

Professor Dearest Chapter 19

~CLARA~

Jenna, speaking in a whisper, observes, "You seem to have had a sleepless night. Is everything okay? Could you share what happened last night that kept you from getting a good night's sleep?"

As I sat there, trying to gather my thoughts, I knew what to do. I had to tell my best friend everything. But it wasn't easy. I had done something that I wasn't proud of, and I was ashamed to admit it.

I was too embarrassed and, quite frankly, preferred that no one else knew. But I knew I couldn't keep it bottled up inside any longer. So, I took a deep breath and began to tell her the whole story. "I did something kind of crazy last night..."

It was a difficult conversation, and I knew I should have waited till class was over to tell her, but I couldn't wait any longer.

She listened to me without judgment, but that was the kind of person Jenna was. She wouldn't judge anyone unless it were something really bad that couldn't be forgiven.

"So let me just get this straight," she whispered after I'd finished the entire story. "You actually kissed Alaric last night? That Alaric in front of the class. Our professor!"

My eyes widen at her interpretation of my story.

I'm not sure I understand how you arrived at that conclusion," I assert, my tone both firm and incredulous.

"To be clear, I only mentioned that I kissed the bruise he had on his forehead. I never said anything about kissing him!

She smiles at me, "Clara" she whispers. "You kissed his forehead. That's a part of him. Whether or not you want to admit it, you kissed your professor last night."

I inwardly groaned; why did I choose to tell her anything?

She was never going to let me forget about last night.

"When you went missing, I thought you were busy caring for Scarlett," she admits. "I never once thought you were busy kissing Alaric!"

My hand tightens on the pen in front of me.

"He's looking at you." My best friend whispers.

I couldn't bring myself to meet his gaze. My face still felt warm with embarrassment from the events of the previous night. I clung to the hope that Scarlett's reassuring words would prove true, that he had forgotten everything, and that things could return to normal. But deep down, a small part of me hoped he had remembered.

I didn't understand my own conflicting emotions. I was a mess; I knew that much.

Eventually, I couldn't hold it in anymore. I gave in and finally looked at him. Thankfully, his gaze was no longer on me.

However, it did nothing to ease the tension within me.

Alaric was sexy without even trying to be. In fact, I don't think I've ever wanted him more than this.

As I sit there quietly, observing his every move, he reaches out for his sleeve and slowly starts to roll it up. Why was? so enchanted by his every move?

With deliberate movements, he then reached out for a marker that was resting on his desk. Turning away from me, he faces the board before him, his broad back now obscuring my view. I didn't mind. Even Alarie's back was a masterpiece to me.

How lucky Nicole was to be his wife.

That reminded me of last night. I never found out if she was the one responsible for the bruise on his forehead.

I never saw her for the rest of the night, and while it made me happy, it also worried me a bit.

Just what happened between the two of them last night?

Whatever it was, I knew that it wasn't good. It made Alaric so upset that he spent the entire night getting wasted. I hated seeing him that way.

I'd never seen him that upset in the past, and it bothered me to the point that I couldn't sleep at all. Other than the fact that I had made a complete fool of myself last night in front of him.

The bell signals the end of class, and I quickly get up to leave. I didn't want to take too long to exit the classroom. I didn't need to give Alaric another reason to try to speak to me.

"Gosh, you're in a hurry," Jenna whispers next to me as I grab my bag.

"We need to get out of this classroom now," I whisper back, unable to hide the urgency in my voice.

She grabs her books and quickly follows me.

Just like always, there is already a group of girls surrounding Alaric.

I try not to roll my eyes as I pass them to get to the door.

"Miss Clara Mae."

I freeze. I could hardly move. Not after he'd said my name like that, like I was in trouble. I swallow and slowly turn around to gaze at him.

His eyes are dark as he says, "Meet me in my office in five minutes."

My heart sank as my lips parted in horror. I desperately hoped that I had misheard him, but the furious expressions on the faces of every girl in front of me confirmed what I feared to be true.

What did I do?

Why did he want to see me?

Was this about last night?

That last question made my entire body begin to panic.

Please don't let it be about that.