

Professor Dearest Chapter 24

~NICOLE~

“You have some explaining to do.” I hiss.

Upon entering Alaric's office today, I had anticipated a warm welcome from him but was disappointed. To my surprise, I found him engrossed in conversation with Clara, his apparent new interest. It wasn't the first time I had seen her around him, and it was beginning to feel like she was intentionally following him around. It was frustrating to see her continued presence; I was finding it hard to have a one on-one conversation with Alaric without Clara interrupting or hovering around us. She was getting on my last nerve.

I was seething with anger when I saw the way he was treating her. It was as if she was special to him, someone he cared for deeply. This starkly contrasted with how he treated me. I was once the only woman in his life who mattered. Now, it felt like she had taken my place, and I couldn't help but feel a pang of jealousy. Every word he spoke to her, every gesture he made, felt like a betrayal to me. It was a hard pill to swallow, and I couldn't shake off the feeling of being replaced.

Alaric surprises me when he takes a few steps toward me.

It's the first time he's gotten so close to me in a long time. It made me feel like I had some power over him again.

However, I'm shocked when he growls low and dangerously. “What you said to Clara today is f\*cking unacceptable, Nicole.”

My lips part in horror. What the hell did he say to me? He was fighting to protect that woman once more. When would the t\*\*\*\*\*e end?

“I only spoke the truth.” I snap. “Have you forgotten that I am still your wife, Alaric? Why are you putting her above me?”

“I'm not putting anyone above you, Nicole.” He growls. “I've let you get away with plenty in the past. I won't let you disrespect another person in my life again. Clara is not only one of my students, but she's also Scarlett's sister. She's family. You cannot speak to her in that manner. I won't let it happen again, at least not before me. I won't ask you again, so ensure it doesn't happen.”

Was that a threat?

Did he indeed threaten me for that girl?

What the hell was happening? He was so different from the Alaric that I was used to.

“You've changed,” I mutter in shock.

I never thought the day would come that Alaric would choose another woman over me. He was replacing me right in front of my eyes.

“I told you already that I'm not the man I used to be.” He repeats. “I gave you enough chances, Nicole. You need to understand that it's time for you to move on. Sign the divorce papers and make our divorce final. I don't want to ask again. I would hate to get lawyers involved in this. I don't want to make it a messy divorce.

It was another threat.

If I didn't sign the papers, he would find other ways to force me to sign them.

I had to do something to make him think I was agreeing to the divorce.

“Okay,” I tell him. “If that's what you want, then so be it.

Send the papers to me tonight. I'll have them signed and return them to you tomorrow before your first class.”

He looks shocked at my response. I wanted to get back on his good side. I didn't want to dig a deeper hole for myself. I had to make Alaric trust me again. I couldn't let Clara get him.

He seems relieved. “Thank you, Nicole. I'm happy that you agreed to do this. I didn't want to have to use force to get my way. Even after everything, I still want the best for you. I want you to be happy.”

I try not to be affected by his words. I didn't want to fall for Alaric. I never fell for him during our marriage. I didn't want to want him when he was over me. However, for some reason, now that he didn't want me, there was this strange feeling in my chest.

I run a hand through my hair.

“I want you to be happy also, Alaric.” I lie. “I hope you can find someone who can make you happy again.”

It was another lie. Maybe he could see through my lies, but I wouldn't give up.

I'll have Alaric back in my life again.

I'll do anything I need to; all I need is the Alaric that was crazy about me back in my life. I needed a man who would never look at another woman. The Alaric that I knew would have never been attracted to someone like Clara. I barely knew who he was anymore. I knew I was partly at fault for this, but that's why I was willing to do x things.

Now that Ace didn't want to see me anymore. I needed Alaric.

I needed him.