

Chapter 24 Unexpected Person

We walk through the hall. I don't even need to turn to know his eyes are fixed on my ass. I do, though, his eyes raise, and he smirks.

"You need to stop wearing things like this here."

"Would you rather I was nude?" He pulls me to him.

"Don't tempt me to say yes."

Smirking I nod, and turn back, opening the door I can't help but smile.

"Ruby." I freeze, seeing Jake, and hear the door close behind me. I don't move. I have no idea if Alaric is still there, but the door has a glass panel. I turn and look behind, unable to see him.

"Ruby."

Turning, I look at Jake. "What?" My word is quiet. "Why are you here?"

"You avoided me all week. You said you were busy, but come here?" He stands, looking around the room.

"Jake, you need to stop following me."

"If you had answered, I wouldn't need to."

"I don't have my phone with me, Jake." I left it at home so I could avoid his calls. "How did you find out I was here?"

"Ivy said you were with Bex but wouldn't say where. I rang Lucy, and she told me where you were." He looks around us. "What the fuck is this place anyway?"

"Jake, you need to leave."

"Who is the guy?" I don't answer. "Ruby, who is the guy you're seeing? I have a right to know."

"Jake, please stop. We're at a private business, don't do this here." I've avoided any communication with him. I had an assignment due, so that was my excuse.

He moves and lips press against mine, moving I push him back.

"Jake!" What the fuck. "No!" He moves to kiss me again.

"Jake, Ruby." I look up and see Alaric; he came from another direction. "Why are you two here?"

"Dad? What is going on?" Jake looks between me and Alaric.

"You tell me. Someone came to my office and said someone was causing a scene. She said no."

"I'm not talking to you." Jake turns away from Alaric and looks at me. "Can we please sort this?"

"Jake, this isn't the place." Alaric looks at him. "Get in here." Alaric opens a door and pulls Jake in, and I follow.

"Why are you here?" Jake looks at me.

"I'm with someone; that's all you need to know, Jake. So stop trying to get me back." I was hoping he had given up.

"And you?" He looks at Alaric.

"This is my business, Jake; you just didn't know."

"And you knew she was here?" Jake stares at him.

"No, I didn't know until I saw you and her together. Jake, she said it's over, so listen to her and stop following her around." Alaric looks at him.

"Nothing makes fucking sense! No one goes from one extreme to the other. You're lying about something." He looks at me, waiting.

"I'm not lying about anything, Jake. I took your advice. There's more action in a board game, right?"

He stills at my words. "I didn't mean it."

Laughing, I nod. "Well, if you did or didn't, it makes no difference. We broke up. I've moved on, and I'm not coming back. So stop following me."

"Fuck you both." I watch him storm out.

"Look, I'll grab Bex, and you two go home. I will go to Jake's and try to sort things out and explain this place now that he knows." Smiling, he walks out of the room. Standing up, I go out and sit through at the bar. There are still a lot of people here.

Ages later, Bex walks through. Smiling, she wraps her arm around mine. "Come on, you can tell me everything on the drive home."

We leave together. Sitting in the car, I spoke to her about how I ended up with Alaric instead of Kian. Then I explained about Jake showing up. I expected Alaric to stay hidden.

Him coming out meant telling Jake about that place, and he didn't seem to want Jake to know about those businesses.

"Maybe you just need to tell Jake?" I turn to Bex. "Yeah, for a bit, things will go boom and blow up. Surely, though, it's better than him just walking in one, you two?"

She's right but also wrong. "Right now, he isn't speaking to Alaric because of the money. So add this and it will be worse. Alaric has told me they barely fell out. They were close. Until I came along."

I changed everything. She stops the car, and I see Alaric's.

"He just can't keep away." She grins at me.

"Behave." Getting out, I walk to his car and see him.

"How do I get into his little party? The guys on the door won't let me in because I'm a parent."

"You won't; some of the people will be doing drugs, Alaric, so they won't let anyone in who they see as may cause an issue." I know what he means. "I will go and ask him to come out."

"No, I can't get you involved." His head shakes.

"Alaric, I'm involved, and I will get in no problem."

"Fine, get Bex to follow. If Jake comes out, he will be in the car with me." I nod and wave at Bex, and she nods, knowing what I mean. Sitting in the car with him, he stays quiet.

"They wouldn't even pass on a fucking message."

"Because the place is locked down. It's private, and only certain people can enter, or a lot of cash." He stops the car and follows me to the door.

"Ruby, you know the rules."

"He's waiting out here. I'll speak to Jake." The guys nod and move out of the way. Walking through the building, I ignore the games room. He won't be in there. I walk past the dance room and into the lounge with the dancers.

I look across the room, seeing Jake with a woman dancing ahead of him while stripping. Walking over, he looks at me and then back to her.

"Jake, your dad wants you."

"My dad?" He laughs and stares at me. "My dad..."

"Jake, come on."

"Come on, what, Ruby? Why are you with him again?"

"Because they wouldn't pass on the message or let him in. So he came to mine to ask me to get you."

He laughs and nods. "Ironic."

"Jake, your dad is worried for you."

Standing, he laughs. "He didn't look worried in the videos."

What? I stared at him confused. "Why were you in that place tonight? Why was my dad there?"

"It's his business."

"Bullshit! You fucked him!" People turn and look at us.

"Jake, you can't just assume that. It is his business, and that's why he is here trying to talk to you."

"Don't lie! I saw the videos, Ruby! I went by yours and pushed past Ivy. I knew you were lying, so I got your phone and figured out the password to the locked videos."

Shit. "Jake."

"No! You fucked my dad!" Everyone turns and stares. "You're the reason he cut me off. Those few days we went to visit, it was then. So what, he fucks you, and you get my money."

"Jake, stop. You have it wrong." My words are quiet, and everyone is watching.

"I have it wrong?" He grabs his phone. "Shall we ask everyone here if I have it wrong?" I watch as he does something.

"Jake, what are you doing?"

"Sharing the videos, let's see who is wrong."

"Don't you dare Jake!" Alaric rushes in and takes his phone. Was he really going to fucking share the videos?

"You're a hypocrite, telling me to grow up; all along, you were fucking her behind my back." Jake stands, and I can see he is hurt.

"I agree. Get in the car so I can talk to you. Please, Jake. Don't run and ignore me, listen, then by all means go. I will give you the money, and you can leave. Just listen." Alaric looks at him.

"Fine." I watch as Jake turns and walks out, Alaric reaching out for me, my hand stops him.

"Ruby."

"No." This is my fault, standing here, now, if I consider it, I would be worse than Jake if I had found out my dad slept with Bex, or my mum slept with Jake.

"Just come out and talk to me."

"Alaric, he's your son. I'm sorry, but if we continue doing this when he is already so emotionally unstable, we will make it worse. Fix things with Jake, then yes. I won't be the reason you never speak to your son again."

He pulls me out of the room, away from everyone. "Ruby, think about this."

"I have. I would do just about anything to get my parents to speak to Alaric. I know how it feels to be stood on the outside and feel like you don't know things. That just happened to Jake."

"You're really doing this?" He looks at me, shocked.

"I caused this. Him losing his money, fine; me refusing to take him back, fine. Us two, though? If I continue to see you now, Alaric, it will make him worse, and I won't get between you both." I can't do that.

"Fine. Fuck you." I watch him turn and walk away. It's for the best until he and Jake are sorted or at least on speaking terms. Walking out, I climb into Bex's car.

"You broke this off, right?" I nod at her. "Ruby, this is different from you and your parents. You did nothing wrong; Jake has."

"Maybe so, but I know how it feels to lose your parents or feel like you have. I wasn't saying I wouldn't see or speak to him, just that I think we would wait a bit until Jake has calmed down."

"He took it as you were ending everything." She looks at me.

"Yeah. Jake had the videos of me and Alaric." She turns and stares. "Exactly, he knows everything, Bex, and even I know right now Alaric should focus on sorting that with Jake, then fucking me." Getting out, I walk in. Going to my room I find my phone on the floor.

Grabbing it I lool through, he has sent the videos to himself. Why?

"Give him time to calm down and realise what you meant, Ruby." Bex smiles at me.

"Sorry, I answered and he pushed in. He was doing something on your phone and then stormed out." Ivy hugs me.

"Everyone knows." I turn to Bex, confused. "There's a video of you and Jake arguing, then Alaric, and you two, then just you and Alaric. It's been sent to everyone."

All I can do is nod. "Let me guess, I'm the whore who went to his dad for revenge?" I look at her.

"Pretty much. That and a gold digger cause people actually think Alaric gave you his money."

Laughing, I nod. "I've had a dress and mask, that is all. I've not had a penny from either of them."

"They don't need proof; to them, it's true." Ivy smiles at me.

"I don't care. I know the truth and couldn't give a damn what other people think." I don't, and there's no way I will go into hiding. I did that after I caught Jake cheating. I won't do it now as well.

My eyes go to my phone. I want to message Alaric now, but I won't. I'll leave it a few days until everything has calmed down. Then I will reach out and apologise, and explain what I meant.