

## Chapter 13 - Sweet Addiction

Antonio had never felt more appreciated than when he saw his dear Tara eating the disturbingly awful eggs he had made. He knew himself to be a bad cook, and he usually either ate out or got his food delivered to him.

Why he thought he would be better at cooking now that it had been years - literally years - since his last attempt was a mystery to him. He must have been blinded by everything that was Tara.

This latter ate every last bit, but had large gulps of orange juice nearly after every bite. It was obvious that she was forcing herself, and yet she did so with a bright smile on.

It was all he could do to control himself then. As a matter of fact, he was almost shocked at how he had managed to keep himself in check.

But then again, he had been holding himself back for four years. He could still wait for her one more month.

Hopefully, she'll come around about dating him.

When she finished her plate, she told him she was going to raid the fridge for a yogurt.

He could only tilt his head to the side in an invitation to do as she pleased with his fridge.

He kept watching her, fascinated and completely transfixed, as she ate. She smiled at him from time to time when their eyes met and she'd blush each time.

Sometimes, he really thought he needed help.

Could an infatuation as obsessive as this one not be reciprocated?

Antonio had become an addict and Tara was his drug... and who was he not to succumb to this beautiful addiction?

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Tara was about to finish her yogurt when her phone went off. She grabbed it from her purse and picked up immediately without even checking the ID.

"Where are you, Tara?" Her dad's voice asked her rather urgently.

"Hello to you too, dad," she greeted coolly, almost coldly.

“Don’t start with me, little girl,” he chided her rather harshly.

Tara rose to her feet in a fit of anger. “Oh, believe me I have not started yet. Do I really need to remind that you have completely forgotten about my birthday yesterday?”

“I did not!” Her dad exclaimed.

“Really now?” She rolled her eyes at him even though he couldn’t see her.

“I remembered it was your birthday yesterday, I just didn’t get around to call you. I did send you an email though.”

“What email?” Tara scoffed, “The one you’ve sent when it was close to midnight, saying that instead of being the first one to congratulate me for my birthday you’d rather be the last? Admit that it was mom who reminded you to begin with.”

“I remembered, okay?” He was seething.

Well, tough! She wasn’t about to back down. She had grown a backbone during the hours she had spent with Antonio, it would seem.

“Right,” she scoffed. “I believe ya, dad,” she said sarcastically.

“Onto more pressing matters, where are you? Why aren’t you at your flat?” He asked.

“Why do you care?” She taunted.

“Answer me, damn it!” He exclaimed, the last thread of his patience snapping.

“I am a grown woman, dad,” was her sole response.

“Don’t give me that crap,” he told her angrily.

“Goodbye, dad,” she said before hanging up.

Antonio looked at her, without saying a thing, a sardonic smirk adorning his lips... and just like that, without being asked, she poured her heart out to him.

“You know, clubbing wasn’t originally the plan for when I finally turned twenty-one. Had it not been for my dad completely dismissing my birthday like he didn’t give a rat’s ass about it, I would have celebrated it at home since Chloe isn’t in town at the moment.”

She paused and then added almost in afterthought, “Chloe is my best friend by the way.”

He nodded at her and told her two disturbing words, “I know.”

So not only he knew nearly anything there was to know about her, he knew who she spent her time with as well?

“Just how much did you stalk me, Antonio?”

“Four years if we are to be precise,” he chuckled, finding humor in his words.

She felt some of her resolve to resist the man dissipate at his easy confession.

It almost as if there were two Antonio's - the dangerous man she saw at the club and the sweet admirer. And if she were to be honest, she liked both sides but preferred the bad-ass attitude over his sweetness. Call her crazy, but that was just how it was... maybe it was so, because deep down, she hoped he'd take the choice out of her hands and make her his woman, whether she liked it or not.

But then again, that could be called rape if it got extreme, a part of her reasoned.

Not if you fantasized and begged for it, her inner slut retorted.

“What are you thinking about, Kitten?” He asked her, sounding genuinely curious. “You are so flushed.”

“Nothing,” she squeaked out quickly, too quickly.

“You got a fever or something?”

Now, she just knew he was openly teasing her as he raised his hand to feel her forehead.

“Haha, really funny.” She rolled her eyes at him.

“So, you want me to take you home now or later?” He asked after a moment of comfortable silence.

I want you to just take me, period... in the kitchen, in the living room, on the backseat of the car, under the shower head. Wherever is fine, as long as you do fuck the living daylight of me, her inner slut purred.

She shook her head negatively, and realized almost too late she had done it for real, not just mentally.

“Can you be more specific?” He asked in a light tone, sounding amused by her.

Thinking back of her freak control of a dad who was probably waiting for her at the flat she rented - well, technically, he was the one to rent it for her - was unpleasant and thus she said, “If we can hang out, I'd appreciate it. I don't feel like going just yet.”

His eyes sparkled with something akin to happiness and childish excitement.

Tara didn't want to lead Antonio on since she was still having doubts about getting together with him, but she did want to get to know him better. She couldn't make her choice based on an impression or two. She needed to know the man before making her mind... or so she tried to convince herself.

Tara didn't know it really, but even as she doubted her own feelings, it was almost as if she had already given in.