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Chapter 14 EMILY

I stared at the mail longer than I would have liked to admit. It was so tempting to just accept, but was it really true what he had said? That I wouldn't be in any type of debt to anyone? If so, why should I say no?

My mind was spinning going over both pros and cons of agreeing to have a sponsor. It was a hell of a lot of money that someone would spend on me. That, in itself, was crazy, and I couldn't comprehend it. I was drowning in student loans, and now I might agree to get a hundred- and twenty-dollars' worth of membership? Bi-fucking-zarre.

The prideful part of me was shaking inside, fighting to get out just to tell Chris, «Fuck no, I'll pass." But another part of me didn't want to do that. In other words, I was indecisive as all hell.

Yeah, I would need some time to decide. And if I decided before the weekend, I could visit the club... I don't have work then, a small voice in my head whispered.

Pushing it all to the side, I pressed play on the movie I was getting ready to watch before all this happened. The wine was room temperature, precisely how I liked it. I'd planned on drinking just a glass or two, but as I relaxed to the movie playing, I poured more into the glass as soon as it emptied the second time.

I wouldn't get drunk or anything, just enough to sleep easier. If I knew myself as well as I knew I did, I would overthink as soon as my head hit the pillow. Too much had happened for me not to go over it all and the possibilities it might present.

By the time the end credits appeared on the screen, my eyes were at half-mast. Doing a quick night routine, I got back into bed, and true to my words, fell asleep right away.

My night was dreamless and heavy, so when the alarm rang, I felt rested and ready for a new week.

Jumping out of bed, I stretched and made a fresh cup of coffee.

I had a quick makeup routine for the days spent at the café. With only elderly as our customers, I didn't need to make myself look pretty for them. My tips didn't depend on it.

While the nightclub was located in Downtown Manhattan, I needed to take a bus to get to-the café was only four blocks from my apartment.

It was nice out at this time of the day; the heat wasn't unbearable, and

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the street wasn't too busy either.

Kevin, my co-worker and best friend was in the shop as I walked in. He was in the middle of taking down the chairs from the tables when he spotted me.

"Girl," he whistled, his eyes on the new uniform I'd gotten. I could see the grin he was trying to hide. "Agnes did you dirty."

"Ugh, I know. Look at this skirt." I grabbed the end of the dress, which was way down past the knees, and showed him the awful underskirt.

Agnes was the owner of the café, and although she was a kind woman, she was old fashioned when it came to clothes. At least the last outfit had been monochrome. This, on the other hand, was going down in history as the worst dress ever made. It was yellow with blue polka dots. The too thick, too itchy underskirt was icky on. If it hadn't been for that, it might have been wearable.

"And suddenly I'm glad to be a male." Which he should be. He, at least, only needed to wear a slightly less hideous-but monotone-blue t-shirt and a pair of grey slacks. He actually looked good in his outfit, not that he wouldn't look good no matter what he wore. With his rich brown hair, cutest freaking smile and a body that made model scouts stop him on the street, he was, as many can attest to, "drop dead gorgeous." He honestly looked like a catwalk model-not that he'd ever want to work in such a toxic industry, his words, not mine.

"Ugh, that looks uncomfortable." Kevin gave the skirt the stink eye. "Lucky for you, you're pretty enough to pull that hideous dress off." Kevin came to me and slung an arm around my shoulders. "How was your weekend?"

"Good," I answered too fast. I hadn't told him about last weekend when I visited DD, and now all I could think about was the offer I had received yesterday.

"Really?" Oh no, he sounded intrigued, and when he wanted answers, he always got them.

Kevin guided me behind the counter and made me sit on the chair. He leaned on the counter, looking at me with excitement and glee as if he knew I had something juicy to tell him. "Spill."

If there was one person I trusted and knew wouldn't judge me, it was Kevin. If anything, he would be like a devil on my shoulder, urging me to do what I was afraid to do. And maybe... maybe I wanted him to push me.

"I, eh..." I rolled my eyes at my own nervousness. Grow up, Emily. "I went to a club last weekend."

"What kind of club? Please, say sex club. Please, say sex club." I laughed at Kevin's antics as he crossed his finger and looked at me hopefully.

"It was a BDSM club," I admitted, looking down at my hands before I

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raised my gaze back to his.

His eyes bulged in shock. "No fucking way. I was kidding I didn't actually think you were at a sex club."

I watched as he raised his voice. Luckily, no one but Kevin and I were at the café.

"Tell me everything!" He practically begged, and it was impossible to deny his puppy eyes. Trust me, he could give better puppy eyes than puppies. So, I did. I filled him in on everything that happened, both from last weekend and yesterday, while we got the place ready for opening.

"Seriously?"

Throwing a wet washcloth at him, I shushed him. "Dude, could you lower your voice a little?"

"What? There's no one here." But he did as I asked. "You have to accept it. I mean it, if you don't, I will."

I laughed. "Oh, really, are you in pain with your pleasure?"

He huffed. "No, but-holy hell. I just realized that you're a kinky bitch. I mean, I know what BDSM is, but I didn't really register it before now. Good on you, girl, let someone take that stick that's up your ass out."

Suddenly I wished I hadn't thrown the rag on him just so I could do it again. "I do not have a stick up my ass," I protested.

"You're always so prim and proper. You never do anything crazy or live a little. Ever since I got to know you, all your attention has been on work, school, and graduating college. But now? Damn, now I understand why we're even friends."

Oh god. He made me sound so dull, but I knew it was true. Kevin was the impulsive and lively person out of us two, while I was often too shy to grab life by the horns and do as I pleased.

"Either way. You have to accept it. Think of it this way. When you're old and withered, do you want to regret not living your life to the fullest? Or do you want to have memories of a crazy and fun time instead?"

He had a point. If I did say no, I would regret it, and I didn't want to live my life with that on my shoulders.

Well then...it seemed like this girl was going to join Desire's Den.

I was going to say yes to the membership.