

## Chapter 19 The Alpha's Mistress

### Moana

I decided not to go to Edrick's room that night. I couldn't bring myself to do it in good conscience after discovering that he had a girlfriend, and I wasn't about to be his mistress on top of being his daughter's nanny!

At the usual time that I normally would've been sneaking over to Edrick's room, I instead crawled into my own bed with my sketchbook for the first time in days. It felt a bit strange already to be sleeping alone, but it was also a relief from all of the stress of our strange agreement, and it was nice to have the late night to myself to have some time to draw.

Like clockwork, however, my phone started to ring just five minutes after I picked up my pencil. I lifted my eyes from my sketchbook, letting out a deep sigh when I was Edrick's name on my screen.

"Yes?" I said after picking up the phone.

"Where are you?" Edrick said. His voice sounded agitated.

"I've decided to unilaterally end our sleeping arrangement," I replied. "You can reduce my salary back to the original amount. I'm sorry, but I'm no longer comfortable sleeping together."

Edrick was silent. I could hear him take in a sharp breath on the other side of the phone before he abruptly hung up. Rolling my eyes, I shut my phone off and tossed it down on my bed, returning to my drawing.

A few minutes later, there was a knock on my door; no doubt it was Edrick. I decided not to answer and to just pretend that I was asleep, which seemed to work as he didn't knock again...

Or so I thought.

He knocked again, this time louder. I set my sketchbook aside and pondered whether I should let him in or not, but finally jumped up out of bed and scurried over to the door when he knocked for a third time, even louder and more aggressively that time.

"Can you not try to wake everyone up?" I asked in a hushed tone of voice as I opened the door.

Without a response, Edrick brushed past me with an angry look on his face. Sighing, I quietly shut the door behind him and turned to face him with my arms folded across my chest.

It was then that I realized I was only wearing my nightgown, thanks to Edrick's glance down at my bare legs. I quickly grabbed my robe off of the back of my chair and put it on, pulling it tightly around myself.

"What's going on?" Edrick asked, quickly looking away from my body. "You seemed fine with our arrangement. What changed so quickly? Don't tell me you suddenly found your dignity again."

I sighed and looked down at the floor, not entirely sure how to best phrase it. Finally, I looked back up to face Edrick, who was staring at me again with an agitated expression.

"I did find my dignity again," I said, "and I never should have made this agreement with you in the first place. I'm your daughter's nanny, not your sleeping buddy. Besides, if you have a girlfriend, you should be sleeping with her and not me. I didn't come here to be your mistress."

Edrick furrowed his brow and shot me a puzzled look.

“What?” he said, running a hand through his dark hair. “What do you mean?”

“Kelly found the earrings I left on your bedside table,” I said. “I’m afraid she misunderstood our relationship.”

Edrick was silent for several moments before shaking his head. “You think Kelly is my girlfriend?”

I c\*\*\*\*d my head, suddenly feeling confused. “Surely you two would’ve been married already, if not for Ella—”

“You must’ve listened to the maids,” Edrick said, rolling his eyes and walking over to the balcony, staring out at the city below with his back turned to me for a few moments before turning back to face me. “Kelly is my childhood friend. She’s like a little sister to me. I’ve never thought about her in that sort of way. Our families are close, and we had the chance to be each other’s chosen mates, but I decided against it. Yes, Ella also doesn’t like her, but I chose myself not to be romantically involved with Kelly.”

I froze, unsure of what to say.

“I-I’m sorry,” I said finally. “The way she spoke to you, I thought—”

“Well, you thought wrong,” Edrick interrupted with a frown. “Maybe you should talk to me next time before you go and gossip with the maids about my personal affairs.”

There was another long silence between us as I processed everything Edrick had told me. My mind still raced as I thought about our arrangement.

I guess I overreacted, but what if Edrick really got a girlfriend in the future?

“Fine,” I said, walking over to the edge of my bed and sitting down. “If you want to continue the arrangement, we can. But under two conditions.”

“Go on,” Edrick said reluctantly, folding his arms across his chest with narrowed eyes.

“For starters, I want to sleep in my own bed sometimes,” I said. “You can join me or you can not join me, but I should be entitled to sleeping in my own bedroom a couple of nights a week, and the responsibility of hiding our arrangement shouldn’t be entirely mine. I also want one night a week by myself.”

Edrick paused for a few moments. I wondered if he would refuse, but finally he nodded. “That’s reasonable,” he said, which gave me an immense amount of relief. “What’s the second condition? Or was sleeping alone the second condition?”

I shook my head and stared at the floor for the next few seconds as I tried to formulate my thoughts. Finally, I looked back up and bravely met the Alpha billionaire’s icy gray stare. “If you start seeing a woman and she becomes your girlfriend, I want our arrangement to end immediately,” I said. “Especially if you plan on getting married. I won’t have anyone questioning my relationship with you.”

Edrick suddenly looked somewhat amused for a split second before answering with a surprisingly light and nonchalant tone of voice. “That won’t be a problem.”

I narrowed my eyes. “What do you mean?” I asked.

“I won’t ever get married,” Edrick replied.

I frowned, confused by this statement. What could possibly be stopping a wealthy, handsome Alpha CEO from getting married? Before I had the chance to say anything else, however, Edrick circled around to the other side of my bed.

“We’ll sleep in here tonight,” he said matter-of-factly, grabbing the blankets and pulling them down. He must not have seen my sketchbook laying there, because it toppled to the floor as he pulled the blankets down.

He paused for a moment, then picked up my sketchbook. I suddenly felt my face flush hot as he looked at my drawings, and I went to snatch it out of his hand — but he quickly pulled away, shooting me another amused glance, as he looked at the drawing I had been working on before he rudely barged in.

“Is this... Ella and me? On the ferris wheel?” he asked, his smirk fading as he looked up at me.

I grabbed the sketchbook out of his hands, then stuffed it in my bedside table drawer.

Edrick said nothing. Without a word, he climbed into bed and turned onto his side, and went to sleep.