

# Perfect Bastard

## Chapter 02: Is That a No?

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ELLIE

*Shit, Ellie, focus.* He's definitely not the right guy; he's more like the completely wrong guy.

I blinked, trying to remember what he had just said.

"Let me guess... White lab coat, glasses, test tubes, and a total nerd?" I raised an eyebrow.

He nodded.

"Something like that."

"Don't be fooled. We spend ninety percent of the time dressed exactly like that," Anna said.  
"But even now, the nerdiness remains."

That's right. That's my girl.

"You just forgot to mention that we wear high heels," I added, winking at her.

Ethan sighed.

"That's the closest you got to making the image of a scientist sexy. Well, thanks for the help, Anna. Finish what you're doing and join us; it'll be the first time I've had the chance to talk nonsense in front of two scientists," he said before leaving.

"What the hell was that?" I asked, frowning.

"What?"

"What do you take?"

"It was just curiosity. The man is... huge!"

"As if that's uncommon and Will isn't just as big or bigger."

“Well, Will is... Will.” She shrugged.

“Great argument.”

“What I mean is that Will works out a lot and runs regularly.”

“What I mean is that your question sounded like flirting. It’s obvious he spends a lot of time at the gym.”

“I’m married; it couldn’t have sounded like flirting.”

“You’re terrible!” I laughed.

“I was just trying to be nice.”

“I get it. Where were we?”

“I think we were praying for your ideal guy to show up so you can have lots of sex?”

“You make me sound desperate.”

“I know you’re not. But you really do need to get laid.”

“Just because you have sex every day doesn’t mean everyone else has to. People do other... things.”

“You don’t have to do it every day, at least once a month, but never once a year.”

“What are you getting at?”

“You tell me... How long has it been?”

“That’s enough.”

*A year? Maybe more. It was with that lawyer I met through work. He was hot but too busy. A shame.*

“You’re trying to remember, aren’t you?”

“This conversation is over. My sex life isn’t important when all the available men are bastards.”

“Don’t forget Will and Ben’s past. I don’t forget. So there’s still hope. Sometimes a bastard just needs to discover love.”

“Thanks, but I don’t want to be the reason any bastard changes. And Will and Ben were always good men. Sleeping with lots of people doesn’t make you a bastard. Only when you lie and deceive.”

“I wouldn’t bet on them,” she said, surprising me.

“We’re talking about your husband.”

“I know.”

I blinked, considering it for a moment.

“Come to think of it... neither would I,” I agreed, making us burst into laughter.

“He checked out your ass,” she said when we stopped laughing, making me frown in confusion.

“Huh?”

“Twice, and he lingered the second time when he thought I wasn’t looking.”

“What are you trying to say?”

“He was analyzing you, first your boobs, and now your ass. I’d say he liked it.”

“Why are we still talking about this? The guy has a history.”

“He’s hot. And maybe... if you just wanted to...”

“Don’t continue. I’m not interested in anything superficial. I think I have to repeat...”

“Okay, okay. No bastards, womanizers, or players.”

“Great.”

“But why not have some fun until you find the right guy?”

I sighed. She knew why.

“I’m never letting anyone use me just for sex again. I respect that there are people who enjoy that, but it doesn’t work for me anymore. You know what happened last time.”

“Seven months wasted with a guy who couldn’t be honest with you and didn’t have the guts to say he wasn’t interested in anything more than sex, while you fell deeper and deeper for him.”

“Yeah. I wasted my time. So, enough of this topic.”

“Okay. Sorry.”

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It was past ten. It was time to leave. Jack and Zara were already heading out. They were another one of my couples of friends.

What to say about the two of them? Eccentric? Overly romantic? They made my heart warm just watching them. The way Jack treated Zara as the object of all his dedication and affection.

There were also two more couples I saw less often but loved just as much. The most recent of all, Anna’s brother, Jason, and his English girlfriend, Phillipa. And Jack’s brother, Neil, and his also English girlfriend, Rosie, who was a friend of Phillipa.

It was really hard not to feel a little envious of each of these couples' stories, being the only single one in the group. And maybe that’s why I was starting to feel like I was stranded at twenty-seven.

Poking Anna on the couch, I pointed to the empty beer bottles that had accumulated on the coffee table.

“Let’s take them to the kitchen,” I suggested.

“Don’t bother,” Zoe said, slightly tipsy from the drinks, leaning against her husband’s chest on the couch in front of us.

"Don’t worry, we’ll take care of it," Ben added.

"Don’t be so nice. We already know you’re not that nice in reality," I said, making everyone laugh.

"I’ll help you," Ethan said, standing up. "Anna can focus on figuring out how to get Will home," he teased.

I nodded, getting up as well.

"I’m fine. You’ll see that during our run tomorrow," Will said, grinning as he pulled Anna closer. "I’ve still got plenty of energy to burn tonight," he insinuated.

"Oh, God!" I muttered, picking up four bottles, two in each hand.

Zoe and Ben laughed as I headed to the kitchen, hearing Ethan walk behind me, making me uncomfortable.

I really didn't want to witness the foreplay of two couples.

"Are you sure it's a good idea to go running with Will tomorrow? The man's a machine," I tried to make conversation, attempting to avoid an awkward silence as I placed the bottles on the kitchen island.

"It wouldn't be the first time. I've known Will for a long time. We've done a lot of runs in London during his visits."

"Of course. You also think it's normal to wake up before ten on a Sunday to work out. How could I not have noticed?" I said, sarcastically.

"Don't you like exercising? I mean... you seem pretty fit to me."

I tried to ignore the idea that this might be flirting.

"Thanks. I go to the gym whenever work allows. But waking up at seven on a Sunday? I'll pass," I said, turning to look at him, meeting his eyes for the first time since I shook his hand.

Bad idea. The man had a perfect face that made me feel awkward. His jaw seemed to have been sculpted by the gods themselves.

Looking away, I busied myself organizing the bottles he placed on the island, lining them up with mine.

"I see. So, you don't mind a bit of cardio after ten?" he asked.

"I guess so."

"Great, because it's almost eleven."

"What?" I looked up at him, not understanding.

"Looks like we're the only ones here who won't be having sex tonight."

"I think I got lost at the part about cardio after ten, but you'll get used to it. It's just part of having only married friends."

"You really didn't get what I meant?" A mischievous smile appeared on his face.

"Should I have? Maybe it's the alcohol."

"You said you don't mind doing cardio after ten... It's almost eleven, and I have an idea for some cardio we could do together," he articulated, making me blink.

"Wait... are you? Did you just meet me and are doing what I think you're doing?"

"Is that a no?" He raised an eyebrow.