

God of Milfs 501

Chapter 501: A Snake In Disguise

Kafka let her words hang in the air for a moment. His expression unreadable.

Then, with deliberate slowness. He reached out and gently tilted her chin upward. Forcing her to meet his gaze. His touch was soft. His eyes warm but intense. As though he were looking straight into her soul.

"Nina..." He said. His voice steady but filled with a quiet strength that made her heart ache. "Listen to me when I say you could never let me down."

Her breath caught. Her watery eyes widening as she stared at him. "But—"

"No buts." He interrupted. His tone firm but kind. "You're not perfect, Nina. No one is. You make mistakes. That's human...But don't you dare think for a second that you're not wanted." He paused. His eyes softening as he continued. "You're wanted, Nina. You're wanted by me."

Her lips parted slightly. Her chest tightening at his words. "Kafka..." She whispered. Her voice barely audible.

"And as for you trying to be better for me." He added. With a small, teasing smile. "You're already enough. You're more than enough. You're fierce. Kind. Stubborn as hell...And yeah. You make mistakes. But that's part of what makes you, you. And I wouldn't change a thing."

Nina blinked rapidly. Her cheeks flushing as she tried to process his words. The warmth spreading through her chest was almost overwhelming. And for a moment. She forgot how to breathe. "You... You really mean that?"

"Of course, I mean it...Do I look like the kind of guy who says things he doesn't mean?" Kafka chuckled softly. His thumb brushing against her cheek.

"No...No, you don't...You're someone who's too brutally honest for your own good." She couldn't help the small laugh that escaped her. Though it was shaky and accompanied by a snuffle.

"There's my girl." Kafka said. His voice full of warmth and pride. "Now, no more of this 'letting me down' nonsense, okay? We're a team, Nina. You and me...And if you stumble. I'll be right here to catch you."

Nina's heart swelled at his words. And for the first time in what felt like forever, the weight of her insecurities began to lift.

Her husband, still standing in stunned silence, seemed completely forgotten as Nina leaned into Kafka's touch. Her heart finally feeling at ease. For the first time in a long while she felt truly cherished.

Kafka's hand remained on Nina's head, stroking her soft hair in a gentle rhythm. His gaze, however, was sharp as ever. "Nina." He said, his voice almost conversational but with an undertone of seriousness. "Do you always sign the documents he gives you without reading them first?"

Nina tensed slightly under his touch. Her hesitation was evident. She bit her lip, unsure how to respond but the reassurance he had given her earlier emboldened her. Taking a deep breath, she admitted softly. "Well...Yeah. I mean, he handles all the accounting and administrative stuff for the hot spring."

"He does?" Kafka raised an eyebrow. His expression was calm but curious.

She nodded slowly, glancing down at her hands. "I'm really bad with numbers and all that paperwork. It's not my thing, you know. So...When he brings me something to sign, I just assume it's for the hot spring and go along with it."

Kafka's gaze flicked over to her husband, who now looked as pale as a ghost. The man's hands fidgeted nervously and he seemed to be shrinking under Kafka's scrutiny.

"And..." Kafka continued, his tone still calm but with a certain eeriness creeping in. "Are these requests limited to just documents? Or...is there something else?"

Nina hesitated again. Her long ears fluttered around in nervousness. "He does also ask for money sometimes." She admitted reluctantly. "He says it's for the hot spring. Like repairs, supplies, or... other things."

Kafka's jaw tightened, but he kept his expression composed. His eyes, however, flickered with something colder as he glanced back at her husband, who now looked like he wanted to sink into the floor. The man avoided Kafka's gaze entirely. His shoulders slumped as if the weight of his guilt had finally settled on him.

"Nina..." Kafka said, turning his attention back to her. His voice softened but still firm. "The past is the past. I get that you were trying to trust him, but from now on..." His hand stilled on her head. His fingers gently brushed her hair. "...you're not allowed to sign anything without reading it first. No, scratch that." He paused. His tone grew more resolute. "You're not allowed to sign anything without showing it to me first."

"But, Kafka, I—" Nina blinked up at him. Her eyes widened with surprise.

"No buts." He interrupted, his expression softening slightly but still resolute. "Some people might seem close to you, but they're actually snakes in disguise, Nina and you wouldn't even know when they strike because of how well they've hidden themselves." He turned his head slightly. His gaze landed squarely on her husband, who visibly flinched under the weight of it.

The man looked utterly defeated. His earlier bravado was completely gone. His eyes darted nervously between Nina and Kafka. His gulped as if he was too afraid to speak.

Nina followed Kafka's gaze. Her heart sank slightly at the sight of her husband's cowering form. She had always known their relationship was distant, strained. But seeing him like this—so utterly spineless—made something inside her twist painfully.

Nina's husband stood frozen in place. His mind raced with panic. 'This brat.' His thoughts swirled, laced with fear and frustration. 'This damn brat just had to show up and ruin everything.' His eyes darted to the stack of papers Kafka now held. 'I was so close. Just one more week. I could've been out of this miserable place with enough cash to start fresh...Now it's all slipping through my fingers because of him.'

He clenched his fists. His face twisted into a grimace, but he didn't dare let his frustration show. But Kafka's eyes had already seen too much. Even now, with his plan seemingly unraveling, the thought of challenging Kafka sent a shiver down his spine.

But then, to his utter shock, Kafka's voice broke through the tense silence.

"Go ahead, Nina. Sign the papers."

The man's head snapped up. His eyes widened with disbelief. "What?!" He blurted out before he could stop himself.

Kafka didn't even glance at him. Instead, the young man's gaze remained fixed on Nina. His expression was calm and unreadable.

Nina herself looked equally stunned. She stared at Kafka as if she hadn't heard him correctly. "What. Kafka, why?" She asked, her voice filled with confusion. "You were so hesitant earlier. Why are you telling me to sign now?"

Kafka's lips curled into a small smile, but his eyes were sharp. His gaze flickered briefly toward her husband before returning to her. "I've changed my mind." He said simply. His tone was light but with an edge that made Nina hesitate. "Go ahead now...Sign the papers."

Nina blinked, still unsure. But she still nodded slowly. Her hand reached for the pen. Her fingers brushed against the papers—but then, to Kafka's surprise, she didn't immediately sign.

Instead, she picked up the papers. Her brow furrowed as she began to carefully read through them.

Kafka's eyes widened slightly. He was caught off guard by her sudden diligence.

'Well, I didn't see that coming.' He thought. His lips twitched into a faint grin. For all his teasing and scolding earlier, it seemed she had taken his words to heart after all.

Then with a wry smile, Kafka leaned closer to her. He rested his chin on his hand as he spoke.

"Hey, why are you reading it so seriously. I told you to just sign it."

Nina didn't even glance up. Her lips twitched into a teasing smile. "Well, I'm just following what you said earlier, Kafka. You're the one who told me not to trust anyone other than myself."

Kafka chuckled, shaking his head. "Oh, so now you're taking my advice to heart. Huh." His hand reached out. He lightly brushed against one of her long, pointed ears. His fingers played with the delicate tip. "What about me, then. Do you think I'm a snake that you have to be wary of as well?"

Without missing a beat, Nina finally looked up. Her green eyes sparkled with mischief as she said, "Oh, absolutely. You're the baddest snake of them all, Kafka...If I let my guard down, you'd devour me whole and not leave so much as a bone behind."

Kafka blinked in shock at her response. "Nina..." He exclaimed and then leaned back slightly as if her words had physically hit him. "After all we've been through, I can't believe you'd say that."

She giggled softly. Her earlier tension melted away as she watched him flounder for a response. "Well, it's true." She said, her tone teasing. "You're dangerous, Kafka...So dangerous that even someone like me, who feared by everyone in this town has to be wary around you."

"And here I thought we had trust, Nina. I'm wounded." Kafka sighed dramatically as he shook his head.

Nina laughed again but didn't reply. Her attention turned back to the papers in front of her.

But as she continued to read, her playful smile gradually faded. Her brows knitted together. She mumbled something like she was lost in a heap of words as she flipped to the next page. The further she went, the more her expression shifted into one of confusion.

Finally, after a minute, she let out a frustrated groan. She dropped the papers onto the counter and she threw her head back with a huff.

Chapter 502: Greed Leads To One's Demise

"Kafka~" She whined. Her voice was laced with exasperation. "I don't understand any of this...There are too many big, complicated words."

Kafka burst out laughing. The sound was rich and warm as he leaned over to ruffle her hair. "This..." He said between chuckles. "This is exactly why I told you I'd read it myself. But you're cute when you're determined, though."

Nina pouted. Her emerald eyes narrowed at him, but there was no real heat in her gaze. "It's not funny." She grumbled, though her cheeks flushed slightly at his teasing. "How am I supposed to figure out if there's something wrong with the papers if I can't even read them properly."

"Relax." Kafka said, still grinning as he handed her the pen. "Leave the reading to me, alright. You just focus on signing. I'll make sure there aren't any hidden potholes that you've missed out on."

She hesitated for a moment. Her gaze flickered between the papers and the pen in her hand. Finally, she nodded. Her lips curled into a small, playful smile.

"Alright." She said softly, taking the pen. But just as she was about to sign, she glanced up at Kafka with a cheeky glint in her eye as she asked him in a playful manner, "But Kafka, even though you say all that, how can I be sure that you won't be the one devouring me?"

Kafka smirked. He leaned in slightly. His voice dropped to a teasing murmur. "Well, you don't have to worry about that, Nina, since the only devouring I'll be doing.." He said, his tone dripping with mischief. "...is in bed."

Her face turned a deep shade of red. She let out a strangled noise of protest as she hurriedly scribbled her signature on the paper.

Her husband on the other hand stood rigid. His fists clenched at his sides as he listened to Kafka and Nina's exchange. His mind churned. He pieced together the obvious.

'So, it's true.' He thought bitterly. 'They have some kind of...relationship. This brat, sitting here with my wife, acting like he owns the place.' His clenched his teeth until they felt like shattering, but he didn't say anything.

The fear Kafka inspired in him was too overwhelming. And honestly, he didn't care about Nina enough to confront them over this...Not when he was finally about to get what he came for.

His eyes darted to the document on the counter. His heart pounded in anticipation...The papers are signed. That's all that matters.

Kafka, however, wasn't in any rush. He picked up the signed papers with deliberate slowness. His expression was unreadable. Holding them firmly in his hand, he looked at the man with a solemn gaze. His dark eyes seemed to pierce right through him.

The man took a hesitant step forward. His hand reached out to snatch the papers away. But just as his fingers were about to touch them, Kafka's voice cut through the air and made him stop in his place.

"Hold on." Kafka said. His tone was low but carrying an unmistakable weight.

The man froze. His hand hovered mid-air as a chill ran down his spine.

Kafka's lips then curled into a faint smile, but there was no warmth in it. "Let me make something clear." He said, his voice was calm but laced with an underlying menace. "I honestly can't be bothered with you...You're not worth my time and I don't want to waste another second thinking about you."

The man's face twitched. A mix of anger and fear flashed across his features, but Kafka didn't stop.

"That being said." Kafka's smile faded. His eyes narrowed slightly as he leaned forward. He held the papers just out of the man's reach. "You've got a choice here."

The man swallowed hard, his Adam's apple bobbed as he tried to hold Kafka's gaze and failed miserably.

Kafka tilted his head slightly. His expression was unyielding as he stated, "You can leave this document here. Walk out that door. Go on with the rest of your life. I won't stop you."

There was a moment of silence. The air in the room was heavy with tension. Nina, sitting quietly by Kafka's side, glanced nervously between the two men. Even she could feel the gravity of Kafka's words. The way his presence seemed to dominate the room.

"But..." Kafka's voice dropped lower. The faintest hint of a chuckle escaped his lips as he continued. "If you take this paper and do what I think you're planning to do..." He let the words hang in the air for a moment.

The silence was almost deafening as he leaned back slightly. His grip on the papers was firm. He smiled—a dark, almost predatory smile.

"...Then don't blame me for what happens next."

The man's breath stopped in place like there was no air to take in. His hand trembled slightly as it hovered near the papers.

He wanted to lash out. To demand the respect he thought he deserved. But the fear coursing through him was paralyzing. He could feel Kafka's gaze boring into him. A silent promise of consequences he wasn't brave enough to face.

"Your move." Kafka said simply. His tone was almost casual as he held the papers steady. His eyes never left the man's.

The man's trembling fingers hovered over the papers for a moment longer. His fear was palpable.

But then something shifted. His gaze flicked up to Kafka.

For the first time since the confrontation began, a flicker of defiance crossed his face. He straightened his back slightly. His lips curled into a bitter scoff.

'What am I so scared of?' He thought. The realization dawned on him. 'He's just a kid. A brat playing tough. At the end of the day, what can he really do to me? I've got people behind me—real power...This little punk is nothing!'

With that newfound confidence, he reached out. He snatched the papers from Kafka's hand and stuffed them into his pocket. Without another word, he turned and walked away.

His footsteps were heavy with false bravado. He didn't look back. He was too caught up in his own thoughts to notice the faint smirk tugging at Kafka's lips.

Kafka watched him go. His expression was calm, almost amused. His fingers drummed lightly on the counter as the door swung shut behind the man. "Well." He murmured to himself. "He just signed his own death wish."

Nina, still seated beside him, had been quiet throughout the exchange. Her hands were clasped tightly in her lap. As the door clicked shut, she turned to Kafka. Her green eyes were filled with confusion.

"What...What was that all about?" She asked hesitantly as she still has no idea what was going on.

Kafka sat back on his chair. His posture was relaxed, though his eyes still carried a faint glint of something unreadable. "That..." He said with a faint smirk. "...was just an example of how greed can lead to the fall of man."

"Greed? Fall of man?...Kafka, what are you talking about?" Nina blinked. Her brow furrowed as she tried to process his cryptic words.

Instead of answering, Kafka simply shrugged. His smirk widened slightly as he reached for a glass of water on the counter.

"Let's just say he'll learn soon enough." He said. His tone was nonchalant, as though he hadn't just delivered a veiled warning.

Chapter 503: The Future She Desires

Nina's confusion deepened, but before she could press him further, another thought struck her. It sent a wave of panic through her chest. Her eyes widened as she turned to him. Her voice was a hushed whisper.

"Kafka!...My husband definitely knows about us now!"

Kafka raised an eyebrow. The smirk never left his face. "Oh? And?"

"And?" Nina repeated. Her voice rose slightly in alarm. "Kafka, he's my husband. What if he does something? What if he tells someone? What are we supposed to do?!"

Kafka leaned back in his chair. He let out a casual sigh as if nothing in the world could trouble him. "Nina.." He finally said lightly. "You're overthinking this...Your husband isn't going to say a word."

Nina frowned, still uneasy. "How can you be so sure, Kafka? He's my husband—well, technically—and if he's upset, he might do something."

"I just know, alright. Let's say I have a gut feeling about these things." Kafka waved off her concern with a nonchalant gesture while thinking that she really didn't need to worry since corpses don't talk.

Something about his tone was so calm, so unbothered, that it made Nina pause. Her nerves slowly began to settle as she looked at him. Kafka had a way of exuding confidence that was infectious, even in situations like this.

"Well." She murmured, her voice was hesitant. "I hope you're right."

"I usually am." Kafka said. His lips twitched into a small smirk as his hand slid over her shoulder, pulling her just a little closer. He tilted his head. He then studied her with a playful glint in his eye as he said, "Now, let's change the subject, Nina. I've got a question for you."

Nina blinked. She was caught off guard by his sudden shift in tone. "A question?"

"Yeah, a hypothetical one." Kafka's smirk deepened as he leaned closer. "Let's say, hypothetically, the only way you could stay with me was if you had to give up the hot spring...Would you do it?"

Nina's mouth opened slightly in surprise. Her eyes searched his for any hint of what he was getting at.

She knew how much he liked to tease. But there was a weight to his question that made her pause.

The hot spring wasn't just a business to her—it was her parents' legacy, a piece of her family's history, and something she had fought to keep alive for years.

She expected herself to hesitate, to weigh the question carefully. But to her surprise, the answer came almost instantly.

"If I had no other choice." She said softly. Her voice was steady. "Then I would."

Kafka blinked. He clearly didn't expect her to answer so quickly—or so honestly.

"You would?" He asked. His voice was quieter, almost disbelieving. "But...isn't this place your mother's legacy? Your family's inheritance? The thing you've been fighting so hard to protect all this time?"

Nina smiled softly. Her gaze lowered for a moment as she seemed to gather her thoughts.

"It is, Kafka." She admitted. Her voice was steady but gentle. "It's the last gift my mother gave me, the one thing she left behind to remind me of her love and everything she worked so hard for. And because of that, it's incredibly important to me...It's my responsibility as her daughter to take care of it."

Kafka's eyes softened as he watched her speak. Her words carried a sincerity that tugged at his heart.

"But..." Nina continued. Her voice grew quieter but no less firm. She looked up at him, her green eyes shimmered with emotion as she continued saying, "More than this place, my mother cared about one thing more than anything else—my happiness."

Her lips curled into a small, almost wistful smile.

"She used to tell me all the time that no matter what, she just wanted me to live a happy life. To find someone who loved me, who cherished me, and who made me feel like I was the most important person in the world...She wanted me to have a life full of love and joy, not one spent clinging to a piece of property, even if it meant the world to her."

Kafka swallowed hard. His throat tightened as her words sank in.

"So..." Nina said. Her smile grew brighter, almost radiant. "If I had to choose between the place my mother left me and the man who makes me feel like the happiest woman alive—who makes me feel loved and cared for in a way I never thought possible—I would choose you...Every single time without a hint of hesitation."

Her words hit Kafka like a tidal wave. They crashed over him with a force he hadn't expected.

He stared at her. His chest tightened as a swirl of emotions threatened to overwhelm him. Her smile, so full of warmth and conviction, was almost too much to bear.

It wasn't just her words. Though those alone were enough to make his heart ache...It was the way she looked at him. Like he was the center of her world.

Like there was nothing she wouldn't do for him.

Kafka reached up, almost instinctively. He cupped her cheek in his hand, his thumb brushed lightly against her soft skin. "Nina..." He murmured, his voice was thick with emotion. "Y-You... You really mean that?"

She leaned into his touch. Her smile never wavered.

"Of course I do." She said simply, as if it were the most natural thing in the world. "Kafka, you've done so much for me. More than I ever thought anyone would...So, how could I not do something so simple for you in return?"

For a moment, Kafka couldn't speak. He could feel the sting of tears threatening to well up in his eyes. He blinked rapidly, refusing to let them fall.

He was never one to get sentimental. But this...this was different. He had never felt so utterly and completely loved in his previous life.

"Y-You're...Amazing, you know that." He finally managed. His voice was soft and trembling slightly. "I don't know what I did to deserve you."

Nina chuckled. The sound was light and melodic as she reached up to cover his hand with hers.

"You just have to keep being you, Kafka." She said warmly. "That's all I need."

Kafka let out a shaky laugh. His usual smirk returned, though it was softer. It was tinged with an almost vulnerable kind of joy.

"You really are something else. Nina." He said, as he leaned in to press a gentle kiss to her forehead.

She closed her eyes. Her smile widened as she leaned into him. "And you're the best thing that's ever happened to me." She whispered.

For a long moment, they stayed like that. They were wrapped in the warmth of each other's presence. The weight of the world was forgotten. And in that moment, Kafka realized just how

deeply he loved her—and how far he was willing to go to protect the woman who had given him her heart so completely.

Kafka then pulled her into a warm hug. His arms wrapped securely around her as he pressed a soft kiss to her temple. "You know..." He murmured against her skin, his voice was low and affectionate. "There's no way we can let go of this property in the future...It's absolutely necessary to us."

Nina tilted her head slightly. She still leaned into his embrace. Her brows furrowed in mild confusion. "Necessary?" She asked. Her voice was muffled as she was buried in his chest. "Why is that?"

Kafka didn't answer right away. Instead, He pulled back just enough to plant a series of light kisses along her cheek. The gesture was so tender it made her heart flutter.

Then, he leaned closer and he whispered into her ear, his tone was teasing yet filled with warmth.

"Because with all the children we're going to have in the future, we're going to need a rather big house to accommodate them all. So this hotspring of yours seems like the perfect spot."

Nina froze. Her entire face turned a deep shade of red. Her pointed ears twitched slightly as his words sank in.

"K-Kafka." She stammered. Her voice pitched higher than she intended. "What...W-What are you even saying."

Kafka chuckled, clearly enjoying her flustered reaction.

"What? Am I wrong." He teased. His grin widened as he nuzzled against her neck. "Think about it, Nina. This place has so much space. It's already filled with so many wonderful memories...Can't you just picture it. Us running the counter together while a bunch of little ones run around, causing chaos and keeping us on our toes."

Nina's mind betrayed her. The image he painted came to life in her thoughts. She could see it so vividly.

Kafka leaned over the counter, laughing as their children played tag through the lobby. The thought made her heart skip a beat. A warmth bloomed in her chest that she couldn't ignore.

"I...I can't believe you're thinking about that already." She mumbled. Her voice was soft as she tried to hide her embarrassment. "You're shameless."

"Shameless, huh." Kafka smirked. His hands moved to gently cradle her face. "Well, if I'm going to be shameless, I might as well make it count."

And before she could respond, he tilted her chin and to her shock he covered her lips with his own.

"Nnnn!♡~ Smooch!♡~ Hnnnn!♡~ Kiss!♡~"

The kiss was deep, slow, consuming. It left no room for protest or doubt. Nina's initial surprise melted away and she found herself leaning into him.

Her hands clutched at his shirt as the world around them faded and her thoughts wandered, despite herself back to the vision he'd described.

The idea of working side by side with Kafka. Their laughter mixing with the sound of children's footsteps and playful giggles. It didn't seem so far-fetched...In fact, it didn't seem bad at all.

She couldn't deny it. She didn't try to. Instead, she let herself lean into him again.

Her heart was full and her mind raced with possibilities because despite his teasing and her embarrassment there was one truth she couldn't ignore.

...Kafka was the future she wanted more than anything else in the world and there was nothing that could deny it.

Ding~

[Request Completed: You have earned the God of Flames Ophelia's appreciation and satisfaction]

Chapter 504: Delayed Surprise

I sat on the plush sofa in Camila's living room, tapping my fingers against my knee as I glanced around. The house was quiet, save for the faint murmur of voices coming from the other room.

Camila and Bella had been on the phone for a while now, whispering urgently to whoever was on the other end. I couldn't make out what they were saying, but it didn't take a genius to figure out that something was going on.

Yesterday, when they'd called me over, both of them had sounded...excited, almost giddy. I remembered how Camila had laughed softly into the phone, and Bella, in her usual energetic manner, had practically shouted, "You'll love it, Daddy! Just wait!"

But now? Now they looked more hesitant than excited. As soon as I arrived, they exchanged quick glances and told me to sit here while they handled something. And now here I was, sitting alone on their sofa, left to wonder what this so-called surprise could be—and why they suddenly seemed unsure about it.

I leaned back, draping an arm over the back of the sofa, my curiosity growing by the second. It wasn't like them to act this way.

Usually, Bella would be bouncing around, teasing me about something or dragging me into some impromptu activity. And Camila? She was always composed, elegant, and in control. Yet right now, they both seemed...off.

I could hear Bella's muffled voice rising slightly in urgency, followed by Camila's calm but firm tone. Whoever they were talking to, it was clear that the conversation was important—or at least, they thought it was.

I was just about to get up and check on whatever was keeping them when the door opened, but before I could, Camila and Bella entered the room together.

Their expressions were hesitant, a stark contrast to the excitement from yesterday's call...Something was definitely up.

"What's going on? Is there any problem you need help with?" I raised an eyebrow, giving them both a questioning look.

Camila opened her mouth first, likely to offer some excuse to ease the tension, but before she could utter a word, Bella, who was already fidgeting under my gaze, blurted out, "It's just—there's this package that got mixed up in the mail, and we—"

Before she could finish, Camila swiftly placed a hand over Bella's mouth, giving her a serene but sharp look. "Thank you, Bella." She said smoothly, her tone laced with that calm authority she always carried. She then turned to me with a graceful smile and said, "And there's nothing wrong, really. Just a small matter we need to handle... You'll just need to wait a little longer."

I glanced at Bella, who was glaring at her mother, clearly wanting to say more but muffled by the hand over her mouth. I then crossed my arms, unconvinced, and said, "If there's a problem, I can help, you know. You didn't have to drag me over here just to sit on the couch."

Camila released Bella, who let out a huff of frustration but wisely stayed silent this time. "It's sweet of you to offer, Kafka." Camila said, her voice calm and composed. "But there's really nothing for you to worry about. We can sort it out ourselves."

I wasn't entirely buying it, but before I could press further, Camila added with a graceful smile, "However, if you're feeling restless and don't want to be idle, there is something you could help with."

"Oh? And what's that?" I raised an eyebrow.

"Well, the pipe in the bathroom has been leaking again." Camila said casually, as if she hadn't just dismissed my offer to help moments ago. "You could fix it while I handle this...small issue. And, while you're at it, you can teach Bella how to do it as well."

Bella's eyes widened in alarm, and she took a step back and asked, "What? Why me? I don't need to learn how to fix pipes!"

Camila gave her daughter a sharp look and sighed as she said, "Bella, it's a basic skill. You'll thank me one day when you're living on your own and something breaks."

"But Mom, I'm perfectly fine calling a plumber whenever some problem occurs!" Bella protested, throwing her hands up dramatically. "That's why they exist!"

Camila didn't budge, her serene smile unwavering as she delivered her final strike. "Learning never hurts, Bella. Besides, Kafka's here. Who better to teach you?...You'll even get to have some proper father-daughter bonding time with him."

At those words, Bella froze, clearly caught off guard. "Father-daughter bonding?" She repeated the phrase in her head, probably trying to figure out what it even meant.

For someone like Bella, who had grown up without a real father figure—only the occasional appearance of a man too busy with work to be present—the concept was foreign.

She'd only heard stories from her friends about their dads forcing them to help with chores or dragging them out on errands. And while those girls complained about their fathers being overbearing, Bella had secretly envied them, wishing she could experience those moments too, which is why she was really interested in what her mother was at the moment.

She cast a quick glance at me, trying to gauge my reaction. I could tell she was curious. Maybe even...hopeful. But being Bella, she couldn't just outright admit it.

Instead, she crossed her arms, puffed up her chest, and said in that classic cheeky tone of hers, "F-Fine! Since I have no other option, I'll...I'll accept, I guess...Learning a skill wouldn't be too bad."

Camila looked satisfied, like a general who'd just won a small battle. Bella, on the other hand, was clearly expecting me to go along with her act, maybe tease her a bit, and then say something cheesy about how it would be fun to bond.

After all, wasn't that what dads were supposed to do? Agree to things like this with a warm smile and some sentimental nonsense?

But where's the fun in doing what she expects?

"Nope." I said flatly, crossing my arms and keeping my expression serious. "I'm not doing it."

"W-What?!" Bella blinked, completely blindsided.

I shrugged, pretending not to notice the disbelief on her face. "Not interested. Teaching you would take twice as long as doing it myself, and honestly, I don't have the patience for that right now."

Her jaw dropped. For a few seconds, she just stared at me, as if trying to process the fact that I had actually rejected her. "You can't just say no like that! You're supposed to accept whatever your cute daughter says!" She sputtered, her voice rising slightly. She then looked at Camila and complained, saying, "Mom, did you hear that?! He's rejecting me!"

Camila turned her head slightly, arching an eyebrow in my direction. But before she could say anything, I added, "Look, Bella. Not only would teaching you take forever since you've probably never handled a tool in your life, but honestly, I'd much rather just call a plumber and get this over with...I mean, that's why they exist, and I don't want to be the reason they don't reach their monthly quota."

Bella huffed, crossing her arms tighter over her chest. Her eyes flicked toward Camila, silently pleading with her mother to do something about my unwillingness. She clearly didn't want to miss this chance to spend some quality time with me, even if she wouldn't outright admit it.

Camila gave Bella a reassuring glance before turning her full attention to me, her smile soft yet... knowing. As she began to walk toward me, there was something about the way she moved that immediately put me on edge. That smile, the way her eyes glinted mischievously—I knew that look. Camila was up to something.

She stopped right in front of me, crossing her arms loosely, her voice calm and sweet. "You really won't help us out, Kafka?" She asked, tilting her head slightly.

I narrowed my eyes at her, already wary of what she was planning. "Nope. Not happening."

"Oh?" Camila's smile widened just a fraction, but it was enough to make me more suspicious. "Are you sure about that? I mean, you're usually so helpful. And Bella really seems to want to learn."

Bella perked up, nodding eagerly beside her mother. "Yeah, Daddy! Come on! I know you like fixing stuff. You're just being stubborn for no reason."

"It's not about being stubborn. It's about being practical. We could call a professional, have it done in half the time, and avoid turning the bathroom into a flood zone." I signed as I noticed Camila taking a step closer to me with a suggestive look in her eyes like she was up to no good.

Chapter 505: Helping One Another's 'Pipes'...

Camila tilted her head slightly, a soft smile playing at her lips as she took a measured step closer. Her voice, low and demure, carried a teasing warmth that seemed to wrap around me. "Are you sure about that, Kafka?" She asked gently, the question lingering in the air like a whispered secret.

I tried to keep my composure, but there was something about the way she moved—fluid, graceful, her hips swaying in a way that made it impossible to look away. The scent of her perfume, light and familiar, curled in the space between us, making it harder to focus.

"Y-Yeah." I managed, though my voice sounded more uncertain than I intended. "Still no."

Camila's eyes sparkled with quiet amusement as she caught the hesitation in my tone. She let out a soft, melodic laugh, stepping closer until the air felt charged with her presence. "Really?" She said, her voice a mere murmur as her gaze held mine. "You don't sound so sure anymore."

Bella, still watching from the side, frowned slightly, clearly confused by the sudden shift in the atmosphere. "Mom, what are you doing?" She asked, her voice cutting through the tension.

"Nothing, sweetheart." Camila said smoothly, without breaking eye contact with me. "Just seeing if your dad is as stubborn as he claims."

Bella groaned in frustration, throwing her hands up. "You two are so weird." She muttered before stomping off toward the kitchen. "I'm getting a snack."

The room fell quiet, and the absence of Bella's presence made the tension between Camila and me feel even more palpable. Camila turned fully toward me now, her expression soft but with a hint of something playful and knowing.

"So..." She began, stepping closer until only a breath separated us. Her voice dropped slightly, taking on a husky, intimate tone as she used her fingers to draw circles on my chest. "Are you really going to keep saying no? Even when I'm asking so nicely?"

I swallowed hard, my pulse quickening despite my best efforts to remain calm. The way she was looking at me—soft yet intense, teasing yet sincere—made it impossible to ignore the effect she was having on me.

"I-I..." I started to reply, but the words caught in my throat.

Camila's smile deepened, her eyes gleaming with quiet triumph. She then rose onto her tiptoes, bringing her lips dangerously close to my ear. The warmth of her breath brushed against my skin as she decided to deliver the final blow by whispering, "Would you really say no, Kafka...If I said I'd help you with 'your pipe' afterward, if you help fix the one in my bathroom?"

And then, without warning, she lifted her chin slightly, her lips parting ever so delicately. Slowly, with the kind of grace only she could manage, her tongue flicked out, tracing a small, deliberate arc in the air between us, as if tasting something invisible. The motion was teasing, elegant, and far too effective at scattering my composure.

And at the same moment, I could also feel her hands grasping at the bulge in my pants like she was trying to grab a hold of the boner that was forming while her enticing, beautiful blue eyes locked onto mine.

Her words sent a jolt through me, and I instinctively took a step back, my heart pounding in my chest. My mind raced, trying to process what she had just said, but the playful glint in her eyes told me she knew exactly what she was doing.

"You..." I stammered, struggling to form a coherent response. "You can't just say things like that."

"Why not?" Camila smiled, clearly enjoying the effect she was having on me. Her tongue slipped back behind her lips as she tilted her head, her expression equal parts innocence and knowing. "I'm just trying to motivate you." She added, her tone light and playful, but with that teasing edge that made it impossible to ignore her.

I narrowed my eyes, trying to maintain what little resolve I had left. "Motivate me, huh?" I muttered, more to myself than to her. "This feels more like a trap than motivation."

Camila giggled, the sound light and melodic, as if this was nothing more than a harmless game to her. "Oh, come on, Kafka." she said, stepping just a little closer. "Think of it this way—you'll get to show off your skills, Bella will get to learn something, and I'll be...very grateful." She gave me a look that was both sweet and impossible to argue with. "What's the harm?"

I sighed, rubbing my eyes as I felt my defences crumbling. She wasn't going to let this go, and judging by the triumphant glint in her eyes, she already knew she had me cornered.

"Fine..." I said at last, my voice heavy with resignation. "I'll help. But if this turns into a disaster, I'm calling the plumber."

Camila's eyes lit up, and before I could say anything else, she clapped her hands together in relief. "Thank you, Kafka!" She said quickly, her tone bright and cheerful. And then, without missing a beat, she turned toward the kitchen and called out, "Bella! He said, Okay, so come quickly before he changes his mind!"

"Really? Did you have to make it sound like I'm about to run away?" I groaned inwardly, already regretting my decision.

Camila turned back to me, a playful grin tugging at her lips. "Better safe than sorry." She said with a shrug. "You do have a tendency to rethink things."

Before I could respond, Bella came bouncing out of the kitchen like an overexcited puppy, a wide grin plastered across her face. "He said yes?" She asked eagerly, looking between her mother and me for confirmation.

"He said yes." Camila confirmed with a nod.

"Yes!" Bella cheered, rushing over to grab my hand. "Come on, Daddy, let's go before you change your mind!"

I barely had time to react before she started dragging me toward the bathroom, her grip surprisingly strong for someone her size. "Okay, okay! I'm coming!" I said, stumbling slightly as I tried to keep up with her pace.

As we passed by Camila, I glanced back at her, only to find her waving at me with that same knowing smile.

Her eyes gleamed with amusement, and I couldn't help but think that she's one formidable woman. Even when she wasn't directly involved, she always managed to steer things exactly where she wanted them to go.

Camila gave me a little wink as Bella pulled me further away. "Good luck." she said sweetly. "I'll be waiting to hear how it goes!"

"Yeah, yeah." I muttered under my breath, shaking my head. "Formidable, indeed."

Bella didn't seem to notice the exchange, too busy chattering excitedly about what we were going to do. "Okay, so first we check where the leak is, right? And then you can show me how to fix it! Oh, and maybe I can try tightening something myself!"

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves." I said, glancing down at her. "One step at a time, okay? Let's figure out where the problem is before we start fixing anything."

"Okay!" Bella said enthusiastically, her grip on my hand tightening as she practically dragged me into the bathroom.

As I stepped inside, I couldn't help but glance back one last time. Camila stood at the doorway, watching us with that same satisfied smile, her hands resting lightly on her hips. I knew this wouldn't be the last time she roped me into something like this, but for now, I was too caught up in Bella's excitement to care.

Besides, I thought with a small, reluctant smile, it wasn't so bad to have some father-daughter time with my adorable daughter, who looked so excited to spend some time with me...

Chapter 506: Am I A Plumber Yet?

Bella tugged me into the bathroom with the same enthusiasm she'd have if we were on a treasure hunt. She then pointed dramatically at the tap over the sink, water dripping steadily onto the counter.

"There! See? Leaking tap! Mission accomplished, right?" She grinned at me like she'd already solved half the problem.

I rolled my eyes and crouched down, opening the cabinet beneath the sink. Sure enough, the main pipe was leaking just as they'd said. It didn't take long for me to spot the culprit—a worn-out gasket that was barely holding together.

Bella leaned over my shoulder, peering into the cabinet with wide, curious eyes. "Whoa, you already figured it out?" She asked, sounding impressed. "What's wrong with it? Is it serious?"

I turned my head slightly to look at her, meeting her bright gaze. For a second, I considered just telling her, but then I remembered Camila's words about teaching her something useful. So with a smirk, I straightened up a bit and crossed my arms and said, "Nope. Not gonna tell you."

"What? Why not?" Bella blinked, clearly caught off guard.

"Because it's your job to figure it out," I said, my tone calm but firm. "Step one in fixing anything is identifying the problem. If you can't do that, how are you going to fix it?"

"You're serious?" Her jaw dropped slightly, and she stared at me in disbelief.

"Dead serious." I gave her a challenging look as I sat myself on the cold floor and then continued saying, "Come on, Bella. You want to learn, right? Then start by telling me what's wrong with the pipe."

"But—" She hesitated, glancing back down at the leaking pipe. "I don't even know what I'm looking at!"

"Exactly." I said with a teasing grin. "That's why this is a learning moment. Take your time. Look at it carefully, and try to figure it out."

Bella let out an exaggerated sigh, muttering something about me being impossible, but she crouched down beside me nonetheless. She squinted at the pipe, her brows furrowing as she tried to make sense of what she was seeing.

"Okay, uh..." She mumbled, reaching out to poke at the pipe. "It's definitely leaking...Is it...broken somewhere?"

"You tell me." I smirked, resisting the urge to laugh at how serious she looked.

She gave me a frustrated look but kept going. "Maybe...Something's loose? Or...maybe that thingy is worn out?" She pointed vaguely at the gasket.

"Getting warmer." I said, nodding encouragingly.

"Wait, really? Did I get it right?" Bella perked up slightly.

"Almost." I said, giving her a small smile. "You're close. That 'thingy' you pointed at is called a gasket. It's worn out, which is why the pipe is leaking." I then decided to go more in depth into the workings of the system to see if she could keep up.

"Alright, listen up, Bella." I said, crouching down by the pipes, already feeling the weight of her attention—or lack thereof. "This here..." I tapped the main pipe with dramatic flair. "...is the supply line. It's where the water comes through. You with me so far, or did I lose you at 'listen up'?"

Bella shot me a deadpan look. "I'm not five, Daddy. Main pipe...Water...Got it."

"Good." I said, suppressing a grin. "Now, these twisty things here..." I pointed at the shutoff valves, "...are how you stop the water from flooding the entire house. Turn them clockwise, and you shut it off....Simple."

She leaned in, examining the valves closely. "So, twist to stop the flood. Got it...Am I a plumber yet?"

"Not quite." I said, smirking. "Next up, we have this beauty right here..." I pointed at the curved pipe below the sink. "...the P-trap. It's important because it blocks sewer gases from wafting back up and ruining your day."

Bella blinked, then wrinkled her nose. "Ew...Why does it sound so fancy if it's just a stink-blocker?"

"Plumbers love their fancy words." I said with a shrug. "Now, if you see water dripping around here, chances are it's either a loose connection or a clog in the P-trap."

"Loose connection, clogged stink-blocker...Got it," Bella said, nodding as she observed everything I was pointing at.

"Sure, let's go with that." I muttered, rolling my eyes. "And if the leak's coming from the faucet, it could be the washers or the aerator."

Bella waved her hand dismissively. "Whoa, whoa, slow down, Mr. Dictionary. What's an aerator?"

"It's the thing that controls how the water flows out of the faucet." I explained. "You'll probably never touch it, but it's good to know."

She crossed her arms, tilting her head thoughtfully. "So, basically, I need to twist some knobs, check the stink-blocker, and maybe call a plumber if it's too complicated?"

"That's...actually a solid summary." I admitted, surprised she was paying attention. "But let's pretend you care enough to fix it yourself one day...What's the first step if you see a leak?"

Bella straightened up, looking smug as she said, "Twist the twisty things to stop the flood."

"Shutoff valves." I corrected. "But yeah, twist the twisty things...And then?"

"Check the...stink-blocker for clogs or loose connections."

"P-trap." I said with a sigh. "But yes, close enough. You're a natural."

Bella grinned. "See? Told you I'm a fast learner. You should be proud, Daddy."

"Yeah, yeah, you did a good job." I ruffled her hair, messing it up just enough to earn a playful glare from her. "But don't get ahead of yourself. That was just the explanation...The real hard part is actually fixing the problem."

Her eyes sparkled with excitement, and she puffed out her chest like she'd just been awarded a medal of honor. "Alright, so what's next? Tell me, and I'll ace that too!"

"Go grab the toolbox." I said, pointing toward the hallway. "We're gonna need it if we want to actually fix this thing."

"On it!" She chirped, turning on her heel and sprinting off like she was on a rescue mission.

I tapped my fingers against the marbled floor that was quite clean, letting out a breath while I waited.

It was strangely endearing seeing her so eager. Normally, Bella preferred being wrapped up in a blanket watching movies, but today, she looked like she was ready to conquer the world with a wrench in hand.

A minute passed, then two...Just as I was starting to wonder what was taking her so long, I heard hurried footsteps approaching fast. And before I could even react, Bella's panicked voice echoed through the bathroom.

"Watch out, Daddy!"

"What?" I barely managed to say before something large and heavy came flying into view. My eyes widened as I saw a toolbox tumbling through the air straight toward my face.

For a split second, time seemed to slow. Bella's horrified face appeared behind the airborne toolbox, her expression screaming 'Oh crap, I'm about to kill my step-dad!'

But unlike how Bella thought that my head was going to be smashed in, in one swift motion, I shot my hand out and caught the toolbox inches from my face.

The weight hit my palm with a satisfying thud, but I didn't even flinch. I set it down calmly on the floor beside me, acting like I hadn't just narrowly escaped getting flattened by a rogue toolbox.

I then looked up at Bella, who was shocked and in relief that I was alright with a deadpan expression, raising an eyebrow, and said, "You know, if you didn't want to learn how to fix the pipe, you could've just said so. Trying to murder me with a flying toolbox feels a little extreme."

Bella's eyes widened, her face turning an adorable shade of red as she flailed her arms in panic. "No, Daddy! It's not like that! I swear!" She exclaimed, her voice rising an octave. "It was just too heavy, and I couldn't hold onto it anymore! It slipped—I didn't mean to drop it on your head!"

I crossed my arms, giving her a skeptical look.

"Really?" I asked, my tone playful but laced with mock suspicion. "Because from where I'm sitting, it looked a lot like a premeditated attack."

Bella puffed up her cheeks, glaring at me with an indignant expression. "Of course it wasn't! Do I look like someone who would try to murder her stepdad?"

I chuckled at her flustered reaction, shaking my head.

"Relax, I'm kidding. But if you're going to blame it on the toolbox being too heavy..." I reached down and grabbed the so-called 'heavy' toolbox. With a casual flick of my wrist, I balanced it on my pinky finger like it weighed nothing. "...then you've got some serious explaining to do."

Bella's jaw dropped as she watched me effortlessly hold the toolbox with just my pinky.

"W-What?! How are you doing that? That thing weighs a ton!" She stammered, pointing at the toolbox like it was some kind of alien artefact.

I gave her a smug grin, spinning the toolbox lightly before setting it back down. "Maybe you're just weak." I teased. "Or maybe it really was a murder attempt, and now you're trying to cover it up."

Bella let out an exasperated groan, stomping her foot in frustration. "I told you, it wasn't a murder attempt! Why would I want to kill you? You're the one fixing the pipe! If you're dead, who's going to do it?"

Bella then crossed her arms, a pout forming on her lips as she huffed in frustration. "And it's not that I'm weak..." She muttered, her eyes narrowing slightly as she searched for the right words. "It's just that you're freakishly strong! Seriously, you toss things around like they weigh nothing."

"Excuses...Excuses." I teased since seeing her flustered face was amusing. "All I hear are excuses to save yourself from a murder case."

She shot me a glare, her cheeks tinting pink. "I'm not making excuses! It's just ridiculous how you act like heavy stuff is nothing. You do it all the time, like when you—" Bella's words came faster, as if she was too worked up to notice where her sentence was headed. "—like when you pick me up at night and toss me around like I'm some kind of doll, thrusting in and out of me without a care in the world!"

Chapter 507: A Lesson On Tools

Silence crashed down between us, the words that revealed what father and daughter were doing at night hanging in the air like a live wire.

Bella's eyes widened in sheer horror as the weight of what she'd just said hit her. Her hands flew up to cover her mouth, her face flushing a deep crimson. "I—I didn't mean that! Forget I said anything!" She squeaked, voice muffled behind her fingers.

I couldn't hold back the slow grin spreading across my face. "Oh?" I drawled, stepping forward, enjoying every second of her flustered panic. "So I toss you around, do I? Like a little ragdoll?"

"No!" She blurted out, her hands still glued to her mouth as she shook her head furiously. "I mean, yes—wait, no! Ugh, just stop!" Bella groaned, turning away in a desperate attempt to hide her embarrassment.

I leaned in close, my breath brushing against her ear as I whispered, "For someone who doesn't mean it, you sure sound pretty convinced. Want to clarify, or should I assume you like being my little toy, which I use to relieve my cravings all night?"

Bella let out a strangled squeak, refusing to meet my gaze, her whole body practically vibrating with embarrassment. She tried to edge away, but I caught her wrist gently, pulling her back just enough to keep her close.

"Don't worry, Bella." I said with a low chuckle, my voice teasing but warm. "I'll let this one slide...for now. But you better be careful what you say next time, or I might have to remind you exactly how easily I can throw you around."

Bella was practically vibrating with nervous energy, her lips pressed into a thin line as she avoided my gaze.

I then let her wrist go, watching as she stepped back, her fingers fidgeting with the hem of her shirt, the red still burning high on her cheeks.

"Relax, I'm done teasing." I said with a smirk, leaning down to grab the toolbox again. "Come here, sit beside me. If you're going to be helping out, you should at least know what half these tools are called."

She hesitated, still flustered, but eventually shuffled over and plopped down on the floor next to me. She sat stiffly, clearly still embarrassed, her eyes fixed stubbornly on the ground.

I nudged her lightly with my shoulder, offering a small grin. "You're not going to learn much staring at the floor, you know."

Bella shot me a quick glare, though it lacked any real heat. "Fine, whatever. Just...tell me what's in there already."

I reached into the toolbox and pulled out a socket wrench, holding it up for Bella to see. "Alright, this here is a socket wrench. You use it with these sockets..." I grabbed a set of them and rattled them slightly. "...to tighten or loosen bolts, especially when you need to apply more force."

Bella gave a slight nod, her expression neutral, though something about the way her eyes glazed over made me suspicious...Undeterred, I pressed on.

Next, I held up a pair of needle-nose pliers. "These are pliers. Great for gripping small objects or getting into tight spaces where your hands can't reach."

I glanced at Bella again, expecting some sort of reaction, but her blank stare told me she wasn't exactly following.

I sighed, grabbing a claw hammer next. "And this—this one's easy. A claw hammer. You use the head to drive nails in and the claw part here to pull them out."

Still, that same lost look clung to her face like a fog, her lips slightly parted as if I'd been speaking a foreign language.

Finally, I set the hammer down and turned to her, raising an eyebrow, and asked her, "Okay, did you get any of that?"

Bella blinked at me, hesitating for a moment before shaking her head. "Not a word." She admitted with a sheepish smile and then complained, saying, "It's all complicated! There are too many names, too many uses—it's impossible to keep track."

I gave her a doubtful look, crossing my arms. "Complicated? It's literally just tools. This stuff isn't rocket science."

She puffed out her cheeks, pouting. "Well, maybe not for you, 'Mr. Strong Stepdad Who Knows Everything', but for me, it's a whole other world." She jabbed a finger at the toolbox. "You're supposed to be teaching me, right? So simplify it!...Make it easier for me to understand."

Her tone was half-complaint, half-dare, like she was challenging me to do better. I chuckled under my breath, shaking my head in amusement.

I then gave Bella a slow, teasing smile, something mischievous flickering in my eyes as I thought of an 'interesting' way to teach her about the tools.

"Alright, fine. You want me to simplify it, huh?" I said, leaning in just a little, my voice dropping to a softer, more intimate tone. "I'll explain each tool in a way you'll definitely remember."

Bella's eyes widened, a flicker of nervousness crossing her face. "W-What do you mean by that?" She asked cautiously, already catching onto the lewd glint in my eyes.

"Oh, you'll see." I murmured, reaching into the toolbox and pulling out the needle-nose pliers again. I held them up, opening and closing the jaws. "These, Bella, are needle-nose pliers. You see how they start closed, but when you apply pressure, they spread open?" I clicked them open demonstratively, my eyes never leaving hers.

"...Kinda like how I spread your legs when I want to take my time enjoying you."

Her mouth fell open slightly, but no sound came out. A deep blush crept up her neck and bloomed across her cheeks.

"And see here..." I continued, lightly squeezing the tips of the pliers together, "...these can grip really small things, like wires...or pinch something delicate. Like your nipples." My grin widened as I watched her squirm uncomfortably, her gaze flitting anywhere but directly at me.

"I-I didn't sign up for this kind of lesson." She stammered, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Oh, but you asked me to make it easier for you." I countered smoothly, picking up the hammer next. "Now, this one's simple. A claw hammer—strong, sturdy, great for pounding things hard. Kind of like how I—"

"Stop!" She yelled, her voice high-pitched and shaky, but there was no real conviction behind her protest. Her hands fluttered nervously by her sides, unsure whether to cover her face or grab something to ground herself.

I grinned but didn't relent, setting the hammer down with a soft clink. I then reached for the screwdriver next, twirling it between my fingers. "Now, this is a screwdriver. Pretty straightforward. You use it to screw things in tight, driving them deep into place. Just like how I shove my cock so deep into your little pussy that you can't help but scream until your mom in the next room thinks her daughter is being murdered."

"Oh my god, please!" Bella covered her face with both hands, her voice muffled by her palms. "Why are you like this, Daddy?!"

I chuckled, setting the screwdriver down. "Hey, you wanted it simple, right? Just trying to make sure you never forget. Besides..." I leaned in slightly, my voice dipping lower. "You don't seem to be walking away. You must be learning something."

Her breath hitched audibly, but she stayed put, peeking out from between her fingers with a glare that lacked any real heat. "You're the worst teacher ever."

"Yet, here you are, paying full attention." I teased, pulling out the tape measure next. "Now, this one's useful for measuring long things. You pull it out slowly..." I extended the tape with a soft metallic hiss. "...and watch as it grows longer and longer, until it's fully extended." I gave her a knowing look. "Reminds you of anything?"

"This isn't a lesson; it's torture." Bella let out a frustrated groan, slumping forward and hiding her face against her knees.

"Nah..." I said with a smug grin, retracting the tape with a sharp snap. "It's memorable." I grabbed the wrench again, spinning it idly. "Now this bad boy? Great for tightening things up. Like how I hold your waist tight when-"

"I get it!" She cut in, her voice high and breathy, her entire face glowing red. "I get it, okay?! Lesson learned! No more examples!"

I laughed softly, setting the wrench back into the toolbox. "Alright, alright. But hey, you said you wanted me to simplify things, and judging by how flustered you are, I'd say my method worked perfectly."

Bella groaned again, refusing to look at me as she mumbled something incoherent. I chuckled softly, thoroughly satisfied with how thoroughly I'd scrambled her thoughts using how busy we had been lately at night, indulging in father-daughter bonding sessions that no other parent-child couples do...

Chapter 508: Compensation

With Bella still pink-faced and flustered from my teasing, we finally got back to the task at hand. I picked up the wrench and gestured toward the pipe we were supposed to be fixing.

"Alright, enough fun. Let's see if you can actually use some of those tools I so...creatively described." I said with a grin.

Bella shot me a wary glance, as though afraid I might start up again, but when I stayed quiet, she let out a relieved sigh and knelt beside the pipe. I handed her the wrench, and she gripped it tightly, taking a moment to line it up with the bolt.

"Just twist it gently at first." I instructed, my tone now genuine, guiding her hand without touching. "You want to get a feel for how tight it is before you start applying real force."

Bella nodded, focusing on the task. Her brows furrowed in concentration as she began to turn the wrench. At first, it resisted, but with a little effort, she managed to loosen the bolt just enough to adjust the pipe.

"There you go. Nice and steady." I encouraged, watching her work. For all her earlier protests, she was surprisingly careful, making sure everything was properly aligned before tightening it again.

After a few more minutes of minor adjustments, she wiped her hands on a rag and sat back on her heels, a satisfied smile playing on her lips. "Done!" She declared, her voice filled with a mix of pride and relief.

I knelt beside her, inspecting her work. The pipe was perfectly positioned, the bolts snugly fastened. "Not bad, Bella." I said, nodding approvingly. "Actually, scratch that—you did great. Looks like you really did learn something after all."

"You really think so?" Bella's eyes lit up at the praise, her earlier embarrassment forgotten for the moment.

"Absolutely." I said, giving her a genuine smile. "You handled that like a pro. Guess I don't have to worry about rogue toolboxes coming for me anymore."

"Okay, okay, I get it. No more throwing tools around, I promise." She laughed, the sound light and genuine, the tension between us easing.

I stood up and offered her a hand. "Deal. And next time, you might even fix something without me hovering around."

Bella grabbed my hand and let me pull her to her feet, but instead of letting go right away, she gave me a playful grin. "Yeah, right. Not a chance. As long as my Daddy's around, I'm always calling you over." She said with a teasing tone in her voice, her eyes sparkling mischievously. "You're basically, like, the family plumber now. Why would I bother learning when I can just call my personal plumber anytime?"

I raised an eyebrow, chuckling as I crossed my arms.

"Personal plumber, huh?" I repeated, putting the tools back into the toolbox while eyeing her with a smirk. "Well, if I'm gonna be your personal plumber, maybe I should get something in return for my trouble... You know, compensation for not only finishing the job but also for giving you a hands-on lesson."

Her grin faltered slightly, her cheeks starting to turn pink. She shifted awkwardly, as if suddenly realizing she'd walked right into that one. "C-Compensation?" She echoed nervously, the teasing edge in her voice softening. "Uh, what kind of compensation are we talking about?"

I took a slow step toward her, closing the gap just enough to make her visibly tense. I kept my tone light but let a knowing look creep into my eyes. "Oh, don't worry. I'm not talking about money or anything boring like that." I paused deliberately, watching her squirm under the weight of my words. "I was thinking something more...personal."

Her eyes widened slightly, and she instinctively stepped back until her shoulders lightly brushed the wall. "P-Personal?" She stammered, her voice catching in her throat as a deep blush spread across her face. "L-like what?"

I didn't answer right away, letting the tension stretch a moment longer. Then, with a slow, easy smile, I leaned in just enough that she could feel the warmth of my presence. "I don't want anything complicated. Just a little bit of love from my daughter." I said, my voice low and smooth.

Bella hesitated for a moment, standing there with a flushed face, her lips parting slightly as if she was weighing her next move.

Then, with a newfound resolve, she took a small step forward, rising up on her tiptoes, her breath warm and trembling as she leaned in. Her eyes flicked to mine one last time before they fluttered closed, and then her lips pressed softly against mine.

"Mmm!♡~ Smooch!♡~ Ahhh!♡~ Kiss!♡~ Hmmm!♡~"

The kiss started tentative, like a question, but I wasn't one to leave things uncertain for long. I cupped her face gently, my thumb brushing her cheek as I responded, letting her know she didn't need to hold back. The warmth of her lips stirred something primal, something that wouldn't be satisfied with gentleness alone.

"Mwah!♡~ Slurp!♡~ Ohh!♡~ Suck!♡~ Mmm!♡~"

Bella gasped softly into the kiss, and I took the opportunity to deepen it, tilting my head slightly as my tongue teased the seam of her lips. She parted them hesitantly, her breath hitching when our tongues met. Her arms slowly looped around my neck, pulling me closer as the kiss grew hungrier, more urgent.

I didn't stop there.

In one smooth motion, I wrapped my hands around her waist and lifted her effortlessly. She let out a surprised squeak, breaking the kiss briefly as I set her down on the edge of the counter. Before she could say anything, I leaned in again, claiming her lips once more.

"Hmmm!♡~ Mwah!♡~ Haa!♡~ Kiss!♡~ Mmm!♡~"

This time, there was nothing tentative about it—I kissed her deeply, thoroughly, my hands resting on her thighs as they instinctively parted to let me step between them.

Her fingers tangled in my hair, pulling me closer as if she couldn't bear the idea of any distance between us. I responded by sliding my hands up her sides, feeling the warmth of her skin beneath

the thin fabric of her shirt. Bella shivered at the contact, a soft sound escaping her lips as she arched slightly toward me.

"Ahh!♡~ Mmmm!♡~ Smack!♡~ Smooch!♡~ Hmmm!♡~"

The counter creaked faintly beneath her, but neither of us paid it any mind. My hands roamed freely now, one slipping around to the small of her back while the other trailed up to rest just below her ribs. Each touch drew another soft gasp from her, each sound driving me further, making it harder to hold back.

"Ohhh!♡~ Lick!♡~ Sigh!♡~ Nibble!♡~ Mmm!♡~"

Her lips were swollen and glistening when we finally broke apart for air, her chest rising and falling rapidly as she tried to catch her breath. I rested my forehead against hers, our breaths mingling in the quiet, charged air between us.

"Why does it seem like you're enjoying this more when it's supposed to be my compensation?" I asked, my voice low, rough with lingering desire.

Bella didn't answer right away. Instead, she tightened her grip on my shoulders, pulling me back in for another kiss—this one slower, softer, but no less intoxicating.

"Mwah!♡~ Mwah!♡~ Smack!♡~ Mwah!♡~ Sip!♡~"

Bella's breath was coming in quick, shallow bursts as our lips moved together in perfect rhythm. Each kiss seemed to grow deeper, more urgent, as though neither of us could get enough. Her fingers tightened their grip on the back of my neck, pulling me closer still, her soft body molding perfectly against mine.

My hands roamed slowly, deliberately, tracing the curve of her waist beneath her shirt. I let my thumbs brush against her bare skin, feeling the way she shivered at the contact. Her legs tightened their grip around me instinctively, pulling me in closer, as though afraid to let even a sliver of space remain between us.

"Peck!♡~ Peck!♡~ Mmm!♡~ Peck!♡~ Lick!♡~"

I trailed kisses along her jaw, each one slow and lingering, savoring the way her breath hitched each time my lips found a sensitive spot. Her head tilted back slightly, giving me access to the smooth expanse of her neck, where I pressed my lips next. Bella let out a soft, breathy sigh, her fingers tangling in my hair as I continued to trail kisses lower.

"Daddy...Y-You're really taking this whole compensation thing seriously, huh?" She murmured breathlessly, her voice trembling slightly but still carrying that teasing edge.

I pulled back just enough to meet her eyes, a playful grin tugging at my lips. "Hey, I take my job seriously." I said, my voice low and teasing. "Especially when the reward is this...sweet."

Bella blushed again, but there was no hesitation in the way she leaned in for another kiss, her lips meeting mine with more confidence, more need. My hands settled at her waist, my fingers pressing gently into her sides as I held her steady against me. The warmth of her body, the softness of her curves—it was intoxicating.

The air around us felt charged, every touch, every kiss adding to the tension that built between us like a slow-burning fire. Bella clung to me, her body responding eagerly, her breath mingling with mine in the heated space between us...

Chapter 509: Can You Teach Me How To...

Bella's lips pressed eagerly to mine, warm and soft, filling the space between us with heat I could get lost in. But just as I leaned in deeper, she pulled back with a startled squeak. "Ouch!"

I blinked in confusion, loosening my hold on her waist. "What? Did I...bite you?" I asked, baffled because there was no way I could've made that kind of slip-up.

Bella shook her head rapidly, her cheeks puffing out in that adorably exaggerated way she did when she was about to complain about something trivial but serious to her.

"No! It wasn't that!" She pouted, rubbing her cheek with a theatrical wince. Her finger shot up, pointing accusingly at me as she said, "Your face scratched me!"

"My face scratched you?" I repeated feeling caught off guard for a second. Then, realisation dawned, and my hand went to my jaw, brushing over the rough stubble that had returned since morning. "Oh...The beard." I muttered, half amused, half apologetic.

"Yeah, I forgot to shave today...Guess it's starting to grow back."

Bella's eyes narrowed, and with a curious hum, she leaned in, her fingers lightly touching my face as if she were inspecting something strange.

Her brows furrowed, lips pursed in concentration as she rubbed her thumb over the coarse stubble, testing the texture.

"It's so rough!" She declared, giggling as if it were some grand discovery. "Like those scratchy kitchen sponges! You could sand furniture with this!"

I couldn't help the grin tugging at my lips.

"You're comparing my face to a sponge now?" I tried to sound exasperated, but her bubbly energy made it impossible to keep the amusement out of my voice.

Her hand lingered on my jaw a little longer as she continued to marvel at the roughness.

"You could totally grow a full-on beard if you want to, Daddy!" She said suddenly, eyes bright with excitement as if she'd just come up with the best idea ever. "Like, a real, serious beard. All thick and manly!" She waved her hands in front of her face, mimicking some wild lumberjack look.

"Yeah, I could." I admitted slowly, eyeing her with a raised brow. "But it'd get itchy as hell, and I'd probably look like I got lost in the woods for a month."

Bella gasped dramatically, her hand flying to her mouth like I'd just offended her delicate sensibilities. "No way! You'd look cool!" She gave me an exaggerated once-over, then grinned. "Like a grumpy forest guardian. You'd have that 'don't talk to me unless you brought firewood' look."

I chuckled, low and amused, the sound rumbling deep in my chest.

"Really? You'd actually like me with a beard?" I raised an eyebrow, looking at her skeptically. "Most women, including your mom, hate it when I let it grow...She's always nagging me to keep it clean-shaven unless I want to stay in her house because of how irritating it feels when we kiss."

Bella blinked, caught off guard by that, then shrugged, her lips quirking into a small, teasing smile. "Well, I guess I'm not 'most women.'" She poked her tongue out slightly before giggling again. "Besides, it's not like I want you to look like a total caveman, just...rugged, you know?"

I narrowed my eyes at her, amused by her enthusiasm but still curious as I asked, "You don't exactly strike me as the kind of girl who's into guys with beards, Bella...What's the real reason you want me to grow it out?"

Her grin faltered for a split second, and she hesitated, her fingers twitching slightly before she clasped them behind her back. "W-Well, it's kind of..." She trailed off, biting her lip in a way that told me she was embarrassed.

"Kind of what?" I pressed, leaning in just enough to watch her squirm a little.

"It's because..." Bella fidgeted, glancing anywhere but at me before finally mumbling. "You look really young without it."

I blinked, surprised by her answer. "Young?" I repeated, tilting my head slightly. "What's wrong with that? I mean, it's only natural—I am younger than you."

"No, no, it's not a bad thing." She said quickly, waving her hands as if trying to dismiss my confusion. Then, with a glance away and a faint flush creeping up her neck, she added in a quieter voice, "It's just...you're supposed to be my dad right now, you know? That's how I want to see you too. But with such a young-looking face, it's kinda...hard to do that."

Her words hung in the air, and I could tell she was embarrassed by the admission. I didn't know whether to laugh or groan. My lips twitched in dismay. "So what you're saying is, if I grow out a beard, you'll have an easier time treating me like your stepdad?"

Bella peeked up at me, still flustered but managing a cheeky grin. "Yeah, pretty much."

My lips curled into a mischievous grin as I crossed my arms, leaning against the counter while watching her try to keep her cool.

"You know..." I said slowly, drawing out each word just to make her squirm. "...at the end of the day, this is really just about your Daddy fetish, isn't it?"

Bella's face turned crimson in an instant, her eyes going wide as she sputtered in protest.

"W-What?! No! It's not like that at all!" She waved her hands frantically, as if trying to physically bat away the accusation. "I just...It's not-ugh! Stop being weird!"

I laughed, the sound low and teasing, enjoying how easily she flustered.

"Oh really? So, you're telling me it's purely innocent when you call me 'Daddy'—especially when we're in bed and you call me that word in such a seductive tone?" I stepped closer, watching her face go from red to impossibly redder, her lips parting as if to argue before clamping shut again.

"I-I don't do it for that reason!" She insisted, her voice higher than usual, betraying her nerves. "It's just...it just slips out like that, okay?"

"Slips out." I repeated, raising an eyebrow. "And you're telling me you don't get even a little turned on when you do?" My voice was low, soft, teasing, daring her to deny it while I watched her squirm beneath my gaze.

Bella opened her mouth, ready to fire back with a denial, but the words caught in her throat. She fidgeted, her fingers tangling nervously with the hem of her shirt, and I could practically see the internal battle playing out in her head.

At first, she clearly wanted to deny it—her lips pressed into a thin line like she was ready to declare, 'Of course not! That's ridiculous!'

But then, as the seconds ticked by, her resolve wavered. I could tell the memories were flashing through her mind—those little moments when she'd called me 'Daddy' and felt that strange, forbidden thrill ripple through her.

The times her heart had raced faster, her breath catching in ways she didn't want to admit.

Realising there was no point in lying to herself—or to me—her blush deepened, and she glanced away, mumbling something under her breath.

"What was that?" I prompted, leaning in closer. "Didn't catch that."

She huffed, crossing her arms over her chest defensively before finally muttering, "Maybe I get...a little turned on when I say it. B-But just a little, not too crazy like you might think!" Her voice was barely above a whisper, and she refused to meet my eyes, clearly bracing herself for the teasing that was sure to follow.

But instead of teasing her further, I reached out, wrapping my arms around her shoulders and pulling her into a warm hug.

Hug~

I felt her stiffen slightly in surprise before relaxing into the embrace, her head resting against my chest. My hand moved slowly, rubbing gentle circles on her back.

"Hey..." I said softly, my voice quieter now, lacking its earlier teasing edge. "I get it. I understand why you feel that way."

She didn't say anything, but I could feel the tension in her body, hear the slight hitch in her breath as she waited for me to continue.

"You never really had a father around growing up since he barely came back home. And even if he did, he would simply shower you in presents and think his job was done, not knowing that his daughter was yearning for his attention." I said gently, keeping my tone as steady as I could. "And because of that...you crave that kind of love from someone else. It's natural...It's nothing to be ashamed of."

Bella didn't move for a long moment, but I could feel the way her fingers gripped the fabric of my shirt a little tighter, like she was holding on to something solid.

"I'm not saying this to embarrass you." I added, keeping my hand moving soothingly over her back. "I'm saying it because I want you to know...I'll make up for everything he didn't give you. I'll be the best father I can be, and that's a promise, Bella...A promise you can put your faith in."

Bella sniffed softly, burying her face further into my chest. Her arms wrapped around me tightly, returning the hug with a kind of quiet intensity that made something in my chest tighten.

"Thank you, Daddy." She whispered, her voice muffled but thick with emotion. "T-That...That means a lot to me."

"Anytime." I said, pressing a soft kiss to the top of her head. "You're stuck with me now, kid...Beard or no beard, I'm not going anywhere."

Bella pushed me away lightly, a mock glare on her flushed face as she wiped away her tears.

"Don't call me a kid!" She huffed, crossing her arms with a dramatic harumph. "I'm still the older one here, you know."

I raised an eyebrow, smirking at her exaggerated pout. "Yeah? You've got a funny way of showing it, acting all pouty like that."

She stuck her tongue out at me but didn't respond right away. Instead, she seemed to drift into thought, her expression shifting from playful to contemplative.

I could practically see the thoughts whizzing through her head as she bit her lip, glancing at me out of the corner of her eye like she was debating something.

"Something on your mind?" I asked casually, leaning against the counter again, watching her with mild curiosity.

Bella fidgeted, twirling a lock of her dark hair around her finger before finally speaking up, her voice unusually coy. "Umm...S-Since you shave a lot, Daddy..." She began, hesitating as if unsure how to continue. "You, uh... You know how to use a blade, right?"

I blinked, caught off guard by the sudden question. "Yeah, of course. It's not like I'm waxing my beard off or anything...Why do you ask?"

She glanced away, her blush deepening as she struggled to find the right words. "W-Well..." Her fingers fidgeted nervously with the hem of her shirt, and after a moment, she peeked up at me shyly. "Could you...maybe teach me how to do so?"

"Teach you? Teach you what?" I tilted my head, puzzled.

"You know..." Bella's voice trailed off, her hands gesturing vaguely in front of her before she finally blurted out. "How to shave!"

"B-But you don't have a beard." My brow furrowed in confusion.

Bella's face turned an even deeper shade of red, and she gave me an exasperated look, though it didn't quite hide her nervousness. She rocked on the counter, her gaze darting everywhere but at me.

"I-I know that...obviously." She finally muttered, her voice barely steady. "It's just...I was wondering if... maybe you could, you know..." She trailed off, glancing up at me for a split second before quickly looking away again.

I narrowed my eyes slightly, not out of annoyance but curiosity. "Wondering if I could what?" I asked, watching her fumble for words.

She twirled a strand of hair around her finger nervously, her lips parting slightly before she closed them again, clearly trying to find a way to say it without blurting it out.

Finally, after a long pause, she took a deep breath, still avoiding my eyes. "You know...teach me how t-to...shave...d-down there." She finished the sentence so softly it was almost inaudible, her cheeks practically glowing.

Chapter 510: Heart Shape

My brain stalled for a second as her words sank in. I blinked at her, confused. "Teach you how to shave...down there?" I echoed slowly, as if saying it aloud would somehow make more sense.

Bella's entire face turned crimson, and she looked like she wanted to disappear. She clutched the hem of her shirt even tighter, twisting it nervously between her fingers.

"Yeah..." She mumbled, barely loud enough to hear.

I gave her a puzzled look, still trying to wrap my head around the absurd request. "Why are you asking me something like that?" My brow furrowed, suspicion creeping into my tone. "This isn't some...weird perverted thing, is it?"

Bella's eyes widened in horror, and she frantically shook her head. "No! No way! It's not like that!" Her voice came out in a high-pitched squeak, and she waved her hands in front of her as if to physically bat away the accusation. "Why would you even think that?!"

"Then why?" I asked, folding my arms across my chest. "I mean, you're old enough to know how to handle something like that on your own, right?...Why would you need me to teach you?"

She hesitated again, biting her lip nervously as she glanced away. Her eyes wandered around everywhere, and it took her a moment to work up the courage to answer. "I...I-I don't actually know how." She admitted quietly, her voice barely above a whisper, while I stared at her, waiting for her to elaborate.

"What do you mean, you don't know how?" I asked, still puzzled. "Most people figure that out by themselves...It's not exactly rocket science."

Bella's blush deepened, and she shifted awkwardly from foot to foot. "I mean...until now, there wasn't any need to learn such a thing." She said, her tone flustered but honest.

"No need to?" I repeated, still not quite getting it. "What are you talking about?"

She glanced at me briefly before looking away again, clearly mortified by what she was about to say. "This is the first time I've ever, you know...grown hair down there." She explained, her voice soft and hesitant. "I-I didn't think anything would ever show up, so when it did, I was terrified and didn't know what to do."

Now that caught me off guard. I blinked at her, surprised by the revelation as I asked, "Wait...This is the first time?"

"Yes!" She squeaked, hugging herself tightly as if that would shield her from the embarrassment of admitting something so personal. "I never thought it would happen, okay? But then, one day...something showed up, and I didn't know what to do, so I freaked out!"

She sighed, clearly frustrated with herself, before continuing. "I even went out and bought a shaving kit, thinking I could figure it out on my own. But..." Her voice trailed off, and she gave me a sheepish look. "I got too scared to use it. I didn't want to mess it up or...hurt myself, so I thought maybe...you could help?"

Her voice grew quieter and quieter toward the end of her sentence, and by the time she finished, she was giving me a pair of wide, pleading puppy dog eyes that made it hard to say no, even if her request was completely out of left field.

I pinched the bridge of my nose, trying to make sense of what I'd just heard. "Wait, let me get this straight." I said slowly, glancing at her flushed face. "You've never...grown any hair down there? Ever? Even though you're already an adult."

Bella's hands clenched tightly at the edge of the counter, and she gave a tiny, flustered shake of her head. "N-No...never." She mumbled, her voice barely above a whisper, eyes darting everywhere except at me. "It's always been...bare. Like, completely bare."

She paused, fidgeting even more nervously as though she wanted to stop but found herself compelled to keep explaining.

"I mean, not even a little fuzz. Nothing...It was always smooth-like a baby's skin or something." Her voice wavered, and with every word, her blush deepened further, creeping down her neck to her shoulders. "And just thought maybe it was normal for some people to...stay that way forever but apparently not." She bit her lip, casting a quick, mortified glance my way before hurriedly looking down at the floor again.

And as the realization of what she'd just admitted sank in, she groaned softly and covered her face with both hands. "Oh my god, I can't believe I'm saying this...Why am I even telling you this?!" Her voice was muffled behind her fingers, dripping with embarrassment. "This is so humiliating..."

I stood there for a second, trying not to laugh at how utterly flustered she was. Her shoulders were hunched, and she looked like she wanted the ground to open up and swallow her whole.

"Well.." I said after a moment, rubbing the back of my neck thoughtfully. "It's not unheard of. Some women really do start late when it comes to stuff like that." I paused, glancing at her again, and before I could stop myself, I added, "And, you know..." My eyes roamed over her face, taking in her delicate features, her soft lips, the way she kept fidgeting nervously. "Women who start becoming sexually active tend to mature faster. So, in a way...maybe this is my fault too."

Bella's head snapped up, her eyes wide with disbelief and embarrassment. "W-What?!" She squeaked, her voice higher than usual. "How is that your fault?! Don't just say weird things like that!"

I shrugged, trying to suppress a grin. "I'm just saying...maybe I kickstarted something." Her flustered expression was priceless, and I couldn't help but enjoy watching her try to come up with a response.

She opened her mouth, then closed it again, clearly too embarrassed to argue. Instead, she looked down at her feet, her hands twisting nervously around each other. "Daddy, you jerk." She muttered under her breath, though there was no real heat behind the word.

I chuckled again, stepping closer. "Alright, fine. But seriously, why come to me with something like this? You could've just asked your mom. I'm sure she'd know exactly what to do."

Bella's head shot up, and she stared at me like I'd just suggested something insane. "No way!" She blurted, waving her hands frantically. "There's no way I could ask her about something like this! That would be way too embarrassing!"

I raised an eyebrow, amusement flickering in my eyes. "And asking me isn't embarrassing?" I asked, my voice turning sly as I took another step toward her. "You don't think it's awkward to ask me to help you shave...down there?"

She hesitated, biting her lip nervously before mumbling in a barely audible voice, "I-It's not as bad with you." When I didn't respond immediately, she peeked up at me through her lashes, her cheeks still burning. "You've already...s-seen all of me. Like multiple times, s-so it wouldn't really matter". The last part came out so softly I almost didn't catch it, but the way she fidgeted nervously made it clear how much the admission flustered her.

I stared at her for a moment, then let out a low chuckle, my smile deepening. "Fair point." I said, the teasing note in my voice unmistakable. "I guess I can't argue with that."

"Still..." I said, my tone deliberately light. "It probably would've been better if you'd asked your mom about this instead. She's kind of an expert when it comes to grooming, you know? She's always so neat and tidy with herself." I saw Bella give me a wary side-eye, sensing where I might be heading, but that only made teasing her more tempting. "In fact..." I continued, ignoring her warning glare. "...there was even this one time where she-

"Daddy, don't-

"-managed to trim it into a heart shape." I said, grinning as I finished the sentence. "She did it as a joke to surprise me. Took me a second to notice, but once I did...well-"

Before I could finish, Bella let out a horrified squeak and launched forward, landing a surprisingly solid punch to my chest. "Stop it! Don't talk about my mom like that!" She shrieked, her voice high-pitched with embarrassment.

I barely flinched from the hit, laughing as I rubbed the spot where her fist had landed. "What? I'm just saying she's quite lucrative...You might've picked up a few tips if you'd asked her."

Bella groaned loudly, covering her face with both hands as though trying to block out my words.