

Chapter 17 His Pleading

I wake up alone. Rolling over, my hand reaches out, but Alaric isn't there. Sitting up, I look around, confused and grab my phone.

Your locks are changed, don't give my son a key. Stay safe, Ruby. A x

I want to believe this wasn't the end, but something tells me it was. Standing, I walk down and see Ivy and Bex in the kitchen. Sitting on a chair, Bex hands me a coffee.

"Fun night?" She smirks at me.

"You two were home, right?" I didn't even consider that. Which says a lot, as with Jake I did, every thought was there making me worried and paranoid.

"Oh, we were..." Bex grins. "Jake wasn't happy. He let himself in, heard you, called your name and tried to open the door. Then left swearing about how he will win you back."

Win me back? "He didn't give in?" He should have realised that was the moment to give up.

"Nope." Ivy stands and places flowers on the table.

"Where did these come from?"

"Jake, after your friend changed the locks this morning. Jake came by, was pissed off he couldn't get in. Then asked that we give you these."

How did he get money for flowers? I don't even want to know.

"He's only doing it to try to gain back the money. He needs to stop." He's wasting time trying to play pretend with me when he needs to fix himself.

"Well, he heard you screaming, Daddy, last night, and well, his face said he was shocked. I almost filmed it." Ivy laughs.

"You two were stood outside the room?" My cheeks heat up.

"I heard the door downstairs, so I came out and saw Jake walking upstairs. I tried telling him you were busy, but he made out like that was impossible because he wasn't with you." Bex laughs.

"He asked who was with you, and was honestly confused by the fact you didn't stop when you heard him, if anything you got more wild."

I groan, hearing Ivy.

"Your keys." Bex places them down. "When are you seeing him again?"

"I'm not." Things are done, over and finished.

"You said that when you came home." Ivy laughs.

"Last night was different, and he had been invited there already."

"No, he just had to see you in the dress one more time." Bex giggles.

"Okay, enough. We agreed we wouldn't do it anymore, and we're not." Even if I want to.

"Let me see your list." Bex holds out her hand. Grabbing my bag, I hand her it.

"You crossed out a lot," she says, raising her head. "You've not missed a pill, right?" She laughs slightly.

"Trust me, I haven't. I wouldn't have done it if I wasn't certain I took every single one on time." She smiles and nods.

"So, you had a threesome?" She looks at me, confused.

"No, Alaric had me cross out some that weren't safe. Any crossed out with black are the ones he deemed unsafe."

She grins at me. "He's taking care of you," she says. I laugh slightly at her words.

He was, though—he really was. "He called himself a plaything." They looked at me. "I had doubts and said he was nearly my father-in-law. He told me that now he's my plaything, that I call Daddy and get pleasure from."

I laugh slightly, and they join in.

"He is...kind of. You did use him for pleasure."

"Not use." That's crazy to consider, the fact that I would be happy to get into something more serious with him. I would swap the fun, no strings, for commitment with Alaric.

I'm not going to see him again, though. We need a clean break. We failed at it already, so now I aim to ensure we stick to it.

My day is spent in my room, mostly catching up on missed sleep from being with Alaric. When I wake, I get ready and go to my course, but my mind is constantly going to Alaric.

I want to message him, but he has Jake to think about. I was barely paying attention to the course.

"Cheer up." Bex looks at me from across the table. I watch as Ivy places down the shots. "Drink up." Bex pushes the glass to me.

Picking it up, I drink it down in one swallow. Groaning as it burns my throat.

"Ruby, can we talk?" My head falls forward, hearing Jake. "Please. I've no one else to speak to."

Nodding, I look towards Bex and Ivy, watching as they walk away. Jake sits opposite.

"Now what, Jake?"

"Can we..." My hand goes up.

"Don't! Do not ask me if we can try again or try to fix things. I'm not going back Jake, we're done. Nothing can change that."

He looks at me, defeated. "I'm sorry. I guess now, without the money, I realise just who fucking cares about me. No one." His words are loud.

"People care about you, Jake." His dad, for one.

"No, they don't. Do you know how much I have spent on others? How much I have given away? Nights out drinking where I paid. Now, it's nowhere to be seen. Not a single one of them will even buy me a damn drink."

My head nods. "You used money to gain friends. They weren't ever your friends, Jake. They were there for your money, and now that it's gone, they have moved on to the next fool."

"I know that." He looks around us. "I realised the one person who didn't want me for the money. Who was truly nice to me was you, and I fucked you about more than anyone. I'm sorry."

This is too quick. Something tells me, yes, this has made him realise, but in his head, he's not apologising for fucking me about, but to hope it helps him gain back his money.

"What has your dad said?"

"That until I prove I'm grown, I get nothing. I need to get a job, work, earn money and realise just how hard life is. Easy for him to say, he's sat at home with his money."

My eyes widen. "No! Jake, I know your dad was born into nothing and had nothing growing up. He's been someone like me and the others. He understands, and I don't think him cutting you off was easy."

Sure, Alaric was pissed off, but even I know he struggled to cut him off.

"Apparently, he knew I had cheated on you multiple times. The fact I lied and made you go with me made things worse. That and leaving you that night when he had guests coming."

"I suggest you listen to your dad. Don't run to me and apologise, don't try to get me back, don't play the perfect son, and don't use another woman." That will only make this worse.

"Listen to him? He can get fucked." My eyes widen. "Sorry, but I don't care how bad I was, cutting me off entirely? That is wrong."

"Jake, he worked hard for the money he gave you. It's his right to do with it as he wishes. Rather than hating him, maybe consider how you feel right now when all those friends are gone. You gave them everything, and they just wanted your cash. You're doing that with your dad."

"Whatever. I will get my money back."

Sighing, I nod. "Not if you don't change, Jake. From what you said, you need to work to earn back your father's trust. I don't think this is about you using me, Jake. I think it's the fact that you lied to him for over a year."

"I never lied."

Laughing, I nod. "No? You knew he wouldn't marry me. You took me back to your dad and announced we were engaged. You lied and made out you had changed. You lied, saying we were together, knowing we weren't." How is he so blind? "Jake, I can't believe I am saying this. Stop apologising to me, stop trying to make things up to me, and apologising to your dad. Something tells me you hurt him more than me." Standing, I grab my bag.

"Ruby, please, I have no one."

"You had people, Jake; you just pushed them out like me. Look back and find the real friends whom you laughed off. You have your dad, and you have no idea how lucky you are."

He laughs at my words. "You have both of your parents."

"Who disowned me when I decided I wanted a real relationship with you! I would do anything to get my parents to speak to me, to make amends, and you're here crying like a pathetic child over money and blaming your dad!" I walk out and don't look back.

He's not going to stop, something tells me he will keep trying to apologise, but apologising to me means nothing anymore.