

## KEILY

### Don't Fall for Him

He was still. Too still for my liking. *Maybe this was a mistake...*

Before the panic of what I was doing could settle in and make me unlatch my lips from his, his hand grabbed the back of my head, ceasing my attempt to escape.

It was like a switch had flipped in James; one second, he was unresponsive, and the next, he ravished my mouth like there was no tomorrow.

Every sensible thought faded from my mind, leaving behind only pleasurable fireworks. My whole being buzzed.

When his tongue swirled on my lips, asking for entrance, I was in no state to deny. And once it entered, a moan slipped past me.

Apparently, that was enough for him to let go of any restraint and plunder my mouth savagely.

My hand moved to the nape of his neck to feel his smooth hair, while the other clutched his shoulder to keep myself from falling. It was too good. He was too good.

I had a hard time keeping up with him, but his moans told me he didn't mind at all.

Finally, after what felt like an hour of mind-numbing thrill but was only a few minutes, he pulled away, giving my lower lip a gentle tug with his teeth and allowing both of us to catch our breath.

His hands rested loosely on my waist.

I had never been kissed so thoroughly before.

It was amazing.

The dazed look on James's beautiful face made me not blink lest it disappear. Slowly, a small smile crept onto his lips, full of bliss regardless of its size.

If he only knew how killer his real smiles were...

"You want me," he stated, the euphoric haze yet to clear from his dark eyes.

*I want him. I want James.*

As those words repeated in my mind, the weight of them pressed down on my conscience, and the blur inside my head started clearing.

I wanted James Haynes, my bully, the guy who every day told me how fat and ugly I was.

And I'd just kissed him.

I'd kissed the asshole! The devil!

*What have I done?!*

Immediately, I untangled my arms from him, the previously dormant panic and shock rising. "I—I'm sorry," I muttered, remembering it had been me who'd initiated the kiss. "I shouldn't have done that."

Without waiting for his reply, I stormed away, not caring where I was going.

My breath came out in short gasps as I rushed past the others. The last minutes replayed in my head, and my shaky legs moved faster, fearing I'd fall if I stopped.

*I kissed James.*

*Oh God!*

I was astonished by my actions. Tonight, I was a bundle of surprises, wasn't I?

First, finding out I liked my bully, then strolling around his mansion while holding hands with him as though we were a couple—and now kissing him.

Guilt surfaced inside me, because I couldn't bring myself to despise the kiss. I'd liked—no, I'd *loved* every millisecond of it.

His lips were magical, and maybe it was my crazy brain making things up, but I'd felt a longing in them as they captured mine.

His body pressed against mine felt so right, so natural, and his arms holding me were possessive—

I hoped he wasn't disgusted by my flab.

My fists clenched in anger at my toxic thought. It shouldn't matter if he was disgusted by me or not. It shouldn't matter if he enjoyed kissing me or not. He was James.

But a tiny part of me still wished he'd liked it.

I was pathetic. It seemed I'd finally lost all my remaining dignity because of him.

*I hate myself.*

I found myself in the living area when my feet slowed, hurting from walking too fast in heels. I was flushed and gasping for air, probably a result of the panic.

A big vintage clock hanging on the wall came into my vision: It was 12:15 a.m.

I had to take Sadhvi and Addison home before 1 a.m.

It was time to leave.

To be honest, I was more than glad to get out of here. I was too much of an emotional wreck to enjoy the party anymore—or to face James again.

Now all I had to do was stop thinking about him for a minute and find the girls so I could cringe peacefully in Auntie's guestroom.

The last time I'd seen Addison and Sadhvi, they'd been heading upstairs when James was showing me the main floor, so that's where I went.

No one was allowed upstairs other than the people who were close to James. It was an unwritten rule, and everyone followed it—at least that's what Addison had told me in the car.

The fact that Addison and Sadhvi could go upstairs confirmed that James considered them close friends. *Or close frenemies.*

Maybe, for a night we had become close too...

Until I ruined it by kissing him.

Without wasting a second, I climbed the stairs. The hallway had rows of rooms on either side. I went to the left, because I recalled Addison and Sadhvi had been on the left staircase.

I skipped the first door, which was open a little, hearing the laughter of several males coming from inside. Although I did peek, just to make sure the girls weren't there.

The next door was closed, letting no sound leak. I wouldn't have been surprised if the rooms had been designed to be soundproof in this mansion.

So, I turned the knob and opened it slightly, greeted by the most unexpected sight.

*Oh.*

My eyes widened, and I shut the door quietly before anyone could see me. I stepped away, trying to make sense of what I'd seen.

*This night just keeps getting better.*

I'd never thought Addison and Sadhvi to be...

I shook my head. It was none of my business what they were. And they definitely weren't planning on revealing it to me. It hurt, but I understood...

Or I could be looking too much into the situation. They both were drunk, and like their bold selves, they were just experimenting with different stuff.

And who was I to say anything?! Heck, I wasn't even drunk, and look what I'd done—slobbered up the devil!

Barging into the room and making things awkward for the three of us didn't seem like a good idea. So, I decided to call Addison to let them know we needed to head home.

Cursing myself for not having done that earlier, I hurried my way back to the stairs and crashed into someone coming up. A familiar scent surrounded me.

*No.*

I looked up to find the dark eyes I'd been avoiding.

I most likely looked like a deer caught in headlights.

"Who knew you could move those short legs so fast?" James said, and his eyes twinkled with mischief. I noticed his hair was tousled, and I blushed, knowing I was responsible for it.

"You can't just kiss and run, Keily." His hands snaked around my waist, and I felt like a caught prey.

My heart fluttered, hearing him say my name so endearingly. I fought against myself to not lose control again.

"I'm sorry." I avoided his gaze, embarrassed for running away from him.

"You're sorry won't cut it." I could practically hear his smirk. "You've kissed me; now you have to face the consequences, Keily Harris."

"I shouldn't have done that. I'm sorry."

"But you did, and I don't want you to feel sorry for it." He moved closer.

I looked back up, inches separating our faces. "Then, what do you want me to feel?"

Before I could blink, I was pinned against the wall, with James hovering over me. His hands were firmly planted on my hips, and his eyes trailed my face with yearning.

My breath hitched, anticipating his next move.

However, amid the haze, a tiny voice was screaming inside me, warning me to stop, to not slip again.

"I want you to feel this." James leaned down, but I turned my head at the last second, and his lips landed on my right cheek.

I felt his lips quirk up in a smile and peck my cheek sweetly, not disappointed by my rejection. "Don't be shy," he coaxed, nudging his nose against the side of my face playfully.

My toes curled. Who could have guessed he was capable of being this sweet and gentle?

*Don't fall for him*, my conscience poked.

It took everything in me to push him away. When a confused frown marred his beautiful features, I was tempted to pull him back and kiss it away. But somehow, I held my ground.

"We shouldn't do this, James," I said, trying to meet his eyes.

"You're the one who started this."

I nodded. "And I'm apologizing."

"Don't apologize."

"I shouldn't have done that. It was a mistake."

"A mistake?" His brows knitted, and I sensed his mood getting dark when he let go of me.

I nodded.

"Then, why did you fucking kiss me, Keily?" he demanded, sounding like I had committed a crime.

"I don't know," I replied, my eyes downcast.

"You don't fucking know," he said angrily. "You just led me on for nothing!"

"I didn't lead you on!" I glared at him. "You're disgusted by me, remember?!"

The accusation in his tone had snapped something in me too. He had no right to yell at me when it was his fault, his bullying that was the reason for my conflicting emotions.

If he had not been an ass from the beginning, then maybe things could've been different.

"Where did that come from?" James asked, surprised.

I glared at him harder because he had the gall to ask that.

“Where did that come from?!” I spat. “After all the comments you made about my body, after all the insults you threw and body-shamed me endlessly to remind me how fat and ugly I am, you ask *why* I think you’re disgusted by me?!”

I fought to keep my tears at bay. “I’m your Piggy, whale, cow, *fat slut*—” My voice broke. “Do you want me to continue?”

“Don’t tell me you took all of that seriously.” He ran a hand through his hair, frustrated. “I was just jea—” He shook his head, cutting himself off. “Don’t be a baby, Keily. It wasn’t serious.”

His nonchalance stung. I had hoped for him to apologize and say sweet nothings to coax me back into his arms. Not that I would have forgiven him so easily.

But his lack of remorse hurt and widened the gap between us.

It stung. So bad.

“I hate you, James.” I almost tasted venom on my tongue. “Kissing you was the biggest mistake.” And I meant it, even though I’d very much loved it. “I hate you.”

His face fell as if he’d been slapped before it distorted into the most heinous scowl. “Okay.” His cold tone chilled my spine. “You hate me.” He nodded, then swiveled back and stomped away.

I sighed as his back disappeared, rounding the long hallway. Suddenly, all energy drained out of me, and I felt empty.

After I called Addison, she and Sadhvi, both very drunk, stumbled to the front porch to meet me.

Their funny gibberish during the car ride failed to lift my mood like other times.

Until, suddenly, Addison gasped.

“Oh my God.” Her phone was illuminating her face in the dark car as she gawked at something. “Keily, do not tell me this is what I think it is!”

Next Chapter

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