

Chapter 4 A Test

It was past two in the morning when Nate was in his study, engaged in a video call. Then, a scream echoed from the room next door.

He rose abruptly, forcing the adjacent room's door open.

With the room empty, Nate grew anxious, calling out, "Leanna? Where are you?"

From the bathroom, a faint sound emerged.

Nate hurried to the bathroom, discovering it flooded.

Leanna was halfway crouched, trying to rise with the wall's support.

He quickly picked her up, and she exclaimed a surprised "Ah," gripping his neck tightly.

The smell of gardenias wafted from Nate's body, which was the scent of her beloved shower gel she always used.

In past close encounters, Leanna had to steady her breath, worried he'd detect her deep-seated emotions.

But at this moment, she was resolved to take a courageous leap.

Leanna nuzzled against Nate's collarbone, tilting her head upwards. She purposefully exhaled deeply, brushing his Adam's apple with her breath.

It's rumored to be the spot men are most sensitive to.

In a gentle tone, she murmured, "Uncle, it seems I've hurt my foot."

Nate lowered his head to look at Leanna, and "coincidentally", she tilted her head up, leading their noses to collide.

Her heart raced as though it might leap from her chest. A hint of regret washed over her; if only she had tilted her head a bit more, their lips might have met.

That would have stirred a different kind of feeling.

Nate tightened his grip on Leanna, sensing a warmth spreading through his body where their skin made contact.

He observed the notably minimal coverage of her camisole dress.

Possibly due to her earlier attempts to stand, part of Leanna's chest was unveiled, showcasing an enticing glimpse of smooth skin.

Additionally, the dress was too short, scarcely extending to her thighs.

Leanna gazed up at him with tear-filled eyes, securely in his hold, seemingly oblivious to the potential impact of their intimate pose on a man.

Nate placed Leanna on the bed with swift urgency, like handling a hot potato, then draped a blanket over her. His gaze hardened as he reprimanded her, "Haven't I instructed you against wearing camisoles? Your dress ought to reach your knees."

Nate looked at her from head to toe, an unfriendly smile forming on his lips. "What's the intention behind such attire? I'm your uncle. You're not attempting to seduce me, are you?"

Leanna did have thoughts of seducing him, but his tone of exposure left her feeling only embarrassment and humiliation.

She averted her eyes, unable to face him. "Is there a problem with me dressing lightly in my own space? I haven't gone out like this. You're the one who intruded."

Nate's expression grew stern. "Why are you up at such a late hour? What's keeping you awake?"

"I was just using the restroom when I accidentally stepped on the basin filled with water and slipped. Is there something wrong with having an accident?"

Leanna's voice shook, heavy with tears as she spoke.

She had taken a tumble, yet his first reaction wasn't to inquire about her well-being. Instead, he chose to scold her attire and ridicule her. It was evident that Nate lacked any genuine care for her.

Seeing her tears, Nate's features relaxed. He crouched down, releasing a sigh. "How will you manage on your own overseas?"

Leanna lifted her eyes, now glossy with tears, and asked, "Does this mean I can remain here?"

Nate's demeanor grew colder by the moment. He rose to his full height, fixing her with a severe gaze. "Leanna, are you attempting to tug at my heartstrings?"

Leanna shut her eyes, engulfed in a wave of disappointment.

How could he view her in such a light? Did he really see her as someone manipulative?

She grumbled in annoyance, "I was obviously trying to use my looks to my advantage."

Sadly, not only did her attempt at testing fail, but it also left her feeling even more frustrated.

"Is your foot alright? Should we get that checked at the hospital?" Nate exhaled a resigned sigh, gently extracting her foot from beneath the blanket to press it tenderly.

The warmth from his hand sent a ripple of tingles from her foot's sole straight to her heart. Leanna quickly withdrew her foot, concealing it beneath the blanket, and murmured, "It's slightly painful. Some rest should heal it."

Nate nodded. "Get some rest. If it still hurts by tomorrow, let Paula take you to the hospital."

Why would the maid be the one to go instead of him?

As Nate walked away, Leanna caught her lip between her teeth.

She recalled a time in high school when she sprained her ankle at a sports event. Despite being abroad for business, Nate hurried back through the night to accompany her to the hospital.

Leanna's injury wasn't severe; her foot was merely somewhat swollen.

After applying a new bandage, Nate quickly returned to his international commitments.

Back then, Leanna believed he cared for her and liked her, which made her feel ecstatic for a while. But later, she stumbled upon the truth: he hurried back because Paula called him in a panic, claiming her foot was broken.

If Paula hadn't exaggerated, it's possible Nate might not have returned at all.

He was always unpredictable, sometimes kind, sometimes distant. Occasionally, he made Leanna feel cherished. But then, just as swiftly, he'd make her feel the opposite.

This unpredictable lunatic somehow kept pulling her in deeper and deeper.