

Chapter 19: Just a Mistake

ETHAN

I gripped her hips, sinking my fingers into her skin. I took a step, pressing her against the door, crushing her body with mine as I took everything I could with my tongue in a long, deep kiss.

She moaned into my mouth, clutching my shoulders as I pressed my hips against her with urgency, letting her feel just how hard I was.

I'd completely lost control; I wanted to tear off her dress, lick every inch of her skin, and fuck her against the door. The way her body fit into mine, the way our tongues moved together, drove me insane.

We were forced to stop to catch our breath, panting as we stared at each other. She pushed against my chest in shock, just as I was. Then, I realized what she'd just done.

"Did you just used me to make your ex jealous?"

"I..." She shook her head, still dazed.

"And I'm the bastard?"

"I'm sorry. That was a mistake." She turned and started searching for something in her purse.

"What are you doing?"

"Didn't you hear me? It was a mistake. Now go."

"You've got to be kidding!"

"Goodnight!" she said, before opening the door and going inside.

She shut it in my face, leaving me standing in the hallway like an idiot.

What the hell was she thinking? I turned, hoping that asshole wasn't still in the hallway to see her kicking me out.

He wasn't. The door in the hallway was now closed. I turned back to face the door she'd just slammed in my face.

I guess Miss Brown could be a much bigger bitch than I'd thought. What should I do? Bang on her door? Drag her back out? Demand an explanation?

After what she'd done, the least she could have done was invite me in and let me see that damn lingerie. Now I was turned on, frustrated, and feeling like a complete idiot.

Damn. I fought the urge to go in there and make her beg for me to fuck her. At least this meant I'd won the bet.

ELLIE

When I locked the door, my heart was pounding in my chest. What had just happened? Why did I do that? I sat down on the couch, staring at the door as I tried to catch my breath.

I was praying he'd leave because I didn't know what I'd do if he knocked

on the door. My legs were still weak.

This was a mistake. Damn Todd. Because of him, I'd acted like a bitch. The bastard had the nerve to text me in the middle of the night, making me so mad that I ended up taking it all out on Ethan like an idiot.

First, getting mad at him, and now using him to try to push Todd away. This was the worst idea I've ever had.

And now, I knew exactly what I was missing. I knew what it felt like to have his lips on mine and his big, strong body pressing against me. And just a bit of that was enough to make me lose my mind. I had no idea what would happen now.

I sat on the couch for what felt like an eternity, trying to process everything that had just happened. Then, I dragged myself to my bedroom, wearing nothing but a nightgown before collapsing into my bed.

I couldn't close my eyes without remembering the feel of his lips, his hands, and his cock pressing against my belly.

Before I knew it, I was panting as I touched myself, imagining my hands were his. This was wrong.

Thinking about it was wrong. But I couldn't help it. I couldn't help but want him to possess me. I bit down on my arm to muffle a scream as I reached my climax, alone in my bed.

Panting, I stretched my arm out, sliding my hand over the empty side of my bed, imagining what it would feel like to lie against his broad chest, feeling the warmth of his body against mine.

I was losing my mind. I shouldn't be thinking about Ethan, much less about what it would be like to have him in my bed.

During my sleep, I had hot dreams about a blond man with light brown eyes taking me in every possible way.

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My Sunday started with a horrible headache. I felt like I had a hangover. Maybe it was a guilt hangover.

Remembering that I'd used Ethan to try to make Todd forget I existed made me want to disappear. I couldn't have regretted it more, and I didn't even want to think about the consequences.

When did I become the kind of person who acts recklessly? Every decision in my life, until now, had been made with common sense and careful planning. Maybe everything that had been happening was making me lose my mind.

I took a shower, wondering if I should tell Anna everything. I could already imagine what she'd say. I told you so, Ellie. She was right. How did I think I could get involved with Ethan without getting burned?

Maybe I could have managed if I hadn't thrown myself at him like an idiot after spending the whole night trying to avoid his advances.

That was completely inconsistent, Ellie. You were so close, you just needed to get inside and close the door.

When I got out of the shower, a storm was raging outside. I put on a

nightgown and had breakfast before picking up my phone.

Moving closer to the window as thunder rumbled, I thought about calling Anna. Maybe I shouldn't tell her I'd thrown myself into Morgan's arms. But I couldn't hide anything from her; after all, she was my best friend.

My body froze when I heard a knock on the door. I stared at it before hearing another knock.

Who could it be? I wasn't ready to face Mr. Morgan after all that. I forced my legs to move to the door and opened it.

You've got to be kidding me. Todd was standing right in front of me.

"Good morning, Ellie!"

His hair was wet, like he'd just showered.

"What do you want?" I asked, crossing my arms over my chest.

Maybe my plan to use Ethan hadn't worked, and now it was just a big problem I'd have to deal with.

"Can we talk?"

Yeah, I guess it really hadn't worked.

"You really think we have something to talk about?"

Just looking at him was hard enough.

"Did you get my message?"

"Yes, but I was busy."

In reality, I'd just chosen to ignore it and pretend Todd didn't exist.

"Yeah, you seemed pretty busy last night. Is he your boyfriend?"

"Seriously? That's none of your business."

"I just want to talk to you, Ellie."

"We already had our last conversation. A long time ago."

"It won't take long; I just want you to listen. Please?"

Maybe if I listened, he'd go away for good.

"All right. But after that, you leave me alone."

I opened the door to let him in and led him to the couch, sitting down before he did.

"Well?" I sighed, staring at the rain outside.

"Can you at least look at me?" he said after sitting down.

"No, I don't want to look at you or listen to you. In fact, I'd rather never see you again."

His presence was enough to irritate me. Why was he pushing this?

"You said you forgot about me, but it sure doesn't look like it, given how angry you still are with me. Will you ever understand my reasons?"

"Oh, I understand your reasons all too well... I understand perfectly that

Commented [Ma1]:

your job was more important than anything else in your life. And maybe I should thank you for showing me that my job was what I should have prioritized, instead of dedicating myself to a relationship that only existed in my head."

I wanted to spit out everything still stuck in my throat.

"Ellie, you've always been important to me."

"Why did you come back? Why didn't you just stay there forever?" I asked through gritted teeth, feeling my blood boil."

"What do you want? For me to beg you to forgive me? I tried, Ellie... I tried to make you understand. I wanted to keep what we had."

"The problem is, we had nothing! And you did nothing to change that! What did you expect? That I'd stay here, waiting for you to come back someday? While you fucked whoever you wanted? Is that what you wanted? For me to still be waiting for you? You knew exactly what I was waiting for, and you did nothing! Now it's too late! If you need my forgiveness just to feel better, then just promise to leave me alone, and I'll give it." I growled, feeling my vision blur from the anger.

"That's not it. Don't you see I care about you? You're the one who's chosen to ignore me all this time. You're the one who decided things would be like this."

"Did you want me to wait for you forever? Until you decided I was worth it? Worth committing to a relationship with me?"

"Always the same. Always the damn labels. We had something, that's what

mattered."

"Enough! Maybe when you grow up and own your mistakes, you'll understand what it's like to be with someone who gives you hope but offers no security. You made your choice, Todd. Now you're just the past." I stood, moving past him.

I didn't want to hear any more. This was exhausting me. I didn't want to remember the hell he'd put me through.

"Ellie..."

"Leave. Forget I exist." I walked to the door with the intention of kicking him out.

As I touched the doorknob, he grabbed my arm, making me turn to face him and forcing me to look into his eyes.

Doing that still made my chest ache and my heart race. Those damn eyes. No matter how hard I fought it, my body insisted on betraying me.

"It's me, Ellie... I'm still me," he said, holding my face with one hand.

I closed my eyes, and before he could do anything else—anything I'd regret for the rest of my life—I turned away, breaking free from his grip and opening the door.

"Get out!" I snarled at Todd, before turning and coming face-to-face with Ethan, standing right outside.