

## Chapter 28: Island Fun

Riley was already swimming alone in the pool. Against the hot sun, she felt great being submerged in a cold, freshwater pool.

She had already swum four laps when Adrian appeared in his board shorts. He was still in his wheelchair, but he was already half-naked, his six-pack abs flashing before her.

"How is the water?" Adrian asked.

"Just perfect for the hot weather," Riley answered with a smile.

Adrian settled his wheelchair closer to the pool. Then, he helped himself up.

Riley panicked. She asked, "Can you handle it?"

"It's just a few steps," Adrian answered.

In the next few seconds, Riley watched in agony as Adrian limped to the edge of the pool. When he finally sat on the pool's edge, she sighed.

Riley swam closer to Adrian, prepared to help. She asked, "You will be okay in the water, right?"

Adrian smiled at Riley. He lowered himself into the water and said, "Yes, buoyancy helps me float -"

"Because you can just lean on me anytime," Riley offered.



"Ah, yeah, actually, do you mind helping me get across? We can do laps together," Adrian proposed, and Riley hurriedly wrapped her arm around the man's bare waist. At the same time, Adrian rested his muscular arm around her shoulder. 1

For a second, Riley thought she saw Adrian smirk. However, his expression changed to his usual in just a split second. When they reached the other side of the pool, Adrian said, "Thank you, Riley. Do you want to race with a disabled man?"

"Urgh!" Riley rolled her eyes. She laughed and said, "You will still beat me!"

She poked his bicep and described, "See that muscle? You've got arm power, Mister."

"Hun," Adrian corrected.

"Huh?" Riley asked.

"Hun," Adrian repeated. "You need to get used to calling me that in front of the people that know my grandpa."

"Right." Riley said, "Of course, Honey."

"Ready?" Adrian asked Riley.

Riley positioned herself for the swim. "Ready."

"In three, two, one, go -"

Riley tried her best to compete with the man, but Adrian was just too

strong. At some point, she stopped swimming and just watched his graceful movements.

The way Adrian leaned to his side to breathe, and his long, muscular arms stretching out for the next stroke made Riley bite her lip. She mused, "Who knew a simple freestyle stroke could look so sexy?"

After that brief swimming competition, Adrian and Riley had lunch by the pool. As they ate, Adrian said, "Grandpa is arriving on Friday, so we will meet him on Saturday at the old mansion."

Riley placed her hand on her chest. She swallowed her food and remarked, "Oh, it's this weekend already."

"Yes," Adrian acknowledged. "My father and stepfamily will be there. I want you to be ready for their disapproval."

"Okay. You said your relationship with your father isn't good, but I still don't know how to handle it. I—I don't want to be the reason it gets worse," Riley said. "Shouldn't we try a way to fix your relationship?"

Adrian stared at her for seconds. Then, he ate a piece of meat before saying, "He had long abandoned me, Riley. His goal was to prove himself to be a successful leader of the company, not a father. When mom died, I grieved with Grandpa and Aunt Linda, but never with my father."

"When I was recuperating for a year in Sweden, he only visited me four times out of 365 days, Riley," Adrian revealed. "I don't know if my father is... redeemable."

Riley looked down. She felt Adrian's pain. She said, "I'm sorry, Adrian."

Forgive me for even suggesting it. It's just that at least you have a dad, and I don't." 1

With a shrug, Riley said, "But I guess our dads are the same."

There was an awkward silence between them before Riley resumed eating. After a while, Adrian asked, "I know you told me that your Dad left you, but what if it's not the case and he has been looking for you?" 3

Riley frowned. She replied, "My mom said he abandoned us, and his entire family hated us - my mom in particular. So, my dad chose to leave us."

Adrian's jaws clenched. His brows met before he looked away. He took a deep breath and said, "Do you mind if I... look into it?"

"My mom would never lie, Adrian," Riley suggested.

Adrian fell silent. After some time, he said, "I'm sorry. I just wanted the best for you." 1

"Anyway, going back to your concern. Don't worry about Dad and my stepfamily. I don't care about their opinions. If I were to choose between you and them, I'd choose Riley Allen any day," Adrian firmly said before eating his food. 4

Riley stilled. She thought, 'Did I just hear that right? It sounded like a love confession.'

But then again, Adrian earnestly preferred Riley's company than his stepfamily, so Riley dismissed the idea.

\*\*\* 1

In the afternoon, it was back to fun again. Riley and Adrian went kayaking around the island. Riley had an excellent sunbathing, and Adrian's strong arms were used well.

"Wait, let's pose for the picture!" Riley encouraged Adrian, but the man was busy maneuvering the kayak.

Adrian only chuckled and said, "Go ahead, Riley."

At the very least, Riley had a good selfie with Adrian's muscled back as her background.

When Riley and Adrian returned to the shores, it was already four in the afternoon. They quickly swam at the beach before surrendering and lying on the soft sands for minutes.

Riley took deep breaths as she watched the calm skies above her, the clouds moving slowly. She smiled and declared, "This is island fun. It's one of the happiest days of my life."

Beside her, Adrian was also lying in the sand. The sun beautifully kissed his skin, making him look more refreshing. The tip of his nose was red, and so were his cheeks. 1

Adrian turned to Riley, his gray eyes focused on her. He declared, "Same for me, Riley. I'm glad you are enjoying our first date."

Suddenly, Riley's stomach growled. She screamed, "Oh, my god. How embarrassing!"

A chuckle left Adrian's lips. He remarked, "That's pretty normal. We were out the entire afternoon."

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Adrian sat up and proposed, "Let's head back. I have a surprise for you waiting. Wear something nice for dinner."

Riley's eyes gleamed. She asked, "What's my surprise?"

The man could not help but laugh. He said, "Now, it wouldn't be a surprise if I tell you."

\*\*\* 1

An hour later, Riley stepped out of her room wearing a stunning red dress. She went to the second-floor veranda where Adrian had been waiting for her.

Riley's eyes rounded when she saw Adrian holding a bouquet of red roses. She flushed and asked, "Is that my surprise?"

"No," Adrian said while giving Riley the flowers. He held her hand and guided her into a veranda where a gorgeous candle-lit dinner had been prepared. "This is my surprise for you."

Riley's eyes sparkled, and her jaws dropped. She screamed, "Oh, my god! Seafood buffet!" 1

In front of Riley was a long table of crustaceans and shellfish, cooked differently. Riley's eyes formed hearts, and she unwittingly embraced Adrian. She said, "I just love you!" 4

She was so happy, she didn't realize what she said until after a second. She paled and turned to Adrian, saying, "I mean, I love it!"

"The food," Riley explained further, her face turning a shade darker

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with each second that passed. "I love the food, and I love how you prepared it for me."

"Hmmm." Adrian smiled. He answered, "And I love that you are happy. Let's eat."

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*May 25, 2024. Chapter 2-2. Guys, I'm going to rest tomorrow. The next chapter will be on Monday. Take care, everyone, and have a great weekend.*

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