

Crushed Affections

Chapter 12 No Need

Bella froze. Only three people knew about this—her, Felix, and her friend, Lia Lawson. How on earth did Ian know?

Noticing Dominic's gaze fixed on her, she didn't dare meet his eyes. She asked, trying to appear nonchalant, "You're pretty gossipy. Who told you that?"

Ian responded with a sly smile, "I've forgotten. It's been a long time. I was teaching at your university back then and happened to overhear someone mention it. When you mentioned you were classmates back in university, I remembered what I'd heard."

Bella forced a light tone. "Oh, I see... It's all in the past. He's a good guy, but I'm not good enough for him."

As soon as the words left her mouth, she realized something was off. Dominic's face had turned dark, his eyes full of intense anger as if he wanted to tear her apart.

"Someone you can't have might seem like your perfect dream, and just because you've slept with someone doesn't mean you're worthy of them."

Dominic's cold remark sent a chill through Bella. Yes, whether it was him or Felix, she wasn't good enough for either of them. She didn't need him to remind her.

For some reason, she felt a sting in her eyes, and she lowered her head, not wanting anyone to see her emotions.

Ian realized the uncomfortable turn of events and tried to change the subject by placing a dish in front of Bella. "This is really good. It's the signature of this restaurant."

Dominic coldly remarked, "She has hands of her own."

Ian swallowed, then joked, "I just gave her some food. Are you jealous?"

Dominic shot him an annoyed glance. "No need for that. Just eat your food."

Bella barely touched her meal. By the end of it, the atmosphere seemed to return to normal, but it felt more like a calm surface concealing an underlying storm.

After leaving the restaurant, Ian was the first to drive away. Bella turned to Dominic. "I'll hail a cab. Drive safely."

Dominic didn't respond; he just got into his car and sped off, leaving her standing there as he disappeared into the night.

But she didn't feel lonely. It had been like this for years. Even if they were heading the same way, he would never offer her a ride.

In his words, just seeing her made him sick. She had spent years trying to please him, but it had all been for nothing.

Recalling all those moments of intimacy, it seemed none of them had happened when he was sober. It was always under the influence of alcohol. Like he said, if he wasn't drunk, how would he even think of sleeping with her?

She waited on the sidewalk for about ten minutes, but no empty cabs stopped. Finally, she gave up and decided to walk home. The cool spring breeze brushed against her, but it did little to lift her spirits.

As she walked, a car suddenly pulled up beside her, honking to get her attention. She turned her head and saw the window roll down. It was Felix.

"Why are you walking home alone? Let me give you a ride," he offered.

She hesitated and felt a bit awkward. "No... it's okay. I just wanted to take a walk."

Yvonne's little head popped out of the back window. "Don't refuse! Felix is just that nice. Don't overthink it!"

Bella smiled wryly. "I won't overthink it."

Felix gently scolded Yvonne, "What are you saying, Yvonne? Stop talking nonsense and let Ms. Jones get in the car."

Unable to refuse such kind insistence, Bella finally got into the car.

At first, neither of them spoke. It was Yvonne who kept chatting away. As they approached Miller Manor, Felix suddenly asked, "If you don't mind me asking, you live at Miller Manor, and you were just having dinner with Dominic. Are you two close?"