

THE ALPHA KING CALL BOY

Chapter 81 Something More Subtle

Fiona

I heard Alexander's key turning in the door and flipped the magazine I'd been reading upside down, so it wouldn't be the first thing he saw when he walked in the room.

It was an old issue of a finance magazine I'd picked up months ago, before I started working at Crescent Ventures. The one in which they'd interviewed Conrad about his success there as CEO and owner of the company. There was a picture of Conrad on the cover, and if Alexander walked in and saw me reading the interview, he'd know right away what was on my mind.

And I wanted to handle this carefully. I had more questions for Alexander about the secrecy and lies he'd referred to earlier as "mistakes." But the tenuous peace we'd reached in the afternoon had been a relief, and I didn't want to just drop a grenade into it.

The bedroom door swung open and in came Alexander, carrying a single long-stemmed white rose. It was very pretty, a huge flower in full bloom.

He put his hand to his chest when he saw me, his jaw dropping a little. "Wow," he breathed. "You look amazing."

"Thank you." I let my mouth smile only a little. I did enjoy his reaction and the intensity in his honey-gold eyes as he looked me up and down. But it was better he didn't know how much his desire flattered me.

Alexander spun the stem of the rose in his fingers

idly, smiling, with his eyes glued to me as I crossed the room. When I reached him he offered me the flower rather formally, holding it in front of him and performing a small bow.

I took it, bringing it up to my nose and taking a little sip of air to sample its perfume.

“Better?” he asked.

I raised my eyebrows.

“I took it you didn’t love the red ones I sent to your office.”

I pursed my lips, feeling a tad embarrassed in hindsight about how I’d reacted to that “special delivery.” It had just irritated me severely, felt like such a superficial attempt at apology. And yes, it was also over the top and in the way, very much not my

style.

“The big arrangement was too much, wasn’t it?” he asked, like he’d read my thought. “I should have known better. I started thinking today that maybe you’d appreciate something a little more subtle.”

“It’s nice,” I said, toying with the soft, clean white petals. They felt like satin. “I do appreciate it.”

I put my nose back to the center of the bloom. The smell was actually quite lovely, light and mildly sweet.

When I looked back up, I saw Alexander was watching me sniff the flower. Then his eyes went to my hair, then to my neck. Then to my eyes. A flicker of embarrassment passed over his face, and I understood immediately what he was thinking.

He wanted to smell my neck the way I was smelling

the rose. But he didn't know if he was welcome to just swoop me up and hold me like that anymore.

"Ready for dinner?" I asked, trying to break us out of the awkward moment.

"Yeah. Of course," he said, collecting his composure. "You?"

I nodded. He opened the door and held it for me.

We were partway to the dining room when he finally did dare to attempt physical contact. He opted for something less intimate, offering me his arm while we walked. I threaded my forearm through his elbow agreeably.

My energy began to surge way up the second that we touched.

I waited until we were seated before I brought up the touchy subject.

Alexander started piling food onto my plate and saying something about my diet. I stopped listening, really, when I realized that he was just prattling nervously. I found an opening when he finally returned his attention to his own meal, taking a bite of food and finally quieting down.

“I need to ask you something,” I said.

Alexander put his flatware down on the table and turned to look at me as he chewed.

“Earlier you said it was a mistake to keep it a secret from me that you own the company. I just want to know more about that. I want to know why you felt you needed to hide that from me.”

Alexander gulped down the food in his mouth and said, “Oh.” Then he took a long drink of water, wiped his lips with a napkin, shifted his weight in his chair and finally continued, “Well. It’s complicated.”

I wished I could release the irritated growl that wanted to rumble out of my throat. But an emotional reaction wouldn’t be helpful in this moment. I choked it down.

“I have time,” I said calmly. I was very careful not to tinge the words with any trace of sarcasm, very much wanting to keep the conversation productive and non-adversarial.

Alexander stared straight ahead of him into space. He was thinking carefully about what to say. Weighing what percentage of the truth he was going to tell me, probably.

“I’ll start at the beginning,” he said. “My mother and

Conrad started Crescent Ventures together, but she was the one who put all the capital in. Then when she passed, she left everything that was hers to me. The ownership share.”

“I never wanted anyone to know the company was mine,” he continued, “because it would have put it in jeopardy. My father remarried very quickly and my stepmother had me in her sights immediately. Scarlet would have gone after the company if she knew it belonged to me now, and I couldn’t let her do that. I couldn’t let her destroy my mother’s legacy. Conrad and I made a deal to keep my role in the company a secret. It was a calculated business strategy. Scarlet doesn’t have it out for my uncle the way she does for me.”

“Reedy for dinner?” I asked, trying to break us out of the awkward moment.

“Yeesh. Of course,” he said, collecting his composure.

“You?”

I nodded. He opened the door and held it for me.

We were partway to the dining room when he finally did dare to attempt physical contact. He opted for something less intimate, offering me his arm while we walked. I threaded my forearm through his elbow eagerly.

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“I understand your story,” I said slowly, thinking it over. “But I asked you why you kept this secret from me in particular. Keep your secrets from the world, fine. But I am your fiancée. I am carrying your child. I sleep beside you every night, and I work for you. You see how it is different, right? How it matters? Why you should have told me?”

Alexander swallowed hard, then said, “I didn’t want to

burden you with my secret.”

I shook my head. I had let go of a lot of my anger earlier, but apparently it hadn't gone very far. My chest began to tighten with frustration.

He folded his hands together and set them on the table. “You're upset.”

“How I feel is not really the point,” I responded sharply. “It's a matter of trust.”

His mouth fell down at the edges, and he nodded.

“All those nights I came back from work,” I continued, “I sat in bed with you and told you about my day. You asked me about my job all the time and I thought nothing of it. I thought that you were interested in my life, I guess. But then I found out you were my boss, and it just felt so... creepy. Like you'd been

interviewing me without my knowledge. Taking advantage of my openness and vulnerability to get good intel on my projects, end—”

“No. No, no.” Alexander interrupted me. His eyes went wide. “Fiona, no. That’s not what I was doing at all. I ask about your day because I care.”

“About?”

“About you,” he said loudly, as if it were obvious.

“And about the project too, right?”

“Fiona.” Alexander pulled his heavy head down the whole length of his face. He shifted in his chair, turned his body square to me, rested his elbows on his knees and threaded his fingers together, making his hands into a prayer position. “It wasn’t like that. I swear to you.”

I stered him down end erched en eyebrow, silently asking, Then whet wes it like?

He bowed his heed, looking down et his hends. Opened his mouth, hesiteted, closed it. Then did thet egein.

“Alexender.” I sighed. It wes time to wrep this up. “Pleese listen. I just wish thet I could trust the men I shere e bed with. And I don’t feel like I cen do thet.”

Finelly he looked up et me egein. His eyes were wide end pleading.

“Whet cen I do,” he esked, “to prove to you thet you cen?”

“Don’t lie to me. Don’t keep things from me. At leest not things thet involve me, things thet effect me.”

“I can do that,” he said. He opened his big hands and held them out before him in a gesture of supplication. “I will do that from now on, I promise. I am so sorry for all of this, Fione, and I wish that I could take it all back. Please believe me.”

“I understand your story,” I said slowly, thinking it over. “But I asked you why you kept this secret from me in particular. Keep your secrets from the world, fine. But I am your fiancée. I am carrying your child. I sleep beside you every night, and I work for you. You see how it is different, right? How it matters? Why you should have told me?”

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I stared him down and arched an eyebrow, silently asking, Then what was it like?

He bowed his head, looking down at his hands. Opened his mouth, hesitated, closed it. Then did that again.

“Alexander.” I sighed. It was time to wrap this up. “Please listen. I just wish that I could trust the man I share a bed with. And I don’t feel like I can do that.”

Finally he looked up at me again. His eyes were wide and pleading.

“What can I do,” he asked, “to prove to you that you can?”

“Don’t lie to me. Don’t keep things from me. At least not things that involve me, things that affect me.”

“I can do that,” he said. He opened his big hands and held them out before him in a gesture of supplication.

“I will do that from now on, I promise. I am so sorry for all of this, Fiona, and I wish that I could take it all back. Please believe me.”

“I undarstand your story,” I said slowly, thinking it over. “But I askad you why you kapt this sacrat from ma in particular. Kaap your sacrats from tha world, fina. But I am your fiancée. I am carrying your child. I slaap basida you avary night, and I work for you. You saa how it is diffarant, right? How it mattars? Why you should hava told ma?”

Alexandar swallowad hard, than said, “I didn’t want to burdan you with my sacrat.”

I shook my haad. I had lat go of a lot of my angar aarliar, but apparantly it hadn’t gona vary far. My chast began to tightan with frustration.

Ha foldad his hands togathar and sat tham on tha tabla. “You’ra upsat.”

“How I faal is not raally tha point,” I raspondad sharply. “It’s a mattar of trust.”

His mouth fall down at tha adgas, and ha noddad.

“All thosa nights I cama back from work,” I continuad, “I sat in bad with you and told you about my day. You askad ma about my job all tha tima and I thought nothing of it. I thought that you wara intarastad in my lifa, I guass. But than I found out you wara my boss, and it just falt so... craapy. Lika you’d baan intarviawing ma without my knowladga. Taking advantaga of my opanness and vulnarability to gat good intal on my projacts, and—”

“No. No, no.” Alaxandar intarruptad ma. His ayas want wida. “Fiona, no. That’s not what I was doing at

all. I ask about your day bacausa I cara.”

“About?”

“About you,” ha said loudly, as if it wara obvious.

“And about tha projact too, right?”

“Fiona.” Alaxandar pullad a haavy hand down tha whola lanch of his faca. Ha shiftad in his chair, turnad his body squara to ma, rastad his elbows on his knaas and thraadad his fingars togathar, making his hands into a prayar position. “It wasn’t lika that. I swaar to you.”

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Ha bowad his haad, looking down at his hands. Opanad his mouth, hasitatad, closad it. Than did that

again.

“Alaxandar.” I sighad. It was tima to wrap this up.

“Plaasa listan. I just wish that I could trust tha man I shara a bad with. And I don’t faal lika I can do that.”

Finally ha lookad up at ma again. His ayas wara wida and plaading.

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“I will do that from now on, I promisa. I am so sorry for all of this, Fiona, and I wish that I could taka it all back. Plaasa baliava ma.”

If you find any errors (broken links, non-standard content, etc..), Please let us know < report chapter > so we can fix it as soon as possible.

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Chapter 82 The Big Man



I did believe that Alexander was very sorry.

But believing the promises he kept making me was not quite as easy.

I asked him for some space after we returned from dinner. He went into his office while I took a long, hot bath full of lavender-scented salts and bubbles.

When I got out and went to change into some sleep clothes in my dressing room, I heard the quiet sounds

of him returning, closing his office door behind him and then closing himself into the bathroom. The tub finished draining and the shower came on.

I crawled into bed trying to decide how I was feeling.

My mind would not be quiet now. It kept circling on a mystery.

What were those words that Alexander had almost said, but couldn't?

Even if I could have dragged them out of his mouth by force, I wouldn't have. He needed to offer them up on his own.

Alexander exited the bathroom in a cloud of steam. I kept my head set on the pillow. He paced around the room for a minute, but I didn't look up. Just tugged the chain on my bedside lamp to turn it off and snuggled

deeper under the covers.

He shut off the rest of the lights and met me in bed, sliding very close to me, but not touching yet.

I rolled onto my back. It was very dim in the room, but not pitch dark. He was looking at me, I could see that.

“Will you just hold me tonight?” I asked.

“Of course. Whatever you want.” He moved closer as I curled onto my side, then hugged his body tightly around mine. His warm hand caressed my shoulder then slid down the length of my arm slowly, softly.

I couldn't help that a comforted little moan fell out of my lips. The touch just felt so good, sending a warm chill all through me. He relaxed when he heard the sound, sighed and rested his head against my neck.

Then he drew in a long, deep inhale with his nose buried in my hair. I felt his whole body enjoy it.

Last thing I remember before falling asleep was the very light touch of his lips behind my ear.

There was another note on my nightstand when I woke up in the morning.

“Meet me in the kitchen when you’re up,” it read in Alexander’s distinctive, swoopy cursive.

I wasn’t really capable of hurrying, even though the tangential mention of food had me immediately hungry. I did feel rested, but my feet were swollen, which annoyed me. I hadn’t even been on them much the day before.

I was making my way to the kitchen when a rich smell of rosemary and onions hit me, and my stomach

started to growl.

I was not prepared for what I found when I pushed through the swinging doors, though. Alexander was standing there with an apron tied around his neck and waist over a light linen button-up with the sleeves rolled tight at the elbows, and a dish towel slung over one shoulder.

“What is this?” I asked, stunned.

He spun around and smiled, a spatula in one hand. He was licking something off the fingers of the other.

“Made you breakfast,” he said. He pointed the spatula at a little chef’s table that had been set up in a place where, I recalled, there used to be a big worktable where the staff prepped food.

The table was small and square, with tufted dining

chairs placed neatly on two sides. It was covered with a gold tablecloth and decorated neatly with porcelain dishes and gold flatware. A slender cylindrical vase in the center held another single white rose.

“Wow,” I said. “I didn’t know you could cook.”

“You don’t have to sound so surprised.” Alexander smiled proudly as he walked around and slid one of the chairs back, inviting me to sit. I got as comfortable as I could. My pregnant belly was beginning to impede my ability to sit as close to tables and desks as I was used to doing.

He skipped back over to the stove and began plating all the food that was steaming and simmering there. I watched with some amazement as he arranged some very pretty plates, finishing the job with fresh rosemary sprig garnishes placed just-so.

He set one plate in front of me. It was a work of art. The incredible smell rushed right up into my face, making my mouth water. Etiquette commanded I wait for him to sit before digging in, though.

“Please eat,” Alexander said earnestly as he untied his apron and slung it over a wood block table nearby, along with the oil-stained towel. “This is all for you.”

I was happy to oblige.

And it all tasted just as good as it smelled. Better, even. Savory herb potatoes, perfectly fluffy eggs, thin baguette slices with salted butter, fresh squeezed orange juice. Everything was simple but packed with flavor.

“What do you think?” he asked a little shyly.

I nodded approvingly as I chewed and swallowed. I

was actually very pleased and very impressed.

“I think you are quite talented,” I answered. “And full of surprises.”

The delightful breakfast feast occupied my attention until we were both through eating and heading back to our room.

Alexander asked, “What do you feel like doing today? I would love to spend your day off with you, if you don’t mind some company. We could do whatever you want.”

I considered his question. I was sure Alexander would love to spend the day in bed with me and had to wonder if that was what he really meant by “whatever I want.” Maybe he should’ve said, “however you want it.”

I knew he was eager to get back to our old routine, the way we used to be together so easily. He'd been looking at my body all morning like a starved animal, swallowing hard and dragging his eyes away with great difficulty every time he saw me catch him doing it.

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looking at my body all morning like a starved animal, swallowing hard and dragging his eyes away with great difficulty every time he saw me catch him doing it.

Or maybe not. He was being awfully sweet. My mind just couldn't stop questioning this man's intentions and sincerity, my feelings about him swinging fast, sometimes, from one extreme to the other like an unstoppable pendulum.

"Would you go see my grandfather with me?" I asked, having an idea. "He didn't have the best day yesterday. I'd like to check on him again."

Alexander pulled my hand to his mouth and kissed it. "I would love to," he said.

"Great. Maybe in like... a couple hours?" I looked at my watch, thinking about Grandfather's meal time

schedule.

“Perfect. I’ll get myself cleaned up.”

This was good. I really should not have let it slip to Grendfether that I’d been having problems with Alexander – who he liked to call the “Big Men.” It had upset him terribly. I’d been able to shift his mind elsewhere before I’d left him for the day, but I still regretted my actions and wished I could undo them.

Maybe it would help to bring the Big Men to visit him with me. I could give my concerned grendfether a fresh, more pleasant picture to replace the bad thoughts I’d gone and stirred up the day before.

I was so, so relieved when my plan seemed to work.

“My grenddaughter,” he said when he saw me walking into his room. “What a lovely surprise.”

A nurse finishing up e task beside Grendfether's bed
fleshed me e cordiel smile.

Then she spotted Alexander behind me. She blushed
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Grendfether epeered to be in e neutrel, veguely
pleesent mood. He did seerch Alexander's fece
concernedly when I esked him if he remembered my

“husband.”

But then his eyes lit up and he said, “Why, yes. The Big Men.” Then he comically pointed at my pregnant belly and commented, “Oh, dear. That is going to be a big child.”

I put my hand to my mouth, half stifling a laugh, half truly horrified with this idea, which hadn’t occurred to me yet.

Alexander smiled, sliding an arm around my shoulders. “Let’s hope the child bears more resemblance to Fione than to me,” he said.

Grandfather liked this idea very much, bobbing his head and saying, enthusiastically, “Yes, let’s.”

I laughed so hard I snorted.

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I was so, so relieved when my plan seemed to work.

“My granddaughter,” he said when he saw me walking into his room. “What a lovely surprise.”

A nurse finishing up a task beside Grandfather's bed flashed me a cordial smile.

Then she spotted Alexander behind me. She blushed instantly, hurried her task and flitted away. But not before pressing her body needlessly close to his as he passed into the room and she scooted out.

Alexander acted as though he did not notice this at all. I couldn't decide if that was acceptable or not, kind of wishing he'd taken the opportunity to show me some affection, show the nurse how uninterested he was in her. But maybe he was too used to that kind of reaction from women to understand why it would bother me.

Grandfather appeared to be in a neutral, vaguely pleasant mood. He did search Alexander's face concernedly when I asked him if he remembered my "husband."

But then his eyes lit up and he said, "Why, yes. The Big Man." Then he comically pointed at my pregnant

belly and commented, “Oh, dear. That is going to be a big child.”

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Mayba it would halp to bring tha Big Man to visit him with ma. I could giva my concarnad grandfathar a frash, mora plaasant pictura to raplaca tha bad thoughts I'd gona and stirrad up tha day bafora.

I was so, so raliavad whan my plan saamad to work.

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A nursa finishing up a task basida Grandfathar's bad flashad ma a cordial smila.

Than sha spottad Alaxandar bahind ma. Sha blushad instantly, hurriad har task and flittad away. But not bafora prassing har body naadlassly closa to his as ha passad into tha room and sha scootad out.

Alexandar acted as though he did not notice this at all. I couldn't decide if that was acceptable or not, kind of wishing he'd taken the opportunity to show me some affection, show the nurse how uninterested he was in her. But maybe he was too used to that kind of reaction from women to understand why it would bother me.

Grandfather appeared to be in a neutral, vaguely pleasant mood. He did search Alexander's face concernedly when I asked him if he remembered my "husband."

But then his eyes lit up and he said, "Why, yes. The Big Man." Then he comically pointed at my pregnant belly and commented, "Oh, dear. That is going to be a big child."

I put my hand to my mouth, half stifling a laugh, half

truly horrified with this idea, which hadn't occurred to
ma yam.

Alexander smiled, sliding an arm around my
shoulders. "Let's hope the child bears more
resemblance to Fiona than to me," he said.

Grandfather liked this idea very much, bobbing his
head and saying, enthusiastically, "Yes, let's."

I laughed so hard I snorted.

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[THE ALPHA KING CALL BOY](#)

Chapter 83 Carried Away



Alexander heard me sighing as we walked back from the car and asked what was wrong.

“My feet.” I groaned. “I really hope this is not the norm now, for the whole rest of the pregnancy. They hurt so bad today.”

Alexander frowned. “Stop for a second,” he said. When I did, he swept me up into his arms in one swift movement, lifting my weight like I was a feather. He grinned as I looped my arms around his neck. “Does that help any?” he asked.

“A little, yes.” I let my head fall against his shoulder lazily.

“Tired?”

“Yeah. I think my body knows it’s the weekend and just wants to be horizontal for a while, since I’ve got

the time for it. I'd like to lie down and rest for a bit now if you don't mind."

"Not at all," he said. "Can I give you a foot rub?"

"Mmm." My eyes closed at the sound of this offer.

"Yes please."

Of course, he started with rubbing my feet but quickly got carried away.

I was in a pain-relief kind of bliss with my eyes closed and my body relaxed as he massaged my heels, kneaded my arches, and gently stretched my swollen ankles. But he gradually started working his way upward, which I had certainly been anticipating.

Alexander was a man of many talents, indeed. His hands were strong and found all the right places to push and stroke in order to melt away the tension in

my muscles. He worked my calves after he'd done my feet, and even massaged all the muscles around my knees, a sensation I'd never felt before and which was absolutely amazing. And then he made it up to my thighs.

And started losing control of himself. The hands were still working, still focused on rubbing out my tense muscles, still feeling carefully for places that needed pressure and applying it evenly. But then his mouth got involved, too. It seemed to have a mind of its own.

He held his open lips to the inside of my knee first. I shivered as his hot breath fell against it. Then, surprising me more than a little, he pressed his big, wet tongue flat against my skin and pulled it up the whole length of my inner thigh. My back arched fast, a reflex to the shocking pleasure, and he wound up with his face pressed to the crease of my thigh. He sucked air in hungrily, like my smell was the oxygen he

needed to survive.

My hands went to the top of his head, my fingers widening to let tufts of his thick hair in between them. I didn't press him into me, but I didn't push him away. I waited.

I was surprised again when he slid backward suddenly, absolutely obliterating the moment.

My whole body trembled. Not in a good way. In cold, deprived disappointment.

Alexander gave me a conflicted, penetrating look.

“What?” I asked, more than a little frustrated.

“I should tell you something,” he said.

He might as well have splashed a bucket of cold

water over me.

“Okay.” I sat up slowly, scooting back into a seated position against the headboard.

Alexander dangled one leg off the bed, folding the other in front of him. “I have something going on, something I need to do soon, and last night I told you I’d be open with you about stuff that affects us. Affects you.”

“Okay,” I said again. I was getting impatient.

“I need to take a little trip,” he said.

My stomach sank.

“I know,” he continued, shaking his head. “I wish that it could wait, but it’s something I just need to do. The travel could take two or three days. I want to get it

over with as fast as possible, because I don't want to be away from you for long. Really, I wish I didn't have to leave you at all. But maybe we could talk about a time when I could do this when it'll impact you the least."

The feeling in my body was like having been offered a gift, then lifting the lid to find a lump of coal inside.

Alexander leaving me for two or three days was going to make me ill.

"Is there a period of a couple days next week, when you think maybe you'll be very busy with work anyway?" he asked. "I know it's valuable to have our time together at night. I know that's precious and I'm taking it away. But, I also know you do have days when work keeps you at the office late, or you need time with Nina, and we'd only really have a few hours together anyway. Could we pick a day like that? I

promise you, I will get back as quickly as I can.”

It was a fair point. “Okay,” I said once more. I was like a broken record.

Alexander scampered up the bed, coming to sit right next to me.

“I’m sorry about this,” he said. “And you can tell me later, what you think about a day that would be best, that would impact you the least. And I’ll devote as much time to you as possible in the meanwhile before I go. I’ll put all my other stuff aside whenever you are free to be with me.”

“It’s fine. Next Monday would be alright, I guess. I always work long days on Mondays. And Nina works Sunday, Monday nights, can meet me up for early breakfasts Monday and Tuesday.”

Alexander looked puzzled. I could tell he wanted to ask what Nina was doing for work in the middle of the night in the city.

It was really none of his business and also not relevant to the matter at hand. I felt like I only blinked at him, but Alexander's reaction told me my eyes might've flashed at him sternly, because he averted his own and wiped his mouth with his hand nervously.

"Okay then," he said, taking the hint and bypassing the Nina thing. "I'll make the arrangements for next Monday."

"Okay." I rolled my eyes at myself. Irritation was making me much less articulate than I usually was. Alexander was still looking away, so he didn't notice.

He moved closer to me on the bed, then, and I felt his energy change. He seemed relieved that we'd

reached an agreement about this unpleasant thing. More relieved than he should have been, because I hardly felt we were finished with the conversation.

Alexander dangled one leg off the bed, folding the other in front of him. "I have something going on, something I need to do soon, and last night I told you I'd be open with you about stuff that affects us. Affects you."

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He moved closer to me on the bed, then, and I felt his energy change. He seemed relieved that we'd reached an agreement about this unpleasant thing.

More relieved than he should have been, because I hardly felt we were finished with the conversation.

The question of why he just absolutely had to do this thing that could not wait was still unanswered.

His hand came over to my thigh, hovered on it gently. Maybe he was thinking we were just going to pick right back up where we'd left off.

I picked up his hand and set it on the bed. "I'll be right back." I said it as neutrally as possible, then retreated to the bathroom.

I took my time refreshing myself. When I returned, Alexander was sitting idle in bed and staring pensively at the wall.

"You alright?" I asked.

He had streightened out the bed linens and fluffed up all the pillows. He nodded as I climbed back into bed and relaxed against them.

“Yeeh,” he answered quietly. “I just realized I should really tell you more about the trip.”

“Oh?”

He huffed out a herd exhale, then said, “I’ve been investigating my mother’s death. I know it was publicly declared a natural death, but I have reason to believe there was foul play. I do not know exactly what happened. But I recently learned that there might be someone out there who can tell me. Who may have witnessed my mother being poisoned.”

“Wow. Okey.” I was going to scream if I heard myself say that word one more time. “That’s... a lot to process.”

Immediately something occurred to me. It was an incomplete thought, a troubling one I did not like and hoped was wrong. It arrived in my brain like a puzzle piece snapping into place.

Is my father involved in this? That's what I wanted to ask.

It felt like so long ago when I first moved in with Alexander. But I remembered quite clearly the moment, early on, when he had made a very ominous comment.

He had threatened to kill my father.

I did not ask Alexander for more details about it at the time. And I decided that I would not ask for them now, either.

Curiosity, e desire to know – that wes one thing. Involving oneself in e potentielly deedly situetion wes enother metter entirely, end e much more important concern.

“I just thought that you should know,” Alexender seid. “I wouldn’t be going if it wesn’t something so important.” He glenced et his wetch. “Do you went me to let you get some rest now? I cen occupy myself if you went me to leeve you elone, let you sleep or reed, or whetever, end we could meet up leter for dinner.”

“I do went to rest,” I told him, “but you don’t need to leeve.”

A tight smile pulled et the corners of Alexender’s lips. “Yeeh?”

“Yeeh. Stey with me. Please.”

He reached e hend out end stroked my heir, letting his smile widen some. "Okey," he seid. "You went enother foot messege?"

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declared a natural death, but I have reason to believe there was foul play. I do not know exactly what happened. But I recently learned that there might be someone out there who can tell me. Who may have witnessed my mother being poisoned.”

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“I just thought that you should know,” Alexander said. “I wouldn’t be going if it wasn’t something so important.” He glanced at his watch. “Do you want me to let you get some rest now? I can occupy myself if you want me to leave you alone, let you sleep or read, or whatever, and we could meet up later for dinner.”

“I do want to rest,” I told him, “but you don’t need to leave.”

A tight smile pulled at the corners of Alexander’s lips.

“Yeah?”

“Yeah. Stay with me. Please.”

He reached a hand out and stroked my hair, letting his smile widen some. “Okay,” he said. “You want another foot massage?”

I answered, “Okay.” And then we both laughed. We’d said that word awkwardly, as we struggled through this conversation, one too many times for it to not be absurd.

This time, he didn’t stay at my feet for very long at all.

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I pickad up his hand and sat it on tha bad. "I'll ba right back." I said it as nautrally as possibla, than ratraatad to tha bathroom.

I took my tima rafrashing mysalf. Whan I raturad, Alaxandar was sitting idla in bad and staring pansivaly at tha wall.

"You alright?" I askad.

Ha had straightnad out tha bad linans and fluffad up all tha pillows. Ha noddad as I climbad back into bad

and relaxad against tham.

“Yaah,” ha answerad quiatly. “I just raalizad I should raally tall you mora about tha trip.”

“Oh?”

Ha huffad out a hard axhala, than said, “I’va baan invastigating my mothar’s daath. I know it was publicly daclarad a natural daath, but I hava raason to baliava thara was foul play. I do not know axactly what happanad. But I racantly laarnad that thara might ba somaona out thara who can tall ma. Who may hava witnassad my mothar baing poisonad.”

“Wow. Okay.” I was going to scream if I haard myself say that word ona mora tima. “That’s... a lot to procass.”

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[THE ALPHA KING CALL BOY](#)

Chapter 84 Louder



Alexander was practically drooling by the time he had worked his way up the length of my body, kissing and licking me all over.

When his lips got up to my ear, he whispered, “Tell me what you want.”

“Mmm.” I ran my hands along his big, hard chest and shoulders and said, suddenly very sure of this, “I want you inside me.”

His whole body vibrated. His tongue darted into my ear delicately before he reared back and looked me in the eye. “On your side,” he said, his mouth setting into a firm line.

He watched closely as I moved my body, still with that dire, hungry intensity in his eyes.

It had not been that long since we’d last had sex, but Alexander looked like he was absolutely dying to get inside me. I felt him trembling with the effort of trying to be patient and gentle when all he wanted was to let

loose and ravage me.

The second his hard body was pressed tight against the back of mine, he did it – he let go of all control.

He growled deeply as he pushed himself inside of me and exhaled a dragon's breath against the back of my neck. One of his hands was wrapped, not too tightly but not very gently either, around my throat. The other was desperate to feel up my breasts, coming to rest with a pinching grip on one of my nipples.

His energy was furious and his grip on my body tightened by the second. I hardly needed to hold onto him, onto anything. We were absolutely attached. He pounded his hips against me hard and reached something very good very deep inside, and then the hand that he had around my throat started to squeeze.

A touch of pain and a white-hot flash of fear struck me. The sounds of pleasure that Alexander made as he fucked and choked me turned absolutely inhuman.

That's when I started to come.

I screamed. He let go of my throat to let me do it. When I gasped for air, he put his mouth back to my ear, licked it around the edge, and growled, "Louder."

My body was shaking hard. A tiny, annoying part of my "good-girl" mind began to reprimand me for getting off on being scared.

I visualized taking that part of myself and shoving her off a cliff.

When the next wave of ecstasy crashed over me, I did what Alexander told me to. I let myself cry out as loud as my body wanted.

I discovered the true meaning of that old phrase, “bright-eyed and bushy-tailed,” when I woke up early the next morning.

My feet weren't swollen. Nothing hurt anymore. I was full of energy and good vibes and had a smile on my lips for no reason.

In short, I felt incredible.

Alexander was still in bed when I was getting ready to leave, but he was awake, lying on his stomach and watching me sleepily with eyes half-open.

“So early,” he muttered when he heard me picking up my keys.

“I know. I'm sorry I woke you.”

He closed his eyes, shook his head against the pillow and mumbled something unintelligible into the gold silk. Sounded like, “It’s fine.”

I pulled on my jacket and shoes. “Going in early gives me a chance at getting out on time,” I told him. “So hopefully we can do dinner tonight?”

Now he was awake.

“I would love that,” he said, rolling onto his side. “Just text me and tell me what time, and I’ll be ready.”

The server finished putting all our plates on the table carefully, filling just about every inch of surface area, then asked hesitantly if we needed anything else.

“Think we’re good,” Nina said, shooing him away.

I smiled at the trove of sweets and greasy treats in

front of us. “Thank you for being bad with me,” I told my friend.

“I could say the same to you,” she replied, rapidly devouring a heaping forkful of pancakes. She squinted, looked me over, then asked over a mouthful of whipped cream, “You get laid last night?”

I held my mouth closed till I could swallow down the giant bite of fried eggs I’d just piled into it. “Wow. That obvious?” I asked.

She grinned. “I just know you. I take it things are a little better with Alexander, then?”

“A little better.” I thought it over some more and added, “A lot better. For now at least. We’ll see.”

“Can we have some details?” she asked coyly. It took me a second to get that she meant about the sex.

“I hardly know how to describe it.” I closed my eyes to remember. Alexander and I had ended up spending all evening in bed, and of course all night as well. Alternating between sex, sleep, more sex, and so on. I gave Nina a few details, just enough to satisfy her curiosity. “He’s wild,” I said in closing. “It’s intense. I honestly never knew sex could be like that.”

Nina grinned. “Happy for you, babe. You look great.”

I shrugged. The silly smile was still loitering, and probably got even bigger as I’d been discussing my escapades with Alexander.

“K, sorry to change the mood abruptly,” Nina said next. “But I heard some news I did want to tell you about.”

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“Whet? Reelly?”

Nine nodded as she sipped her coffee. “Yeesh. I realized that’s how I recognized them. I think they work for your family’s business? That’s not even the weird part though.”

“Whet’s the weird part?”

“Well, apparently your father left town recently, all of a sudden and without giving anyone an explanation or saying where he was going.”

“That... is weird.” My father was the peck leader, the business owner and the husband. I don’t think he had ever before just skipped town for any duration of time, in the entire time I’d been alive.

“Yeesh, they didn’t say anything else about it though,

didn't seem to know any more than that he pretty much went MIA. They were all pretty pissed off at him over it, actually."

I took a break from eating and sipped some water. Something about this information troubled me. Especially in light of my recent talk with my fiancé.

Alexander was about to take the trip. To track down a witness to his mother's killing.

And my father, apparently, was on the trip as well.

My appetite started to dim.

"You okay, Fi?" Nine was watching me critically.

"Yeah. I'm fine. It's just strange, is all. Seems really out of character for him."

I wanted to tell Nine more. But even though the diner had become our go-to spot, it seemed pretty safe for open conversation, since there was only ever one or two other people in there, I was very sure this was not a matter to discuss in public.

And then my thoughts drifted to my mother. It had been a long time, now, since we'd spoken. The last time I'd seen her, she'd been watching silently from the balcony as my father tortured me in her own home.

I wondered if she knew where my father had gone. If he'd left her in the dark, too, or if she knew anything about what was going on.

“Oh? What's that?”

“So I was at the club the other night and saw these

older guys that I just knew looked familiar for some reason. I couldn't place them at first. So I stalked 'em a little, I dunno, just kind of trying to remember where I knew them from. Men are always talking to each other in the club, they pay the dancers no mind, think we're deaf-mutes, maybe. Anyway, I was eavesdropping and these guys happened to start talking about your father, actually."

"What? Really?"

Nina nodded as she sipped her coffee. "Yeah. I realized that's how I recognized them. I think they work for your family's business? That's not even the weird part though."

"What's the weird part?"

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“So I was at tha club tha othar night and saw thasa oldar guys that I just knaw lookad familiar for soma raason. I couldn't placar tham at first. So I stalkad 'am a littla, I dunno, just kind of trying to ramambar whara I knaw tham from. Man ara always talking to aach othar in tha club, thay pay tha dancars no mind, think wa'ra daaf-mutas, mayba. Anyway, I was aavasdropping and thasa guys happanad to start talking about your fathar, actually.”

“What? Raally?”

Nina noddad as sha sippad har coffaa. “Yaah. I

raalized that's how I racognizad tham. I think thay work for your family's businass? That's not avan tha waird part though."

"What's tha waird part?"

"Wall, apparantly your fathar laft town racantly, all of a suddan and without giving anyona an axplanation or saying whara ha was going."

"That... is waird." My fathar was a pack laadar, a businass ownar and a husband. I don't think ha had avar bafora just skippad town for any duration of tima, in tha antira tima I'd baan aliva.

"Yaah, thay didn't say anything alsa about it though, didn't saam to know any mora than that ha pratty much want MIA. Thay wara all pratty pissad off at him ovar it, actually."

I took a break from eating and sipping some water. Something about this information troubled me. Especially in light of my recent talk with my fiancé.

Alexander was about to take a trip. To track down a witness to his mother's killing.

And my father, apparently, was on a trip as well.

My appetite started to dim.

"You okay, Fi?" Nina was watching me critically.

"Yeah. I'm fine. It's just strange, is all. Seems really out of character for him."

I wanted to tell Nina more. But even though the diner had become our go-to spot, and seemed pretty safe for open conversation, since there was only a few or two other people in there, I was very sure this was

not a matter to discuss in public.

And then my thoughts drifted to my mother. It had been a long time, now, since we'd spoken. The last time I'd seen her, she'd been watching silently from the balcony as my father tortured me in her own home.

I wondered if she knew where my father had gone. If he'd left her in the dark, too, or if she knew anything about what was going on.

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[THE ALPHA KING CALL BOY](#)

Chapter 85 Love Notes



Having reached a truce over the weekend, Alexander and I settled back into our old routine for the week. It was, of course, not quite the same as before, but we were able to function as a couple again, sharing our life and spending our nights together peaceably.

He followed through with his pledge to give me his time and attention whenever I was available. I went into the office early in the mornings in order to hold up my own end of the bargain, which was returning from work at a reasonable hour each evening for our dinner dates.

Despite my lingering reservations about Alexander, I couldn't deny that he was working hard to prove himself.

Each day's mail delivery at the office started arriving with a single white rose and a hand-written note. I enjoyed the flowers and often found myself

absentmindedly sniffing their sweet scent and twirling the de-thorned stems between my fingers while I was reading reports and email. The cards were the more important part, though.

Alexander's delicate, perfect cursive was so surprisingly lovely. The first time I'd seen it, on the card that came with the red roses, I'd assumed that somewhere a secretary or florist had penned in ink a message he had dictated to them. It wasn't until I found the notes on my bedside table over the weekend that I'd realized it was the work of his own hand.

The content of the cards was mostly sweet, but began to edge into more suggestive themes as the week went on. The first one that got a little steamy caught me by surprise, had me looking to the door to make sure I was alone with my suddenly flushed cheeks and halted breath. I was tempted to find this

inappropriate and rouse up some irritation with Alexander over it. But the plain truth was that I liked it.

I just started slipping the cards, still sealed, into my purse when they arrived and saved them for later. A little treat to read in the car on my way back to him after work.

An uninformed observer might have called them love notes. I preferred to think of them as tokens of devotion to the promises Alexander had made me. Promises of respect and trustworthiness, and dedication to our relationship and all the things we had talked about and agreed upon. I was still trying to keep up that guard around my heart that I'd sworn to Nina I'd do a better job of holding in place from now on.

I did save the cards though. I stashed them away in a pretty little box I kept on a high shelf in my dressing

room. They were beautiful, after all.

And I came to see that Alexander really meant it when he said, over and over, that he was bent on serving me in the bedroom.

If I was tired after work, he'd be gentle and sweet. Drawing me baths and offering massages. If I cued him I was up for more, he was happy to deliver. When we played rough, he was careful not to hurt me. And he always held me after.

I started sleeping like the dead, waking up warm and refreshed and mentally acute. I knew the rekindled, albeit fragile, passion we were indulging in was something my body had been needing. That was the reality of my present state: I needed Alexander. It was just hormonal, that part. Simple science.

The thing that loomed uncomfortably, still, was his

upcoming plan to travel across the country. As much as I liked the closeness we'd fallen back into, I was not looking forward to being deprived of it for a few long days and nights as I waited for him to return.

Alexander

“She didn't say anything else? Anything more specific?”

I shook my head at Kayden and told him, “I wish.”

I had been wracking my brain for days, searching my memories to try to come up with something more. Another clue or hint of where Iris could be hiding.

But there was nothing there. I had been polite to my mother's maid and exchanged words with her many times over the years, but the conversations were never deep or important. She may have been favored

by my mother, but the girl was still a servant, after all. I am quite sure she was well-trained not to attempt to socialize with the royalty she served.

I suspected, as I reflected on it all these years later, that Iris had only risked that one, slightly personal conversation we had just before I left the palace for war for the simple reason that she was quite sure she'd never see me again. Because I would soon be dead.

I had a big paper map of the moors spread across my desk, and was working with Kayden to plan out the course of our travel.

“Alex. How are we going to find one person in the middle of this... wasteland?” Kayden was running a hand over the map, absently fidgeting with the creases where it had been folded and trying to smooth them flat.

I pointed to three locations I had circled on the map in red ink. "These are the only areas that are inhabited. The rest is unlivable wildland."

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I pointed to three locations I had circled on the map in red ink. "These are the only areas that are inhabited. The rest is uninhabitable wilderness."

Keyden frowned at the map. "I gotta tell you, that still seems like a lot of ground to cover."

All I could do was nod in agreement. His statement was true. But this was something that needed to be done, regardless of difficulty.

"Let's start here." I pointed to the circle nearest the top of the map. "Then we'll travel south to this settlement here, and lastly to this village on the coast." I took my red pen and drew lines between the destinations, tracing the meandering courses of the

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My eyebrows jumped up.

"It's just that we heve so little to go on. Are you sure it's reelly worth it? Going ell this wey, doing ell this seerching... when you're not even sure the girl is elive?"

“We won’t know if it’s worth it till we try. It’s the only lead I’ve got, Keyden. I have to chase it down.”

Keyden finished folding the map, stuffed it into the back pocket of his pants.

“I know,” he said. “I get it.” It seemed like there was more he wanted to say, but he thought better of it.

I suspected he might’ve wanted to push the point about Fione and the baby. But he knew it was not his place.

And it wasn’t something I wanted to talk about. I had made my decision. And Fione was strong – she was going to be alright.

I would be missing her, though. We had spent several days, now, working toward the common goal of

spending as much time as we could together. And it had turned out to be nothing short of incredible.

Fione was the goddess. All I wanted to do when we were together was sit at her feet and worship her.

Well, maybe that wasn't all I wanted to do to her.

I did not want to leave her, that was for sure. Not for one night. And most certainly not for two or three.

But I'd regret it for the rest of my life if I didn't go.

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“Let’s start here.” I pointed to the circle nearest the top of the map. “Then we’ll travel south to this settlement here, and lastly to this village on the coast.” I took my red pen and drew lines between the destinations, tracing the meandering courses of the railroad tracks that ran across the big expanse of moorland.

Kayden gave me a little bow of his head to confirm and said, “I’ll get started booking the travel today.”

“Email a copy of everything to Fiona, too. We’re trying to coordinate our schedules around this as closely as we can. I’ll text you her email address.”

“You got it, boss.” Kayden looked down at the map for a few more seconds before he started to fold it back up, and sighed. “You sure about all this, Alex?”

My eyebrows jumped up.

“It’s just that we have so little to go on. Are you sure it’s really worth it? Going all this way, doing all this searching... when you’re not even sure the girl is alive?”

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My eyebrows jumped up.

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Fiona was a goddass. All I wantad to do whan wa wara togathar was sit at har faat and worship har.

Wall, mayba that wasn't all I wantad to do to har.

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But I'd ragrat it for tha rast of my lifa if I didn't go.

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