

## Chapter 31 Asking Him

We sat eating, and I explained that it was a worker error that caused him to get so many delivered. He seemed shocked that I got the manufacturer to agree to take back four hundred and refund them.

I'm guessing he thought I would struggle. Seeing the history of the orders showed that Alaric's business is one of the manufacturer's biggest buyers, so my threatening to go elsewhere made them agree.

He has still not spoken about what happened with Max; he's keeping that secret under tight lips. He turned off his phone when we walked in here, which I have a feeling he might regret if anything messes up at the business.

I've agreed to stay at his place on the days I won't be studying, it's only for another three months, then I won't be restricted. I'm not now, but apparently, it would be wrong of him to let me skip classes.

"Jake never said, so what family do you have?" I assume they have family, or is it just Jake and his dad?

"My parents are still alive; I also have a brother. He has two kids. I rarely see them; I work a lot and don't have time. You just have your parents, right?"

"Had my parents." I need to ask, I've avoided it, but I can't anymore. "Alaric, how old are you?"

He glances at me briefly. "Guess."

"No thanks, just tell me." He looks about thirty-five, but if he is, that would have made him like fourteen when he had Jake. So that's not possible.

"Thirty-eight. Why?" So, he was seventeen when Jake was born?

"You were only seventeen when Jake was born?"

"Let's go in, and you can ask." He gets out, and I walk in with him following me. Going into my room, I sit and look at him.

"What do you want to know, Ruby?" He sits looking at me.

"It's fine if you don't want to talk about it." I'm not sure he if it's even right for me to ask things already.

"Just, come on. Ask."

"So, were you seventeen when Jake was born?"

"Yes, I was." He looks at me, waiting.

He was young, so when did she leave? He mentioned he had to work for what he had, so being that young, does that mean he didn't have anything when Jake was born? Did the woman disappear before or after he built his business?

"You're thinking and not asking baby girl." He pulls me closer.

"I'm just...How old was she, and when did she leave? Was it before or after your businesses?"

He chuckles slightly. "I met Beatrix when I was fourteen, and she was seventeen." Wait, my eyes widen at his words. "She was twenty when Jake was born, and she was gone within a year. I started my first business at nineteen; I had no choice; I had Jake to look after. It took a lot of work and time; when I was about twenty-three, it really kicked off and expanded a lot."

She was an adult and left essentially a child with the baby? I stare at him in shock.

"Why did she leave?" I don't understand.

"There's no answer; I don't know. I can assume, but she simply packed the bags left a note one morning saying she couldn't live this life and left."

So she never told him why or explained?

"I'm sorry." I shouldn't have asked, why did I anyway?

"Ruby, I'm fine with answering anything you need. You will have questions, and I have to answer; I can't refuse. You have a right to know."

Do I, though? I consider it and stare at him as I realise. "You haven't been in a relationship since you were eighteen?" Make no wonder why he reacted so badly when I tried saying we needed to take a step back.

"Relationships, yes, but they were always within the lifestyle; they were built and based around a contract."

A contract to keep him safe. "Did you ever try to start a relationship without a contract?"

His head shakes. "No, I stepped into the lifestyle and accepted that was my way forward. I never touched a woman after if there wasn't the contract, the terms stated and such."

Opening my mouth to talk, his hand goes up. "Until you." My mouth shuts at his words. He didn't; I just realised that he hasn't even mentioned a contract or terms. I was already well outside his norm. He had changed a lot with me.

"You used contracts to protect yourself and hide." He did, it's a fact.

"Maybe, who knows?" He smirks, and I laugh. Is that him in denial or not wanting to accept it out loud?

I'm still shocked that he was fourteen and the woman was seventeen. The age difference is nothing, but he was practically a child.

"You're looking at me weird, why?" His words are barely a whisper.

"I'm not looking at you weird, just processing everything." Smiling at him, I move and climb onto his body. "So, Max?" He can't keep avoiding it.

The feel of his hand wrapping around the back of my neck has me smiling. "I told you what happened." As I open my mouth to object and argue with him, he silences me. His tongue gliding into my mouth.

My hands drop and begin unfastening his shirt, as the last button undoes, my hands slide along his chest, and up to his shoulders. Pushing his shirt down and off his body, I move onto his trousers.

His hands capture mine, and I sulk until I realise he's lifting my dress from me. He moves until I'm laid below him, and my hands go back to unfastening his trousers. Grasping his cock, I begin to tease him slow.

I'm bored of him always having control. Pushing him over, I straddle him and lower myself onto his cock. His hand grips my hip.

"Ruby."

Ignoring him, I move his hand from my hip and begin moving against him. His head shakes and he looks at me unamused. I don't care though. I move faster, and he grips my neck, my hands stroking down my chest as I continue to fuck him.

I watch as his control slowly slips away, he pulls me down onto him, kissing me deeply as his hips begin working in unison with mine. His body moves until I'm below him.

Gripping my chin he stares at me. "We were meant to be talking."

"Talking sucks Daddy." He groans at my words and I try to move against him. His head drops and his mouth teases my neck, his hips begin moving again. I smile feeling his hand cover my mouth as his thrusts become more lethal, each one causing pleasure to pulse through my body.

My body and mind crying out as he keeps going, working faster until he groans and finishes. His body stays over mine as his mouth kisses my neck. Grasping my chin, he looks at me and smiles. "We were meant to talk, not fuck."

Well, we failed at that. I laugh slightly. "Wait, I was you started this!" He used it to distract me from my question.

"I kissed you, you stripped me. So you started it. Just, sleep you have classes tomorrow."

Pouting at him, my head shakes. "And if I refuse Daddy?" I bite my lip and smile.

"Then I go home."

"Fuck, okay. There I was thinking you would threaten to spank me." I laugh slightly.

Chuckling he nods. "Normally yes, but it's late. That threat would keep you up longer. Don't argue, just sleep." Rolling my eyes I nod.

"Fine, but you're not getting out of telling me what happened with Max." He can't keep avoiding it.

"I think I can." He smirks and pulls me closer to him. "Just sleep."

Not arguing, I give and fall asleep. I didn't get to sleep until late last night, then I was up early this morning. So falling asleep was easy.

I woke alone, but a message from Alaric explained he left early to go back home and work and to message when I'm awake. Walking down to the kitchen I grab something quick for breakfast.

"You're up." Bex looks at me.

"Yeah, I've got to leave soon for class. I'm guessing Ivy is still in bed?"

She nods and laughs. "With Oliver by what I just heard."

Laughing I nod. When this course is over, I need to move. The almost four hour drive isn't good. "I might be moving after the course."

Her head snaps up. "He's not that good in bed that you have to move."

My head falls as I laugh at her words. "That's not why! It's four hours away, it makes things hard."

"So we lose you in a few months?" She stares at me.

"Maybe, we will see. It's just a warning before it happens." I don't want to just go along with things then suddenly drop it on them I'm moving.

"I'm glad Oliver is still here, he can tell me what happened as Alaric still hasn't." I might have given him silent treatment until he told me, but that didn't go well before.

"You don't need Oliver to." She moves and grabs her phone. "There's a video."

Shit. That can't be good.

"How bad is it?" They were meant to forget it.

"Not bad, here." She hands the phone, and I stare at it.

"Can't you just tell me what happens?"

Laughing, she stands. "Nope, enjoy." I watch her walk out. Great, I'm not sure why I'm so resistant to watching it.

Alaric

Walking in, I glance around, and Oliver steps ahead of me. "Max, you're needed." I watch as everyone turns and looks towards us, which doesn't help with me figuring out who the hell Max is.

It's clear from the whispers they know who I am though, so maybe me getting Ruby to grab Jake that day was a mistake. Waiting, I watch as a guy walks out. He stands looking at us confused.

"What the fuck do you want?" He looks at me annoyed.

"To talk, if possible?" To start with anyway.

He stands confused and people continue to watch.

"You hurt Ruby."

He laughs and steps closer. "I didn't, she's lying."

Other than Oliver, I have yet to meet a single person from around here that Jake spent time with who wasn't an asshole.

"The black eye says different." I step closer to him.

He shrugs like he's confused. "No idea how that happened, ask her again. Watch her story change, let's be honest, it could have been any one, she goes through men quick, especially the dads."

I bite my tongue to stop from punching him. "Tell me Max, do you know how it feels to think you have a choice in something and suddenly realise you're powerless and that your choice is ignored?"

He laughs and steps closer. "I'm not fucking powerless." His words are spat at me. I watch Oliver walk behind him.

"No, you just like to hit women who refuse to fuck you. Right? You feel powerful because you go for those who can't fight back. So why not swing for someone who can fight back?"

"Fine." He moves to hit me and Oliver grabs his hands stopping him, stepping forward I punch him. Moving, I hold the knife against his throat.

"Still feel powerful Max?" I lean in closer. "How does it feel to realise you have no choice if I slide this knife across your neck? How does it feel to realise you are weak?"

I watch as he fights to get out of Oliver's hold. "Remember this feeling Max next time you try to force a woman into bed or hit her for refusing you." Stepping back, Oliver releases him and I watch as he turns and rushes off.

Point made I think.

Ruby

I stare at the screen. He threatened to kill him, or in so many words anyway. Rolling my eyes I take out my phone.

I'm awake, and we need to talk about what happened with Max

He can't avoid it.

I'm in a meeting right now baby girl, after?

Of course he is busy, laughing I walk upstairs and start getting ready, okay I should reply.

Fine, after. Then I want to discuss something else as well. Like when do I get a contract?

He reads it but doesn't reply. My morning disappears in class, while I constantly look at my phone and don't have a reply. Is that because he's busy?

Well?

He can't avoid it.

I'll see you tonight and talk about you wanting a contract.

So is that a yes, or no? He's too vague.