

Professor Dearest Chapter 16

~CLARA~

Alaric doesn't answer me. I'm unsure if he's ignoring me or thinking of something else.

"Alaric?" I whisper.

The thought of Nicole physically hurting him like this made me furious inside. I always knew I didn't like Nicole because of her awful personality, but this was on another level.

What reason could she possibly have to do this? I wasn't even sure she was the culprit, but I was already so bitter.

His eyes look so sad that I want to lean forward and hug him. I wish that he would let me take his pain away. I hope that he can give me that chance to make his life better.

I've never felt this protective of a man in my entire life. I didn't know why. I'm not sure of anything anymore.

All I know is that I want to make him happy. I want to be the one to make him smile.

"I want to be alone." He says again. "The bruise is nothing.

It will heal on its own."

I frown, "it's bleeding." I point out. "The wound is something Alaric, and it needs to be tended to."

"Why do you care so much?" He asks me. "I'm not Carter, Clara."

I gasped at his words.

Why would he bring Carter up at a time like this?

What does my past relationship with Carter have to do with this?

"Fuck." He growls.

It looks like he regrets saying that, but I could just be imagining it.

I don't know why I haven't left yet. I don't know why I'm still staring at him wide-eyed like I can't believe he'd just said that to me.

"Look, Clara," he whispers; it sounds like he is about to apologize, but he stops himself.

I'll never know what he wanted to say to me. It seems like he's conflicted about what to do.

"Why do you always say my name professionally?" I ask him. "Why can't you speak to me like you would speak to someone who isn't a stranger?"

He frowns, "You are my student. How else should I say your name?"

His student.

Right.

I wish it weren't like that. I didn't want to be known as just his student.

I knew it was pointless having this conversation with him while he was intoxicated, but I didn't think I was brave enough to have it otherwise.

I reach forward one last time to touch his bruise, and Alaric tries to stop me once more, except, this time, his watch hooks on my dress. He pulls lightly, and my eyes widen when I hear a rip.

His eyes travel to my torn dress, and he immediately moves forward to cover it with his hand.

We both freeze.

His hand was now on my breast, and I don't think that was what he intended to happen.

There was so much heat in his eyes that I felt my insides melt.

What was he doing to me?

I've never felt feelings as strong as these in the past. What was the meaning of this?

Should I be worried? Should I see a doctor or a psychiatrist?

I just knew that none of this was normal.

He clears his throat and removes his shirt to hide my exposed skin.

This is the second time he's given me something of his to cover my body. I'm reminded of why I'm so attracted to him. Because of this side of him. I knew the type of person he was deep down inside, which in turn drew me in.

"I'm sorry." He apologizes.

I still haven't recovered from having his hand on my breast, even though it was not intentional.

"I'm not," I whisper.

I don't know why I said it. I shouldn't have.

He looks at me, "What did you say?"

I take his hand and place it on my chest so that he can feel my pounding heartbeat. I wanted to tell him that it was because of him but I didn't say anything.

He looks confused by my actions. Even I was a bit confused. I was not used to being this bold.

"Clara," he swallows hard. "What are you doing?"

"I don't know," I whisper; I can barely recognize my voice. "I don't know Alaric."

His gaze travels to my neck, and he surprises me when he moves his hand there. He gently rubs the spot right beneath my earlobe with his thumb.

I'm not sure what's on his mind, but I know that I don't want him to stop touching me.

It felt like a dream, and maybe I was dreaming because there was no way I could do something like this in the real world.

I could hear his wild heartbeat as well when he leaned into me so that his lips were just above my ear.

I felt myself instantly grow wet between the legs. I ached down there, and I wished I could tell him.

I wish he would kiss me. I wish he would do more than that.

Alaric does nothing of the sort. He stayed that way; he was close to me, but he wasn't touching a single part of me with his lips.

But still, his nearness ignited a flame in my stomach that threatened to ruin my life.

I think I've finally lost my mind when I wrap my arms around his neck and tiptoe so that I can press my lips against the bruise on his forehead.

Alaric freezes at the contact, and after a while, I freeze as well.

It finally sinks in what I'd just done.

What the hell was wrong with me?