

REJECTED: CLAIMED BY THE ALPHA MAFIA

AS MY WIFE

Kiara:

Zane lifts me in his arms, but this time, he doesn't carry me roughly. This time, it's gentle and unexpected. He cradles me bridal style, my arms instinctively wrapping around his neck as my face rests against his chest. As he walks, I shut my eyes tightly, praying he doesn't notice I'm faking.

After a while, he stops, and I hear a door open. He places me gently on a seat, and I expect him to leave, but instead, he surprises me. He moves closer, lifting my head and placing it on his lap. My heart races, wondering if he has discovered I'm faking.

The door shuts, and soon the seat vibrates as we start moving. Zane gently pats my hair, revealing the spot on my neck where he marked me. I can feel his gaze on me, but how would I know for sure?

After a while, I feel his belly contract. Is he tense? I wonder. His hands run down my hair, and I take a deep breath, praying he doesn't reach my belly where the book is hidden. My heart races faster than his hands move lower, but he stops at my hand. I breathe a sigh of relief.

But he doesn't pause. He grabs my hand, caressing my palm gently. I hate this man, yet his touch feels unexpectedly right. When I can't handle the feelings his touch stirs, I raise a finger, causing him to withdraw his hand.

He bends closer, looking at me, but my eyes remain shut. He sighs aloud, then sinks back, placing a hand on my shoulder. For a while, he stays that way, and my mind quiets, allowing me to drift into sleep.

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The soft, plush material against my body jerks me awake. My hand instinctively searches my body, and my heart skips a beat when I can't feel the book I had hidden. I look around and realize I'm in my room at Zane's house. I'm about to jump off the bed when the door opens, and Ariana walks in.

"You're awake," she says, a corner of her lips raised.

"Where is it?" I demand, grabbing the sheet to lift it, but she rushes to me, grabbing my hand.

"I hid it in your closet. You don't have to worry, ma'am, I didn't take my eyes off you," she says. I glare at her, then pull her into a warm hug, breathing a sigh of relief.

Only the Moon goddess knows what Zane would do if he found it.

"How do you feel? And your wounds, what happened to them?" she asks, curiosity etched on her face as she pulls away from the hug.

I take a deep breath and explain everything that happened, how I discovered the cure myself.

"I'm just glad you're fine. I've been dead worried, and I've had nightmares for days. Even Mr. Zane couldn't..." she pauses and turns away.

"Couldn't what? Don't leave me hanging."

I don't care if I sound desperate. I need to know what she's hiding.

"He hasn't been himself for a while. He didn't eat for a whole day. The entire house thinks it's because of you, but I doubt that," she chuckles, and I burst into laughter, holding my belly.

"That's preposterous," I say between laughs, wiping the tears from my eyes. I'm about to speak when Zane's voice trails off.

"That would be nice, father, and I will ensure the event is hugely successful."

The door flings open at his last sentence, and I roll my eyes. He hasn't learned to knock.

"You're up," he says, his face void of a smile. I shrug.

"Against your wishes for me to be dead. Sorry to disappoint you, Mr. Malibu," I retort, and his brows wrinkle, almost touching his nose.

He walks towards me, then cocks his head at Ariana. As she stands up to leave, I get to my feet. He closes the space between us as Ariana exits the room.

"How do you feel?" he questions, scrutinizing my body. I try hard not to look him in the eyes. "Look at me!" he demands, and I sigh, placing a hand on my forehead.

"I've just returned from a dungeon where you sent me, almost lost my life, and now you won't let me rest. Won't killing me delight you, Mr. Malibu?" I challenge, and he lifts my chin with his index finger.

He holds his gaze for a while, inching his face closer to mine. My heart thumps harder in my chest.

"And I ask again, what use is that when I can play with you all day?" he whispers, his lips inches from mine. My heart feels like it's going to rip out of my chest. I never imagined he had this kind of power over me.

"I can feel your heart race against my chest," he says. I swallow hard, slapping his hand away from my face. He smirks as I turn my face away.

"What do you want, Zane?" I ask, my face scrunched up, hating how he makes me feel.

"My father has a function in two days, and you're invited," he says. I raise a brow, glaring at him. "Let me rephrase, you must attend this event, and you have no choice."

Of course, did I ever have a choice?

"And you must behave well to avoid incurring my wrath." His tone is stern, but I remember what Ariana said about him, and the thought of him loving me makes me burst into laughter. "Is there something amusing, Ms. Levine?" he questions, and I shake my head, covering my mouth with my palm.

"I'll get you what to wear tomorrow morning, and you'll do as I require during the event," he continues, and I cross my arms.

"What makes you think I'm interested? You've pushed me to the brink of death. Nothing scares me anymore."

"Oh, you'll be scared when you mess up my preparations," he says, walking towards the door.

"And why do you care about what I do? I'm not one of your girlfriends you can parade," I snap, and he pauses.

"I'm not having this conversation with you anymore. You'll shut your mouth and play dress-up as my wife in two days."

My mouth falls ajar at his words.