

Chapter 149 Two Can Play At This Game

She leaned forward instinctively, her lips glistening softly in the dim light, a touch of sheen making them all the more inviting. For Caden, they were far more tempting than the food laid out before him.

His gaze dropped, lingering on them for a moment too long.

Alicia noticed.

Her expression stiffened, though she tried to mask it, and she silently placed the half-eaten chicken wing onto his plate.

Caden blinked, momentarily at a loss for words.

He could do it—he could show more care, especially since she was still recovering from their earlier intimacy.

"I'm not interested in your chicken wing," he said, his voice low. "I'm interested in your lips."

Now, it was Alicia's turn to feel speechless.

His implication wasn't lost on her.

She fought the urge to roll her eyes and silently complained to herself. Hadn't they kissed enough earlier? Why was he still so fixated on her?

What was the big deal about lips anyway?

With a quick, deliberate motion, she snatched back the chicken wing she'd just surrendered.

Caden raised his brows, once again baffled by her unapologetic behavior.

But instead of teasing her further, he steered the conversation back on track. "I'm taking you to a banquet later this month. Start preparing now."

Alicia's curiosity piqued. "What's the occasion?"

"To make you feel better."

Her eyes lit up, intrigued. "And how do you plan to do that? When's the banquet?"

Caden opened his mouth as if to answer, then reconsidered, his words retreating as quickly as they'd surfaced. "I'll let you know when the time comes. Just know that it'll be before the end of the month."

Alicia's lips curved downward in disappointment.

"That's still so far off!"

He shrugged, a teasing glint in his eyes. "If you can't wait, just count down the days while thinking about me."

Her heart gave a subtle flutter at his audacity.

"You're such a cheeky flirt, you know that?" She paused, then asked with a grin, "When I go with you, will I be your date?"

"You're overthinking things."

"Good," she muttered, her shoulders easing in relief. "I have no desire to make our relationship public."

A subtle smirk tugged at Caden's lips as they both returned to their meal, finishing every last bite in comfortable silence.

Alicia glanced at Caden's spotless plate and wiped the corner of her mouth. "So, do you like the food from this place?" Her voice was casual, but she couldn't help noticing how much he'd eaten.

He had quite an appetite, it seemed.

Caden's expression remained indifferent as he replied, "Sure."

It wasn't like he had fallen in love with the meal—it was just the first time he had ordered from there. Yet, somehow, he'd finished it without even realizing.

The moment hung between them, and Alicia knew the kiss was inevitable. There was no point in running away, so she took the initiative to stand on tiptoe.

As always, whenever she made the first move, Caden would scrutinize her, as though to glean her intentions.

When he did nothing, Alicia took it upon herself to close the gap, pressing her lips gently to his, her body leaning into his for support.

She was determined to set the pace this time, and to her surprise, her technique had improved.

It didn't take long before she could feel him responding—his pulse quickening beneath her fingers.

But soon enough, the strain of it all became too much, and she pushed him back, catching her breath. "Is that enough?"

Caden wasn't done. Wrapping his arm firmly around her waist, he pulled her back into his space. His voice was low, the faint rasp of desire barely concealed. "The dumbest but most effective way to improve your kissing is tracing letters with your tongue in someone's mouth."

Alicia had heard about that method before but always found it too embarrassing to try.

She licked her lips nervously, choosing silence instead of admitting to anything.

Caden smiled at her hesitation, leaning down until his breath brushed her ear. "Shall I teach you?" he whispered, his voice dripping with amusement.

She squirmed slightly under his intense gaze. "What's there to learn?"

Her gaze lifted to meet his dark, intense eyes. "You might as well give me a proper apology."

He arched a brow. "Do you really need an apology?"

Wasn't what he said earlier enough?

Alicia knew his roundabout way of making her feel better was a kind of



apology, but her pride demanded more—a special concession just for her.

"Yes," she murmured, her voice softer now, almost vulnerable. "I need it."

Her uncertainty only added to the allure, and Caden's eyes deepened with something darker.

"Those words," he said, his voice now edged with heat, "are better saved for the bedroom."

Alicia's cheeks flushed instantly, but before she could react, Caden pulled her into his arms, capturing her lips once more in a kiss that was anything but gentle.

It felt like a spell—a kiss that grew more intoxicating with each passing second, making her head spin.

She didn't want it to stop.

She wanted more.

Her mind went blank as her body melted against his, his touch stirring a fiery desire within her.

But Caden wasn't satisfied yet, his fingers slipping lower, teasingly brushing her waist until he heard the sound he was looking for.

Alicia kept dodging.

Her body unwittingly grazed against his, fueling the tension between them and stoking his desire even higher.

He clenched his jaw, restraining himself as long as he could, but when the need overwhelmed him, he scooped her up without a second thought, carrying her toward the lounge.

Only then did Alicia snap back to her senses, her eyes widening with dread.

"No," she gasped, her voice uneven. "We've already done it today."

Caden stopped in his tracks, her words cutting through the haze.

He knew he could persuade her if he wanted, but their rules were set in



stone, and he had to respect them—no matter how tempting it was to break them.

Patience, he reminded himself. The finest prey was always worth waiting for.

With a frustrated sigh, he gave her hip a firm squeeze before setting her down.

Her legs wobbled beneath her, betraying her.

She wanted to slip away, escape the pull between them.

But Caden wasn't ready to let her go just yet. His muscles tensed as he reached for her again, craving another kiss.

Alicia swiftly turned her head, denying him. "When you help me feel better," she started to say, a playful glint in her eye, "then you can kiss me."

His eyes narrowed, a smirk tugging at the corners of his mouth. "Do you really think I can wait that long?"

"If I can, then so can you," she challenged, her voice steady despite the heat between them. Their bodies were pressed together, the air thick with desire.

Alicia's throat felt dry, her pulse quickening, but she held her ground, refusing to give in.

She had him wrapped around her finger, and they both knew it.

Caden couldn't resist, not when she played the game like this.

His chest tightened with an unfamiliar sensation—one he couldn't quite name.

With a slow exhale, he released her, cooling himself down. "Tomorrow will be a new day," he warned. "You won't have a choice then."

Alicia, however, firmly stood her ground. "I always have a choice. My lips, my rules. If I don't want to, you don't get a kiss."

Caden's gaze dropped to her swollen lips, and a low chuckle escaped him.

She was impossible to resist.

Later that night, Alicia made plans to stay with Monica, and Caden casually offered to drive her.

But Alicia shook her head. "Monica knows your car. If you drive me back this late, it'll be suspicious."

Caden paused, a strange feeling washing over him.

For a brief moment, he almost felt like an adulterer.

Just as Alicia was about to suggest taking a cab, Caden shrugged and said, "We'll take a different car. Pick one from the garage."

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