

## Chapter 14 - Sweet Addiction

“I gotta make some phone calls and answer an email or two,” Antonio announced as he rose to his feet, “but I’ll be with you in half an hour at most.”

“Oh,” why did the hell did she sound so disappointed? Tara wasn’t the desperate kind of girl who clung to a man. “It’s nothing,” she told him. “I should probably go anyways.”

“What?” He exclaimed. “No. Stay.”

Although worded out as an order, it came out as a plea.

And Tara wasn’t strong-willed enough not to oblige.

“You could watch TV or something while I get some work done,” he suggested with a wink.

And then, as easy as that, he went to what she assumed was his home office.

TV not being a thing she favored, Tara decided to call her best friend Chloe. She went to the living room, sat on the sofa, before finally giving Chloe a call.

“Hello,” she drawled when her friend picked up.

“Hey,” Chloe answered back sleepily.

“Don’t tell me you’re still asleep,” Tara rolled her eyes in dismay. “Shouldn’t you be fucking your boyfriend’s brains out?”

“Been there, done that. We had a blast,” came the deadpanned answer. “And if I were supposed to be fucking his brains out as you put it, I wouldn’t have picked up. Did you think of that when you called? No, I bet you didn’t.”

Tara giggled at her friend’s antics.

“Something wrong, Tara?” Her friend then asked out of the blue, almost if she sensed what was troubling her.

“No...”

“Really now?” Chloe probed.

“I mean, nothing is wrong per se, but something did come up,” she told her truthfully and yet somehow cryptically.

“Look girl, you have ten seconds to spill the beans or I am definitely hanging up on you,” Chloe threatened.

“Mean!” She exclaimed in a light tone.

“You have not seen mean yet,” her friend retorted. “10. 9. 8. 7...”

“Fine, fine. I met someone yesterday,” Tara began her tale with that much. She then dampened her lips before continuing, only to be interrupted by Chloe’s obnoxiously loud question, “Did you finally lose it?”

“No,” she said simply.

“I’m not interested in knowing the non-juicy details then,” Chloe said, sounding almost annoyed. “Did you really call me at - what? - 1 pm on a weekend just tell me you have yet another crush?”

“It’s not like that,” Tara tried to justify.

“It is exactly like that, girl. It has been like that ever since I can remember,” came the reprimand.

“Whatever,” Tara huffed.

“So, what happened?”

It seemed as if Chloe felt bad for the way she acted and thus came her question, but Tara was no longer in the mood to share the news of Antonio barging in her life.

And although Chloe shall find out, sooner or later, it wouldn’t come out of Tara’s mouth.

“Nothing. I’m the same old boring me I was back in high school, and I might never lose my damn virginity if this continues,” she retorted acidly.

“Oh, Tara...” Chloe began only to be interrupted by Tara saying harshly, “I gotta go now. See you soon.”

“Seriously...”

Tara could sense the rant coming. And seeing as she didn’t want to deal with her friend at the moment, she found herself hanging up on her without further ado.

“I do hope you weren’t serious,” Antonio’s voice reached her from behind her, and she startled at the sound.

“You scared me,” she admonished him softly as she turned her head around to mock glare at him.

“That was not my intention,” he said with a small smile and then he started massaging her tense shoulders.

“What was your question again?” She asked in afterthought as she relaxed under his hands.

“I said I hope you weren’t serious about the never losing your damn virginity part,” came his whisper.

“Wouldn’t you like to know?” She quipped.

“I would, very much,” he admitted in a husky voice. His breath fanned her ear and she shivered in response.

“Antonio,” she breathed out.

“Yes, kitten?”

“You don’t play fair,” she chastised him.

“Who ever said I did?” He chuckled before nipping on her earlobe.

Tara couldn’t help the moan that escaped her at that unexpected turn of events.

“Antonio,” she moaned his name this time around.

He only hummed in response before licking the sting of the nip away. “Yes, kitten?”

She turned to glare at him, but upon seeing the dark sparkle in his deep green eyes, she couldn’t help but want to give in to the temptation that was Antonio freaking De La Cruz.

“Kiss me,” she wanted to sound strong and confident, but her words came out as a plea instead.

“Gladly,” he said right before he delved for a prize that was his for the taking.

Unlike the previous kisses, in which it almost felt as if Antonio was taking possession of her mouth and staking a claim all at the same time, this one was sweet. No tongues involved, only their lips moved sensually.

Tara’s hands rose, almost of their own accord, and she started to stroke his face lovingly with one hand and held his head down with the other.

No sooner had she done that, Antonio put an end to the kiss and straightened up.

“What’s wrong?” She whispered, both sounding and feeling insecure as never before.

“What is wrong is that I promised I’d give you time to think about us. And then, you plead for me to kiss you like that, with such come-hither looks... I am a man, kitten, made of blood and flesh.”

“Antonio, I...”

“Let me carry on,” he urged her with dark eyes, and she sealed her lips shut. “I have fought every urge to make you mine for the last four years. But seeing how I kept tabs over you, watching you from the sidelines, my feelings have grown from the stage of a mere infatuation... and I am just blown by the chemistry that’s sizzling between us at the moment.”

His confessions came to comfort her ego.

“It is taking all my self-control to keep from ravaging you, kitten,” he admitted. “If you value your virtue, even if it pains me, you’d do well to allow me to take you home.”

The inner slut in Tara was overjoyed at the prospect of being ravaged by him. But the reasonable part of her made her rise from the sofa and stand on wobbly feet.

“Okay. Take me home then, Antonio.”