

Chapter 12 : Restricted heart

Ivanna

"I saw your pictures. You're just looking like a doll, Ivanna. And I swear you and Christian look so adorable together," Emily beams at the other end of the call. "Girls will be so damn jealous of you"

"Do we have anything else to talk about other than my stupid wedding?" I shrug, strolling by the garden. 1

It's filled with more than a thousand varieties of plants, flowers I have only seen in the pictures or heard names about. It's kinda relaxing until Emily starts talking about Christian.

"You're mourning your marriage, girl. That too with Christian. Do you know how many girls dream about him?" She husks.

"I'm not among them. As simple as that. Besides, you know everything now, no?" 1

I have told her everything about this marriage, still, she will only rant about Christian.

"I know, huh? But how much will you wait for that person? It has been a year, Ivanna. I don't think he even thinks of you," she says, occurring an ache to my heart.

I don't know what to say when a piece of heart believes the

same. Does he even remember me? What if he already got someone else? My head throbs.

"Are you hearing me, Ivanna?"

"Yeah, yeah, I am," I mumble.

"Let me tell you. Maybe God has some other plans for you. Accept it and just move on. He's good," she says. 1

I don't know what he is, how he is. At one point, he seems to be so good and at the next moment, he's completely different. Among all the good things, I can't forget how he treated my dad. Yes, my dad is in debt. That doesn't mean he'll behave like this with him. It hurts.

"Anyway, leave it. What's your plan now? Any changes after the marriage?"

"Not at all," I almost yell. "I'm not changing my plans. Actually, I was thinking about applying for a PhD soon," I say.

"Finally. I'm glad that you're pursuing what you always wanted," she says.

While travelling back to Dallas I had my mind ready for it. The situation has changed but not my strategies. However, I'm still worried about it. Christian has repeatedly broken the rules and it makes me anxious about my plans. If he messes this up for me, I'm literally gonna show my worst face to him.

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I hardly keep my eyes open while surfing social media. Christian left after dinner tonight like every day. He was on the call, doing some work and I didn't feel like talking about myself since I wanted the entire attention when I would be talking about my agendas.

A crack occurs at the door as I look up, discovering Christian coming inside, taking lazy steps. He looks tired, all in sweat. His eyes meet mine for a second before he looks away.

"What's keeping you up so late?" He asks in an exhausted voice.

"You"

Wrinkles form across his wide forehead as he frowns at me.

"You want to scream over last night again? I'm tired, please. If you don't trust me, I can't make you believe anything. So, don't stress yourself and also me," he shrugs.

His words make me feel like a culprit, especially his exhausted voice.

"I know I overreacted this morning. But I was scared. You're not a girl. So you won't understand," I lower my head.

"At least, you accept it," he says, taking out his clothes. Should I wait until he freshens up? I'm not so cruel to nag a tired person.

Keeping my mouth shut, I focus back on the phone and wait for him to come out of the washroom.

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My eyes are closing when I yawn.

"What do you wanna say?" Christian asks, coming out of the washroom.

My gaze goes back to him. His caramel skin covered with droplets glistens with the light, delivering shivers down to my spine. Doesn't he feel uncomfortable standing in front of me with his bare body?

"You can stare at me later, Mrs Scott," he grins as I mumble, pulling my shameless gaze to his face. I wanna slap myself hard now.

"I was— not staring— and"

"You don't need to lie," he walks towards the bed while wiping his hair. "After all, I'm officially yours— I mean your husband. You may stare as much as you can. I won't mind"

I gawk at him, parting my lips.

Talk about the damn important thing, Ivanna. I scold myself.

"Well," I cleared my throat. "I know I don't need your stupid permission and all, but since I'm staying at your place I should tell you. I want to apply to complete my PhD. Actually, I have already applied before coming to Dallas and

my classes will start next week. So— I hope you won't cause trouble," I dart my eyes at him. 1

He scratches his forehead with a mild smile. "I don't know what to say when you have already assumed that I would cause trouble"

"I don't trust you yet. You keep breaking the rules"

"I never broke the rules, Iv," his voice came harshly. " Whenever I touched you it was because of the situation, not with a bad intention. You were the one to— anyway"

My cheeks feel hotter with his words when I realise what I did last night.

"Anyway, good luck with your next phase. But there will be a few conditions"

"Again conditions?" My eyes open wide.

"You were the one to start this, Mrs Scott," he grins, getting inside the blanket. "And our relationship is based on conditions completely"

"What's your condition?" I grumble.

"The same one. You won't break the rules and you won't try to contact Richard or Janice. I didn't expect what you did last night," he glares at me. "You said you'll be honest towards the clauses" 1

I gulp down, clueless about what to say. Technically he is

right and indeed he didn't break any rule.

"Okay. I will be," I sigh.

"Good. And the next condition is the butler will drop you every day and pick you up," he says, leaving me stunned.

"Will you spy on me?"

"Have you sworn to misunderstand me every time and assume nonsense?" His dark eyes burn at me. 2

My throat dries up. I don't know what happens to me whenever his eyes lay on me. It's so intense and raw as if he has many complaints with me. But what about me? I have many more complaints.

"The butler will only drop and receive you. He's not gonna spy on you. It's for your safety," he shrugs. 1

"Okay," I mumble and look at him.

He lies down and squirms on the bed, grabbing his forehead. His face is curled up, eyes clasp harder.

"Turn off the lights," he groans and his voice sounds painful.

I turn the lights off immediately and lie next to him. He moves a lot today while it's him who falls asleep quickly as soon as he falls onto the bed. I turn around, discovering him rubbing his forehead.

I can't help asking, "are you okay?"

"Yeah. I am. Sleep"

But he doesn't look okay. I get up and open the drawer, taking out the pain relief balm and then drag myself next to him. His eyes open at me.

"I told you to sleep," he says.

"I will. But now I can't sleep because you're moving too much," I scoff, shoving his hand away from his forehead.

"You—" he strives to say.

"Ssshhh," I shush him, applying the remedy across his forehead. His eyes dart on me, calm and composed. Sometimes, I can't see the arrogance and snub in his eyes. When I peer deep into them, for the next few seconds, I can only feel how intoxicating his eyes were.

"Feeling better?" I ask in a low tone.

"Hmm," he mumbles.

"Close your eyes. You'll feel better"

"Then you won't be able to stare into them," his raspy voice comes as a whisper as I immediately drive my eyes away.

What am I doing?

I squeeze my eyes shut in tension but my fingers are still working on his forehead, giving him the gentle message.

A few moments later when I look down at him, he's fast

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asleep. My massage worked and a smile curves on my face, staring at him sleeping peacefully. He looks innocent and cute.

"I can't believe you're the same rude alien monster," I shrug and gently shove my hand away from his forehead, sliding myself into the blanket.

I'm much closer to him, so I try to make a bit of distance only to fail. His long arms spiral around my waist, getting closer to me. My heart skips with his body brushing against my back. I can feel his cosy breath fanning my skin when he's fast asleep. 1

My body tenses and I hold his wrist to nudge it. But I can't. He has hugged me so tightly that I feel like I'm out of my breath.

I think I should stop trying to get away from him. But I shouldn't fall for him.

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