

A Favor To My Boss

Chapter 31:

Lost in the rush of her lips on mine, I gave in, even as a small voice in my head warned me it was reckless. Winona's hand skimmed over my chest, her fingers brushing my skin and sending a shiver through me. My body tightened under her touch, wanting more. Both my hands slid down her back and settled firmly on her hips, drawing her in. The way our mouths met pulled soft moans from us—electrifying, breathless.

Then a furious shout cut through the haze.

“What the hell do you think you’re doing?” Leona’s voice snapped us back to reality. But honestly, I wished she’d storm out so I could keep going.

Winona didn’t flinch. With a wicked smile still on her lips, she slowly turned her head to meet Leona’s stare.

“Do you need something?” she asked, breathless from our kiss.

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“Excuse me? This is my house, and that’s my husband. Why are you still here, you little slut?” Leona spat, her voice sharp and cold.

“Let’s clear a few things up. First, this house is Davidson’s, not yours. You never paid a bill, never worked a shift. Second, he’s your ex-husband, and you have no one to blame but yourself. And third? We were busy having fun before you barged in. So why don’t you leave—since nobody invited you here?” Winona didn’t waver. Her gaze hardened.

Shock ran through me. I’d never seen Winona speak like that. Her fury was unmistakable, her fists clenched at her sides. Neither of us moved, frozen in that intimate position on the couch while tension crackled through the room.

“Who the hell do you think you are, talking to me like that? I’ll make sure you regret it. I’ll ruin you,” Leona hissed, her voice turning poisonous.

Winona slid off my lap, straightened her posture, and walked toward Leona without a hint of fear.

“And how exactly do you think you’re going to do that? You have nothing on me. Honestly, I’m done with your games. I used to bite my tongue and put up with your cruelty for Davidson’s sake. That’s over. I don’t owe you anything,” Winona shot back.

“Don’t play innocent. You were sneaking around with my husband behind my back.” Leona narrowed her eyes, her anger rising.

While Winona confronted her, I quickly pulled my shirt back on and moved closer, ready to step in before things got worse.

“I’ll say it one last time: nothing happened between Winona and me while I was with you. I wasn’t the one who cheated—you were. What are you doing here, Leona? I’m sick of you barging in and treating Winona like she’s beneath you!” I snapped, my patience gone.

“So you’re really choosing her over me?” Leona spat, her words dripping with venom.

“Yes. I am,” I replied with a calm shrug, making my position clear.

Leona didn’t back down. Instead, she marched straight up to Winona, getting so close it felt like a challenge.

“Is it your thing to go after married men? What could he possibly see in you? Honestly, look at yourself.” Leona’s voice dripped with disdain as she sized Winona up.

“Enough! Get out of here! Get out of my house—now!” I shouted, my voice echoing through the room.

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“You think any of that is supposed to hurt me? Sorry, but I don’t care about you. Maybe you should crawl back to your new boyfriend before I tell him what you’ve been doing. You never deserved Davidson, and everyone knows it. You’ve always been a spoiled, gold-digging leech,” Winona fired back.

Who would’ve thought Winona could speak with that kind of defiant edge? I had to fight to hide my smile. For once, someone was giving Leona exactly what she deserved—and Winona was leading the charge.

Watching my ex, I saw her fury build, her face twisting with frustration at being pushed onto the defensive.

“You know what you are? Absolutely nothing. Enjoy it while it lasts. It won’t, anyway. He couldn’t even satisfy me in bed. Honestly, the best thing I ever did was leave—my new boyfriend actually knows how to treat a woman. Davidson isn’t worth the air he breathes.” She shot me a venomous look, like she was daring me to argue.

Her words hit like a punch, freezing me in place. When you hear someone tear you down for long enough, it starts to seep in. Before I could process it, Winona stepped forward, squaring up to Leona.

“How dare you? You don’t get to talk about him like that. Davidson is a great man. You’re trash—a liar, a cheater, and the most self-centered person I’ve ever met. And if we’re talking about bedroom skills, sweetheart, trust me—the problem was you, not him.” Winona’s words came out soft and steady, fearless. She only meant to rile Leona up, but hearing her defend me so fiercely moved something deep in my chest.

“Maybe you were never good enough for him, sweetheart. I’ll only say this once: get out of my way and leave Davidson’s house, or I’ll do something about that pretty face of yours,” Winona warned, her voice calm and cold.

Leona stared at me, stunned—clearly expecting me to take her side. But that was never going to happen.

“Out. Now. And don’t ever show up here again!” I roared.

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Whatever response Leona had been ready to spit out vanished when Winona leveled her with a look. Finally, she realized she wasn’t getting an ounce of support from me. With a dramatic huff and a flip of her hair, she stormed out like a sulking child.

“This isn’t over!” she screamed before slamming the door so hard the walls shook.

Winona turned, her expression softening as it settled on me. The damage Leona left behind must have shown on my face. Without a word, Winona squeezed my hand, steadying me in silence.

“Hey. Are you okay? Please tell me you don’t believe a single word that woman just said.”

“I get it. Still, when you hear the same insults over and over, they start to sink in—whether you want them to or not.” I ran my fingers through my hair and let out a heavy sigh.

“She doesn’t deserve you, Davidson. You deserve so much more,” Winona murmured, offering me a warm, encouraging smile.

The corners of my mouth lifted—barely—in response. Without thinking, I pulled her into a tight hug. She wrapped her arms around me immediately, holding on just as firmly, and I let myself take comfort in her support.

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“Thank you,” I murmured, my voice barely above a whisper.

Winona’s eyes shone with kindness as she smiled back. “When you need me, I’ll be here,” she said.

“How about that movie and another glass of wine? I feel like we both earned it tonight.” I let out a genuine laugh, finally starting to relax.

“Sounds perfect,” Winona said, and her laughter lightened the air between us.

No one had ever defended me the way Winona just did. Most of the time, I fight my own battles—people know better than to push me, and I don’t tolerate anyone’s bullshit. Still, that doesn’t make me immune to being hurt, especially when someone knows exactly where to strike. No one ever knew how to cut me down like that woman—the one who would soon be my ex. In those last months together, she seemed to take every opportunity to remind me how easily she could get under my skin.

Honestly, I couldn't wait for the divorce to be final. Only then would I cut her out of my life for good. Maybe that was exactly what I needed if I ever wanted a real chance to start over.

Davidson's Point of View:

A dull ache in my neck pulled me from sleep. When I tried to move, I realized I wasn't alone on the couch—someone was pressed against me, turned away. It took a few seconds to register that Winona had curled up beside me.

I had no idea how we'd ended up like this. I didn't even remember either of us falling asleep, which was strange, considering we'd only had two glasses of wine.

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Then again, the fight with Leona had probably left us both exhausted. My mind drifted to one specific moment: Winona on top of me. Kissing her on the couch had been thrilling—electric—and I couldn't pretend I hadn't enjoyed every second. Too bad it had all been an act.

Looking down, I noticed my arm was wrapped around her, natural and easy. Somehow, her body fit perfectly against mine. Having someone this close felt unfamiliar, but I couldn't deny I liked it. Lately, I'd had my flings, but none of them had stayed the night—not in my bed, not under my roof.

I wasn't ready for this. Leona had been the only woman allowed to share my bed, and letting someone else in felt wrong. It was too soon.

Part of me knew I should wake her and let her go, even in the middle of the night if she wanted. Still, I didn't move. It had been so long since I'd felt this kind of calm with someone beside me. Letting her sleep felt easier than facing what came after.

Moving as quietly as I could, I grabbed the blanket draped over the back of the couch and pulled it over us both. Then I settled again, my arm finding its place around her. For the first time in a long while, I felt genuinely at peace.

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Her fingers slid over mine and rested there, unintentional on her part. I didn't pull away. Rationally, I knew it was probably a bad idea to let things stay like this—especially when she didn't seem to have any romantic intention toward me. It was just comfort. Nothing more.

What harm could it do? Worst case, she'd wake up, realize where she was, and maybe slap me out of reflex. Still, it wasn't like anything inappropriate was happening.

A small shift on her side made me tense, unsure if she was waking. Maybe she could pretend she was still asleep. Instead, she rolled over, pressing herself closer, one hand pushing my shirt up as she slept. My heart kicked hard at how intimate it felt. Thank God the couch was spacious, or things would've gotten uncomfortable fast.

I couldn't help watching her for a moment, a smile tugging at my mouth. Even asleep, Winona looked impossibly sweet. Carefully, I brushed a loose strand of hair from her face, earning only a quiet sigh as she sank deeper into sleep.

I realized again how beautiful she was. There was no point pretending otherwise—any man could see it. With a sigh, I forced myself to get a grip. She was my assistant. She was here only to help me this weekend. Letting my mind wander was a bad idea. I closed my eyes and tried to fall asleep again.

With only a few hours before we had to be up for work, I wondered if I could call in sick and let the manager handle things for the day. It had been ages since I'd taken a weekday off. Maybe I could even convince Winona to take a break with me. A simple excuse would cover us: a sudden business meeting that needed our attention outside the office. That should work.

“Oh, shit.”

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The words echoed through the living room, followed by the unmistakable sound of something—or someone—hitting the floor. Blinking awake, I looked around, completely disoriented. Winona wasn’t on the couch.

“Ouch!” A sudden groan made me glance down.

She was sprawled on the floor, rubbing the back of her neck with one hand. I couldn’t stop myself from laughing, even though I tried.

Winona glared at me. “This isn’t funny, you know,” she huffed. “Did we really fall asleep?”

“Honestly, I have no idea. You didn’t hurt yourself, did you?” I tried to keep my face straight, but failed miserably.

“I feel awful about this, Davidson. I probably shouldn’t have fallen asleep like that beside you.” Winona managed a shy smile as she pushed herself up.

“Really, it’s fine. It’s nothing.” I chuckled.

“Can you tell me what time it is?” she asked.

“It’s five in the morning,” I said.

“Seriously? Oh no! We have to be at work in a few hours. I need to get home, shower, and put on something that doesn’t smell like sleep.” She sprang to her feet, panicked.

Her frantic pacing made me laugh, so I reached out and gently caught her wrist, stopping her. Winona’s eyes met mine, worry carved into her face.

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“Take a deep breath, Winona. There’s no need to rush. I’ve decided we’re not working today. I’ll tell everyone at the office we have an urgent matter to handle outside.” I smiled as I offered the idea.

“Are you seriously asking me to use some rookie excuse? I’ve never tried that. I don’t even know if I could pull it off,” she said.

“You’re forgetting something. I’m your boss, remember? I’m officially telling you not to go to work today, so you have to listen. We can sleep a little longer. We can even go for a walk after we eat. The company won’t fall apart if we’re not there for a few hours.” My tone softened into a tease.

I hoped she’d play along. At first she stayed quiet, staring at me like she couldn’t quite make sense of me. The silence stretched long enough to test my patience, but then a small, reluctant smile curved her lips and she nodded.

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“That’s better,” I grinned, giving her hand a gentle squeeze. “This time, let’s find an actual bed and catch up on sleep,” I joked with a laugh.

“A bed? I hope you mean separate beds.” Winona lifted an eyebrow.

“Looks like the second bed isn’t even made,” I said with a wicked smile. “Relax, Winona. I’m just messing with you. The guest room is ready.” The moment I said it, I saw a flash of panic in her eyes.

“Come on. I’ll show you where it is,” I added, laughing.

Winona reached out and gave me a playful smack on the arm. “You’re a disaster,” she said, laughing with me.

Together, we walked down the hall to the guest room, a couple of doors from mine.

“Do you need something comfortable to sleep in? I can bring you one of my shirts if you want,” I offered.

When she nodded, I left her to check the room while I went to grab one. I came back and handed it to her.

“Here. Thanks for staying tonight, Winona. I’ll pay you back with breakfast in the morning,” I added with a smile.

“You know I always say yes to breakfast, but you don’t have to go out of your way for me. Honestly, I’m only accepting because I know you cook beautifully,” she said, her eyes lighting up.

I chuckled and nodded. “Deal. Get some rest. If you need anything tonight, or you just want company, you know where my room is.”

I finished with a wink.

Winona planted a hand on her hip, gave me a mock-serious look, and tilted her head. “Sure.”

“It was just a friendly offer. Goodnight. Sleep well, Winona.” I smiled as I headed for the door.

“I’ll remember that, boss. Goodnight. See you tomorrow,” she replied with a soft laugh.

Leaving her in the guest room, I went back to mine. After stripping, I slipped beneath the sheets and let out a long, silent sigh. That familiar ache of loneliness rushed back—sharper than before.

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For a second, I thought about going back, maybe just to be near her, to fill the empty space beside me. But I stopped. I knew she didn't want that—not tonight. So I stayed where I was, bracing myself for another long, lonely night.

Winona's Point of View:

When I opened my eyes, it took me a second to remember I was in Davidson's guest room. The memory of falling asleep with him—right there on the couch—hit me all at once. I'd never planned for that to happen, but honestly, I hadn't slept that deeply in years. Having someone's warmth beside me... well, I'd almost forgotten how much I missed it.

Thinking about Leona made my jaw tighten. She was lucky I hadn't completely lost my temper over the way she'd spoken—to me and to Davidson. The whole situation left a bitter taste in my mouth.

Watching him wilt under her words bothered me more than I wanted to admit. That wasn't the version of him I liked seeing.

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"Winona, are you awake?" A soft knock sounded at the door.

"Yes, come in," I replied.

Davidson stepped inside, comfortable and relaxed in sweatpants and a T-shirt. Somehow, that simple look suited him perfectly. He gave me an easy smile, and I found myself returning it as he sat on the edge of the bed.

"Did you sleep well?" he asked softly.

"Yes. Actually, it's the best night's sleep I've had in a long time," I said with a smile.

"How about breakfast? You can take a shower first if you want. I'll find you something clean to wear until you get home," he suggested.

The thought of showering and then putting yesterday's clothes back on made me wrinkle my nose. I wanted to feel clean.

“I think I’m going to take you up on the shower,” I blurted.

“Okay. Wear whatever you want from my closet,” he said with a warm smile. “Or, if you prefer, there’s a robe hanging up.”

I stretched as I got out of bed, and suddenly remembered I was wearing nothing but his shirt and my underwear. I realized it at the exact moment I caught him looking—his gaze lingering a little too long.

“Dammit.” I laughed and tugged the shirt down, trying to cover myself.

Davidson chuckled and slipped out of the room, leaving my thoughts in a mess. I couldn’t believe I’d walked around like that. He really didn’t need to see that much. We’d blurred boundaries more times than I cared to admit.

Honestly, the fewer moments like this we had, the better. Otherwise, working together was going to get very awkward.

I spotted the robe he’d mentioned, pulled it from the hook, and put it on before stepping out. Davidson was waiting in the hallway with an amused smile. I rolled my eyes and walked past him without looking, determined not to give him the satisfaction.

“Pick whatever you want,” he said, gesturing toward a pile of shirts and jackets.

He had a wardrobe that could rival any fashion addict’s, and I actually laughed, shaking my head in disbelief.

“Honestly, Davidson, I think you have a bigger collection than I do,” I teased.

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“What can I say? I appreciate good clothes.” He shot me a proud look and grinned.

“You’re officially worse than any woman I know,” I replied, glancing back over my shoulder.

Davidson only shrugged and winked, his eyes resting on me a moment longer than necessary. The hallway fell quiet, the air thickening as we held a long, silent look that neither of us seemed willing to break.

I decided it was better not to stay in that moment and stepped away, cutting through whatever tension had started to build. Behind me, Davidson let out an exaggerated sigh, and I couldn’t help wondering what it might’ve been like if I hadn’t moved.

His closet was a treasure, but I went straight for comfort: a simple white T-shirt and a pair of his designer sweatpants. Turning around, I held them up for his approval.

“What do you think of these?” I asked.

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“Perfect. I’ll also bring you a clean pair of boxers,” he said with a grin.

Relief washed over me. There was no way I was going digging through his underwear drawer. That would be too much, even for us. Still, the idea of wearing his boxers felt more intimate than I was ready to admit.

“Here you go. The shower’s at the end of the hall. How do bacon, eggs, and toast sound?” He handed them to me like it was the most normal thing in the world.

“Thank you. That sounds incredible.” My stomach answered for me with a loud growl.

Davidson headed to the kitchen while I went straight to the shower. The bathroom was almost as big as my old bedroom, and the water pressure was heavenly. The moment I stepped under the spray, the heat loosened every knot in my muscles and had me sighing in satisfaction.

Tempted to linger, I forced myself to be quick since breakfast was already happening. Once I was dressed, I followed the scent of frying bacon into the kitchen, where Davidson was humming by the stove.

“Need help with anything?” I asked.

“Yeah. Would you mind setting the table?” He glanced at me with a smile.

“Anything for you, boss,” I joked, rummaging through the cabinets until I finally found the plates. Davidson laughed at me, but I held one up triumphantly.

“I did it!” I exclaimed, sticking my tongue out at him as I pulled the plates from the cabinet.

After setting the table, I made coffee for both of us and sat down just as Davidson slid a plate piled with bacon, eggs, and toast in front of me. I couldn’t help letting out a small sigh—the food smelled incredible.

Davidson’s scent reached me as he sat down. I didn’t waste any time eating, surprised by how hollow my stomach felt. Between bites, I looked at him. He was just pushing his food around with his fork, not really eating.

You didn’t have to be a genius to see something was bothering him. And if I had to guess, it had everything to do with Leona.

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“Davidson, are you okay?” I asked softly.

“Yeah. While you were in the shower, Leona texted me,” he said with a deep sigh.

“Oh yeah? And what did she want this time?” I lifted an eyebrow.

“She was being sickly sweet. Started with apologies and talking to me gently, and then she sent me a picture of herself in lingerie. She said she wants to fix things,” he replied.

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I could already picture her games, and I knew if she kept pushing, he’d probably give in. Staying in a physical relationship with her was only making things worse for him.

“So... is any of that getting to you?” I asked.

“Not yet. You’re the one keeping me distracted right now. But she knows if she keeps trying, I’ll give in—like I always do.” He shrugged, offering a bitter smile.

“Sounds like you just need a better distraction,” I said with a smile, deciding to lighten the mood.

“Oh yeah? And what’s your grand plan?” Davidson chuckled. “Are you going to camp out in my guest room and knock some sense into me every time I start thinking about her?”

He laughed, and it eased the tension between us. I realized he was just trying to get Leona out of his head—maybe to make things lighter for both of us.

“I’m pretty sure if I moved in as your personal distraction, people would raise a few eyebrows,” I teased, smiling at him. “But don’t worry—I’ll come up with something better.”

“Hey, I’m in if you’re in,” he said with a shrug, a spark of mischief in his eyes.

I rolled my eyes, finished the last sip of my coffee, and started clearing the dishes. Remembering he actually had a dishwasher this time, I gave everything a quick rinse and stacked the plates neatly inside.

Davidson hovered nearby, watching me clean with mild disapproval. I pretended not to notice, which seemed to frustrate him even more, and for some reason, that made me laugh.

“What about a walk to Coney Island?” he said suddenly, appearing beside me.

“Weren’t we supposed to work this afternoon?” I raised an eyebrow.

“I changed my mind. Let’s distract ourselves for a while. We’ll have dinner later—my treat—as a thank-you for putting up with me. Besides, I haven’t been in years, and the weather’s perfect.” A crooked smile tugged at his mouth.

The hopeful look in his eyes and that lopsided smile caught me off guard. I realized it had been forever since I’d done anything spontaneous. Maybe a small escape was exactly what we both needed.

“Of course, but I’ll need to stop by my place to change first. It’s already warm, and I can’t go dressed like this,” I said with a smile.

“Fair enough. And thank you,” Davidson replied, still smiling.

We finished tidying up together, gathered the last dishes, and then headed out.

“All set,” I said with a smile as I stepped out of my room.

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After pulling on a pair of shorts and a T-shirt over my tank top, I headed for the door.

“Wow,” Davidson breathed, his voice barely above a whisper.

I shot him a puzzled look, but I understood immediately—his gaze was fixed on my bare legs. Then his attention drifted upward, pausing at the neckline of my shirt.

Unease settled in my stomach, the kind I’d gotten used to lately. Davidson’s stare was unsettling and strangely familiar.

Finally, he met my eyes, making no attempt to pretend he hadn't been looking. Usually, he'd offer an awkward apology, but this time he didn't bother. His eyes burned with something wild, and he bit his lip like it might stop him from saying what he was thinking.

"Davidson?" I said, my voice barely a whisper.

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"What is it?" He gave me a wicked smile.

"Stop. Don't look at me like that," I stammered.

Why was my voice shaking? I had every right to tell him to quit it. I'd already made it clear I wasn't interested in becoming someone I'd end up hating. Sleeping with my boss had never been part of my plan. That wasn't me, and I refused to be another office stereotype.

"I have no idea what you mean." He shrugged, playing indifferent. "Are you ready to go?"

I let it drop and followed him outside. After grabbing my bag, I walked to the car, where he was already waiting. Davidson lowered the top of the convertible, letting the sun and warm breeze pour in.

“Got a playlist in mind?” he asked, sliding on his sunglasses.

He looked perfectly at home in that flashy red convertible, especially with those designer shades. He didn’t exactly hide the fact that he had money—and knew how to make it look effortless. Beside him, I felt slightly out of place.

“Can you put on something from outside the U.S.?” I asked.

“Just pick whatever you want.” He nodded toward the console with a grin.

Fiddling with the controls, I tried to figure out the unfamiliar dashboard. It took a moment, but I got there. Davidson didn’t offer to help—he just started laughing at me. Still, I managed to find the genre I wanted, and soon the song I’d been looking for filled the speakers.

That song always moved me. There was something haunting and beautiful about it, something that reached deeper than most music ever could. I closed my eyes and let it wash over me, sinking into the memories that always surfaced with that melody.

“Winona, are you okay?” he asked, a thread of worry in his voice.

His words cut through my daydream. Blinking away the thoughts, I turned to him and shook my head. There was no way I was telling him the story behind that song—not when he was already dealing with enough of his own.

“I’m not buying it, Winona. Something’s wrong, isn’t it?” he pressed, and his tone shifted as the song played.

Part of me wished he wouldn’t dig any deeper, but I always underestimated how perceptive he could be.

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“It’s the song. I love it, but it always hits a nerve.” I tried to shrug it off.

Hoping he'd let it go, I turned my attention to the passing traffic and let out a quiet sigh. Davidson seemed to catch the hint and didn't push. Without another word, he changed the song to something lighter.

"I figured we could use something with a little more energy. No reason to get melancholic on the drive," he joked.

"You're right," I said, laughing.

"I'm glad we're both in the mood for good vibes," he murmured, laughing with me.

Coney Island was only a short drive away, a place that had always felt separate from the rest of the city. The trip went quickly, and soon the sights and sounds of the park came into view. I hadn't been in years—probably not since my teens.

"This place looks different now. My dad used to bring me here almost every weekend for what he called our 'guy time.' No girls allowed," Davidson said, laughing at the memory.

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There was no missing how much he missed those days with his father. His eyes softened every time he talked about him.

“It’s still amazing,” I said, smiling as I looked around.

“Alright, first stop is coffee. Then we’ll see what kind of trouble we can find,” he suggested with a grin.

“Deal. But I want a picture in front of that,” I said, excitement rising as I pointed at the Cyclone.

“No way I’m getting on that ride,” Davidson stammered, sounding firm.

“Oh, come on. Don’t tell me fearless Davidson is scared of a little roller coaster,” I teased, smiling at him.

“That’s exactly what I’m saying, actually. And don’t tell anyone. Nobody else needs to know.” He laughed.

“Fine. I’ll go alone and prove how brave I am,” I said, lifting my chin in mock pride.

“Not happening. I’m not letting you get on by yourself. Watching you from a distance would stress me out too much,” he said, not joking at all.

Was he serious? Was he really trying to play the protective-male card? I gave him a look, brows furrowing, and planted a hand firmly on my hip as I stared him down.

“And what? Now you have to look after me?” I laughed, letting my amusement show.

“Trust me, it’s safer if you don’t get on that ride. I swear I’d probably have a heart attack just watching you,” he said, a trace of panic slipping into his voice.

“You can always look the other way,” I replied with a shrug, laughing.

A stern look crossed his face, though I caught the hint of a smile at his mouth.

“That’s not an option. I’ll just have to keep you so distracted you forget all about it,” he said, sounding far too pleased with himself.

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