



Chapter 45

"I - I -" Riley frowned. How can she tell Adrian that she was thinking about whether he could get a boner?

"Um. It's nothing," Riley averted his gaze, but Adrian grabbed her wrist.

"Riley." Adrian chuckled. "What is going on in that head of yours? Tell me. I promise to keep an objective mind."

"Well." Riley could feel the heat crawling up to her ears. She moved closer to Adrian and whispered, "Leni said you have an erection problem, but I wasn't dreaming when I felt your - your - you know when we kissed?"

Riley told Adrian about her encounter with Leni Eros and their exchanged words. Then, the man had this very amused expression on his face. He asked, "Are you worried about that?"

"No, I'm - I'm confused." She laughed and teased, "I mean, you didn't stuff a cucumber in there, right?"

Adrian chuckled at her response and asked, "Did you see any cucumbers in my bed?"

"No!" Riley laughed, but Adrian pulled Riley closer to him while she was at it.

"Come here," Adrian urged. "Remove your seatbelt -"

"What? Adrian?" Adrian did the work for her, removing her seatbelt. After that, he used his strength to pull Riley into his lap.

The next thing Riley knew, Adrian drew her face closer to his, and their lips touched. Adrian initiated soft kisses. At first, Riley was ashamed to

kiss Adrian while Clint was driving, but later, she figured it was okay.

They were not going beyond that; they were simply a couple having a brief and passionate moment in the car while on the road. Besides, Adrian was so hard to resist; his flavor and touches sent tingles all over her body.

Riley kissed back. Her eyes closed as their heads turned from side to side.

While they made out, Adrian purposely pushed her frame against his groin so that her behind could feel his hardness. After what felt like five seconds of kisses, Adrian pulled away. In his deep voice, he asked, "Does that clear your doubts?"

"Uhuh. I mean, I already knew. I just... don't know why Leni would say that?" Riley softly stuttered in her reply. "Is it true, though, you were never intimate?"

Adrian shook his head. He said, "We never even kissed."

"She said that because I told her so," Adrian revealed.

"You told her you have an erectile dysfunction?" Riley was dumbfounded. "Why?"

"I wasn't interested in her, Riley," Adrian replied. "Like her, I was figuring out a way out of the marriage agreement. So, when you came along, I had the perfect excuse. I'd rather bring you to the hospital than attend our engagement party."

Riley remained on Adrian's lap, her arms resting on his chest. She bit her lip and teased, "So you are interested in me?"

"What do you think, Riley?" Adrian asked back with narrowed eyes.



Before Riley could answer, he cupped her chin and closed the gap between them. They kissed again very slowly and passionately. Each of Adrian's kisses seemed to be savoring Riley thoroughly.

After some time, they ended the kiss. Riley was so over the moon that she rested on the man's chest for the rest of the drive. As they were en route, Adrian softly said, "I supposed my surprise would tell you."

Riley did not fully understand Adrian's words until they arrived at the villa. Adrian brought her to his study. Inside his office, a secret door behind the wooden shelf opened to an entire room that contained a massive vault. Clint was there the whole time to assist Adrian.

"Should I be seeing this, Adrian? This looks like a very private thing," Riley said as Clint opened the vault.

"This is me, Riley, slowly telling you the truth. You need to see this, but I'd like to warn you before that. I'm not a creep, okay? I simply -" Adrian sucked in a deep breath. "I simply wanted to support you over the years."

"What?" Riley asked, but the man did not answer. Instead, he led the way, entering the vault.

Clint smiled at Riley, encouraging her to follow, "You may step inside, Miss Allen. I'll be waiting outside to give you both a private moment."

From outside the vault, Riley saw necklace display stands covered in glass boxes. She thought they were familiar, but she realized what they were when she entered.

"Oh, my god!" Riley's eyes brimmed with tears, recognizing they were her limited edition jewelry pieces. "Adrian, these - these - How did you get them?"



She inspected each piece of jewelry one by one. From diamond necklaces to bangles, rings, and gold pieces, she searched for the Brey brand mark, and sure enough, it was on each one.

"Those are all yours, Riley. You, being the designer, should have a piece of all your limited edition designs," Adrian declared.

Riley turned to Adrian, still in shock. Tears streamed down her face as she asked, "Adrian, how - how did you get them? Who did you buy this from?"


"I have bought them since the start of your career as a jewelry designer, Riley," Adrian lazily admitted.

"What?" Riley asked. "But, Adrian, your name never came up -"

"Ace," Adrian cut her off. "Mister Ace. That was me. I had been buying pieces of your jewelry under that name. At the same time, I had recommended your pieces to a few people I know."

Riley's lips trembled. She carelessly wiped the tears on her face as she asked, "But why? Why did you do that, Adrian?"

"Isn't it obvious, Riley? By now, you should already know," Adrian said.

'Do I know?' Riley echoed. Yes, she had a clue, but she wasn't the type to assume things. Adrian was so good to her in ways Riley couldn't measure. She thought that Adrian liked her, somehow, but all this... this wasn't just a simple like! This was more than that! 

Riley took a step closer to him. She sniffed her tears away and asked, "I feel it, but will you tell me? I'd like to hear it from you."

Following her response, Adrian took a deep breath. Clearly, he was



bracing himself for what he was about to say. He cleared his throat and answered, "This isn't easy for me. I'm not very -"

He breathed in again before resuming, "This isn't like me -"

"I've got all night and all day. We can stay here until tomorrow if you like," Riley suggested.

Adrian chuckled. He sighed, took a moment to compose himself, and eventually said, "I... had always cared for you, Riley. Ever since we were in college. I have known you for a very short time - six months or so, but I think I had -"

He paused, avoiding her stare, and resumed, "I think I had fallen for you back then, but I never fully grasped how much I wanted to be with you until I returned—when I learned you were already with Brian."

"So, Brian knew all along that you liked me?" Riley asked, and Adrian confirmed it with a nod.

"I was furious with Brian. Initially, I aimed to make his life miserable, but eventually, I realized that I was hurting you too. You were happy, so during those years you were with him, I chose to support you quietly instead," Adrian said.

Silence stretched for a good few seconds. Riley and Adrian merely stared at each other.

Soon, however, Riley dropped on the floor, unable to hold the heaviness that was building up in her chest. She cried, "I can't - I can't accept it. It should have been you! It should have been you!"

