My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 81

I raced toward the iron gates of the Capone estate, the tires of the Ducati screaming. I didn't slow down while the sensors picked up the chip in my bike, the heavy metal bars groaning as they swung open.

The security guards stood at the entrance, their hands resting on their holsters. I didn't want them to see a thing. I shifted my weight, leaning my chest forward until I was shielding Gianna's entire body with my own. I pulled the collar of my jacket up and pressed her face harder into the crook of my neck, hiding the mess of her hair and the dazed look in her eyes.

"Don't move," I gritted out through my teeth, "Don't look at them."

She let out a soft, muffled sound against my skin, her fingers digging into my shoulders. The guards gave a short nod as I sped past them, their eyes lingering on the bike for a second too long. I didn't stop. I tore up the long driveway.

Instead of heading for the main entrance where Adriano or Vincenzo might be lingering with a drink, I took the side path. It led straight to my private garage, a bunker hidden behind the stone walls of the east wing.

I coasted inside, the dim overhead lights flickering to life, as I slowed the bike and finally killed the engine.

The roar of the bike that had been filling my ears was gone, replaced by the sound of her heavy breathing. The bike was still hot, the metal ticking as it began to cool.

I stayed still, my hands frozen on the handlebars. I needed her off. I needed to put distance between us.

"We're here," I said, "Get off, Gianna. Now."

She didn't let go of my neck. Instead, she let out a long, shaky sigh that ghosted over my skin, making the hair on my arms stand up. She shifted her weight, her frame sliding slowly against the fuel tank.

Then, she rocked.

It wasn't a mistake. It was a deliberate tilt of her hips, a heavy roll that pressed her core directly into the hard, aching length of my erection.

I went completely stone-still. My heart stopped mid-beat, then slammed against my ribs so hard I thought it would crack a bone.

I felt the blood rush to my head, my vision swimming with a dark, dizzying heat. Every muscle in my body locked into place, my fingers gripping the rubber handles so tight the knuckles turned white.

The friction was agonizing. It was the kind of touch that made a man forget his name, his family, and his honor.

She did it again, a lazy, drugged movement that was meant to find comfort but found fire instead. She leaned back just an inch, her green eyes hooded and dark as they searched my face.

I looked down, seeing the way her legs were hooked around my waist, the way her chest was rising and falling against mine.

She wasn't just leaning on me.

She was using me.

I sat there, frozen, as the garage around us faded into a blur of gray shadows. Everything started to move in slow motion, like we were underwater.

She shifted her weight, a slow drag of her body against mine. She rolled her hips again, a drugged motion that

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sought out the very center of my heat.

Her head fell back, her spine arching until she was pressed completely into my chest. Her eyes were squeezed shut, her long lashes dark against her pale skin.

Her lips parted, and a soft, breathy sound escaped her, a tiny moan that didn't just hit the air. It echoed in my head, over and over, like a bell I couldn't unring.

And it was the best and worst thing I had ever felt in my life.

Janedoewritings

Author

Let me know what you think!

My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 82

Raphael

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I snapped.

My hands flew out, my fingers digging into the soft skin of her hips to stop the motion. I meant to push her away. I meant to end the torture. But the second my palms hit her curves, my brain went up in flames.

It was a slow, dragging friction that made my vision go dark. My body was screaming at me to lean in, to just take what was being offered.

“No,” I rasped.

“Help me,” she whispered.

“I am helping you,” I rasped, my jaw aching from how hard I was clenching my teeth. “I’m the only thing standing between you and a total disaster.”

I reached up and grabbed her by the shoulders, pushing her back just enough so I could look into those glassy, green eyes. She looked back at me, her lips parted, her breath coming in short, hot puffs. She looked like she wanted to melt into the floor with me.

“You don’t want this, Gianna,” I said, my jaw so tight it hurt, “You think you do right now, but you don’t. It’s the pill talking. And you’re making things very fucking difficult for me.”

She let out a soft, frustrated whine and tried to lean back in, her hands reaching for my neck again. She didn’t care about the rules. She didn’t care that I was someone she usually hated. Right now, I was just the heat she needed.

“Stay. Still,” I ordered.

I swung my leg over the back of the bike, moving fast before my body could betray me again. I stood up, the cool air of the garage hitting the sweat on my skin. I didn’t give her a second to think. I reached down, grabbed her around the waist, and hauled her off the fuel tank.

She was dead weight, her limbs loose and soft. I hoisted her up and threw her over my shoulder like a sack of grain.

“Wow!” she gasped, her hands thumping against my back, “Look, the world is spinning!”

“Shut up,” I hissed, “Unless you want the whole house to see you like this.”

I kicked the side door of the garage open, the one that led into the servant’s passage. It was a narrow hallway that stayed in the darkness, away from the high-ceilinged lounges where my brothers were probably with their families.

I moved fast, every step I took, her body jolted against my shoulder. I could feel the curve of her backside against my neck and the way her hair draped down my back.

I had to get her to her room. If anyone saw us, if they saw her drugged and messy on my shoulder, they wouldn’t ask questions. They would blame me for something I had no control over.

“Stop moving,” I muttered as she tried to squirm.

“It’s too fast,” she whispered, “Everything is moving too fast.”

I rounded a corner, my eyes darting to the security cameras. I knew the blind spots. I knew how to move through

my own house like a fucking ghost.

One wrong turn and I was a dead man walking. One look from the wrong person and the war would start tonight.

I reached the back staircase, and I climbed them two at a time. I just needed to get her behind a locked door.

I reached the top of the stairs, my lungs burning. My bedroom was to the left, and hers was in my father’s wing.

Part of me just wanted to get to her bedroom, toss her onto the rug, and bolt but then I stopped.

I thought about what happened. I thought about the red lights, the masks, and the way those girls had laughed while she choked. She had seen the hunt. She had seen the ugly side of our world that she was never supposed to touch. If she woke up alone, her mind would go to dark places. She would remember my hands on her.

And if I wasn’t the first thing she saw when she opened her eyes? She would be a wildcard. She might scream. She might run to my sisters-in-law. She could make things very, very difficult for me before I had a chance to explain.

“Change of plans, you stupid witch,” I muttered.

I turned on my heel and walked toward my own door. I nudged it open with my boot and stepped into my room.

It was my space, where no one ever came without an invitation.

I walked over to the massive bed in the center of the room. I leaned down and let her slide off my shoulder. She hit the silk sheets, her hair fanning out like a cloud against the gray fabric.

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Chapter 83

“Soft,” she whispered, and reached out and grabbed a handful of the sheet, pulling it to her chest, “It smells like you.”

I stood over her, my hands on my hips, watching her. She looked so small in the middle of my bed. She was curled up on her side, her knees tucked toward her chest. The bandages on her feet were white against the dark bedding.

I wanted to leave. I wanted to lock the door and sleep on the floor of the garage.

But I couldn’t.

I walked over to the window and pulled the heavy curtains shut, blocking out the moonlight.

“Go to sleep, Gianna,” I said.

“Stay,” she breathed. She didn’t open her eyes, but she reached out one hand, her fingers searching the empty air for me, “Stay here with me.”

I sat in the armchair in the corner of my room. My body was still humming from the ride, my skin still felt like it was on fire where she had touched me. I reached for my laptop, flipping it open. The glow of the screen hit my face, making me squint in the dark.

“Raphael?” her voice floated from the bed.

“I said, go to sleep, Gianna,” I snapped.

I didn’t look at her. I started typing, my fingers flying over the keys. If any of the family tech guys looked at the logs tomorrow, they couldn’t find a trace of her on my bike.

“Do you think fish get thirsty?” she asked.

I paused, my finger hovering over the ‘delete’ key. I closed my eyes for a second, letting out a long, tired breath.” What the fuck are you talking about?”

“I mean, they live in water,” she murmured. I heard the sheets rustle as she rolled onto her side, “But do they drink it? Or is it like... breathing? If I were a fish, I think I’d want juice. Orange juice.”

“You’re high as a kite. Shut the hell up and close your eyes,” I ordered.

I clicked through the files for the front gate. There. A ten-second clip of my Ducati rolling through. I highlighted the file and hit ‘Wipe.’ I did the same for the driveway, the private garage, and the back hallway. I scrubbed every frame that showed a hint of her brown hair or her pale legs.

“The stars are loud tonight,” she whispered.

“Stars don’t make noise, Gianna. They’re giant balls of gas millions of miles away. Go to sleep.”

“They’re screaming,” she insisted, “They’re mad because you’re being mean to your stepsister. Why are you always so rude? Did someone steal your favorite toy when you were a baby?”

“Yeah,” I muttered, my eyes locked on the screen as I deleted the footage of the service stairs, “His name was Adriano. Now, for the last time, shut your mouth.”

“I like your room,” she said, ignoring me completely.

“Sleep before I put a piece of tape over your mouth.”

I finished the last wipe. I checked the logs twice, making sure the timestamps looked natural. As far as the Capone security system was concerned, I had come home alone, parked my bike, and gone straight to bed.

I slammed the laptop shut and leaned my head back against the chair.

“Raphael?”

“What now?” I barked.

And in return, I heard a little, almost inaudible snore.

I watched the silhouette of her under the covers until her breathing finally turned deep and even. She was finally

under.

“Fucking hell,” I whispered to the empty room. I wiped a hand over my face.

The silence of the room was broken by the buzz of my phone in my pocket. I snatched it out before the sound could wake her, my heart skipping a beat.

The caller ID screen glowed bright white. DANTE.

I cursed under my breath and swiped to answer. I kept my voice low, “What?”

“Where the hell are you, Raph?” Dante’s voice was loud, filled with the noise of the party behind him. I could hear music and the distant sound of someone screaming, “The hunt just started, and your bike is cleared out of the lot. You don’t just walk away from a night like this.”

I leaned back in the chair, my eyes staying on the shadow of Gianna on the bed. My hand tightened on the phone.

“I got bored,” I said, my voice flat. I made it sound like I was talking about a dull movie, “The party was trash. The hunt was slow. I came home to get some actual sleep.”

There was a long pause on the other end. I could hear Dante breathing, his suspicion coming through the line like heat. Dante wasn’t a fool. He knew I didn’t just get bored when there was blood to be tracked.

“Bored?” Dante repeated, “You? Since when do you leave a hunt behind? People are asking questions. They say they saw you hauling someone out of the hunt. They say you looked like you were ready to kill.”

“People talk too much when they’re high,” I snapped, my temper finally fraying, “I’m in my room. I’m tired. you want to play games in the dirt with those spoiled little bitches, go ahead. But don’t call me again unless the house is on fire.”

“Raph, if you’re hiding something-”

“Hang up the phone, Dante.”

I didn’t wait for his reply. I tapped the screen and ended the call, throwing the phone onto the table.

I stood up, my legs feeling heavy. I walked to the edge of the bed. Gianna had kicked the silk sheets down in her sleep. She looked cold, her small shoulders shivering in the air-conditioned chill of the room.

I reached down and grabbed the heavy gray duvet. I pulled it up slowly, tucking it under her chin.

Then I felt it again.

That deep, sharp throb in my gut. My jeans were so tight it was becoming a physical pain.

“Goddammit,” I whispered, the word a hissed curse.

I turned away from her, my jaw aching from how hard I was clenching my teeth. I walked toward the bathroom. I stepped inside and slammed the door shut.

I stepped into the glass shower, the tiles cold against my back as the water started to hiss. I didn’t turn on the heater. I wanted it cold. I wanted the ice to snap me out of the haze, to kill the heat that was pulsing in my blood. But as the freezing spray hit my shoulders, it didn’t help.

Every time I closed my eyes, I felt the phantom weight of her core rocking against me.

“Fuck,” I spat.

I reached down, my hand wrapping around my cock. It was stone-hard, straining against the cold water. My grip was tight, rough, and impatient.

I started to move my hand, a fast slide that made my breath turned heavier. I leaned the back of my head against the wet glass wall, my eyes squeezed shut.

I could have had anyone tonight. I could have had any girl in that hunt. I could have picked out any two of those high-society whores and fucked them right there. I should be balls-deep in someone right now, fucking her brains out, using every hole she had until I was empty and bored.

That was the life I was supposed to have. I should have been covered in someone else’s sweat, hearing a stranger scream my name. Instead, I was standing in a dark bathroom like a teenager, hiding from a girl who shouldn’t even be in my wing.

I rocked my hips into my own hand. The friction was the only thing that mattered. I wanted to get rid of the ache. I wanted to flush the scent of her rain-sweet skin out of my system.

A stupid gold-digging step-fucking-sister.

But my body didn’t care about the labels. It remembered the way her legs had locked around my waist. I pumped faster, my breath coming in heavy gasps that filled the small space. I was punishing myself, my grip almost too

hard, but the release was right there, hovering just out of reach.

I let out a low grunt as the peak finally hit. I slumped against the wall. I stood there for a long time, the cold water washing over me, clearing away the mess.

I took a shower after, turned off the water, and stepped out. I stood in the dark, dripping wet, the hard-on was, gone, but as I grabbed a towel and wiped the water from my face, the annoyance was still there, sitting like a stone in my gut.

I walked to my closet, pulled on a pair of soft gray sweatpants and tugged a black t-shirt over my head.

I looked at the bed. Gianna was a small mound under the heavy duvet.

Then, it happened.

Knock. Knock. Knock.

I froze, my hand halfway to my hair. My stomach dropped to my fucking feet. I looked at the door, then back at the girl.

“Shit,” I whispered.

I lunged for the bed. I grabbed the edge of the thick gray sheets and pulled them up, right over Gianna’s head. I tucked the fabric around her so she looked like nothing more than a pile of extra pillows. I prayed to a God I didn’t believe in that she wouldn’t wake up and start talking about thirsty fish or orange juice.

P

My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 85

I walked to the door, and opened it just a crack, then stepped into the gap, using my broad frame to block every single inch of the view behind me. Behind me, Gianna was a lump under the sheets, and if she so much as coughed, my life was over.

It was Aunt Alessia.

Even this late, she looked like she was ready for a photoshoot in her dark silk dress. She was the only person in this family who I loved more than anything, but right now, she was the last person I wanted to see,

“Raphael,” she said, a warm smile spreading across her face, “You’re finally home.”

I swallowed hard, the lump in my throat feeling like a stone, “Aunt Alessia. What are you doing here so late? It’s way past your bedtime.”

“I came to spend a night here and I was waiting for you,” she said, stepping closer. I didn’t budge. I stayed rooted to the floor, my hand gripping the doorknob so hard the metal bit into my palm, “The guards at the gate told me your bike came in an hour ago. I couldn’t sleep until I saw all of you. You know how I get.”

If she pushed past me, I was a dead man. Alessia was old-school. She believed in the Capone name. If she found Gianna in my bed, it wouldn’t just be a scandal. It would be a betrayal. The look of disappointment on her face would hurt way more than any bullet I’d ever taken.

“Raphael,” her voice snapped me out of my thoughts, “Are you okay?”

“I’m fine,” I said, and I forced a small, tight smile. “Just a long night.”

She didn’t seem convinced, she could easily tell when I was lying or when I was telling the truth, she reached out to hug me and I hugged her back with one arm before taking a step back just an inch, pulling the door with me to keep the gap narrow.

She clicked her tongue, her eyes darting to the sliver of darkness behind me. “Is there a girl in there?”

My blood ran cold. “No...”

She rolled her eyes and let out a long, dramatic sigh. “Oh, please. Don’t ‘no’ me. You’ve got that look on your face. Ugh, what am I going to do with you boys? Honestly. You guys have zero shame. I don’t get how your generation just sleeps with... anyone. It’s like a revolving door in this wing.”

“Come on, it’s not like that-”

“It’s always ‘not like that,”” she mocked, waving a hand, “You’re wasting your time with these random party girls. You need to settle down. Why can’t you find a nice girl? Someone like Claire? Or Maddie? They’re the kind of girls you take to Sunday dinner, not hide in your bedroom from your family.”

Then, Alessia leaned her head toward the crack in the door and spoke even louder, her voice turning sweet and helpful.

“And you! Honey! If you can hear me in there, listen to me!” she called out, sounding like she was giving advice to a friend, “You’re way too pretty to be hiding in his room! He’s a jerk, I promise. He never calls back, he’s a narcissist, and he spends way too much time with that motorcycle. Don’t waste your time being a secret! Go find yourself a nice guy

who will actually buy you a ring and take you out in the daylight. This one isn't worth the headache, trust me!"

"Come on!" I hissed, my face heating up.

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"I'm just telling the truth!" she laughed, patting my cheek. "Go to sleep, you heartbreaker."

I watched her walk away, until she turned the corner. I stepped back into the room and shut the door. My heart was thudding so loud I could hear it in my ears.

I turned around and looked at the bed.

Suddenly, a wave of pure, cold rage washed over me. I wanted to murder her.

I wanted to shake her awake. I wanted to yell at her until she understood the mess she had made.

But most of all, I just wanted her gone. I wanted her out of my bed, out of my sight, and I desperately needed her out of my fucking head.

Janedoewritings

Author

My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 86

Hey, guys!

P

I'm currently fighting for my life in the real world. I haven't written a single word, and I haven't even been home for two days. Yes, I'm barely surviving, but unfortunately, not in a dramatic mafia way, just life being rude.

So, before anyone burns their fingerprints off refreshing the page, there will be no update today either. Save your energy. Hydrate. Touch grass. Mourn the missing chapter with dignity.

And to the people who harass-I mean lovingly pester-me for updates even though I post twice a day... well, how does it feel now, huh? Do you finally appreciate my suffering and dedication? I expect tears. Maybe a small shrine. Lol.

Jokes aside, I love you all, even the chaotic ones who bully me for chapters. I hope you're all doing well and staying safe while your author slowly loses her sanity.

Love you all!

P

My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 87

Gianna

ITT

My eyes felt like someone had rubbed sand into the sockets. I tried to blink, but my lids were heavy and stuck together. Everything was too bright. The light coming through the gaps in the curtains felt like a needle stabbing straight into my brain.

My mouth was a desert. It was bone-dry, and there was a bitter, metallic taste coating my tongue that made me want to gag. My head wasn't just aching, it was thumping. A slow, rhythmic boom-boom-boom that matched the frantic beating of my heart.

I felt hollow like someone had scooped out my insides and replaced them with cold lead. My muscles were weak and my skin felt sensitive, as if the air itself was too sharp to touch.

I shifted my legs, and the fabric of the sheets felt wrong.

This wasn't my bed.

I froze. The memories of the night before started to leak back in like black ink. The forest. The masks. The high, cruel laughter of those girls. I remembered the pink ribbon. I remembered the blue pill hitting the back of my throat.

I remembered running.

Dirt scraping under my nails. Branches tearing at my arms. The feeling of something wrapping around my ankles and dragging me down. The panic. The screaming stuck in my throat.

And then... him.

Raphael.

The memory of his hands grabbing me made heat rush across my skin in a wave that felt wrong and confusing. He had lifted me like I weighed nothing, like I wasn't even a person. Just something lying on the ground that needed to be picked up and moved.

He dragged me out of that nightmare.

But this-this life-this house-this world-this nightmare–was his.

This was his world. This was the life they lived, a world of blood, drugs, and games where people hunted each other like animals. The horror of it pressed against my ribs until it felt hard to breathe.

These people were insane.

I immediately sat up, my head spinning so fast the whole room tilted. I had to grab the edge of the mattress, my fingers digging into the silk to keep from falling onto the floor.

And then I saw him.

Raphael sat in a wide armchair across the room like he had been there the whole time. He wasn't wearing a shirt. His chest was bare, wide and solid, covered in dark tattoos that curled over his shoulders and down his arms. Gray sweatpants hung low on his hips, careless and loose.

But it wasn't his body that stopped my breath.

It was what was wrapped around him.

A massive python, thick as a tree branch and easily fifteen to twenty feet long, was coiled around him. Its scales were dark and shimmering, a pattern of brown and gold that looked... so scary.

The snake's head was resting near Raphael's collarbone, its flicking tongue tasting the air. Raphael didn't look at me. His eyes were fixed on the floor, his large hand moving in a slow stroke down the length of the snake's body.

He was petting it, his fingers sliding over the cold scales as if the creature were a common house cat.

I stopped breathing. I stayed perfectly still, my fingers digging into the silk sheets. The horror of the night before crashed into me all over again. The hunt, the drugs, the fear... it was all still there, trapped in my chest.

And now I was here.

In his room.

In his bed.

I looked at the python, watching the way its heavy body shifted against Raphael's skin. It was terrifying.

He looked like a king of some dark, forgotten world, sitting there with a killer draped over his shoulders.

I wanted to run. I wanted to scream. But my throat was too tight, and my legs felt like water. I just stared at him, my eyes wide, my heart slamming against my ribs.

He knew I was awake. I could tell by the way his hand paused on the snake's back but he didn't look up. He just kept sitting there waiting for me to say something I didn't have the words for.

I felt like I was in a nightmare that wouldn't end.

Finally, he lifted his head. Sunlight reflected perfectly into those brown eyes and it made them look like golden honey.

"Good morning, stepsister," he said.

His voice was nonchalant, like we were sitting at a breakfast table. I swallowed hard, the sound of it loud in the quiet room. I couldn't find my words. I couldn't even find my breath.

My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 88

Raphael turned his attention back to the massive creature draped over his bare shoulders. He reached thumb gently rubbing the top of the snake's diamond-shaped head.

up,

his

"Say hello to Medusa," he muttered, his voice softening in a way that made my skin crawl. It was a sweet tone, the kind you'd use for a puppy, but he was using it for a twenty-foot killer, "She's been waiting for you to wake up. Haven't you, girl?"

The python-Medusa-flicked her dark, forked tongue out near his ear. Raphael let out a dry chuckle and leaned his head back, letting the weight of her body shift against his tan skin. He looked so comfortable, his fingers playing with her scales as if they were silk.

“She’s a beauty, isn’t she?” he asked, though he didn’t wait for me to answer. He began to coil a section of her thick body around his forearm, watching the muscles ripple, “You know, Gianna, people think snakes are just mean. But they’re actually very… efficient.”

He leaned forward just an inch, his eyes locking onto mine.

“Did you know a python like Medusa doesn’t just bite?” he asked, “She doesn’t have to. She wraps herself around you. And every time you take a breath out, she squeezes just a little bit tighter. She waits. She’s patient. She listens to your heartbeat through your skin, and she doesn’t stop pressing until that heart just… stops. No air, no blood, just a quiet, slow end.”

He smiled then, and lifted Medusa’s head, holding her up so she was eye-level with him. He tapped her snout playfully, his movements gentle while my entire body shook.

“She can feel how fast your heart is going right now, Gianna,” he said, looking back at me, “She likes the vibration. It makes her hungry.”

I pulled the covers up to my nose, my eyes darting between his chest and the shimmering scales of the snake. He looked so in place, sitting there with a killer draped over his heart, babying it while I felt like I was dying inside.

He didn’t stay in the chair. He stood up with that predator draped over his skin. The massive weight of the python moved, her heavy coils tightening slightly around his bicep to keep her balance as he moved.

He started walking toward the bed.

My heart felt like it was going to burst through my ribs. I pressed my back against the headboard, my fingers digging so hard into the mattress that my nails began to ache. I wanted to disappear into the wall.

“Stay still,” he murmured, “She doesn’t like sudden movements. It makes her think something is trying to get away,”

He stopped at the edge of the bed. Raphael reached up and stroked the underside of the snake’s jaw, right where the pale scales met the dark pattern of her throat.

“She hasn’t eaten in three weeks,” he said, his voice casual, as if he were talking about the weather, “A girl like Medusa doesn’t need to eat every day. She’s patient. She waits until she finds something big enough to be worth the effort. Something she can really wrap herself around.”

He leaned in closer, I could see the way his muscles rippled under his skin, and I could see the way the snake’s body mirrored his movements.

“Last time, I gave her a whole goat,” he continued, his eyes never leaving mine. “I watched her do it. She just locked her teeth in, threw those coils around it, and squeezed until the bones started to pop. It sounded like dry

+15 Banys

sticks snapping in the woods. And then... she just swallowed it whole. It took her days to digest. She just laid there, basking in the sun.”

I felt the air leave my lungs. A sob caught in my throat, but I forced it down, my eyes wide and stinging. My whole body was trembling so hard the bed began to shake.

“Why... why are you telling me this?” I choked out, “Why are you saying these things to me?”

I looked at him, pleading with my eyes for him to stop, to move away, to take that nightmare out of the room. He leaned over the bed, bringing his face-and the snake’s head-closer and closer to mine.

“Because you need to understand how things work in this house, Gianna,” he whispered.

The snake’s head swayed, moving in a hypnotic circle just inches from my face.

“And because you need to be very, very quiet,” he said, “Last night was a mess. A loud, ugly mess. And in this house, when things get messy, someone usually ends up like that goat I told you about.”

D

P

My Stepbrother's Dirty Little Secret

Chapter 89

I swallowed hard, the metallic taste of the drug still stinging my throat.

“I want you to give me your word that what happened last night stays between us,” he rasped, a cruel smile pulling at his lips, “If a single word about last night reaches Claire, or Madeleine, or especially my Aunt Alessia... then things are going to get very uncomfortable for you.”

He shifted his weight, and the snake shifted with him, its coils rippling across the bed now.

“Alessia is downstairs right now,” he whispered, leaning so close I could feel the heat radiating off his bare chest, “I want to hear you say it. Tell me you won’t breathe a word to anyone about what happened last night, not even my brothers. Because if you do, I’ll stop feeding Medusa goats. I’ll just let her have you instead.”

The snake’s head turned.

It turned straight toward me, like it had heard something only it understood. Its dark eyes locked onto mine. The forked tongue slid out again between us.

My breath hitched hard in my throat.

My hands clenched tighter around the blanket until the fabric twisted into my fists. I tried to sit still like he told me to, but my body didn’t listen. Fear crawled under my skin, making every nerve feel raw.

“See?” Raphael murmured softly, “She’s curious.”

Curious.

That word made my stomach twist violently. My lips parted, but nothing came out at first.

The snake leaned forward another inch.

Its tongue flicked again, closer this time. Close enough that I swore I could feel the faint brush of air against my cheek. My lungs locked tight, refusing to pull in enough oxygen. My chest hurt from holding my breath.

“Say it,” Raphael repeated quietly.

“I-”

I swallowed hard, forcing air into my lungs even though it burned. I hated how scared I sounded.

The snake moved again.

Its head tilted slightly, studying me with that blank, emotionless stare. The slow sway of its body made my stomach roll, nausea rising thick and bitter in my throat. My fingers dug into the mattress so hard my nails hurt.

“I won’t,” I forced out finally, “I won’t tell anyone.”

He stayed right there, watching me carefully, like he was weighing my words on some invisible scale.

“Say it properly,” he murmured.

God, I hated him.

“I said I won’t tell anyone,” I snapped, my voice shaking but louder this time.

The snake’s head jerked slightly at the sound. My stomach dropped straight into my feet. Raphael’s eyes darkened just a little, his gaze sharpening on my face.

+15 Bgnys

“I’m not stupid,” I added, breath uneven. “I know when to keep my mouth shut.”

A faint smile pulled at the corner of his mouth, “Good,” he murmured softly.

That one word made my stomach twist again.

The snake finally lowered its head, settling slightly against his shoulder again.

“If a single word leaves your mouth,” he said quietly, “I won’t warn you again.”

My fingers tightened harder around the blanket as I forced myself to hold his gaze. My heart still pounded wildly, but I lifted my chin just a little anyway.

“I gave you my word,” I whispered hoarsely.

My voice shook, but the words stayed steady enough to sound real.

“Now get that thing away from me.”

The words slipped out before I could stop them. Fear slammed into my chest again the second they left my mouth but I didn’t take them back.

My hands were still shaking when he finally stepped back, not far, just enough to give me air again.

The snake settled against his shoulders like it had already decided I wasn’t worth the effort. My chest still moved too fast, each breath scraping my throat raw. I swallowed hard, forcing myself to sit still for a second longer, waiting for my heart to slow.

It didn’t.

Not even a little.

I couldn’t stay in this psycho’s bed another second.

Slowly, carefully, I pushed the blanket aside and slid my legs over the edge. The floor looked too far away, like I might fall before my feet even touched it. My muscles felt weak and shaky, but I forced myself to move anyway.

My feet touched the floor and I froze instantly, not from pain but from the lack of it.

I looked down slowly, and I noticed the thick white bandages wrapped around both of my feet, neat and tight, covering the cuts and bruises I gave myself just a few days ago. Clean gauze crossed over my skin in careful lines, secured with medical tape that had been pressed down smoothly.

My stomach twisted strangely as I stared at them. My toes flexed slightly, testing the tightness of the wrap. The burning pain from last night had dulled into a throb, but it wasn’t raw anymore. It wasn’t bleeding anymore.

Someone had cleaned them.

Someone had wrapped them.

A memory slipped into my head before I could stop it.

Raphael kneeling on the floor.

Big hands holding my ankle steady. His fingers rough but careful as he pressed gauze against my skin. His head lowered, focused, jaw tight while he worked like it actually mattered.

Like I mattered.

Heat crept up my neck before I could stop it.

I didn’t believe that memory because it didn’t match the monster standing behind me with a damn snake around his shoulders.

I swallowed hard and straightened my back.

No.

I wasn’t doing this. I wasn’t standing here thinking soft thoughts about a man who had just threatened to feed me to his pet like I was dinner.

“Make sure no one sees you stepping out of my room, I don’t want to associated with you in any way,” he said rudely.

My fingers curled into fists at my sides.

“Did you do this?” I asked quietly, gesturing towards my feet.

Behind me, I heard the soft shift of scales as the snake moved again, “Yes,” he said simply.

“Next time,” I muttered, forcing strength into my voice, “don’t.”

The lie tasted bitter in my mouth.

I forced myself to step forward. The bandages pressed softly against my skin as I walked toward the door.

The door stood tall and silent in front of me. Locked. Smart system, no handle and no way out without him.

Of course.

I stopped in front of it and waited.

“Open it,” I said.

Behind me, I heard the faint sound of movement. Then click. The lock released, my fingers lifted slowly and pressed against the cool surface of the door.

I held it there just for a second.

My heart still pounded too fast, but the fear had changed shape now. It wasn’t just panic anymore. Something

+15 Brus

sharper sat underneath it. Something stubborn and angry.

I hated when men tried to scare me into things.

I turned around slowly. Raphael still stood there, tall and calm, the python draped across his shoulders as he peppered kisses all over his scaly reptile face.

I glared at him, really glared.

“You know what’s funny?” I said.

His eyebrow lifted slightly.

I tilted my head just a little, crossing my arms carefully over my chest like I needed the barrier between us.

“All this,” I said, gesturing slightly toward him and the snake, “The whole psycho-zookeeper act. And you’re still terrified of a bunch of women downstairs.”

The corner of his mouth twitched slightly, not a smile but a sneer. I leaned a little harder into the door behind me holding it open with my hand.

“And just so we’re clear,” I added quietly, meeting his eyes head-on, “if you ever threaten me with that oversized shoelace again-”

My gaze flicked briefly to the snake before snapping back to his face.

“I’ll go straight to Aunt Alessia. I’ll sit her down for tea and tell her every single dirty little detail about your midnight hobbies. I’ll tell her everything you do when the lights go out.”

Silence filled the room.

My pulse slammed hard in my throat, but I didn’t look away and then, because fear made people stupid and brave at the same time, and adrenaline had finally pushed me past the point of being careful, one last word ripped out of

“Pussy.”

My stomach dropped into my shoes the second it hit the air.

God, that was a terrible idea.

But I didn’t take it back. I didn’t apologize. I didn’t even wait for him to react.

I spun around, ripped the door open, and bolted. I ran out of his room, sprinting down the long, cold hallway of his wing. My heart was pounding like it was trying to smash its way out of my chest, the sound of my own footsteps echoing against the walls. I didn’t look back. I just ran, knowing I might have just signed my own death sentence with a single, stupid word.