

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 221:

“Thanks,” I replied. “You too.”

It was the most hollow, perfunctory exchange imaginable, and we both knew it.

Just then, Miles Holloway, Cary’s long-suffering secretary, appeared around the corner. He gave me an awkward, sympathetic nod.

I nodded back. “Good to see you, Miles.”

“Good to see you too, Hyacinth,” he said, his voice weary. “Your boss is drunk. Don’t let him drive.”

“Sure.”

We update every week on galnove/s.com

“Good night, then.”

I left without a backward glance, walking away from the wreckage of my past without a single regret.

I pushed the restaurant door open and was hit in the face by a stab of cold night air that felt like a physical cleansing. Winter was indeed coming.

Lochlan was already in the car, waiting. I shivered as I climbed into the warm, silent interior of the Rolls. Lochlan glanced at me. “Everything all right?”

“Yeah.”

“You look a bit distracted.”

“It’s nothing.”

The car started. Roy’s voice came from the front seat, cheerful as ever. “I’ll drop you off at Lauderdale Tower first, Hyacinth, then I’ll send the boss home.”

“Thank you, Roy.”

My phone vibrated in my clutch.

It was a text from Leo: [Hey, there’s an exhibit at the uni next week. Thought you might be interested.] I typed back: [What kind of exhibit?]

I majored in landscape architecture, not fine art. I had done my degree at London South Bank University, a solid, mid-tier institution that had given me a good, practical foundation without the Oxbridge pretension.

His reply came quickly: [It’s an art exhibit. I have a painting on display.]

Me: [Oh really? Well, in that case, I must come and see it.]

Leo: [Great! We can meet for coffee afterwards 😊]

Me: [Sure. We can celebrate if someone buys your painting.]

Leo: [I won’t hold my hopes up. I know I’m good, but not that good.]

Me: [Don't be modest.]

We kept texting back and forth, the light from my screen a bright, mundane rectangle in the dim car.

I was so engrossed I didn't notice the physical weight of Lochlan's gaze until the silence became palpable. I looked up, feeling sheepish, and quickly put my phone away.

It's technically off-work time, I thought defensively. No harm in texting, is there?

Lochlan's voice cut through the quiet. "I'm putting a security team on you and your residence."

.

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 222:

I was shocked. “What?”

“I have just received further intelligence. Armond Abrams may do something reckless.”

“Like what?”

“That is not yet clear.”

I thought back to Armond’s threat during dinner. “Surely he wouldn’t be that stupid.”

“A cornered rat is the most dangerous kind,” Lochlan stated. “And he just got cornered.”

New weekly chapters on ga/novels.com

“But there’s no reason he would come after me, is there?” Even as I said it, I knew it was a weak argument.

Lochlan just stared at me, his expression utterly flat, until I relented.

“Yeah, fine,” I sighed. “He has a reason. More than one, actually. But I still don’t think a team of bodyguards is necessary.”

“It’s just a precaution.”

The comfortable victory I had felt during the negotiation evaporated, replaced by a cold, creeping dread.

After a moment of heavy silence, Lochlan spoke again, his tone pragmatic. “If you are averse to having a security team shadow your every move, there’s an alternative solution.”

“What’s that?” I asked.

“I will be travelling to Madeira next week to inspect the Saltzman resort’s progress. I haven’t seen the site personally since taking over as CEO, and Uncle Toby’s behaviour during dinner has left me... concerned.”

I nodded, the image of Toby's ruddy, disinterested face flashing in my mind. The man seemed more invested in the contents of his glass than the multi-million-pound project on the table. Anyone partnering with him had every right to be concerned.

"Come with me," Lochlan said.

I considered it. It would not be my first business trip with him; my inaugural month at Velos had been a baptism by fire on a whirlwind tour of the Singapore offices.

It would be fun to get out of the dreary city for a few days—a change of scenery. And let's be honest, travelling on the company dime certainly beat paying for my own plane ticket.

"Is Kai coming?" I asked.

"He will, provided he resolves his family emergency."

"What kind of emergency is it?" The question was out before I could stop it, a symptom of my ingrained nosiness.

"He didn't specify, and I didn't pry."

I made a mental note to text Kai later with a vague offer of support and nodded. “Yeah, sure, boss. Shall I book the tickets?”

“That will not be necessary. We’ll take the corporate jet.”

Of course we would. Because why fly commercial like a mere mortal when you can zip through the skies in a private aluminium tube? I quashed a cynical smile.

“How long’s the trip?”

.

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 223:

“Four to five days should suffice.”

I nodded, then the realisation hit me like a bucket of cold water. Damn it. That was the week of Leo’s art exhibit. This would mean cancelling on him for the second time in a row. I was rapidly cementing my reputation as the flakiest woman in London.

I would have to make it up to him somehow—maybe with a painfully expensive bottle of wine or a grovelling apology note written in calligraphy.

I pulled out my phone to text him, feeling a flush of self-consciousness.

As I typed out my apology, I glanced at Lochlan sideways.

A sneaking suspicion began to crystallise in my mind.

This business trip was awfully convenient. Both times I had made plans with Leo, a last-minute, unavoidable request from the boss had materialised, pulling me away.

It was probably just the universe’s twisted sense of humour, but the timing was starting to feel less like a coincidence and more like a pattern I was not yet meant to understand.

Chinese novels translated on galnovels.com

The following week passed in a blur of productive, if slightly manic, activity.

I finally managed to untangle the bewildering organisational chart of the parent company and its numerous subsidiaries. There were so many of them it made my head spin.

I got a firm handle on all the major projects underway and gradually forged working relationships with the various department heads and senior managers.

I also made a point of taking the entire secretarial pool out for lunch, and then for after-work drinks, determined to speed up the assimilation process. Having the troops on my side was crucial, as I relied on them daily.

On my first day, I had sensed a faint, frosty hostility from a few of them, which was only to be expected when you are the newly parachuted-in senior hire, doubtless stepping on the toes of someone who had thought the CAO position was rightfully theirs.

But I was no wide-eyed novice. Within a few days, I had won over most of the dozen or so secretaries. The formal “Miss Galloway” had been dropped in favour of “Hyacinth,” and I had even acquired a new set of lunch buddies.

Kai was absent the entire week. I texted him and discovered he was at the hospital.

Roy filled me in later; it was Kai's aunt, who was terminally ill. She had raised him as her own after his parents died when he was a boy, and he saw her as his mother.

I texted Kai, offering to visit. He thanked me but said it wasn't necessary.

I reassured him that work was under control, that I had taken over some of his workload and distributed the rest.

He thanked me and, in a gesture of significant trust, gave me the passwords to some encrypted files he had been working on. [Let me know if you need any help at all,] I texted back.

[Thanks, but that's not necessary,] came his reply. [Boss has already covered all my aunt's hospital bills. Not from the corporate account, but out of his own pocket.]

I was secretly, profoundly moved by that.

Kai's aunt wasn't even a company employee. The corporate health insurance would cover Kai himself, but to personally pay for his aunt's medical expenses... that went far beyond the call of corporate duty.

It seemed the boss was a man whose private actions matched his impeccable public appearance. He had a heart as decent as he was good-looking.

On Friday night, I was packing for the trip to Madeira and had asked Portia to come over to my flat for drinks.

As I folded clothes into my suitcase, Portia hugged a cushion on my bed, resting her chin on it with a girlish sigh.

“Wow, so it’s just the two of you then? That is seriously thrilling. You have to seize this opportunity, darling,” she drawled, her eyes sparkling with mischief. “Sun, sea, and a secluded resort with a gorgeous, single billionaire? This is the plot of every decent romance novel ever written. You’d be a fool not to at least try to get him into bed.”

.

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 224:

I rolled my eyes, holding up a stack of sensible trousers. “Portia, it’s a business trip. The purpose is to inspect concrete and review profit margins, not to have a torrid affair. And might I remind you, the general consensus is that the gorgeous billionaire is gay.”

“Pish posh to consensus,” she retorted, waving a dismissive hand. “I have gay friends, and Lochlan sure as hell doesn’t look like one. Besides, a little holiday fling is exactly what you need to finally scrub the last of Cary’s residue from your system. It doesn’t have to be a relationship, just a fling—a wild one-week fuck fest. Trust me, you won’t be the first woman to fuck her boss there and then come back as if nothing happened. As they say, what happens in Madeira stays in Madeira.”

I shook my head, laughing in spite of myself. “You are incorrigible. Now, help me decide which shoes are both professional and capable of walking across a construction site.”

She sighed dramatically, but slid off the bed to inspect my options. “Fine, fine. We’ll focus on the practical for now. But my offer of moral support for your imminent seduction still stands.”

“What about you?” I asked, deftly changing the subject. “How’s your situation?”

Portia’s face lit up with unapologetic glee. “Oh, you know. Thriving. Met a lovely barista on Tuesday, a sculptor on Wednesday, and I have a banker lined up for tonight. It’s all very efficient. No fuss, no messy emotions—just good, clean, filthy fun.”

I eyed a pair of impractical but beautiful heels before tossing them back into the closet. “Sure, you’re having fun now, but you can’t keep this up forever. A different stud each night? It’s not sustainable.”

active **community** on **galnovels.com**

“Who cares about forever? Carpe diem, darling.” She winked. “Seize the day, and preferably the man attached to it.”

“But how long can you keep this up?” I persisted, selecting a pair of sturdy yet stylish ankle boots. “Don’t you ever want to just... find someone? Settle down?”

“Why must I?” she countered, her tone losing some of its flippancy. “I can take a different stud to bed each night when I’m sixty, if I please. If I’m rich and fabulous, why shouldn’t I?”

“But is that really what you want?” I asked, my voice softening. “A procession of faces you can barely remember in the morning?”

Portia shrugged, a defensive gesture I knew all too well. “Why not? It’s fun, and it’s unburdened. Once my libido runs out, I’ll just go adopt a couple of stray kittens. And when I die, I’ll leave half my inheritance to you and the other half to my cats. That sounds like a perfectly lovely, drama-free way to live, does it not?”

I didn't argue further.

I knew Portia's mind had long been set this way, a fortress built after a betrayal so deep it had shattered her faith in anything lasting.

I loved her dearly, but I couldn't subscribe to her philosophy, no matter how much my own heart had been bruised by Cary.

I still believed, perhaps foolishly, in good relationships out there—in soulmates and decades-long marriages. My own parents were a shining example. I just needed to find the right guy.

And that guy was definitely not Lochlan Hastings—a fact I was once again firmly confirmed in when I saw him in his penthouse after Roy drove me there to meet up before we left for the airport.

He was sitting at a vast marble table, eating breakfast.

I had to look away from the plate of vivid greens, a landscape of kale, spinach, and rocket punctuated by the occasional, accusingly red cherry tomato.

That was it.

No toast, no avocado smash, certainly no bacon.

It was a rabbit's meal, meticulously arranged by someone who had clearly never experienced the pure joy of a buttery croissant.

No, thank you, I thought, my stomach giving a sympathetic rumble. If I had to spend the rest of my life with one guy, I would prefer a man who did not consider mustard sauce a decadent treat.

"Care to join me for breakfast?" Lochlan asked, his voice interrupting my internal critique of his life choices.

"No, thank you," I said a little too quickly.

Mentally, I relished the memory of the bacon and eggs I had devoured earlier and sent a silent thank you to my parents for gifting me a healthy appetite for everything, including flavour.

Not that I had anything against a healthy diet in principle, but what a terribly boring existence if everything you consumed was chosen for being "beneficial" instead of delicious or, God forbid, "fun."

Lochlan must have sensed my thinly veiled disgust for his plate of chlorophyll, as he did not insist.

But the aproned man who emerged from the kitchen had clearly picked up on my disdain.

“You disapprove of my breakfast?” he huffed, his accent a thick Parisian French.

Lochlan made the introductions with his usual impeccable politeness. “Hyacinth, this is Monsieur Laurent Dubois. He’s a registered dietician, a nutritional chef, and the proprietor of Le Jardin Clair.”

“Nice to meet you,” I said, offering a polite smile while making a mental note to look up the address of his restaurant and ensure I never, ever went within a mile of it.

The chef was still huffing. He launched into an unsolicited introduction of the meal. “This salad is my own secret recipe. You cannot find it anywhere else. The greens—the kale, the wild rocket, the mizuna—they are all from the Hastings family orchard, which I personally harvested at six o’clock this morning. Every piece of fruit in that juice was selected for peak freshness and nutrient density.”

I listened numbly.

Of course the Hastings have their own orchard.

They probably had their own vineyard, their own diamond mine, and their own private glacier for sourcing artisanal ice cubes. If I had my own orchard, I fantasised, I wouldn't make salads. No, I'd make my own marmalade, save the best cherries for my mother's famous pie, and set aside a plot for my father to potter around in, experimenting with his gardening.

The chef was still holding forth on the molecular science behind the simple-looking glass of orange juice Lochlan was drinking when Lochlan politely cut him off. "Thank you, Laurent. It was, as always, delicious."

Delicious? Really? The man was a better actor than I gave him credit for.

Lochlan rose. "Let's go."

Gladly.

.

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 225:

Roy drove us to the private airfield.

I had assumed it would be just the two of us—me and the boss—plus the requisite pilot and stewardess. Which was precisely why I almost let out a full-blooded scream when a broad-shouldered figure detached itself from the shadows inside the cabin of the plane.

“Morning, Miss Galloway.” Cameron Sullivan gave me a curt nod, his voice a low rumble.

I swallowed back the sound, my heart hammering against my ribs. “Morning.”

The head of Lochlan’s security team, a former SAS operative, moved with such unnerving stealth that most of the time I forgot he was even there—until he materialised like a spectre to remind me of the various threats lurking in my new, improved life.

Lochlan, utterly unperturbed, explained the itinerary. “We will fly into Madeira Airport, and then proceed to the resort by car.”

I nodded, the details of the project filing through my mind.

The resort was located in Ponta do Sol, a place known for its steep, dramatic coastline. The luxury villas were carved directly into the cliffsides, accessed by long, winding private roads that effectively isolated them, offering privacy and staggering views in equal measure.

The total investment was over twenty-three billion, with Velos Capital holding a sixty per cent stake and Toby Saltzman's company claiming the remaining forty.

The flight was a quick, smooth three hours.

Remembering Portia's salacious advice from the night before, I deliberately chose a seat a good four rows removed from the boss, settling in with my tablet as a shield. It was a gesture of pure self-preservation, a way to silently announce that this was strictly business.

Don't miss **new releases** on galnove/s.com

But all my carefully maintained professional distance evaporated the moment I stepped off the plane.

The change in sensation was shockingly pleasant, almost violent in its intensity.

One moment I was in cold, dreary, grey November London, and the next I was breathing air that was warm and soft, scented with salt and something floral. The sun was a tangible presence, warming my skin through my jacket, and the colours were so vivid they felt like an assault on my senses after weeks of monochrome gloom.

We slid into a waiting car, and as it moved away from the bustle of the city, the landscape opened up.

I watched the scenery transform, the world outside the window becoming a picture of vast skies and cotton-wool clouds.

The combination of warmth and the gentle motion of the car made my body relax completely, my eyelids growing heavy despite my best intentions.

My head listed towards the window, my eyes fluttered shut, and I sank into a deep sleep.

I have no idea how long I was out.

The car was climbing now, winding its way into the hills. I stirred awake, and the view that greeted me was so breathtaking it felt otherworldly.

Outside my window were dense, emerald-green forests clinging to steep slopes, with mist curling around the peaks of mountains in the distance. It felt like we had travelled not just across space, but through time, to some hidden, mystical place. It was staggeringly beautiful.

No wonder the resort was called Quinta do Sol Secreto—the Secret Sunny Estate. It was a beautiful wonderland, a modern, real-life version of a fairy tale.

I sighed inwardly at the sheer beauty of it all, shifting my shoulders to find a more comfortable position against the headrest.

It was in that moment I realised the surface I was leaning against was... all wrong.

What kind of premium car seat was this warm, and smelled so clean and faintly of sandalwood?

What headrest had this particular combination of firm support and yielding softness, with a definite, steady rhythm beneath my ear?

I froze, my neck moving with the rusty creak of dawning horror as I turned my head slowly.

My gaze landed on an expanse of crisp white cotton, followed by the fine wool of a deep grey jacket.

I let my eyes travel upwards a fraction, taking in a strong, lightly tanned neck and a distinctly masculine Adam's apple, and my sinking heart finally plummeted—dashed upon the rocks of absolute mortification.

I was not leaning on the window. I was nestled against Lochlan Hastings.

"Sleep well?" His voice was a low vibration against my cheek, his breath a warm, feather-light touch on my skin.

"Mmm," I managed—a vague, airy syllable—pretending a calm I was miles from feeling as I bolted upright, frantically patting my hair back into place. "Goodness, I must have dropped off. Portia made me watch a horror film with her last night. It scared me so much I barely got a wink of sleep."

I launched into nervous chatter, hoping to bury the horrifying fact that I had been using my billionaire boss as a personal pillow under a landslide of inconsequential detail.

Lochlan wore a look of perfect understanding. "Ah, that explains it. I was wondering about the determined burrowing."

My eyes widened.

Burrowing? What burrowing? Burrowing to where?

In the rearview mirror, I saw Cameron's usually impassive face register something that looked suspiciously like a smirk. My mind was a broken record, screeching the words "determined burrowing" on a loop, in massive, neon-lit letters.

I didn't believe it. I refused to believe it.

I shot a desperate, pleading look towards the driver, seeking any form of validation.

The driver, who had chosen that exact moment to sneak a glance in the mirror, met my eyes and flinched guiltily.

Then, he gave a tiny, almost imperceptible nod.

That nod shattered me. I sat there, utterly petrified by the humiliation.

After a long moment, I forced myself to turn and face Lochlan, my voice heavy with a tragic sense of duty. "Boss, in future, if this... situation... should ever occur again, you have my full permission to shove me away. Or shake me awake. Vigorously. Or... just slap me. Really, anything."

Let's be honest: while I was certainly at fault, was he completely blameless? He could have taken measures. Why had he just... let me lie there?

.

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 226:

Lochlan's expression was one of pure benevolence. "I do not make a habit of assaulting my employees."

In the front seat, Cameron's shoulder twitched, his lips pressed into a tight line as if he were fighting a losing battle with a smile.

I pressed my own lips together, having run out of arguments.

I couldn't very well insist, "No, please, boss, I insist you manhandle me. I would prefer it," without it sounding like a request from a particularly niche fetish club.

I turned to face forward again. It was better to just stop talking.

A thick, awkward silence descended, clinging to the interior of the car all the way until we passed through the resort's gates.

The car climbed higher and deeper into the hills. The road, though remote, was impeccably maintained—a testament to the budget, a ribbon of perfect tarmac carved solely to access the most privileged views.

The infrastructure was thoughtfully designed, with artfully disguised lighting and landscaping that complemented the area's natural, mysterious beauty. The faux-antique bronze lampposts lining the route were particularly atmospheric.

I could imagine them in the early morning or late evening, their warm yellow light cutting through the mist—the atmosphere absolutely perfect.

It would be a fairy tale if it ever snowed here.

The car finally came to a stop in front of the main building of a grand estate within the resort.

Share your favorites from galnovels.com

A small crowd of staff had already assembled at the entrance, waiting to welcome us.

My cheeks were still burning, but I fixed a professional smile on my face—a mask I had perfected over years of dealing with Cary’s business associates.

The group consisted of the resort’s project manager and the chief engineer, each with their respective teams. Since Velos Capital held managing rights, the project manager was our man, while the chief engineer had been jointly selected by both companies.

Lochlan and I got out of the car.

“Welcome, Mr Hastings. We are honoured to have you here,” the project manager said, stepping forward.

The chief engineer followed close behind—a man who looked like he spent more time with concrete than with people.

Lochlan exchanged polite greetings with them. Then he started walking inside, and the entire entourage fell into step behind him, a flock of anxious ducklings following their imposing leader.

Inside, I was introduced to the rest of the local team.

The project manager was named Damon Salvatore, a good-looking young Portuguese man with sun-streaked hair and an outgoing, effortlessly friendly demeanour. The chief engineer was a dour-faced man named Danny Pearson.

It was already mid-afternoon, and a lavish late lunch had been laid out in the main banquet hall.

Lochlan was ushered in, and we sat down to eat.

For the next hour, the joint management team spent half their time delivering carefully rehearsed praise and flattery. I watched the boss closely, and I could see the well-hidden impatience in the slight tightening around his eyes.

They clearly have no idea, I thought. They're likely used to Toby Saltzman, who probably laps this sycophancy up like cream. They haven't yet learned that this new CEO prefers substance over spectacle.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 227:

After the meal, Damon Salvatore led Lochlan and me to our accommodation.

As we rode on a small golf cart towards the villa area, Damon informed us, “Mr Saltzman arrived yesterday afternoon. He brought quite an entourage with him.” He lowered his voice conspiratorially. “Said they were various dignitaries and influencers. Invited them to stay as a sort of soft-opening trial.”

“Where are they now?” Lochlan asked, a slight frown creasing his brow.

Damon, sensing the boss’s displeasure, grew bolder with his gossip. “They’ve taken over the lakeside villas. They were making a racket all last night, so I would imagine they’re all sleeping it off now. Out of the fourteen people he brought, ten of them are... well, very

attractive young women. They threw quite a party in Mr Saltzman's villa last night. The cleaning staff this morning reported... quite a scene. An embarrassing number of used condoms."

The best reading experience on *galnovels.com*

Lochlan said nothing. His silence was more potent than any outburst.

I said nothing either, but my mind was reeling. Good grief.

I managed to contain myself for all of three seconds before my curiosity won. "Given Mr Saltzman's age, is he really up for that kind of... exertion?"

The man was old enough to be Lochlan's father, for heaven's sake.

Damon shrugged with theatrical nonchalance. "Who knows. But what can I say? Mr Saltzman is an investor. If he wants to bring guests, my hands are tied."

Lochlan's expression turned stern and cold. His eyes narrowed slightly, and I could almost hear the calculations whirring behind them.

The golf cart stopped in front of a villa built in a beautiful, traditional Madeiran style, with whitewashed walls and a sloping roof of terracotta tiles. It was charming and, most importantly, secluded.

“We heard you prefer peace and quiet, so we arranged this one for you. I hope it’s suitable,” Damon said.

“It is,” Lochlan replied with a curt nod.

Damon carried our luggage inside. “Boss, why don’t you rest this afternoon? I’ll go and see if Mr Saltzman’s party has surfaced. Once they’re awake, Danny and I can take everyone on a proper tour of the resort.”

“Make the arrangements,” Lochlan said, his tone dismissive.

I gave Damon my most professional smile. “Mr Salvatore, just contact me once everything is coordinated.”

“Please, call me Damon,” he said, flashing me a brilliantly white, toothy grin.

“Of course.”

Then he pulled out his phone. “Could I have your number? To make coordinating easier.”

“Of course.”

We exchanged numbers, and I waved him goodbye at the door.

I turned back to face Lochlan.

His expression was, if possible, even colder and more closed off than usual. The temperature in the room seemed to drop by several degrees.

“What?” I asked.

What had I done now?

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 228:

“Mr Salvatore is wearing a wedding ring,” Lochlan said. “In case you hadn’t noticed.”

I blinked. “I hadn’t. But what of it?”

“Nothing in particular. It’s simply something worth noting.”

“Oh,” I said, the syllable hanging in the air.

Internally, my mind was racing.

Was the boss reminding me that Damon was a married man?

But why should I care if he is? It's not as if I...

Oh. Realisation dawned with the subtlety of a sledgehammer.

Did he just imply I was flirting with Damon?

For fuck's sake. We had exchanged approximately thirty seconds of professionally necessary conversation, and I'd taken his number for purely logistical reasons. This was bordering on the absurd.

I opened my mouth to protest, then closed it again, realising anything I said would either sound defensively guilty or accusatorially sharp.

Follow **us** on ga/novels.com

Better to let the ridiculous implication wither and die in the warmth of my silent contempt.

Then Lochlan picked up my luggage. My luggage. He simply took the handle of my suitcase and started walking towards a winding staircase as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

That was when the second, more significant realisation hit me with a dull thud.

We would be staying in the same villa.

Not the same room, of course—it was a sprawling place—but it was going to be just the two of us under one roof for the next five days.

The awkwardness of the car ride suddenly felt like a minor prelude.

I consoled myself with the one solid fact I thought I possessed. The boss was gay. Probably.

I hurried after him. “You really don’t need to do that. Let me carry it.”

Lochlan offered a characteristically mild rebuttal. “As I said, I don’t make a habit of mistreating my staff.”

He carried my suitcase up the stairs as if it weighed nothing.

I stared at his retreating back. Really? Carrying a bag constitutes mistreatment now? Since when is the boss’s chivalry towards female employees set to such an impossibly high standard?

It felt strange, but I decided not to overanalyse it, and followed him up.

Upstairs, there was one master bedroom, two guest rooms, and a study.

The master suite, naturally, was for Lochlan.

I chose one of the smaller bedrooms, deposited my suitcase, and then went to his room to unpack his things. With Kai absent, the task fell to me.

Before we left, Kai had sent me a comprehensive file labelled “Executive Preferences.” After reading it, I was left with the distinct, unsettling impression that Kai was somehow Lochlan’s unofficial wife.

The level of detail, covering everything from food and drink to fabric preferences, was spousal in its intensity.

It reminded me, with a painful twinge, of a time when I had performed a similar role with that kind of wifely dedication.

No matter how tired I was from work, I would still attempt to cook for a certain bastard, my kitchen skills notwithstanding. The fridge and cupboards were always stocked with his favourite things.

Every suit, every shirt in his wardrobe was meticulously ironed and paired with a tie so he could wake up and effortlessly look polished and handsome—only for him to take that polished handsomeness straight into another woman’s bed.

.

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 229:

Ah, love. It really has a spectacular talent for making one profoundly stupid.

The me from university days would have balked at the idea of making my own breakfast, let alone someone else’s.

“Do you have a particular grievance with my clothes?” A cool tone drifted from the doorway.

I jolted out of my bitter reverie. I’d been unpacking on autopilot, and in my agitation, I’d been gripping one of his shirts with enough force to crumple the pristine cotton.

I hadn’t even heard him come in. The man moved like a ghost. “My apologies. I’ll iron it later,” I said, quickly smoothing the fabric with my hands.

Don’t miss new releases on ga/novels.com

“Were you thinking of something unpleasant?” Lochlan asked.

He had removed his suit jacket and handed it to me as he spoke, his tone deceptively casual, as if we were merely discussing the weather.

“It’s nothing,” I said, taking the jacket from him.

I draped the creased shirt over my arm and reached for a hanger to put the jacket away, hoping my closed-off posture would signal that this particular line of inquiry was over.

I've never been one to pour my heart out, except to Portia, and I was not about to start with my boss.

I became aware that Lochlan was still standing there, showing no intention of leaving.

I turned with feigned nonchalance and said, "Do you have anything else you need to take off, sir?"

Lochlan said nothing.

I felt the blood drain from my face.

The air grew still.

Oh. Oh, mother of God. What did I just say?

Take off? TAKE OFF?

Do you have anything else you need to take off, sir?

He was currently wearing only a shirt and trousers!

I wanted to immediately knock myself unconscious.

I had meant to ask if he had anything else to say, but my mind—still stuck on the fact he had just removed his jacket—had somehow spliced the two concepts together into this... this abomination.

Just as I was contemplating the quickest way to dig a hole and bury myself in it, Lochlan spoke.

He answered my question with utmost seriousness. “No, I don’t think I will. I wouldn’t want to catch a chill.”

Then he gave me a look of such profound and complex meaning that I could’ve written a thesis on it, and left.

I stood there, utterly speechless.

What was that look supposed to mean? Was he thinking, My CAO has a wicked mind and wants me to strip, a desire I simply cannot fulfil?

Or was he mentally drafting the termination notice?

I leaned against the wardrobe door, my will to live evaporating by the second.

I finished hanging the rest of his clothes with record speed, ironed the crumpled shirt, and then practically fled the master bedroom, my eyes fixed straight ahead.

This was definitive proof that one should never, ever let one's mind wander while working.

I retreated to my own room to recover my composure, and only when my internal screaming had subsided did I start unpacking my own things.

About an hour later, a text came in from Damon: [Mr Saltzman's awake. His suggestion is to consolidate all the site visits for tomorrow, as it's getting late. Also, he's invited Mr Hastings for dinner at his villa this evening.]

.

.

.

Billionaire Boss Nah, Just a possessive husband!

Chapter 230:

I texted to ask who else would be at dinner.

Damon: [The entire party he's brought, including the ten hot ladies.]

I smirked. Subtlety was clearly not Toby Saltzman's strong suit.

[Understood,] I replied. [I'll pass the message along.]

I went to the master bedroom and knocked twice on the door.

No answer.

Taking an afternoon nap? Possibly. But what if he wasn't? What if he was in the shower?

The mental image that presented itself was one I promptly—and firmly—evicted from my mind.

Given that the tour was cancelled and this was not terribly urgent, I decided to retreat.

Romance novels on *gal*novels.com

Another hour passed before Damon texted again: [Mr Saltzman is asking if boss is coming. He says if Mr Hastings doesn't want to go to him, he can bring the party to you.]

He added an emoji that made it very clear what he thought of Saltzman.

I laughed, because I happened to share his sentiment, and replied: [Boss is still resting. Please ask Mr Saltzman to be patient, and I will check.]

Damon sent back a crying emoji.

I understood his pain completely. When the big bosses start posturing, the messengers caught in the middle are usually the ones who get blown to pieces. I sent him a consolatory smiley face in return.

Putting my phone away, I went back and knocked on the bedroom door again.

This time, a voice responded. “Come in.”

I entered to find Lochlan standing by the window, his back to me, apparently admiring the view.

The bed was impeccably made, and he had changed into a smart outfit of stone-coloured casual trousers and a soft-looking jumper.

So, not napping. Just contemplating his empire—or perhaps the best way to dismantle Toby’s.

“What is it?” he asked, turning around.

“Mr Saltzman has sent two messages. The first, an hour ago, was to suggest shifting the tours to tomorrow and to invite you for dinner this evening. The second, just now, was to say that if you won’t go to him, he will come to you.” I relayed the information with professional detachment. “I knocked earlier, but you didn’t answer, so I took the liberty of letting him stew for a while.”

Lochlan gave a dismissive, almost imperceptible smile. “That’s perfectly fine. Let him stew.”

He glanced at his watch. “Tell Damon to inform Mr Saltzman that I’ll be there at seven o’clock sharp.”

“Of course,” I said.

I wondered if I should voice my suspicion that Toby’s “dinner” was a transparent attempt to drag Lochlan into a den of vice. I was morally opposed to my boss being corrupted on my watch.

.

.

.