

Chapter 8 - Sweet Addiction

Antonio was driving through the nearly deserted roads, observing silence, while occasionally glancing at Tara. And this latter never felt more on edge.

What was going on?

How could a night out for her twenty-first birthday take such an unexpected turn? She wished she could meet up with Chloe and talk about it, but her best friend was out of town. Besides, she wasn't sure Antonio would appreciate being ditched for a girl on their first night together.

First night together? A voice echoed in her head. It's happening! Good god, it's happening! You're about to lose your virginity at long last, and not to anyone, but to Antonio freaking De La Cruz.

Chill, girl, she admonished herself. He's a man like any other... or so she tried to convince herself.

Could she jump in bed with her dad's client and then act all kinds of indifferent around him if they were to meet again?

"Antonio," she called, uncertainty clear to all in her voice.

"Yes, kitten?" He said, reaching out for her hand which he squeezed ever so slightly.

"I..."

I am not sure this is such a good idea, the words just wouldn't leave her mouth.

"We don't have to do anything you're not ready for right now," he told her, reassuring her immediately. "I just want us to spend the night together, in peace. I don't really fancy celebrating your birthday with you for the first time in a club. We'll go to my place if that is okay with you?"

Now that he was asking politely and not acting like a caveman, she couldn't help but smile at him and say, "Sure, I'd love that."

"Oh, and Tara?" He called her by her given name for the first time that evening and she shivered in delight at the way it rolled effortlessly off his tongue. "I know you to be a virgin. I'm not brute enough to force you into anything you're not comfortable with."

Her eyes widened at that and her jaw almost hit the floor.

How did he know that?

“I am not ashamed to say that I have kept tabs on you for the past four years,” he let out on a low chuckle.

“You almost gave me a heart attack two years ago,” she chastised him.

“God forbid!” He exclaimed, “Was it my pretending to have forgotten you that caused that?”

She giggled. “No, silly. The roses that were waiting for me inside my room gave me the fright of a lifetime.”

“I don’t see how roses can be scary,” he let out good-humoredly, “I always believed them to be harmless.”

“They have horns,” she told him in a duh tone.

“You don’t say!” He let out in mock disbelief.

And that was how she burst off laughing, all tension gone.

“Seriously though, you were not supposed to enter my one-bedroom flat like a thief, just to place roses on my nightstand,” she told him, the hint of a reprimand in her voice.

“Well, the whole process was entertaining, what can I say?” He retorted half jokingly half seriously. “But believe me I didn’t peek in the underwear drawer. I’m not that much of a creep.”

She blushed at that and let out a nervous laugh. She truly did hope he didn’t peek. Two years ago, she mostly wore white knickers, nothing fancy really. She really liked being comfortable.

Speaking of underwear, it’s a relief you are wearing that sexy black lingerie set today, her inner slut purred.

“I swear I didn’t peek, kitten,” he said in a slightly alarmed tone as he shifted his eyes to her face. “I stalked you, sure. I was protecting you in my own way. But I wouldn’t dare invade your privacy that way.”

“Eyes on the road, Mr. Stalker,” she told him in an amused tone.

“Say you believe me,” he pleaded.

“I do.”

He shifted his focus back on the road before telling her in a teasing tone, “I’m not sure we’re at that stage where we’re supposed to exchange vows just yet.”

“Quite the charmer, huh?” She rolled her eyes at him while a smirk tugged at the corner of her mouth.

“I aim to please,” he said in a husky voice, just as he reached out for the remote control that was probably that of the garage.

“We’re here,” he announced as he maneuvered the car into the garage.

“Don’t believe for one second I am always charming,” he warned her, just before asking her to remain inside the car.

“Gotcha,” she mock saluted as he opened the car door for her gallantly.

He smirked at her. And then, he was ushering her inside the house.

Said house was beautiful, simply and yet elegantly decorated, a few art pieces hanging on the walls.

All the walls she could see were white, and all the furniture was a sleek black.

Already, she loved the place.

He then led her to the kitchen where he told her to help herself to what was inside the fridge. She shook her head negatively, not wanting to intrude, and he frowned at her before cocking an eyebrow as her tummy growled rather loudly.

She blushed in dismay.

“Listen, kitten. And listen carefully, for I am not going to repeat this,” he said and she nodded. “I want you to be spontaneous around me. I want you to feel comfortable in my house. Forget the damned manners you were taught at school or the women’s code or whatever. I want you to be yourself. Is that clear?”

She felt her heart soar at his words. “Yeah,” she let out before asking him, “Do you have eggs? I would love to make an omelet. I’m kind of hungry.”

“See for yourself,” he told her as he gestured towards the fridge.

And that was how Tara ended up, on her birthday, making two omelets - one for her and one for Antonio - in his house, wearing nothing but a short black dress. All while being barefoot because her heels weren’t of the comfortable kind.

The meaningless chatter and sweet banter they had while she was preparing her midnight snack was happiness itself.