

4. A Sizzling Reunion

“I think you should attend this event, Nat,” Meera, my personal assistant-turned-friend, says over the phone. “It’ll be a good distraction from the Mike drama,” she continues, clearly hoping to convince me. But I know all too well the questions I’d be bombarded with if I showed up.

For the last two weeks, no one has cared to ask me about anything except my husband. They shamelessly beg for all the juicy details of our upcoming divorce, and honestly, I can’t even blame them. I’m the one who brought it into the public eye. Although, it was Mike’s video message that pushed me over the edge. Or maybe it was the whiskey.

I don’t care anymore.

Mike can burn in the deepest pits of hell for all I care. It’s almost funny now—how he didn’t even bother hiding the fact that he was cheating. All those weeks of avoiding me, throwing out lame excuses about work—I was so blind.

Blind in love. Pathetic.

All I want now is to disappear until the drama dies down—if it ever does—and enjoy a few peaceful days to myself. No men, no drama. But two weeks have done nothing to quench the thirst of the paparazzi. They won’t let me walk down the street without swarming me and throwing questions about Michael Cooper in my face. And sitting cooped up in my penthouse? It’s made me restless.

“Hey, are you there? Nat?” Meera’s voice comes through the phone, a hint of concern in her tone.

“Yeah,” I reply absent-mindedly. “I’m here. Meera, I think we should give it another week. I’m getting Mike to sign the divorce papers, but my dad... he is—”

“Acting like an asshole?” she prompts, completely serious.

“Acting like an asshole,” I agree.

I sink deeper into the plush cushions of my penthouse couch, ipping through TV channels without much thought. “I’ll be binging another show. Just keep me updated on Haymitch’s project. Oh, and I loved the show you suggested—the one about the 30-year-old mom and her 15-year-old daughter. She’s too cool, and her daughter doesn’t even get it.”

“I know, right?” Meera mumbles. “You should watch the regency drama next. The spicy one.”

I can’t help but laugh. “Sure, will do. Bye. Love ya.”

“Love you, too.”

The moment I end the call, my phone rings again. It’s my father, for the twelfth time this morning. I don’t need another lecture on how I’m handling my "marital issues."

Sighing, I switch channels again, my mind wandering until the doorbell rings, snapping me out of my thoughts.

I frown, glancing at the door. I’m not expecting anyone. Unless it’s my father. Or worse, Mike.

I get up from the couch and cross the room, my silk robe clinging to my body. The penthouse is eerily silent except for the quiet hum of the TV in the background. I peek through the peephole, and my breath catches.

Ric.

My heart skips a beat. What is he doing here? I’d be lying if I said I hadn’t thought about him—my father’s friend, the hot stranger who turned me on during a meltdown. But I didn’t expect to see him. Not this soon.

Swallowing my nerves, I open the door. The moment it swings open, his eyes lock onto mine, then travel down my body, taking in every inch.

“I haven’t been able to sleep properly for the last two weeks,” he confesses with a shrug, his voice low and rough.

I feel naked under his gaze, despite being fully covered. Leaning against the doorframe, I watch him with fake innocence. “Is that so?” I purr, arching a brow. “I didn’t realize I had such an effect on you.”

Ric steps forward, his tall, muscular frame lling the doorway. His hand braces against the doorframe above me, caging me in without ever touching me. “Oh, trust me, darling,” he says, his voice sending shivers down my spine. “You have no idea what you’ve been doing to me.”

My breath hitches as I meet his gaze, the raw hunger in his eyes unmistakable. I’m atterred, undeniably so. Having an older, incredibly attractive man like him so taken with me? It’s intoxicating. As much as it is dangerous.

“It took you two weeks to get here. I thought you lost the address,” I mumble, leaning back so that my back touches the wall. Ric moves in sync, pinning me against the wall, his warm breath fanning my face.

I curse myself for not wearing a bra. I know how my body is reacting right now, and the way he’s watching me, I’m sure he’ll see things that would only encourage him.

“I tried to talk myself out of it,” he confesses with a sigh. “But I’m trapped. You’ve trapped me.”

I chuckle, daring myself to reach out and place my hand over his chest. “I don’t even know anything about you. Except your name.”