

## Professor Dearest Chapter 22

~ALARIC~

I don't know why I said it. I wasn't planning on telling anyone that Nicole had hit me last night with a bloody lamp. However, for some reason, I didn't want to lie to Clara. I wanted to be honest with her about absolutely everything.

I'm surprised to see how much my words have angered her.

What was she so upset about? It almost seemed like she cared about me. But that was absurd; Clara would never care about me that deeply. We weren't exactly close, and Carter was the one that caught her heart in the past. She never had eyes for anyone but him.

"Now it's your turn," I tell her. "Tell me exactly what happened last night in that kitchen."

It was bothering me that I couldn't remember. Especially now that I knew she was with me last night.

I knew something happened, her strange behavior confirmed that for me.

Her eyes widen a fraction, "wait." She whispers. "Tell me what happened. Why did Nicole do that to you? There must have been a reason."

My jaw clenches as I look away from her horrified gaze, "that wasn't the deal, Clara. I said I would tell you who did it in return for your detailed description of last night. I kept my part of the bargain; why don't you do the same?"

She seemed nervous again.

What could have possibly happened last night for her to behave like this?

I still believed I did something I shouldn't have. I was usually well-behaved, I didn't do things to offend anyone but it was different with her, I acted foolishly around Clara almost all the time.

I always had to prepare myself before seeing her, it was f\*cking hard at times.

"I wanted to help heal the cut." She finally says.

She did? It wasn't my imagination or a dream.

It wasn't a dream or a fantasy I'd made up. She was there in that kitchen trying to help me.

How much of my memories were true about last night?

"But did I do anything?" I ask her hesitantly.

She shook her head, "You didn't do anything except try to stop me. No matter how hard I tried to help you, you wouldn't let me."

The more she spoke about it, the more I remembered. I frown as a certain trigger brings all of the memories back to me at once.

Did she... No, I swallow as I try to compose myself. She wouldn't.

Clara looks at me with worry. She can tell that I just remembered something else.

I knew I had to be wrong.

"Tell me every single detail," I say again. This time, I didn't want her to skip anything out.

If that memory was true, it meant Clara didn't just try to clean my wound, she also... Kissed it.

But why would she ever do something like that? As far as I knew, Clara didn't like me. Why would she ever like her ex-boyfriend's older brother? I was too old for her. I was also her professor. She wouldn't like me in that way. I was positive she wouldn't.

Her cheeks are now a pretty, bright red. It caught my attention immediately.

"I did something.." She pauses, unable to continue.

"Something?" I urge her to continue.

I stand up from the chair and stretch my legs to shake off—the numbness in them. As I move around the desk, I notice Clara's eyes following my every move. I wonder if my sudden proximity is making her nervous. Does she find me intimidating?

"Clara?" I try once more. "Is there something that you are keeping from me?"

As I gaze at her, I can see her eyes darting around the room as if she's looking for a way out or trying to find help of some sort. It's clear that my question has caught her off guard, and her sudden nervousness makes me wonder if I've made a mistake by asking. But I can't help myself – I need to know if my recollections of last night are accurate, and her answer is the key to unlocking the truth. Despite her apparent discomfort, I maintain a calm demeanor and waited patiently for her to respond.

"I don't think it's a good idea for me to answer your question." she finally says. "But do you remember anything at all from last night?"

Do I tell her, or do I keep quiet about it?

She peers up at me as she waits for an answer. From this close, I can see her delicate lips; they're soft, pink, and perfect. I wanted to put her bottom lip between my teeth and bite down on it gently.

F\*vck.

Those were not safe thoughts at all. I had to put some distance between us before I did something stupid.

The door flew open suddenly, and I was surprised when I saw Nicole standing at the entrance.

My jaw clenched.

Ah, f\*vck.