Chapter 006

AMELIA POV

"Amelia?"

I heard Damien say my name but it felt as though he was calling me from the far end of a tunnel. The breakfast tray was heavy and my arms were trembling with the strain of holding it, but I hardly noticed. Hell! At that moment, the whole world could have crashed and burned and I still would not have noticed.

All of my attention was focused on his body. Damien's lithe, naked body was every bit as I had imagined it, and I had imagined it quite often, especially on the day I thought we would have an actual wedding night. He was perfection. He was perfectly toned and muscled, just as I had expected. The smart suits and long sleeved shirts he wore all the time had not been able to disguise that fact. Standing next to the open window as he was, the early morning sunlight bathed him in a golden, warm glow. The droplets of water still clinging to his skin shone and glittered like tiny, many faceted diamonds.

legs. I felt a flush creep up my cheeks. I gulped. I didn't know any man could get to be that huge. He seemed very much at ease standing there, naked, just as if he were putting on clothes.

My eyes, of their own volition, traveled down his body, and rested on the spot between his

Why on earth hadn't he dived for something to cover himself with? And more importantly, why couldn't I get myself to move? Why was I standing there, rooted to the spot like a fool? Damian cleared his throat loudly and my eyes flew back up to his face. There was a flicker of something like amusement in his eyes, and then it was gone, replaced

by his usual unreadable expression. I opened my mouth to apologize, but I could only utter a long, drawn out sigh. My vocal cords seemed to be somewhere in the region of my fluttering heart. My powers of speech had deserted me. "Hello? Are you going to say something?," he asked.

Damian took two steps forward, extended his hand. For one heart stopping moment, I

thought he was going to touch me, and then he snapped his fingers right in my face. I flinched as the sound brought me back to reality, and my cognitive functions were reconnected with the rest of my body. He nodded slowly. "Better. You've been as still as a statue while I've been calling your name

over and over again. For a moment there, I thought you were comatose."

"Sorry," I croaked.

He raised his eyebrows. "What was that? You have to speak louder if you expect me to hear you."

As I struggled to form a coherent apology, with the towel in his hand, which I had not noticed before, Damian rubbed his head and torso dry. His muscles ripped in a way it was impossible to overlook. He gave the towel a quick flick and quickly wrapped it around his waist. "That's better," he murmured. He planted his hands on his hips and regarded me. "You were

saying?" "That I'm so sorry and- and I should leave," I stuttered.

"You should," he agreed and I immediately turned to flee. "But-" I stopped in my tracks.

"You came here for a reason, didn't you?" For a long, embarrassing moment, I could not remember why I had come into Damain's

reduced to a mumbling, blithering idiot. Why did he have such an unnerving effect on me? Damian began stroking his hand against his lower jaw as he regarded me. The movement drew my attention to the curve of his lips. I wished he would stop that. It was

room in the first place. All rational thoughts had gone clean out of my head and I had been

very... distracting. I shifted uneasily. The plates rattled. The sound reminded me of why I was here. "Breakfast," I blurted out. "Breakfast. I- I cooked and came to give you breakfast before you

"You're absolutely right on that score. You weren't thinking. Weren't you supposed to knock before entering a room that isn't yours?"

left for work. I'm so, so sorry that I barged in on you like that. I wasn't thinking. I-"

I flushed a deeper shade of crimson at his scolding. I supposed I did deserve a tongue lashing. What I was thinking, barging into his room, and then openly ogling him? The only excuse I could think of for doing the former was that I had been so excited to cook for him.

He walked over to the dresser, spun the cap off a jar of cream, and without taking his eyes

off me, began to slowly rub it on his arms.

"You're right. I was supposed to knock. I'm sorry."

"Just make sure that it doesn't happen next time. You see, Amelia, my bedroom is my

sanctum. Here, I'm free to do as I please and that may sometimes involve me moving about

in a state of undress. I don't want to spend my time here thinking that the door could open at

any moment and that you would walk in to see me butt naked." The image that called up set my cheeks on fire once again. I squirmed uncomfortably. "You wouldn't want to be the one responsible for making me feel uncomfortable in my own house, would you?" "No. No. Of course not." "Good."

"Uhmm. Where can I drop this?" I asked.

He shrugged and gestured around the room. "Look around, Amelia."

I spotted a table, and almost ran to it. In less than a minute, I swept the items on it to one side and dumped the tray on it. I spun around and hightailed it out of there just as Damian began to smear the cream on his chest. I slammed the door, leaned against it as I tried to control my

on her cheeks had been fascinating to watch.

before he could accuse me of actively spying on him. ****** **DAMIEN**

that I just couldn't resist teasing her, using the incident to my advantage. The bloom of color

The downside of all this was that I was turned on by her bungling, but frankly carnal

appreciation of my physique. She had tried to hide it, but those green eyes of hers gave her

rapidly beating heart. When I heard him moving about the room, I fled down the corridor

I stopped moving and clearly heard the patter of Amelia's footsteps as she ran down the corridor like a bat out of hell. I chuckled, then laughed when I recalled the look on her face. I had been as surprised as she was to find her in my room, but then she had blushed so prettily

away every time. Each look she had cast over me felt like a physical caress.

I turned away from the door and firmly put thoughts of her out of my mind. I was then confronted with the breakfast tray. I decided to ignore it. I couldn't afford to let her get the wrong impression that I was thawing towards her. I dressed quickly and left for work.

The distance from my bedroom to Damian's room suddenly seemed too short. Hadn't I left my room just a second ago? I swallowed nervously and looked back down the hallway. It would be so easy for me to get one of the domestic staff to retrieve the breakfast tray. But

then, what would that make me?

A coward, said a voice in my head.

AMELIA

I nodded. Yes, I would be a coward, running and hiding from my husband in my own home. Who could blame me though? I doubted many husbands scolded their wives and made them feel like silly, errant children the way Damian did. I steeled myself with the thought that Damian had most likely gone to

Finally, I pushed open the door and went in. I breathed deeply. Damian's perfume saturated the entire room. My gaze flickered to the spot where he had been standing, and my breathing sped up again. If I closed my eyes, I would be able to picture him there, exactly as he had

been with every detail intact. I hoped that the picture of a naked Damian would not haunt my

I shook my head to gather my wits and marched to the tray which was exactly in the same

position I had left it. I lifted the covers of the plates, already knowing what I would find. I still felt hurt and disappointed though to have gone through all that trouble just for Damian to leave his food untouched.

work. It had been over an hour since I had been in his room, and it was unlikely that he would still

dreams tonight.

be hanging around up until now. Still, I knocked on the door and listened. Nothing from inside. I knocked three more times for good measure, each knock louder than the last.