

Chapter 11

Bethany POV

We left the exhibition, and according to the instructions given to the driver, we were headed to a Chinese Restaurant. He sat and answered something on his mobile, where I stared out the window, wondering about the man I was going to have a meal with. What did I know about him? Besides living on the same oor as me and being a good hugger when I was in a mess earlier.

He had a beautiful woman with him the other day who seemed very close to him, and here at the exhibition, he had another woman who seemed like he was going out with her, too.

He sounds like a player, in which case, if I needed a person who could be a friend with benets, he might t the bill. It was too soon to think beyond my s****I needs at the moment. I do not need the pain of that sort of betrayal again. If and when I am ready to get back out there, I will address that when I am ready. For now, I need a little comfort and someone willing to assist me with that. Theo, being a player, sounds perfect. I think I would need to ask if he was willing to be with me and add me to whatever day he had available. He might have others and maybe no free evenings if he had two ladies already. How did this suddenly become dicult? I have no idea about dating or how to nd a one-night stand. Should I go to a club and wait to be approached? Is that even safe?

'Hey, you are very quiet. Is everything okay?' Theo's hand touched my thigh and squeezed, making me jump at the sudden touch and his voice breaking the silence.

Theo removed his hand quickly at my jump.

'Sorry, I did not mean to startle you.'

I turned to look at him, his face full of remorse, and it appeared he was genuinely remorseful. I gave him a weak smile.

'I thought you were busy on your mobile, and I gave you the privacy to attend to your needs.' I replied, not mentioning his apology and the removal of his hand from my thigh.

'Work was asking me to do another shift.' He should have elaborated on when I should give him an out. Work is essential, I nodded to myself, although it appeared he took the nod as an answer to something.

'We can return; you do not need to take me out for food. The exhibition was a nice break, and I had a great time. Thank you, do not turn down work because of me.' I offered him the out.

If he needed to work, I had other things I could do.

'Not necessary, the shift is tonight, a little task that needs doing.'

'Okay.' I replied shyly, unconvinced that he was telling me the whole truth.

The driver pulled up outside a restaurant. It was not a Chinese restaurant like Theo had said; it boasted multi-country cuisine. Theo climbed out and leaned into the car, offering me his hand. I took it, and he helped me out of the vehicle. No, I kicked myself, so I do not compare him to Bret. You said you would stop doing that. I admonished myself before I let the thought completely form. I do not need Bret on my mind ever again. I thought it would be easier than that.

This is not comparing stuff. My marriage was one-sided, so comparing would be stupid. I kept telling myself as Theo placed his hand on the base of my back, and a warmth spread through me, a feeling I had not felt in a long time.

Special, wanted, possessed. Right, not that was what I felt, as Theo guided me into the restaurant as if I was the most important person to him at the moment. If this is how he makes me feel, no wonder he had two other girls interested in him if he did the same to them.

Was I jealous that another woman had his interest?

No, we hardly know each other, but friends with benets looked better and better as the day rolled by.

'Hello, Theo. A table for two?' The woman came around the desk, pulled Theo into a hug, and kissed his cheek. He had let go of my hand to hug the woman back, and losing his hand and watching him give the woman attention took me by surprise.

'Yes, please.' The woman nodded and did not glance at me as she sashayed away, leading us to the back of the restaurant. She was wearing a traditional Chinese outt, all colorful, that showed off her shapely gure nicely. I could imagine most men would enjoy watching her as she guided them to their seats.

Theo's hand made itself back to my lower back as if reclaiming me after letting me go to hug this lady. I was not sure how I felt about that. Is this another lady on his arm? He had three already? How do I compete with that? Will he have time for me and these ladies and work? I would hold off asking him if he was interested. Today was all about getting my head off my problems and giving me a nice day. I need to read more into this. We hardly know each other, and I am already clingy.

Have I been so starved for affection that I am getting all possessive over the rst man to give some?

Get a grip, girl. You are acting like a teenager with your rst boy who asked you out.

Besides, you have more to think about, such as a new job for one, getting a new daily routine for another, and talking to your Dad. He deserves to know what is going on. You can get him to visit. You should know that you'll have to talk and nd out. He is most likely getting the ack over all of this.

I took the seat. Theo had pulled out for me to sit in. I tried to lower myself gracefully, and thinking I had failed, the woman stood by the table until we were both seated and handed Theo the menu, not giving one to me.

'The usual thank you, and instead of wine, two coffees, please.' Theo said, and I frowned. Do I not get a say in this?

'Sure.' She had a smile on her face but still had not bothered to look at me. Is this where he brought all his dates? It must be often enough to have a "usual." Suddenly, I no longer felt that special.

'What is the usual?' I asked curiously.

'When I dine in, I get the chef's mix of the day. It is a little sample of all the meals she is experimenting with, and I get to tell her if I think it works or not. The chef is trying to bring a little of her cooking into the mix. I give her an honest review each time I dine in.'

I could not help it. I had to ask.

'Do you bring all your dates here?'

'So this is a date?' He asked with a smirk, and I felt my cheeks go red at my assumption.

'I ...' Lucky we were interrupted as a woman dressed like a chef came rushing out the door, and Theo only just managed to stand up before this larger lady engulfed him in her arms, and he hugged her back and kissed her cheek.

What is this? Number four?