

# THE MOON AND HER SECRET

## CHAPTER 6 NO.6

Lana wore a sweet and genuine smile on her lips, even though she could feel the uncomfortable sting in her chest. She silently started to pack her belongings, shoving them into her schoolbag while forcing herself not to break the façade she was wearing. The last thing she wanted to show River was any weakness that he could use against her.

Lana knew she was inept at handling her emotions, Ray would often say that she wore her heart on her sleeve and the truth behind that statement haunted her during her middle school years. That was the time she realized her feelings for Zane Railey, the boy in her class who was incredibly kind and caring to everyone around him. Lana was easily swept away by his charming smile and sweet praises. Yet, her open behaviour only led to trouble when she was teased for liking him by her classmates.

Soon she decided to avoid Zane completely, hoping that the distance she created between them would be enough to extinguish the measly crush she had for him. But that never happened and now, she's just disappointed in herself that River of all people could read her like an open book. The fact that he knew she harbours a crush towards Zane was filling her with rage.

"...where are you going?" River called out.

The sound of his voice was enough to irritate Lana. She took in a deep breath to calm herself before replying to him. "I'll continue my work elsewhere." She monotonously spoke, wanting to leave the library as soon as possible before she snapped at him and created a scene.

Before River could say anything, he watched as she flung her bag over her shoulder and turned hastily towards the exit. He sat there, unmoving as he watched her back disappear behind the door. River slouched over the table, resting his forehead against his propped up arm. His attempt to calm himself failed almost immediately.

He let out a loud sigh before slamming his laptop shut. Her scent lingered around him like an oversaturated perfume. He could feel it in his throat, making it hard for him to breathe without inhaling her scent.

He tapped his finger against the wooden table, wondering what he should do next. All this time, he avoided her because he couldn't stand the scent that emitted from her person. It was sweet, sickening even and it made River feel rather delirious, although he would never admit that openly. He felt himself slipping away whenever she was close by, losing all the common sense he had almost instantly. It was disorienting and River could never figure out why she had that peculiar smell.

He managed to live his life peacefully by just avoiding her but now he could not do that anymore. River stood up and packed his belongings into his bag. He ripped off the mask he was wearing because like it or not, River had to face Lana Danley head on.

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Ignore it. Lana told herself repeatedly in her head. Just ignore it. But the longer she continued walking, the harder it was getting to completely ignore the tall and glaring man walking menacingly behind her. Especially when he

was making it quite obvious that he was following her.

With her fists clenched, Lana suddenly stopped walking and twirled around to face him. Her annoyance was quickly replaced by astonishment when she realized that he wasn't wearing his mask anymore. His skin was particularly radiating under the brilliant sun and it was making Lana annoyed at how beautiful he looked. She pondered on how someone so handsome could be such a two-faced scum.

She cleared her throat. "Stop following me," she warned.

River raised an eyebrow. "I'm not? We're walking in the same direction."

Lana made a face, knowing fully that she's been walking aimlessly ever since River started following her after she walked out of the library. She initially wanted to head back to the main school building but the moment she noticed River's presence she started to overthink. "Don't lie to me," she huffed, noticing the tiny beads of sweat forming on her forehead. His chest was rising rapidly as well and she pondered if River actually ran after her.

He scratched the back of his neck, trying his best to appear nonchalant. "No offense to you, but I have better things to do with my time."

"And yet here you are, mindlessly following me!"

River looked away and Lana could not help but think that he resembled a puppy being scolded. "Fine...!" River suddenly yelled out of frustration. "I

wanted to apologize okay?”

His sudden outburst startled Lana. She looked around subconsciously to see if anyone was paying attention to them, but no one was around.

“Um...apologize for what?” she muttered.

“For what I said in the library, about you being desperate...” he said with a sigh. “I didn’t mean it and besides, it isn’t any of my business that you like Railey.”

For a long moment, Lana remained silent. River wondered if she didn’t hear him. He turned towards her only to see her flustered face. Her cheeks were painted in a rosy hue and her eyes glistened as though she was about to cry. River felt himself start to panic. Here he was wanting to apologize to Lana but he ended up making her cry. He keeps showing Lana the bad sides of him and he couldn’t help but feel slightly disappointed over that fact.

Lana slowly covered her face with her hands. “Was it...obvious?” she whispered bashfully.

“What...?”

She dropped her hands and with a determined face she stared at River. “Was I being too obvious about my feelings for Zane?!” she blurted.

River stared back at the girl in confusion. He wondered if Lana had no shame. Why in the world would she openly admit to having feelings towards Zane, to River? The irritation he felt back at the library was coming back to him tenfold, but he couldn’t understand why.

Was it the fact that he never liked Zane and watching Lana ogle over him was just plain annoying? Or was it the fact that the supposedly hard-headed and confident Lana Danley was wearing such a timid and flustered expression right before his eyes? She was not even trying to hide the fact that she has a crush. This entire situation was starting to get on River's nerves.

"Yeah," he finally answered her. "That's why I said it was unbearable to watch."

River's voice broke whatever trance Lana was in. Her expression changed almost immediately to a neutral guise. She cleared her throat loudly. "Well, whatever, I'm still mad at you." she shrugged.

"You can't be serious!? Stop acting like a child!" River countered.

"Well, that makes two of us then!" she smiled as she turned around to continue walking towards the main building. She thought of rushing ahead so River would stop following her but she did not manage to get far when River grabbed the strap of her schoolbag.

She knew River was strong, those muscles he had was not just for show but the fact that him merely grabbing her bag made her entire body come to a halt was something of concern. She slowly glanced behind to him when River remained silent. That signature intimidating glare of his was back and this time Lana was sure that he was about to murder her.

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