

Chapter 8

"Ted, can you stay with me for a few more minutes? I have something to show you." Amy went to the study to get a design she'd worked on for ages. She showed it to Thaddeus.

"Look at these rings I've designed. They're supposed to symbolize vows of loyalty. What do you think of us using these as our wedding rings?"

Thaddeus' patience was running short today, perhaps because of Jessamine's dry heaving. He said flippantly, "You decide. I'll have someone produce them in the future."

Amy was delighted. Since he had no objection to the rings, that meant he would marry her. She was only one step away from marrying him. At least all her waiting finally paid off.

Now, she only had one more step ... She had to speed things up a little.

"Why don't you have a meatball, Ted? I spent the whole afternoon cooking them, you know. I learned how to make them just for you. I even burned my hand!" Amy said coquettishly.

She dragged Thaddeus to the kitchen. Thaddeus had no choice but to eat a meatball.

...

When Thaddeus returned to the car, Jessamine smelled perfume and meatballs on him. It made her stomach roil again.

Thaddeus took a deep breath and glared at her. "I saw you were fine when I was walking toward the car. Why are you dry-heaving now that I'm in the car?"

Jessamine paused, feeling rather flabbergasted. She almost thought she'd heard him wrong. "Do you think I'm pretending to be sick? That I'd do something like that to stop you from meeting your lover?"

Her words pissed Thaddeus off. "Watch your tongue. Don't forget your place."

Jessamine smiled sadly. It wasn't hard to see how hurt she was. After that, she leaned against the window without saying a word.

What right did she have to call Amy a mistress or lover? She wouldn't deserve to say anything like that even if she and Thaddeus weren't getting divorced, what more now that they'd already signed the divorce agreement.

Her obedience made Thaddeus' anger subside. He glanced at her to see her leaning against the window with her eyes lowered. She was pale, and her lips were bloodless. There were also two faint marks on one side of her neck—he'd left them there after pinching her.

The more he looked at her, the more he felt like she was asking to be taken advantage of.

"Come here!" he commanded, breaking the silence in the car.

Jessamine turned to give him a confused look.

"You don't feel well, right? Don't you wanna lean against me?"

Jessamine turned away and ignored him. Yet, all Thaddeus did was ignore her protest and lift her onto his lap again. It was then that Jessamine saw the faint trace of lipstick on his chest. She couldn't stop the tears from streaming down her face.

What had she done to deserve this? Why did she have to bear witness to how loving he and Amy were?

By the time Thaddeus noticed that his shirt had been dampened by Jessamine's tears, they'd arrived at Holt Manor. Jordan parked the car in the courtyard.

He lifted Jessamine off his lap and looked down at his dirtied shirt. His brows furrowed tightly.

After getting out of the car, Thaddeus slowed down as Jessamine jogged over to catch up with him. She linked arms with him as they entered the house. This was their standard practice when coming over to Holt Manor. It was an act they'd honed to perfection.

The spacious living room was decorated lavishly. Thomas was religious and constantly burned sage in the villa. The smell of it made Jessamine feel much better.

When the butler, Joe Manello, saw them, he called, "Mr. Thomas, Mr. Thaddeus and Madam Jessamine are back!"

Then, he turned to Jessamine and said teasingly, "If you were to arrive any later, those shrimps would've been gone. Ms. Sasha's been talking about them the whole day, but Mr. Thomas refused to let up. He's been waiting for you."

Thaddeus smirked. "Considering how little she eats, leaving ten shrimps for her would've been enough to feed her for a day."

Thomas came out of the study looking like he was in a good mood. He was in his 80s but only looked 70 because of how well taken care of he was. He was still spirited and healthy.

"What are you guys talking about? You look excited. Come here, Jessie!"

Jessamine greeted him sweetly and stood beside him obediently.