

Chapter 30 You Really Like Me

Gerry could smell fresh gossip in the air. "Are you two together?" he asked directly.

Before Alicia could answer his question, Caden snatched the phone from her hand and told Gerry, "I'll bring her over in a bit."

Gerry dropped his playful tone. "Today's incident has caused quite a stir. Alicia's face was exposed on camera. Be careful, and make sure she doesn't get targeted by Lilliana's obsessive fans."

"Understood."

Caden hung up and gave the phone back to Alicia.

Other than taking it, she stood still, just staring at him.

Caden had gone to open the door, but when he realized she hadn't moved, his brows furrowed. "What's wrong?"

"Gerry warned me to be cautious of Lilliana's fans," Alicia said, her voice tight.

"And?"

"You're Lilliana's boss. Shouldn't I be warier of you?" She was already on guard against him. "How are you suddenly here, anyway? Did you come to silence me?"

Caden blinked at her and said nothing for a few seconds.

When he finally spoke, his tone was chilly. "That's right, I'm going to take you somewhere remote, have my way with you, kill you, and dispose of your body."

Alicia inhaled sharply. Clicking her tongue, she decided to stop bickering with him.

They needed to leave right away. If Lilliana's fans actually showed up, they would be in big trouble.

A celebrity's team was indeed no joke. They were trained professionals, and they were serious about their business. It didn't take long for Lilliana to flee the scene, completely unscathed.

At that point, there weren't many people left.

Caden hurriedly led Alicia to the underground parking lot.

Alicia thought they were safe, but her relief was premature. As soon as the elevator doors opened, they spotted a small crowd of seedy-looking people waiting just a few feet from the elevator.

The people turned toward the sound of the elevator in unison, and when they saw Caden and Alicia, one of them yelled, "That's her!"

Alicia froze. She hadn't expected trouble to find them so quickly. She took a deep breath and braced herself.

The man leading the group charged in her direction, his expression fierce. "You bitch! How dare you scheme against Lilliana!"

Alicia grabbed Caden's hand and pulled him back. "Get behind me!"

Caden looked at her for a couple of seconds before discarding his suit jacket and rolling up the sleeves of his dress shirt. "This is the perfect time for a man to step up and show his worth."

The next thing he knew, however, Alicia had lifted her leg and landed a solid kick on the man lunging at her.

The man cried out in pain, clutching his chest as he fell back.

Caden stared, speechless, his mouth shaped into a small O. He slowly lowered his sleeves back to his wrists.

But once the first attack was launched, the others followed suit. Other men rushed toward Alicia in a single wave. It was Caden's turn to pull Alicia back and deliver a roundhouse kick to the first person to approach them.

The difference in strength between men and women was evident in their impact.

Alicia had used all the strength she could muster, but only managed to knock her opponent down.

Caden, on the other hand, sent the other man flying, even knocking over a few of his cohorts in the process.

"If you're trying to hurt a man," Caden remarked calmly, "aim for the spots where it would hurt him the most. Kick his groin, his head, his shins."

Alicia's eyes flashed. "Got it."

As another man lunged at her, Alicia stepped forward and kicked him in the groin.

He immediately crumpled to the ground, his hands cupped over his groin as he wailed in agony.

It was a good one, Caden had to give her that. But... He felt a certain tightness in his own lower abdomen just watching the man cup his balls.

Alicia turned to him with a smirk. "How was that? I'm a fast learner, aren't I?"

At that moment, all Caden could think about was how beautiful her eyes were.

He felt an inexplicable urge to laugh. "Well done."

Their attackers weren't that many to begin with, and the pair dispatched them in a matter of minutes.

When the men finally retreated, they were either shaking or limping. They kept a respectable distance, not daring to go near Caden and Alicia again.

Caden dusted off his hands and ushered Alicia to his car.

Alicia fastened her seatbelt and crane her neck to look into the side mirror. Lilliana's crazed fans were still milling about, grumbling and making phone calls, even as they threw sharp glances toward Caden's car.

Her expression turned grim. "They don't seem like Lilliana's fans," she pointed out. "More like people hired to deliberately make trouble."

Caden also glanced at the men through the rearview mirror. "Perfect, then," he said coldly. "Consider it free practice for dummies like you."

Alicia glared at him through narrowed eyes and shook her head in disapproval.

Insufferable man.

She took out her phone and dialed 911.

"What are you doing?" Caden asked.

"I'm calling the cops."

Regardless of whether those men were indeed Lilliana's fans or not, Alicia felt that she could trust the authorities to handle the matter properly. Lilliana was still currently embroiled in the lip-synching scandal. This little altercation might as well serve as a warning to her.

The law was not to be trifled with.

"Those thugs are all beaten up," Caden said. "Who do you think will the police arrest when they see the state those men are in?"

Alicia's frown deepened. "But we can't just let this matter go."

"What more do you want? One of them is already out cold. You've probably chucked him into a life of impotency."

Alicia was somewhat mollified by that. "I didn't kick him that hard."

"Their actions may be premeditated," Caden said slowly, "but we did defend ourselves. At the very least, the police will likely consider this a public brawl."

And although it might be considered self-defense on their part, they still wouldn't get away scot-free. At best, they would be fined. At worst, they would be detained.

They would be at a loss either way.

Alicia thought it through and realized that he made a lot of sense. She locked her screen and put her phone away.

She thought back to Caden's actions earlier, and a strange feeling bubbled in her heart. She turned in her seat to look at him.

They had driven out of the parking lot and just passed the shade of a large tree.

Sunlight streamed through the window, bathing Caden's well-defined features in a warm glow. The sun seemed to glint in his deep-set eyes, inviting an innocent onlooker to drown in their pools.

Alicia continued to stare at his face in a daze.

Caden suddenly turned and met her gaze.

"You really like me, huh?"

Alicia's lips twitched, and she quickly averted her eyes to the scenery outside. She kept looking from side to side, as if she was searching for something.

Caden pulled over in front of a restaurant.

He killed the engine and asked her, "What are you looking for?"

Alicia's tone was glib. "I'm looking for your dignity, since you apparently lost it somewhere."