelling energy she couldn't afford to lose. "So, Miss Brown, how was lunch?" he inquired, creasing his dark brow as he eyed her almost empty plate.

She edged towards the fruit she'd folded into her napkin. "This is... hell... it smells like s**t. I couldn't quite get past the odor of this one... Who on earth eats this?"

"Hmp, that is a durian fruit. My grandmother loves it. And yea, it was hard, prickly skin on the outside and had a rather unkind scent, but it was delicious." His nose furrowed as he picked up a chunk, removed the yellow casing back, and brought the tender flesh to her lips. She took the bite, clamping down on the tremors caused by his thumb grazing her bottom lip. 'Oh, goodness me!'

"Inside is where the pure honey-sweet flesh is tender." Catherine compelled her shoulders back and attempted a quick smile. Wait, was he still talking about fruit? Or something else? "Well... Mmm. It's really delicious, but the smell is deadly. Not good for kissing... I mean, this is stinky, my breath is now stinky." D**n it, Catherine, way to embarrass yourself. She thought to herself. Now was not the time to daydream

The corners of his mouth wobbled upward in a contrarily close mouthed smirk. "I need more details about your brother. Where is he now? How long has he been in deep s**t and how long, has he been emptying your credit?"

What?

"How did you..."

“Catherine, I know everything about you. I know every smirk, every furrowed brow, every smile and every invisible tear and I have the most reliable investigator in London, So now tell me. How did you let this happen?” 1

“It’s none of your business.”

“It’s my f****g business, you are my wife, and I am not going to let you spoil your brother and see you suffer for his mistakes.” 3

What the hell was that? Why was he suddenly angry? The invisible band around her chest twisted.

However, her thoughts refocused on the cold in Shawn’s glare. And the bitter proposition he’d said. Words that had cut through her chest and punctured her heart. Phrases that settled sadness in her soul. She reminded herself again she wasn’t in Vegas anymore.

“He was struggling to sell his art. By the time I found it, he was in deeper s**t. My life savings has already bought him an additional clientele but I don’t know what happened now. He doesn’t like to talk about it. I had to make myself a nuisance to his roommate to get the truth.”

One brow lifted, boosting the impressive effect of Mr. Richmond’s sharp angled features as he sat on the front chair. Took a strawberry and ate it in one go. The worry lines on his face deepened. “Something is not adding up.” “He is not in Scotland anymore.”

“What? Why? How did you.” “I told you, I know.”

She had to give him credit for knowing it before she did. She gazed at him, looking for a change in his angry armor. His cold features and high slashing cheekbones gave away nothing more of his emotion. He was indeed furious.

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