

Don't Fall For Mr. Hart

C 4 - Be Prepared Novel

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I certainly did not want to see Aiden Hart again. Ever again, if possible. Men like him meant trouble, and my heart and mind—and unsatisfied lady parts—were not immune to such a high level of devilishness. Well, I was a girl with a few serious issues. The fact that the last time I had sex was four years ago, and the last time I had good sex was... never, wasn't helping. I developed a chronic state of horniness—a lethal disease I invented—and I could feel that I didn't have much time left before ending my life with a grand explosion. Meeting Aiden Hart up close might have sped up the whole process by ten thousand folds, meaning I could die standing in front of him.

"Relax! I was joking!" Emily patted my tensed shoulder. "As far as I know, Aiden doesn't even work in New York City."

I rubbed my chest, calming my frantically throbbing heart. "Don't scare me like this!" I groaned. Thankfully, the boss I would work for was old, intelligent, and respectful. I would never have agreed to this ridiculous plan if I'd had to work for someone like Aiden.

Once my heart rate slowed to a bearable level, Emily helped me note all the meaningless facts concerning CEO Hart. By the time I finished my fifth coffee, I knew that Alexander Hart's current wife was actually his second since the first one died of cancer. He had three sons: Caesar, Christopher, and Aiden. Alexander Hart was known for participating in numerous charity galas and donating money to orphans. He loved to play Go and even sponsored an international Go tournament in New York. This man's reputation was flawless.

I put down the final magazine from the pile and heaved a long sigh. "This isn't going to work," I told Emily. "This man is either absolutely boring or insanely good at hiding his dirt. I vote for the latter, but either way, we won't find anything useful staring at the colorful pictures."

"I wouldn't say that." Emily giggled and bit her lip.

I frowned and shifted to see what she was staring at. As soon as I saw a picture of Aiden Hart walking out of a limousine, I nearly choked on the air. He looked like the finest male model during a high-end session. How was it possible to look that good in the randomly taken picture?! If it had been me walking out of my car that someone photographed, I would have had my hair all over the place, my clothes would have twisted to make me look at least twenty pounds bigger, and my awkward expression

could have suggested that I had escaped straight from the Zombie Apocalypse movie set.

Emily's eyes were glued to Aiden, his wind-waved hair, his perfectly shaped face with lips curled up in a dangerous smirk, and his body packed in an impeccable vivid-blue suit. Even the way this man held sunglasses in his hand looked too freaking alluring.

"Can I be reborn as one of his suits in my next life?" Emily moaned, her fingers tracing his shape in the picture.

I snorted and patted her shoulder. "You would regret it. A guy like this changes his suits far too often."

Emily gave me a puppy-eye look. "But maybe he would love this suit in particular. I would have looked good on him... or under him."

My brow rose. "Are you sure you're still talking about the suit?"

She chuckled a little mischievously, and I rolled my eyes. She frowned and prodded my elbow. "Oh, come on, Charlie! It's been two months since I became single! I'm on my period, and I am horny as fuck! And yes, I would definitely fuck him!"

Now my both brows shot up. "Oh, poor you. Tell me, how did you manage to live for two months without sex?"

Emily wanted to say something, but my fair dose of sarcasm triggered her realization. She sighed and lowered her head. "I'm sorry... I know that my less than sixty days of loneliness are nothing in comparison to your situation."

"Now you're making me feel absolutely pathetic," I grumbled.

"But you shouldn't feel this way!" She hit the carpet with her slender fist. "Charlie, you are a beautiful woman with a body to kill for. You could easily make guys like Aiden Hart fall for you."

I laughed hard at that. "Yeah, sure. If they're into introverts and freaks."

"You're not an introvert... You're definitely a freak, but not an introvert," Emily corrected. "You need a little change of clothing and a touch of makeup, and you'll look like the hottest girl in town. You're not antisocial, Charlie. You can talk to people."

I gave her a look. "Yes, people who don't look like sex gods. Whenever a nice-looking man comes my way, my brain shuts up, and my hormones do the talking. And ninety percent of the time they use a language that sounds a lot like Klingon with the caveman's accent."

She snorted. "It can't be that bad."

"But it is." My hands fell limply to the floor. "It's like I can't be myself when I'm around someone really attractive."

She stroked my hair. "Oh, sweetie..." Then she moved closer to me, leaning over. "I'll tell you a secret... When a guy meets a woman for the first time, he doesn't want to know the real her; he wants to see her. All you need to do is show him the version of you that he'll find attractive."

I smiled wryly. "So you tell me to pretend?"

She shook her head. "Not pretend but act." A sly smirk crossed her lips. "If you cannot face the guys as yourself, we'll need to build you a confident character that you will put on like a mask."

"A mask?" I repeated.

"Yes," she confirmed. "In fact, you should start building that mask right now. You'll need it to play the role of the CEO's secretary."

I groaned. "God... I forgot that I would actually have to behave like a woman there."

Emily laughed, then launched off the carpet and ran into her room. She returned with a pair of red Louboutins in her hand and a wide grin on her face. "Time for practice," she sang. "I will turn you into the best and sexiest secretary the Hart Global Corporation has ever had!"

It had been a few days since Emily put on her I'm-on-a-mission face and pledged to transform me into secretary material. She even took sick days at work to train me—or rather, torture me.

It's not like I was born in pants and had never worn heels my entire life; I just got used to wearing comfortable clothes and flats. Sweats or jeans and sneakers had quickly become my work uniform. It was more practical than skirts and heels, especially when I needed to run after celebrities... or away from their security. Now, with Emily's and Bastian's help, I was learning the sacred knowledge of working undercover, and—Lord, help me—I was learning it the hard way.

"All right, I did some digging, and I think that it'll be best if you just go there using your own name," said Bastian, summarizing our war meeting.

"Digging?" I looked at him wide-eyed, and he smiled nervously.

"I ran your name in the system, and you come absolutely clean—clean as if you've never existed," he explained.

My lips formed a straight line. "Or never achieved anything," I added.

An awkward laugh escaped both of their throats. "But it's a good thing, right?" Emily shot me a crooked smile. "Because you've always used a pen name when writing for the tabloid and you only worked there as a contracted freelancer, you're like *carte blanche*. No one will ever know that you are a journalist or that you're trying to find something."

I chuckled dryly. "Yes... For the first time in history, being a nobody became a good thing."

"It's a perfect quality," Bastian assured. "That is why I have something for you." He reached to open his briefcase, pulled out a graduation diploma, and handed it to me.

I stared at it for a minute, my heart accelerating. "This is from Yale University, and it has my name on it," I muttered.

"Yes, about that..." Bastian chuckled and scratched his head. "I figured that if you go to the job interview with NYU's Journalism Institute Diploma, it could raise suspicions, but I'm sure that they'd love to hire someone who graduated law from Yale."

I glared at him. "You just said that it's a good thing that I come clean in the system, and now you're turning me into a fraud? Tell me, how is that safe, and how will they not find out about this?"

He shrugged. "We have really good hackers at the agency. Besides, there are too many Charlotte Madisons in the US for them to figure it all out. And they won't check you too thoroughly; it's not like you're running for president."

I blinked several times to process it. "So I will go there with my own name, but I will act like someone else, and I will have to pretend that I graduated law?"

He grinned. "Congratulations, Charlie. Your first case as an investigative journalist is about to begin."