

William and Sophia Warren were the picture perfect power couple; who took the market by storm. He was handsome in stature; she was the beauty every woman envied. Together they were a force to be reckoned with; apart, a fatal accident you couldn't look away from. Their divorce, explosive. Leaving bodies in the aftermath; including mine, Brooklyn Scott.

Two weeks ago, I was Mrs. Warren's Executive Assistant; a woman of elegance, grace and class. Now, I'm employed by Mr. Warren, a bullish, vehement, and Neanderthal of a man. Who by divine fate stole the controlling shares of Warren International Realty, adding me as a bonus.

However, things weren't going to be that simple.

William Warren may have started the war, but I sure as hell will finish it.

### Mature Audience

This story has not been professionally edited. Any mistakes you find will be mine. I have an incredible team of pre-readers who polish up as many of my flaws as possible, but in the end, they're my flaws.

## Chapter 1

"This was not supposed to happen this way," I breathed into his ear.

"This wasn't supposed to happen at all!" He growled, with a hard thrust.

The glass desk top pressed firmly into my thighs, and was pleausurably painful, "Damn it, Warren!" I dug my nails deeper into his rippled back. His groan was satisfaction enough.

Arrogant bastard!

His head lifted from my chest, narrowing those blue eyes in warning. The hand that controlled my waist was now wrapped around my brown strands. He yanked my head back, positioning my brown eyes to his crystal blues. His stature dominated mine as the final thrust tilted us over the edge.

The room quieted with our slowing breaths until it was still. I searched into his eyes, yet found nothing.

Pushing at his chest to release me, he paused before granting me an exit. Typical, Warren.

Quickly buttoning up my white blouse, I smoothed down my black printed skirt, wrapped my tousled hair into a makeshift bun and headed straight for the door.

"Ms. Scott."

Startled by the broken silence, I turned. "Yes, Mr. Warren."

"You forgot your panties." I quickly grabbed them from his hand. But, before I could escape, he said, "This will never happen again."

I didn't bother to turn around. "You can count on that! Merry Christmas, asshat!" And with that I walked out the door.

< 10 Months Earlier >

"Come again?"

"Ms. Scott. You will be reporting to Mr. Warren, effective immediately."

I gawked at her. "How is that possible?"

"Mrs. Warren has relinquished her position. Yet, she will remain as Chairman of the Board at Warren International Realty."

"Then why can't I continue to be her Executive Assistant if she is staying on?"

"She will be stepping back, and your services are needed more so with the CEO."

I stared at the HR rep still dumbfounded by what I had heard. I had just lost my job working with a woman I respected and admired, only to gain the biggest asshole in Atlanta!

"Isn't there somewhere else you can place me?" I could hear the desperation in my voice.

She huffed in frustration as she leaned across her desk. "Ms. Scott, as you are quite aware, we have just gone through a restructuring. Numerous talented people had to be let go. However, if you feel the responsibilities of the job are above your skill—"

"No! No, of course I'm very capable of completing my job responsibilities."

She relaxed back into her chair. "Good."

After reviewing my salary and terms of employment, I was given new keys, a new ID card, and a new office. Mr. And Mrs. Warren had worked side by side occupying half of the same floor. But apparently, Mr. Warren had the office remodeled while I was gone on my two week vacation. He converted Mrs. Warren's section of the floor into smaller offices and enlarged the meeting rooms.

When I finally saw the new space, it was an impressive c-suite. Everything was white, stark, and cold. Just like its occupant. The offices were composed of glass walls, except for Mr. Warren's office, and the conference rooms which were comprised of a privacy wall.

I walked into my office to get settled in when I heard the sound of her heels. I didn't need to look up to know it was Gianna Price; assistant to Aiden Warren, the nicer of the two brothers, who was President of Warren International realty. A company founded by their recently retired father, Collin Warren.

"I heard," she said sympathetically, and shut the door behind her.

"Cute skirt," I stated, leaning against my desk as she handed me a cup of coffee. She was stunning in a long burgundy wrap skirt that was fitted to her curvy shape. Gianna was a drop dead gorgeous blonde who acted like she didn't know it.

"What are you going to do?" She sat down in front of me.

"What can I do? I was already over paid to begin with. I can't make the type of money anywhere else that I'm accustomed to doing what I am now."

We both sighed knowing it was the truth. I had gone from eating Ramen noodles to survive, to ordering über eats every night of the week except Sunday. Sunday was always the family meal. Even though my family was in Oklahoma, I still cooked on Sunday's out of habit.

"Well the bright side—"

"How is there a bright side?" I asked, arching my brow.

"The bright side is that you have something hot to look at each day. You know I could never look at Aiden that way. I adore Kaylee." She was Aiden's college sweetheart turned wife. "But Will. . . mmm, anytime and anyplace."

"Gianna!" I scolded as I took the chair next to hers.

"As if you've never thought about it? That man is scorching hot. Tall, dark and handsome. And those blue eyes, affixed on that chiseled bone structure of a god's face. I'm getting hot just thinking about him."

"We can switch bosses."

She stood. "On that note, I will leave you with 'good luck'. You know where to find me if you need me."

"Hey, what happened to William? You think he's handsome and hot? Why don't you want to work for him?"

"He's great to look at but an ass to work with. Don't worry Brook, you will do fine."

"What choice do I have?"

"That's the spirit." She grabbed a hold of my left hand and squeezed it. "I'll check back later."

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I had hoped that I would have some time getting myself organized however, Mr. Warren wouldn't have it. He tore into the office already angry at the world. Not a hello, or welcome, or a thanks for staying after I treated your boss—his now ex-wife—like trash. One night when we were working late, she had shared with me his harsh behaviors, lack of intimacy, and a need to control everything. I rarely had to interact with Mr. Warren, but that was all about to change.

I took a few deep breaths, grabbed a cup of coffee and knocked on Mr. Warren's door.

"Sir, would you like some coffee—"

"Ms. Scott. I'm going to make this quick. You are on a trial basis."

What the hell?

"Sophia insisted I keep you on after my assistant retired. I would have gotten rid of everything of Sophia's, but I'm going to see how this works."

"You were going to get rid of everything Sophia? I'm not an everything, Mr. Warren, I'm a someone. I assure you—"

"I stated before that I had very little time. I want my coffee in my office first thing. You will need to go over my schedule each night, and update me each morning. I'll email you when I need something. We'll go over the rest later. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a meeting."

It took a moment for my feet to respond but I left; coffee still in hand. When I turned back around, it seemed as if Mr. Warren was checking out my ass. His eyes slowly came up to mine and at that moment I saw the side Gianna had described. Even scowling, the man was breathtaking. It wasn't as if I didn't already know this, all of us knew how exquisite the man was, but he was my boss's husband.

Not now he isn't.

"Mr. Warren," I said softer than normal. "Here's your coffee."

He glared watching me approach. I reached out to him, and the moment his fingers touched mine, I thought the mug was going to fall. Both our hands pulled back.

His eyes stayed fixed on mine as I steadied my hand placing the mug next to him on the desk.

"Anything else, Sir?"

"No." Was his curt answer, before he turned his back to sit down at his desk.

Asshat, I thought, as I headed towards the door.

"What was that, Ms. Scott?"

I stilled. Did I say that out loud?

I turned, placing the sweetest smile I could muster on my face. "Nothing, Mr. Warren."



Then I hurried out.

## Chapter 2

<William>

Brooklyn Scott!

I watched her float out of the office in that ridiculous outfit. It's the twenty-first century; however the woman dresses as if time stopped in the sixties.

Kate Spade...I knew it well. Sophia would stop there to buy Brooklyn gifts of appreciation. They need to make tops that fit!

My cell jogged me out of that thought. "What?"

"Good morning to you sunshine," he sung out.

"Luke, what do you want?"

Luke Weaver and I had been friends since Yale. "What's got your

panties twisted?"

Sighing heavily, I stated in a clipped tone. "I'm going to be late for a meeting. I haven't had my coffee and Sophia's tease of an assistant was a bad idea."

He laughed. "I told you! Next time you need to follow the good Doctor's order."

"To bang her?"

"No! I told you to bang her and Sophia, together." He laughed harder.

I didn't have time for this. I mistakenly mentioned to Luke one night while drinking that Brooklyn looked hot in eyeglasses. She lost her contact lens or something, and came in one day in these ridiculous thick rimmed glasses that made me...

"Luke, I'll call you back." I hung up.

His solution to everything was sex. My marriage had been falling apart and apparently, the only thing that could help was to have a threesome with my then wife and her assistant.

The thought repulsed me. Sophia repelled all pleasures of intimacy.

Brooklyn however....

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Where was Brooklyn? I text again.

She came huffing through the conference doors. "Sorry, everyone. I had a last minute addition." She narrowed her eyes at mine.

I had given her ample time to complete the task.

"Ms. Scott. If you had copied each page by hand, we still would have received it faster."

"Will!" My brother Aiden scolded.

He had been riding me about my treatment of Brooklyn lately. I explained to him that her interest in the work seemed to have faulted. She needed direction.

"Ten minutes may be enough time for you to...take care of business, Mr. Warren." One brow arched. "But I need more time to be completely satisfied with the work."

She glared at me with her lips curved up.

How dare she!

"Brooke, we appreciate you. Will, can we get started?" Aiden asked, grinning.

"Yes." I answered, all the while staring her down.

<>

The rest of the day felt like a push and pull with Brooklyn. I pushed, she pulled. Everything I requested, she questioned. She had an opinion about everything. She made me question why I kept her. I didn't owe Sophia any favors. Yet, Brooklyn was up-to-date with all of Sophia's accounts. One wouldn't have known from her lack of interest lately, that she graduated with honors, and was at the top of her class. Sophia was grooming her as her protégé. The rest of Sophia's staff was let go and paid a generous severance package after the restructuring.

I restructured my company and life. It was overdue. My marriage as well as the company needed an overhaul.

My father started Warren International Realty with one apartment building. The one my mother lived in before they were married. New York was expensive even then, but he made sure the woman who stole his heart at the diner across from that place had an affordable place to live. My mother always said that dad buying the building was for foolish reasons; which was to keep her from moving to another city to earn a decent wage. The diner wasn't as busy as it used to be, she said. Yet, all she had to do was marry the old man. She would tease that it was only for his money. She was twenty-years his junior, and to many it looked as if that was the case.

However, my mother adored my father; and it became more apparent

throughout the years. When her time was almost up, it was my father's strength that helped her through chemo.

After my Mother's death, it became more apparent that my father's heart wasn't in his work anymore. A large part of it had gone with my mother.

I grabbed hold of the reigns and helped Warren International Realty become what it is today.

"Am I interrupting?"

I looked up from my desk, shaking the thoughts out of my head. "Why are you here?" I snapped. "Is Brooklyn away from her desk?"

She sat down across from me on my sofa, making herself comfortable. "She's there. Will, we can be cordial."

"Sophia, you can make an appointment like everyone else if you want to see me."

She shook her head. "Oh, but honey, I'm not just anybody."

I leaned back. "No, no you aren't. Anyone else would have been thrown out by security."

"I'm still Board Chair!" She scowled.

"For now."

She took a few deep breaths while situating herself on my leather sofa. "William, I didn't come across town to argue."

"What do you want?" I stood.

"The opening of Spire is in a month. I'll need someone to assist me with planning the event. Brooke would be fine—"

"No. Brooklyn will take over the planning from here." I sat on top of my desk with arms folded.

If she still has a job.

Sophia frowned. "I've been working on this all year."

"Well now you're not. Sophia, the only reason you're still here is to save face to the stockholders."

"I made this company what it is!" She slapped the sofa with the palms of her hands.

"We. With that being said, we are no longer a 'we'. As much as I appreciate your measuring system of your value. We both know you weren't worth much."

Her face turned red, matching the color of her hair. Lips were pinched, barely holding back the anger that was apparent in her green eyes. "How dare you speak to me like that?" She stood.

"I don't have time for your drama. I'll make sure Brooklyn finalizes everything for Spire. Sophia, as always, it's a pleasure. But next time, make an appointment, or security will be seeing you out."

I walked over to the door and opened it. "Ms. Scott," I yelled. Brooklyn hurried out of her office. Whatever exchange took place between the two women, she narrowed her eyes at me. "My office, now!"

The two women began to exchange pleasantries.

"Any day!" I said, sitting at my desk.

She said a quick goodbye to Sophia before entering.

"Shut the door, and take a seat."

<Brooklyn>

Mr. Warren's nostrils flared as I quickly sat down.

"Under no circumstances do you allow anyone in my office without first, an appointment and second, an announcement from you!"

His tone was harsh. "It was Sophia—"

"Have you lost the understanding of English? This is basic assistant 101."

"I understand that—"

"Apparently you don't. Sophia will need an appointment, just like everyone else. If you are unable to comprehend that, your time will be short here at Warren International."

I bit my bottom lip, trying to control the instant reaction of telling him where he could go. Sophia told me she had a standing appointment with him. One she had always had before their divorce. How was I supposed to know if she didn't know. Nevertheless, he wouldn't allow me to explain. "I understand, sir."

"Good. I never want to be sideswiped like that again. Now, you've been assisting Sophia with the Spire event."

It wasn't a question, but I nodded.

"You will be taking the lead on that event. As well as all events at Warren International."

My eyes widened. There was an entire events team, but all details went through Sophia.



"Is there a problem?"

"No...no, I'm able to assist."

"Not assist, lead." His eyes narrowed.

"May I ask why me? Sophia handled all the arrangements and—"

"You should be capable of taking over the reins. We pay you enough." His brows arched.

Was this about my salary?

"Mr. Warren, my—"

"That will be all. Sophia's rude interruption has caused me to be late for my own meeting. Rearrange the rest of the day." He stood collecting his things.

"Yes, sir." I stood to go work on his diary.

"Brooklyn, if you want to keep this job, show me that you deserve it!" He snapped.

And with that he grabbed his iPad and stormed out the door.

## Chapter 3

<Brooklyn>

Prove it!

I was a damn good assistant. Great, in fact! I graduated at the top of my class at UGA with a B.S. in Business Management. I started working at Warren International when I became interested in real estate. I worked hard to have Sophia Warren take me under her wings to mentor. She respected my opinions and ideas and treated me as an equal.

Damn right I got paid! I deserved it. My life was my job, yet everything I did for him wasn't good enough. He was acting as if he was looking for a reason to fire me. I have been working overtime, nights and weekends, all to impress Mr. Warren and for what?

Not anymore.

The remainder of the week, I did the minimum. Purposely. Testing the jerk to see how far he could be pushed. Threaten me! He sure as hell wasn't going to finalize the Spire event, yet alone the others without my help. Sophia said he hated the details, yet the anal son of a B always wanted everything perfect. I did my

job; I just slowed it down a bit. Which he hated. Everything to him was urgent.

While I spent the week teaching him a lesson, it backfired, and work started to pile up; making my weekend short. I had to go into the office on Saturday to work on the Spire event. As much as I hated my job, I still worked with integrity. My work was a representation of me; and I was damn good at it.

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The office building was a ghost town on Saturdays. There were the occasional employees working hard to catch the boss's eye. I wanted to tell them it wasn't worth their time, but decided to leave it alone.

John, the security guard and I chatted for a while. He was a very nice older man, with harsh facial features, and a military issue haircut. We were a lot friendlier when I worked for Sophia. I had more time to socialize. However, Mr. Warren left no room for fraternizing with other employees. Gianna and I found time at lunch or when our bosses were in meetings to talk. She kept me sane.

<>

I had worked for several hours before taking a break. I ran to the break room and grabbed a Diet Coke. And when I came back, I saw Mr. Warren's door cracked and assumed the cleaners forgot to lock it. When I stepped into his office, it wasn't the cleaners that surprised me, but Mr. Warren leaned on top of his desk, looking intensely at whatever he was reading.

His dark hair was slicked back. His arm muscles bulged out of the blue tank top he was wearing. His body was tanned and toned and showcased how extremely fit he was. There was no doubt a six pack was under the dampened tank that clung to his sweaty body. Although his shorts were long, there was a well-defined outline of the massive bulge that was inside his shorts.

"Is there something you needed, Ms. Scott?"

I jumped at the interrupted silence. Somewhat embarrassed that he caught me ogling his junk.

"I didn't realize you would be in today?"

He sat his iPad down. "I was going to say the same thing to you."

"You wanted me to finalize Spire."

"Yes, I did."

"And I work better without distractions."

"Do I distract you?" He asked with a smirk.

I started feeling a tingly sensation throughout my body. We stared at the other for an awkward length of time until I answered. "No, you don't distract me."

He said nothing while he stared me down. The intensity of the stare was electric, and I was seeing another side of Mr. Warren.

The man was gorgeous in every way. Perfect in everything...except for his personality.

<Warren>

I had seen that stare before. She was looking at me like a piece of meat which morphed into more of a spoiled piece of meat.

What was with this woman?

Her deep brown eyes showed one thing one moment, and another the next. She was always expressive.

"Did I say something that bothered you?" I asked, now curious.

"What? No. No, I'm just surprised to see you in on a Saturday."

"I was running by and figured I would look over a few reports. You didn't have to come in on your day off—why do you look like that?"

Her eyes widened before she examined herself. "It's Saturday, Mr. Warren. I figured jeans would be acceptable. No one is in the office today. Well, you are...but you weren't supposed to

be—"

"Did you know that your face shows everything you are thinking? I was inquiring about the glare you were giving me. Not your casual attire, Ms. Scott. You need to work on your poker face."

She was doing it again. If looks could kill, I would have been dead weeks ago.

"I'm sorry that you feel that I'm 'too expressive' I'll try to watch that." She rolled her eyes.

I chuckled.

"Did I miss something funny?"

She was about to be laid over my knee if she kept that up!

"Ms. Scott. Do I need to remind you to whom you're addressing?"

"No. Sir," she sneered. "I know exactly who I'm addressing." She turned. Then I heard it again.

Asshat.

"Did you just call me an asshat?"

It was when she turned around and batted those long lashes that I felt my control waiver.

"You must be mistaken." She cooed, heading toward the door.

Before I knew it, I grabbed a hold of her and slammed her against the door.

Brooklyn's wide eyes locked on mine. Her surprised expression quickly turned to a look of determination.

"Don't lie to me!" I snapped; pinning her against my office door, with my hands on each side of her face.

"You are mistaken," she smirked.

Hell no, I'm not!

I moved in closer, smelling her sweet breath. "I won't tolerate lies."

She stepped closer with a challenge. "Is that so? What would happen?"

She bit her lower lip, fluttering those damn lashes. She was too close. I could feel the heat radiating off of her body. See her chest quickly rise and fall repeatedly.

"I would pound the truth out of that tease of a body—" I paused.

Damn it!

I needed to gain control.

I pushed off the door, giving myself space, all while watching her feelings display on her face. First, there was shock, then confusion, some anger, but it was the look of arousal that was unnerving me. Her eyes beckoned as her tongue slowly moistened her plumped red lips.

I could throw her against the door and make her come every which way, but I won't.

I wouldn't!

"Just don't let it happen again, Ms. Scott!"

I grabbed my keys and iPad off the desk and walked passed her making damn sure I didn't look at her.

When I reached the elevator, I heard, "Enjoy the rest of your day...asshat."

I snapped around to find her leaning against my office door,



looking amused. Her fingers gliding back and forth along her neck as her eyes challenged mine.

The elevator sounded its arrival and it took everything in me to step inside. Her eyes followed mine until the doors shut.

## Chapter 4

<Brooklyn>

The moment the elevator doors shut, I was thankful the door frame was holding me up.

What the hell just happened?

Mr. Warren...William...the man looked as if he was going to take me right then, and I wanted him to. Even tried to poke the bear, so he would.

I wanted him....

What was I thinking?

He's my boss!

My ex. boss's husband. Ex-husband.

I respected Sophia.

I felt dirty, and off. There was no way I was getting anything else done for the day and I went home.

<>

"Why didn't you rip those clothes off, BB? As fine as that piece of man is, you should have gotten something out of dealing with his tired ass all the time!"

Lucas means well, but he never thinks about the consequences until after. Like never studying in college during the semesters, but cramming everything in the last months before exams.

I groaned loudly into the pillow. "I can't!"

I rolled around his California king with a throw pillow clung to my face.

"Girl, you better not get any make-up on that pillow!"

I threw it at him. "You love it better than me?" I teased.

"For the price, you're neck and neck." He chuckled

Lucas and I had been friends since our freshman year in college. He was from Tennessee and I was fresh out of Oklahoma. After college, we both decided to stay in Atlanta, and a year later we decided to be roommates. Even though he didn't need any help to pay the rent—he was becoming a well-known financial broker—he insisted we live together.

My strict Christian parents on the other hand weren't happy with my living arrangements. Lucas being gay wasn't helping. They saw it as sin, plain and simple. Living with a man outside of marriage was unheard of in my family.

I had eight siblings, and my older sisters and brothers were married right after high school. In the Bible Belt being Tulsa, Oklahoma, that was a common thing. For me, I wanted more. A career and then maybe a family. Yup, that was a maybe. I had no desire to have children. Another reason why I'm the black sheep of the family. It's okay to have a divorce, become an alcoholic, cheat on your wife, and secretly stay in the closet. But to not be married or have the desire not to be was deplorable.

Yet, I loved my family. Wouldn't trade them or sell them on the black market. I was raised with strong values, yet was always inquisitive about our beliefs. My mother always said I would be her most independent child. She was right.

"What am I going to do?" I moaned lying back on the bed.

Lucas was picking at his dark natural curls. The purple dress shirt he had on was one of my favorites. The color popped with his mocha skin tone and made his hazel eyes sparkle.

"Why are all the good looking guys gay?" I teased.

"Don't be jealous of my swirl." He winked at me in his mirror.

He then came and sat down, bending over his long legs to put on his shoes. "Why don't you come with me tonight?"

"I wouldn't be much fun, besides; I still have work to catch up on."

"Brooke, it's Saturday night. Work can wait. Go get dressed, and put on something pretty. That skanky black dress with no back is perfect."

"I'm good. Go, enjoy. Do everything I want to and more."

He leaned over me and kissed my cheek. "Are you sure? I can stay home and we can watch that fine white boy spank that girl's ass." He smiled.

"Not in the mood for Fifty Shades."

"Honey, I'm thinking that would help you out a bit."

I pushed him away. "Go, have fun. I'll be fine."

"Okay, love you." He gets up and heads to the door.

"Love you more!"

<>

To say the following Monday at work was awkward was an understatement at best. Mr. Warren barely came out of his office and only requested what he needed via email. Including going over his schedule. It was like he was avoiding me and that seemed unlikely for him.

<Warren>

I was doing everything possible to avoid Ms. Scott. But it was inevitable that I couldn't hold out for long. We had a meeting about the Spire event and I couldn't back out.

My behavior on Saturday was unacceptable, and I'm sure I crossed several HR guidelines, but she had to know that she did as well. Being a tease for starters.

We needed to meet with the events department along with the PR managers. Opening this office complex in New York was a major challenge, and now that the time has arrived we will be celebrating, along with seventy-two occupants that are leasing floor space. Prime real estate in Manhattan and a new state of the art complex is news. World news. We have owners flying in

from across the globe and nothing could go wrong.

<>

As I sat and listened to Debbie from PR lay out the red carpet procession, I couldn't help noticing Ms. Scott glancing over at me. Several times our eyes met and she would be the first to break contact. Her cheeks would turn pink. Her chest would become flushed. She had this nervous habit of putting her long brown hair behind her ear. She crossed and uncrossed her toned legs several times. One couldn't help looking with the short blue skirt she was wearing and the high heels that looked like school girls shoes.

She would bite the end of her stylus pen with those plumped lips. Her long lashes slowly fluttered as she listened intensely. That same stylus also swept along her collar bone between the opened V-neck of her cream blouse. You could see the outline of her blue lace bra, just teasing through the translucent material.

"Mr. Warren, will that be a yes?"

Brooklyn's eyes met mine as a hint of a grin graced her face.

My head turned to look at Debbie. "Yes, whatever you feel is best." I said hoarsely.

"Good...good. Well, that's it from me."

"Brooklyn, anything you wanted to add?" I grabbed my water

bottle, staring at her as I sipped the dryness away.

"No, Mr. Warren. I think everything is coming together perfectly."

We stared for a moment. "Good." I stood and walked out.

## Chapter 5

"Will, it's good to hear from you son." My father sounded tired.

I adjusted my cell on the dashboard holder. "Dad, I'll call back if I woke you."

"William, I was up. Actually, about to take my morning stroll along the beach."

I waved to security as I pulled out of my garage. "Take Claris with you."

"Stop treating me like an old man. I can still run circles around you, smart ass."

I chuckled, "Probably."

"I don't need my babysitter watching over me. I can walk on my own!"

"Yes sir, dad!"

I put my dad on mute, and hands free texted Claris.

Make sure you don't let Dad out of your sight. He's leaving the house.

Of course, Mr. Warren. I'm with him now. Best, Claris

Dad was alone the last time he walked on the beach and started having chest pains. He barely made it to the hospital in time before he collapsed.

Once she confirmed she was going with him, I relaxed.

"What's up? I know you didn't call your old man to check to see if his nurse was around."

I unmuted him. "She's not your nurse; she's your personal assistant."



"Uh-huh. What's up Will?"

"Dad, can't a son check up on his father. Who lives an ocean apart?"

"What has Sophia done now?"

"Dad, Sophia is fine."

"I bet she is. Now that she has almost half of everything you worked for."

"She doesn't have half, dad." I sighed.

"Damn right she doesn't. To think she wanted what your mom and I had worked for our entire lives."

Mom had no interest in the business. She did however; enjoy the homes that the business provided. The very one my father now lives in, in the south of France. It was her favorite. One my dad would never sell, or allow us to sell.

"Dad, I called to check on you, and to tell you I plan on visiting you in the next few months."

"Are you ill, son?"

"No. Why would you—"

"If it's not business, and you're coming to visit, something is not right."

Sometimes he was too perceptive. "Dad, I miss her."

My mother was everything to us.

We said nothing for a brief moment . "I'll make sure Claris has your room ready for you when you come. You know you're welcome anytime, son."

"Have a nice walk, dad." I said, before disconnecting. Then I text Claris my gratitude.

She was good for my dad. She provided companionship in the large estate; and was our eyes and ears on our father.

<>

"What's been eating at you, Will?" Aiden stared. As if I would ever answer that question. "Is it Sophia?"

I laid my napkin down on the table. "Why does everything have to be about my ex-wife?" I snapped.

"Okay, I shouldn't assume. But you have been crabby lately. Poor Brooke. She has to deal with your wonderful personality on a daily basis."

I raised a brow. "She is fine."

The server came and cleared our plates. "I must say, I agreed with Luke, at first. Keeping Brooklyn on was going to be a horrendous mistake, even with all her talents. Her loyalty to Sophia would always be questioned, but she's proved me wrong. She seems to handle you well."

"Handle me?" I huffed. "Ms. Scott can barely 'handle' herself. For the record, you two might have been right. Her loyalties seem to still lie with Sophia."

"You're making excuses, Will. From what I've seen Brooke has done a fantastic job." He narrowed his eyes. "Don't even think about getting rid of her. If you do, I'll hire her back and have two assistants."

I rolled my eyes. Of course he would. He was originally against keeping anyone slightly devoted to Sophia. Now he's her freakin' cheerleader!

"She let Sophia walk unannounced into my office. What would she have allowed if I hadn't been there? Sophia is still snooping around for scraps; and Ms. Scott either seems too naive or she's under Sophia's spell."

"Why don't you speak to her?"

"I did! I'm confident she understands where my ex and I stand."

"But you have your doubts."

"They were close, Aiden."

He gulped his drink and signed the check. "Will, I'm confident if you laid the ground rules out to Brooke, she will respect them."

He stood from the table, fastening his jacket. My brother looked more like my mother than my father. He had her brown eyes and youthful features. The height, we both inherited from our father. My hair was wavy, where his was pin straight and spiked. Yet, I noticed his sunken eyes at lunch.

"How's Kaylee?"

"She's good. Staying positive. Trying to keep busy."

"You mean keeping you busy?" I chuckled.

He grimly laughed.

I was about to inquire further when he was approached by a client.

Kaylee and Aiden had been trying to conceive for over a year. They went to a few specialists and Aiden was hopeful, but that had been several months earlier. Kaylee was the best decision my brother ever made. She was the perfect wife in every way, and Aiden loved and adored her. My entire family did. She became my baby sister, more than a sister-in-law.

Aiden never won disagreements wherein we had to choose who was right. It was always Kaylee. The beautiful, petite, blonde haired woman, has her husband and everyone else wrapped around her perfectly manicured nail.

<Brooklyn>

"I'm sorry, but I won't be able to fit you into Mr. Warren's calendar for a couple of weeks."

Mr. Thompson raised his voice.

"I'll try to squeeze you in." I tightly stated.

This was always how it was with him. William Warren was an extremely busy man, and his calendar was forever full. I was about to lose my temper when I looked up and saw Mr. Warren staring at me.

It wasn't the usual scowl or distaste that I frequently had the pleasure of seeing daily.

I looked up and his blue eyes sparkled for a brief moment. The tingles came over me again as we stared at each other for a moment until Mr. Thompson started insulting me.

"Excuse me? Mr. Thompson, I am very capable of managing a calendar. As I said before, Mr. Warren has nothing available until the twenty-fifth-.

The man cut me off. Unable to take no for an answer.

However, I pushed back. Before I could really express my displeasure, Mr. Warren was directly in front of me beckoning for me to hand him my cell. I hesitantly obliged. Still able to hear Mr. Thompson yelling, Mr. Warren grabbed my phone.

"George, this is William. If Ms. Scott says I can't meet with you until the twenty-fifth, then carrying on in this manner will not help. In fact, pissing me off will push the date further out. Yes, I understand the importance of this matter. However, you aren't grasping the fact that if you speak to my assistant in this manner again, you won't be hearing back from me. Yes, glad we have an understanding. I'll see you on the twenty-fifth."

He hung up and handed me back my cell.

"Make sure George Thompson gets thirty minutes."

"But sir, the project's overview will take at least ninety-minutes."

"He's lucky I'm meeting with him at all after the way he behaved. In fact, set up a meeting with a new contractor before Thompson's meeting. Contact, Brady and Associates. They are in direct competition with his firm." He smiled.

The sly grin he was displaying spoke deep down. "I'll take care of it, sir."

"Move whoever you need to; and Ms. Scott, I don't tolerate anyone disrespecting my employees." He stated firmly, and then had a pained look. "Something that I need to remember as well.... Brooke, the other day when we were in my office—"

"Mr. Warren, before you continue with that thought. Maybe we could talk about it after your meeting. Ms. Young is on her way up."

He paused, searching for something in my eyes. "Yes, well, I want you to know that certain behavior isn't appropriate and—"

"Mr. Warren, I'm well aware of inappropriate behavior," I swallowed. "And how calling your boss an asshat could be construed as insubordinate."

His eyes darkened, and a low groan escaped from his perfectly shaped lips.

Riley Young approached my door looking skanky as always. Her curly brown hair tossed up. Make-up heavy, full breasts on display, and teetering on five-inch heels showcasing her incredibly long legs. The woman was beautiful even hooked up.

"William, are you ready?" Her accent purred thickly. "Hello, Brooklyn. It's great to see you again," she said insincerely.

I smiled grimly at her. Very aware that Mr. Warren's eyes were still on me.

"Could you be a dear and fetch me some coffee? Make it an espresso from the place downstairs. Oh and make sure it's fresh."

I took a deep breath and stood. "Would you like anything, Mr. Warren?"

"I'm fine, Ms. Scott."

"Brooklyn, do grab Mr. Warren one, as well. We are going to have a late evening and he will want to be alert." She touched his arm in that way.

My stomach turned.

"Well, shall we get started while the girl gets coffee?" She walked toward his office.

We stared at the other for a brief moment more and then he followed behind her.



## Chapter 6

<William>

"You're numbers are impressive."

"They always are," she drawled. Leaning in closer.

Her breasts were on full display. No bra needed; which was usual for our meetings.

"Will, before the gala, why don't you meet me for a celebratory drink?" She whispered in my ear.

"Sorry, Mr. Warren's schedule is tight tomorrow." Brooklyn plainly stated, shoving the espresso at Riley.

Normally, I wouldn't condone such behavior, but the warning in her eyes intrigued me.

"I'm sure William has time for me. I still have a few hours before I need to head to the airport." Riley brushed Ms. Scott off.

"Nope." Brooklyn popped. "Not today or tomorrow. But I would be happy to find some time for you on his schedule." She sat my espresso next to me and stood at my side.

The two women glared at one another. I stood in-between the apparent hostility that I knew had nothing to do with me. Riley rubbed Ms. Scott the wrong way. I remembered Sophia talking about it. Yet, when Ms. Scott's hand wrapped around my forearm as she leaned in to see the financials a surge shot through me.

I knew I was staring at her, and she never looked up, yet she seemed very aware of our proximity.

"Well, my flight leaves in a few hours." Riley said, as I continued to look at Ms. Scott.

Was she reading the report?

"William!"

I glanced over at Riley with a disapproving look. "I'll see you at the gala."

"What about that drink?" She huffed.

"Ms. Scott stated that my diary is full. I'll see you out."

I turned to walk Riley out. Still feeling the pressure of Ms. Scott's handprint on my arm, while she continued to study the financials.

When I came back, she was now sitting down with the report in her hand.

"Does that interest you?" I asked more sternly than planned.

"Anything that has to do with this company interests me." She flatly stated.

I sat on top of my desk, crossing my arms and asked. "Why is that?"

Damn those expressions! She looked up at me as if I was a moron.

"I work for you. It's my job to be knowledgeable in all things related to Warren International."

"I see." I stood and sat down behind my desk.

"Why, are you surprised? I enjoy my work and love working for this company."

"Hmmm. "

She sat the report back on top of my desk. "Why does that surprise you?"

"I'm not surprised per se. It's more that I am amused by the fact that you say you enjoy your job. Working for an ass hat wouldn't seem enjoyable."

Her eyes widened before squinting. "May I be frank?"

"Please." I leaned forward steeping my fingers together.

"Your management style is completely different from what I've dealt with before. You and Mrs. Warren-Sophia...you two are night and day."

"Tell me something I don't know."

"Okay." She leaned forward. "Most people find you intimidating."

"Again..." I circled my hand in the air. I knew I could be intimidating.

"Yet, you don't intimidate me." She stared into my eyes.

"Is that so?" She was lying.

"I understand that you need to be that way, as the CEO. However, there seems to be more to the man behind his public facade."

I leaned back. "Ms. Scott, am I that easy to read?"

<Brooklyn>

"You are far from easy, Mr. Warren. Only more complicated than you want people to know. But isn't it my job to figure you out?"

"No!" He stated and then stood. "As much as I have enjoyed this little counseling session—"

"I didn't mean—"

"As you stated to Riley. I'm a busy man."

I stood awkwardly surprised. I thought we had a moment...yet, I did interrupt his time with her.

"Yes, of course. I'll just—" I looked around.

Why was I here again?

"I need the final layouts on my desk, and I want to see the staging for the Cumberland estate around four."

"Yes, Sir."

He briskly walked past me and suddenly turned. "Ms. Scott, plan

to join me at the estate." Then walked out the door.

Leaving me standing there with my head spinning from the frequent mood changes.

<>

It was a brisk fall day. The leaves were past their prime, yet the long drive north was pleasant. Mr. Warren sat next to me reading the financials from the morning, while classical music filled the car. Traffic was the worst this time of day, and being a Friday doubled the time. At the rate we were moving we would be at the Cumberland estate by 6:00 pm.

I text Lucas letting him know not to expect me; also, to get his take on Mr. Warren. The man had more mood swings than a toddler's birthday party. However, he had never allowed anyone to attend a final staging, as far as I knew. Sophia would try to tag along, or give her two cents, but she always said he declined.

Mr. Warren was a salesman at heart, just like the elder Mr. Warren. His father could sell you the clothes you were already wearing. William Warren inherited his father's gift. He had the charisma and talent to understand what his buyers wanted; needed, and if they hadn't figured it out, William would lead them there.

Lucas plainly answered me back with a why not take me statement.

I loved his confidence in me.

So, I pushed the thought out of my mind and reviewed the final details for tomorrow's Spire event.

I smiled when Lucas text me back with a picture of him holding up a suit and dress combination.

Which one am I wearing? - Brooklyn Scott

You'll want me to wear the suit. My legs are more fabulous than yours and I don't want to show you up on the big day. - Lucas Lewis

I chuckled to myself.

Mr. Warren glanced toward my direction quizzically looking at my cell. "Am I keeping you away from something important? Or someone?"

"No, I'm fine." I grinned.

"Mmmm."

He then went back to his report.

<>

The estate was breathtaking. I didn't expect any less. We were asking fifty million for it. The owners wanted to sell quickly. Mr. Warren approved lowballing the asking price. Something he normally doesn't do, but apparently the owner was a buddy of his.

"Let Monique know she did an incredible job. The colors are perfect," he said

Mr. Warren may be an asshat, but he always gave people their due rewards.

Everyone except me, I thought.

We had finished the walk through. "Anything you want to change?" I asked.

He pivoted on the kitchen floor. "Anything you see?"

Okay, I wasn't prepared for that.

I was about to say all was good, but then I had a thought. "Everything is perfect. Too perfect in a way. It doesn't feel like a home."

He studied me. "Elaborate."

"It doesn't tell me a story. Wait, no, the story it's telling me is that this place is beautiful but nothing else. Where is the joy? There's a movie room with no popcorn machine. A game room



with a pool table, but nothing else inviting you to stay and play. Are we selling a showplace or a home? This area is all families; however the kids' rooms have no toys. Aren't we trying to sell a dream?" I pointed to the lake outside. "A place where the family gatherings are enjoyed in the outside living space, as well. Visualize the father, son or daughter, moments fishing on that lake. This house isn't telling me a good enough story that I would buy."

He thought for a moment. "The story it's telling me is that it's below market price, a steal, and if I don't buy it immediately, I'm the fool."

I rolled my eyes grimly at him.

Why ask me, then?

<>

The ride back to the city went pretty much the same way as we had come. I was going over tomorrow's event, while Mr. Warren was combing through the financials.

"The house will sell within minutes." I broke the silence.

"Seconds. Then flipped making a lucrative profit."

I turned to face him. "Why are we low balling?"

"It's what the client wants."

I chuckled. "You aren't one to give in to a client's wishes. Not if you could blow their expectations and make them a fortune."

Warren International wasn't only in the realty business. It was in the business of making clients' money. We were the ones to take on a project, flip it, and sell it for millions above purchase price. The Warrens had the Midas touch.

"This sale is a favor," was all he said on the matter.

He sat the folders down on the seat and then raised the partition between us and the driver. When the click was heard sealing in our privacy, the air crackled around us.

He poured a drink, offered me one, and then gulped it down. The burn quickly showed on his face before he relaxed into the leather seats.

"We didn't have a chance to finish our conversation about what happened in my office that Saturday."

So, this is why he wanted me to come.

I could feel the disappointment edging up. Here, I thought, he finally recognized my talents. There was a glimmer of hope, now darkened.

I stared into his blue eyes for a moment too long. "It's water under the bridge."

"It was unacceptable. Although, I'm grateful that you realized what was said was--"

"Taken out of context?" I asked and then drank down the dark liquid.

Feeling the burn course through my body was welcoming. He poured me another.

I gulped down the second glass. That one went straight to my head. I hadn't drank in a while and was surprised by how quickly it was taking affect. Yet, I needed to relax. I was tightly wound and the conversation could take a turn for the worse at any moment.

"Yes, Ms. Scott, it was out of context--"

"So, you don't want to take me against your office door then?" I asked through fluttered lashes.

"What the--no!"

"Are you sure? Because you said...and then you were pressed against me, hard. Very hard..."

"Ms. Scott!"

I signaled him for another drink.

"You might want to slow down."

"Mr. Warren. Please don't think my having two drinks are what has spurred this conversation. Shall I remind you that you were the one pinning me to the door?" I crossed my legs. The images clear in my mind. "You also brought it up. More concerned, I'm sure, to stop me from going to HR."

"To tell them what?" His body turned to face me. His glare was dark. "That I touched you inappropriately? As I remember, there was no touching at all."

I slid closer, following his lead.

"It was a lapse in judgment. Nothing more and nothing less." His eyes perused down my legs.

I clenched my thighs, watching as his mouth slightly opened.

Biting my lower lip, I needed to gain some control from the stare down that was occurring. The air was suffocating as our chests heaved. Mr. Warren's fingers started to twitch, and I could feel the perspiration forming on my skin.

Nothing more, he says.

"Hypothetically speaking if I told you I wanted to ride you as hard as you've been riding me for the past year, that's

acceptable?"

He hissed.

## Chapter 7

To say our ride home was uneventful was an understatement. What was I thinking? I knew I might have crossed the line saying what I had to Mr. Warren, but what the hell, he did too!

Yet, he wanted me to drop it. Forget what happened in his office. Truthfully, the man was hot. Smoking and the thought of him...was not going to happen.

He was my boss.

I needed to get some control over whatever it was that I was feeling.

The thought of taking Lucas up on his offer and having him set me up with his work pal looked more and more promising. I hadn't been out for a while and my dry spell was starting to mess with my mind. I couldn't have it messing with my career. This was my dream job.

Mr. Warren said nothing more on our drive back into the city.

His attention stayed on his iPad, and the small space inside the car turned to ice. It was as if I wasn't even there. Yet, when the driver opened my car door, the only acknowledgment given was, "Wheels up at nine. Until tomorrow, Ms. Scott."

He didn't even look up.

<Warren>

The night was perfect. Ms. Scott and the team did an excellent job on the opening Spire gala. Even Sophia was impressed. Watching her congratulate Brooklyn caused some unease; inexplicably so.

Brooklyn looked amazing in a dark blue dress. Far from her normal uptight, clingy, wardrobe of the sixties. The sequined dress clung in all the right places, high in the front covering any signs of cleavage, yet exposing everything in the back. The material draped delicately down her shoulders barely skimming the top of her ass as the material gathered above it. I wanted to touch it.

Yet, I held my ground. This was becoming a challenge. Every time our eyes met there was a charge in the air. The way she smiled at me, or the pouty lip that formed as I spoke to clients. We were yards away; however I could feel her presence as if she was next to me.

<>

The evening was a great success. There were talks of replicating the building in several European cities, with meetings already on my calendar, thanks to Ms. Scott. She played the gracious

host and everyone had nothing but praise to say about her.

I wasn't surprised. The woman had natural talent. Sophia would tell me all the time how good she was at her job. She wasn't good, she was exceptional. Her extensive knowledge was impressive. Her instinct was dead on. Her comments yesterday at the Cumberland estate were valid. Everyone else I would have asked would have told me what they thought I wanted to hear. They would take my notes and then try to turn their thoughts around to agree with what I had already said. I had a lot of yes men, but very few who would stand out of the pack. Ms. Scott not only stands out, she makes herself heard.

When she told me the news of the Cumberland estate offer, the night couldn't get any better.

So, I had thought.

<Brooklyn>

"I didn't expect you to be here?" I said, peeking into Mr. Warren's New York office. "I came to grab the notary seal and was about to rush back to you when I saw the light on."

He looked up; those blue eyes brimming with fatigue, yet they burned brightly. "I would say the same for you, but I read the email from Riley."

I walked into the impressive office with the check. My stilettos' gliding across the marble floor as Mr. Warren slowly took me in before I handed him the document.

The space was double the size of his office in Atlanta, and the

view of Manhattan was amazing. "Sorry about this. With all that was going on today, I couldn't find you to authorize the charge earlier. I didn't realize the bank made these transfers so difficult. I asked them to make an exception, but they wouldn't budge."

His mouth turned up to one side as he looked over the paperwork and signed the check. "No worries, and this time of night, I'm sure it was some starter manager afraid someone was taking advantage of me."

"A million dollar money transfer, even from your account, bats an eye or two."

He chuckled. "Not when you deal with billions."

"True."

"Riley won't mind how her commission is paid; as long as it's paid by the end of the year before the new tax season."

"Is that why she was insistent? We have one more month!" I crossed my arms, perturbed.

She took both of us away from the gala which had been in full swing. I had left Lucas flirting with some oil man while I had to sit in an insane amount of traffic to do this.

"She only did it to find some quality time with me." He stated dryly.



My arms unfolded dropping to my side. "Oh. Well, where is she?"

"I have no clue. I told her I wouldn't have the funds available until Monday. I'm here to grab something for a potential client I met tonight."

"Then why am I here wasting my time?"

"To prove a point. The courier will drop off the check in the morning. Making it very clear that it's not my intention to have any 'quality' time alone with her. Unless, it's business."

"I see. Well, I'm a bit surprised. She's very attractive."

He handed me the check, and I placed it in the courier's envelope.

"If you're into that?" He cocked a brow.

I laughed and felt surprisingly relieved, then went to drop off the envelope on the receptionist desk where it would be picked up shortly.

"Even if I was into that sort of thing, I don't believe I would be into 'that.'" I stated returning.

His eyes perused me as he laughed.

"Your divorce from Sophia is just over a year old." I sat down across from him.

"And?" He got up and sat on top of his desk with folded arms.

"Well, I've never had to go through a divorce, but I'm sure it's hard. I mean feelings just don't leave that quickly. Riley should understand that you may still need some time before you move on. Not saying that you can't move on, or haven't moved on."

He didn't say anything for a while. Making me feel more awkward than I already felt about the matter.

"You did a great job tonight, Brooklyn."

I gawked a bit. He had never called me by my first name, and that was the first compliment I had heard from those lips. "Thank you?"

"I should be surprised by your expression, but I'm not. You did a good job."

"What happened to great?"

He rolled his eyes and then chuckled to himself.

I loved hearing him laugh, and his carefree attitude was pleasant. He also looked incredibly hot in his tuxedo. His pants

were black, but the jacket was a royal blue with black lapels. The color of the jacket made his blue eyes more vibrant. It was hard for me not to get lost in them.

"Would you like some Champagne, Brooklyn?"

The pins in my hair were biting me all night and I couldn't take it anymore. I took them out and shook my hair loose. My long brown mane of hair draped around me. "Is that allowed? Drinking with the boss?" I smiled. Riley's loss was my gain.

His eyes were wide, and then his lips pinched as he walked over to the bar. He poured two glasses and brought one to me. As we drank, his eyes were glaring at mine.

"Did I say something wrong, Mr. Warren?"

He tossed back the last few sips and went to grab the bottle. Refilling both of our glasses, he took a drink, then asked curtly. "I was wondering why you say half the things you do?"

I tossed back my glass and then slammed it down on his desk. "I see we're back to normal."

I barely had time to bask in the compliments or enjoy his carefree manner before Dr. Jekyll appeared.

As I stood, he grabbed a hold of my arm. "Look, I didn't mean to upset you."

I stared down at his hand. "You didn't upset me. Sometimes—never mind." I twisted out of his hold.

"What were you going to say?"

"Sometimes you can be a decent person; nevertheless, the asshole always comes out." I started heading toward the door.

He slammed his glass down. "What did you say?"

I stopped and straightened turning to him. "Mr. Warren—"

He prowled toward me. Standing in close proximity I took in a deep breath. He smelled like alcohol and him; a clean fragrance, with a touch of spice. He was close, too close. His eyes were darker, smoldering. His hands clenched into fists, and I had seen that look before. It was enough to warn, yet excite me.

"I think maybe I should just leave it—"

"With asshole? Yes, I'm an asshole. Most men are, Ms. Scott. I'm sure Sophia has mentioned it."

Okay, that was out of the blue.

"Mrs. Warren—"

"We're divorced! Have been for quite a while, and it was over

long before that, however she is no longer, Mrs. Warren!"

He was more upset then I had anticipated.

"William, I didn't mean to upset you." I said, in as calming of a voice I could muster up.

There was something more to this and my head was spinning.

"You think I'm upset because of Sophia?" He hissed.

"Actually, I have no clue why you're upset."

"Maybe I'm tired of the teasing."

My mouth dropped. "Excuse me! I have never—"

"Think that through, Ms. Scott." He accentuated the Ms.

"Maybe it would be best if I just left.... Wait!" Clarity was starting to form. "I'm a tease?" I laughed. "How the hell am I a tease?"

"You know what you do."

"Enlighten me!" I challenged.

He moved closer. We were now inches apart. The alcohol scent was heavier now, and he smelled of more than Champagne. I could have drank him in at that moment, except for his comment. His tie hung loosely down his tuxedo shirt. The jacket was now thrown over the chair. He had caught me staring at times tonight, admiring his beauty. The man was sculpted by the gods. But that didn't make me a tease.

The way he had been looking at me sure as hell made me feel like one though.

There we both stood, staring at the other, as the air sparked around us.

"I think I will enlighten you." Was the last thing he sneered before I went flying across the room, slamming into the door. He pinned me down, hands feeling everywhere. My body burned at his touch. His strong hands slid down the back of my dress and began to knead my ass.

"I have wanted to do this all night," he panted in my ear. "Tell me you don't want this. Tell me to stop, and I will. Tell me!"

He was shaking and quickly losing control.

I gnawed at his jawline while working the buttons on his shirt. He lifted me up, causing me to gasp at the ease and strength. I wrapped my arms around his neck as our mouths collided. He devoured me.

"Yes," I gulped for air. "I want you."

My right hand pulling his hair as my body crawled up to get closer. The craving had become primal.

William growled, and then slammed me harder against the door. His left hand reached down to my wetness, grabbed a hold of my lingerie, and ripped it as he glided his fingers between my folds.

"Augh!" My head slammed back against the door as the fabric left a sting.

"Look at me!" He demanded.

My eyes flew open and my head straightened.

He studied me, searching for something until he found it. That's when I saw the packet rip from his teeth.

He steadied me, eyes locked, and when the first thrust occurred, the room went dark.

Foreign sounds escaped from our bodies as he slowly worked his way inside.

Deeper....

Harder...

Until no more words were possible.

## Chapter 8

<Brooklyn>

I hated that I wanted more. I could feel that familiar rumble in my stomach, instantly willed away by my thoughts. Old habits with me and food never died, even after years of counseling. However, I wasn't hungry for substance. I was starving for him.

The sun rose slowly to a new day. As dawn approached, every minute we were together seemed increasingly desperate. We were each taking from the other knowing when morning arrived, it would be over.

I started to unwrap myself from the disheveled clothes we had created, and when I looked over past the desk, my breath caught at the sight of William. He looked like an ancient warrior. His bare chest carved out of marble, smooth and strong. His back was defined with rolling curves extending down to a perfectly shaped specimen. William was slipping on his pants over his bare ass.

What an ass, I thought.



Carved out of the same marble, firm to the touch, silky smooth, and yet powerful with a single thrust.

My body tensed at the memories, and I knew I would feel him for days.

Last night was raw. Really raw. Animalistic. I glanced around the room blushing at the damage we had caused. There wasn't a surface left that we hadn't used. I looked back at William, now staring out the window.

That window...last night, New York had shone brightly while William took me against it. He spread me out for the world to see, and claimed me while they watched.

It should have been demeaning and humiliating, but it was wrong and good all at the same time. Actually, fantastic, and it got my heart racing.

Memory after memory filled my thoughts until I saw William turn around. My eyes flicked immediately to his, and for one brief moment I was afraid I would see regret. However, all I saw was desire.

He stood as the rays of sunlight outlined his body. His pants were unzipped and he was at full attention.

Maybe he didn't want this to end either?

What was I thinking?

I knew it was a huge mistake. Sleeping with my boss was career suicide. Especially one I didn't like. However, last night...my feelings shifted. My common sense took the night off and I just couldn't fight it.

I was attracted to him, physically, but when he opened his mouth I wanted to punch him. Then he told me what I did to him...told me how he was going to make me come. He talked dirty and then said some swoon worthy things, and my mind decided to explode.

Everything in me exploded. I stopped counting early into it.

William had been staring at me, as if he had been trying to read my thoughts. I bit my lower lip to hide the fact that I wanted him.

A yawn escaped from me; and I stretched my body with arms overhead, not realizing that I exposed my bare breasts. I looked up at William, whose eyes were pinned to my chest.

His face showed that he was fighting a battle he wasn't going to win.

I removed the discarded clothes from on top of me, turned to my side, and propped myself on my elbow. I was completely naked and facing him. William's eyes narrowed although his expression was neutral.

We both knew this was a huge mistake; however I laid waiting while watching his right hand glide up and down his shaft. I swept my fingers gently over my neck and chest, all while we

watched each other.

Nothing was said.

William then stepped out of his pants and walked to me. I went into a kneeling position and my mouth went into action.

He cursed and yanked my head back. "I need to be inside you. One. More. Time."

<>

I watched William button up his tuxedo shirt.

"You can wash up in the ensuite," he said, grabbing his jacket off the floor.

He then walked to the door and my heart dropped.

What did I expect?

As I gathered my things around me, I didn't realize William was kneeling down beside me on one knee. He grabbed my face and kissed me as if his life depended on it. I melted into him and moaned when he released me. "The plane will be ready at 1:00," he said curtly. Then stood and walked out the door.

I fell back on the floor, trying to catch the breath he so forcefully took. The man was an enigma. One, I wanted to crack open and dissect.

But at what cost?

<>

"Where have you been? I hope you weren't working this entire time. When you said you had errands to run, I didn't think all night, boo boo. I went to Sylvia's without you this morning, and ate enough for the both of us." Lucas yelled through the hotel room.

Our rooms were adjacent with the living area connecting our suite.

"Hurry up! Finish packing or we are going to miss our flight. I have so much to tell you. Gurl—

Brooke? Hello, Brooke?" he called coming out of his room. "What the hell—oh, mess thing!" He walked around and examined me from top to bottom. "Who is he? Why didn't you text me? I need to meet him!" He giggled and did a skip hop combo as he took my hand and dragged me to my room. "Tell me everything, while you pack."

I didn't realize it was that obvious what had happened; and I didn't know where to begin. The drive back to my hotel had helped to clear my head to the truly disturbing acts that had occurred with my boss. There were things that I never had done. I had only been with two guys in my life! The first time was horrible. I didn't want to have sex again. But then James came along and he was much better. But William...he was...a beast. He took what he wanted and never apologized. I didn't realize that

my body could bend that way. There were moments of pain and pleasure combined that made me feel as if I were having an out of body experience.

It shouldn't have felt that way. I should hate him. More so myself. I betrayed Sophia. Then, my stomach decided to empty itself.

"Boo, what is wrong? Are you sick? I rinsed my mouth in the sink. "Did something happen?"

I turned and saw Lucas straighten, and could see his protective nature rolling out quickly.

"No, it was fine...I'm fine...I feel...well, guilty."

I walked to my bed and sat next to my opened suitcase. He started packing for me.

"Why don't you talk and pack at the same time."

"Oh! Sorry, I'm taking a later flight."

His eyes narrowed and before he could start into me.

"William—Mr. Warren is having us take the jet back to Atlanta."

"After all that you have done, you deserve a ride in a private plane. That party was incredible Brooke. Well done, by the way,

but can't you get a day off? That man rides you like a—"

I giggled. Then the giggle went into a hysterical cluster of panicky laughter.

Lucas looked me over and then said, "Spill. What aren't you telling me?"

I took a calming breath. "There are some things I do need to share, but it's going to take a while and you are going to be late."

"I can take the next flight." He sat next to me.

"Umm, no. It's a Sunday afternoon and JFK is already a hot mess. Trust me, you will have to fly standby and sit in a middle seat. Go!" I shooed him up and out of my room. "What I have to say can wait. I'll see you back home, later today."

He stared into my eyes looking for who knows what. "Fine! But dinner tonight and you are telling everything."

"Yes, I will. Now, go."

I gave him a hug and watched him grab his things and leave. I stood there amazed that I was able to pull that off. Lucas would have normally seen through my bull.

<>

I went to the ensuite and ran a hot bath. The water was healing and there were sore spots I didn't know existed. I lay numbed. Mentally and physically in silence I soaked. The text from my phone alerted me and I couldn't help but smile and feel some pain when I saw William's text.

1:00pm!

That was all it said. It seemed as if he was over whatever it was that we had last night. I sunk lower submerging myself.

<>

"I said 1:00pm," William scolded, as I stepped out of the car.

I wasn't trying to be late. It just happened that we were stuck in the carport security line. I forgot how many private planes fly in and out of the city. It took awhile for them to check all of our credentials.

I was going to apologize to William, and then I thought, why should I?

"Deal with it." I said.

He looked stunned, then pissed.

Damn it, I wasn't going for pissed.

He straightened the lapels of his coat and reached out his hand for me to take it.

That was new.

He leaned over close and I shivered at the proximity.

"Do I need to remind you that I'm your employer?" He whispered.

I shook my head.

"Good!" He snapped.

He guided me in front of him, up the stairs, and onto the plane.

<>

There was something to be excited about even after that scolding...and this morning....

When I stepped into the galley I instantly smiled. I loved this plane. I believe I had mentioned that once or twice to William. The company had their own plane; however they also leased other planes. They had a special card that could be used to hire



planes.

Mr. Warren directed me to sit in one of the single chairs across from the same type on the other side. He sat his briefcase down on the table between the two chairs.

"Can I get you anything, Mr. Warren?" The stewardess asked.

"Brooklyn?" He looked at me.

"Umm, water."

"Two bottles of water and a scotch on the rocks for me, please."

"Yes, sir." She smiled at him.

A little too flirty of a smile, I might add.

William took off his jacket and handed it to her. She seemed pleased to assist. I rolled my eyes and looked up at him grinning at me.

Whatever, I thought.

A man in a blue jumpsuit then came over and shook his hand.  
"Anthony, I didn't know you would be here."

"Grant is flying out today. I wanted to look over the plane before they left. I saw your name on the manifest and asked Joe if I could do a once over."

"Brooklyn," he said.

Both men turned toward me.

The man in the coveralls was a specimen of his own. He was more rugged around the edges than William. He had a scruffy full beard and a head of blond hair that might be in need of a haircut, but his crystal blue eyes beamed and dazzled.

Yup, dazzled.

He had a genuine smile to go with those eyes and his dimples were adorable.

He reached out his hand to mine. "This is Anthony, Grant's personal mechanic. Anthony, this is my...assistant, Brooklyn Scott."

"You can call me Tony, and it's nice to meet you."

"Like wise. You must be a very good mechanic if you work for Grant."

Grant was one of William's investors and a huge reason the business had done well. He was a real estate mogul among other things. Grant was the first billionaire I had met. He would have dinner with the Warren's when he was in Atlanta. He was down to earth for being not only filthy rich but hot as hell. Yet, he always expected the best, and there was no room for mistakes.

"Well, my daughter seems to think I'm a good mechanic, which means everything in my book." He smiled brightly.

"Oh, how old is she?"

He took out his phone. "Turning eight in a few months." He showed me the cutie pie that looked identical to her daddy.

"She's getting big." William smiled.

There was nothing unusual about the exchange, just the fact that it was with Mr. Warren who rarely smiled and seemed to light up at her picture.

"She loves that hover thing, by the way. Thank you."

"I'm glad to hear that."

My mouth dropped. Who is this man?

"I better head out. Everything looks fine."

"I know it is," William slapped him on his back.

They walked to the front of the plane, said a few more words, then Anthony's head peeked out. "It was nice to meet you." He waved.

I waved back.

William took the waters from the stewardess and placed them on the table. Then he sat across from me as she handed him his scotch. She lingered a bit too long and had this ridiculous come hither expression.

"After take-off, if we need anything, Ms. Scott will let you know," he said looking over at me, before taking a sip.

My eyes narrowed at his before I tilted my head up toward hers. She didn't seem pleased with his directions.

"Will there be anything else?" She asked.

"We're good, thank you." I answered.

"Yes, ma'am," she sighed.

I stared at William. Studied him. The man never gave anything away, however I wondered had what happened between us last night

made a difference? Could he be a kinder, nicer man? Maybe he had some redeeming qualities deep inside after all.

"What?" he snapped.

Maybe not, I thought.

"Excuse me?" I took a sip of my water.

"Do I have something on my face?" he asked.

"No, why would you think—"

"You're staring at me."

"I'm not staring." I was, but his tone was harsh. "I'm just trying to figure you out."

Then he did something I had never seen before. He smirked. The panty dropping kind.

Thoughts of me riding him came to mind, but I shook them away quickly. I couldn't think like that! Not only was he my boss, but he seemed to have forgotten everything that happened last night and this morning.

The plane started to speed up, and we both checked our seat-

belts. The climb was a bit bumpy, and when it leveled out, I decided I needed something stronger than water.

"Where are you going?" William asked.

"To get a drink, sir!" I snapped.

His mouth twitched slightly, but he held his tongue. I rolled my eyes at him and went into the galley.

The stewardess jumped up from her seat. "Can I get you something?"

"Gin and ginger, please."

Her brow quirked up.

Yes, I needed something stronger when dealing with Mr. Warren.

She poured the cocktail garnishing it impressively, I might add, and asked if Mr. Warren needed anything?

I peeked through the curtain. "Hey, do you want anything?"

His mouth tightened and shook his head.

"Nope," I popped out, before returning to my seat.

"Do you need a refresher course on manners, Ms. Scott?" he asked.

"Do you?" I sneered. "I have been functioning on 2 hours of sleep for the past three days. Doing everything to make your event perfect! I have gone above and beyond, as always, with little appreciation and thanks. So, Mr. Warren, forgive me if my filter is off. I planned to get a few hours of sleep this morning, but was kept awake by an animal."

"Keep your voice down."

I threw back my drink, slammed it down, and looked out the window.

Asshat.

He went back to typing, yet under his breath I heard, "An animal?"

I looked back at him with his head slightly tilted and grinning. I turned my body away from him, and set-up my laptop to clean up my emails.

<>

Little was said between the two of us during the remainder of the flight; however the tension could have been cut by a knife.

My heart hadn't slowed down from my irritation, and the longer into the flight we were, the more irritated I became.

"Stupid asshat," I mumbled.

"What was that?" William hissed.

I pinched my lips firmly and didn't respond. He knew what he was.

<>

The pilot announced our decent and it was a better landing than take-off. As soon as the doors of the plane opened the driver came in for our bags and rushed them to the awaiting car.

"You know, I think I'll grab a cab." I stated.

William looked at me as he put on his sunglasses. "Don't be ridiculous."

"Really, I need some air."

His face scowled. "Get in the car, Brooklyn."



I planted my feet. I was officially off the clock, and needed time away from him. "Mr. Warren--"

"That's an order."

He touched the small of my back and my body quivered. We looked at each other as he directed me firmly into the back seat, and slid next to me.

<>

We rode in silence for a few minutes.

Arms crossed and body pointing away from him was his clue as to how mad I was.

"Ms. Scott. You did an exceptional job this weekend. I'm bumping you up by six percent in salary."

At that moment, I replayed what I thought I just heard him say in my mind, and then turned my body to face his. "I'm not complaining, but what the hell? I deserved that raise a while ago, so why now?" Then a horrible thought entered my mind. "This better not be about last night!"

His eyes went wide. "No...! How could you have even thought...Ms. Warren, as you stated so eloquently earlier, you have been working your ass off. You deserve this on your own merit."

"Oh...well, good and thank you."

"Thank you. I should have said it a lot sooner, but I was a bit preoccupied last night."

"It wasn't all bad—you know—the event and everything."

He raised a brow.

"Driver, can you give us some privacy?" William asked.

The company used a car service and on the weekends our regular drivers were off.

When the partition went up I could feel the tension between us. We had skirted around what happened last night and it seemed that it was time to own up.

"Ms. Scott...Brooklyn. I never planned to...I...what I said last night, I won't blame it on the alcohol. However, my behavior was completely out of line. I do respect you and your work. It's just...those damn skirts, and those tight little sweaters. You have that good girl, bad girl, thing down pat."

"What?" My hand flew to my neck.

"Damn it. Now I'm spewing out words. Look, obviously, I'm attracted to you. However, those sweaters...and that smart ass mouth..."

My thighs rubbed together. "Maybe I need to stop wearing these small little skirts and tight tops, hmmm?" I flicked my skirt up and stuck out my chest.

My outfits were mostly styled from the fifties and sixties. My wardrobe came mainly from the Kate Spade store. I loved their clothes, and there was nothing wrong with my wardrobe.

"Mr. Warren, I am sorry you feel that I dress inappropriately—"

"That's not..." He closed his eyes shaking his head. "...Your clothes are fine."

"You just said...now I'm confused."

He leaned in closer. "It's just not your clothes. It's you, Brooklyn. It's everything about you." He took a deep breath. "You even smell like sin."

I laughed, frustrated. "This whole conversation is strange and now it's my smell?"

He placed his hand on my thigh. "It's everything about you," he said in a pained tone. "I need to stay away from you."

I flinched.

His hand went under my skirt and slowly up my thigh. I bit my lower lip, and my eyes flicked up to his. My heart sped up, and it was hard to swallow. When he reached the lace of my panties, I bit harder. My thighs instinctually widened, as his finger explored.

"This is a mistake," he whispered. "Everything about this is wrong."

My heart was now beating to get out of my chest, while William's eyes held me captive. There were glimpses of desire filled with anger. With every touch and every heated breath, we were both going further down the rabbit hole.

"William. If you continue this," I warned, panting.

"We will not be continuing this, Ms. Scott." He growled, removing his hand.

## Chapter 9

<Brooklyn>

Lucas finally calmed down after I told him what happened between William and me. He insisted I go to HR. That wasn't happening.

We were both two consenting adults and that was one card I wasn't playing.

His hands flailed around in the air. "I understand, but...I'm just angry."

He was a great friend, but I couldn't tell him how I truly felt.

Rejected.

William wanted me. I felt it. To be used by him...humiliation swept through me, and then rejection. The man could have anyone he wanted, and for a moment it was me. Nevertheless, depression took over.

<>

Lucas stayed angry for the both of us all week. He was in a pissy mood. One I should have been in, but I couldn't shake my mood.

One thing I was thankful for was the fact the Mr. Warren had been gone for the week. He had two business trips that came up. I was grateful that I didn't have to face him in the office. I didn't know how I would respond, but wasn't surprised that I went back to what I knew best.

I ate my sorrows away, then threw it up.

Lucas heard me one night when I thought he was out with a friend.

<>

The banging on the bathroom door startled me.

"One moment." I got up and rinsed my face with cold water.

"Open the damn door. Now, Brooke!"

I grabbed the mouthwash and swished it around spraying air freshener. Quickly spitting out the rinse, I ran to the door.

"Hey, you're home." I was out of breath.

His eyes narrowed. "I heard you. I saw the empty food containers in the garbage. Brooke, I thought you defeated this?" His eyes turned to pity.

That's not what I wanted.

I brushed past him.

"My stomach was upset that's all--"

"Stop! Just...don't. You can lie to everyone else, including yourself, but I know you."

I sat down on the sofa and Lucas sat next to me.

"How long has this been going on again? Do we need to go back to group?" he asked.

I shook my head. I couldn't look at him.

Lucas helped me get the help I needed, and he came to family group therapy with me to learn and understand my eating disorder. He wanted me to have the support I should have had from my family. From my mother when she found out. However, at that moment, I felt as if I had let him down."

"I'm sorry."

He wrapped his arm around me. "Baby girl, you don't need to apologize to me."

I looked up and his eyes showed concern, however he didn't look judgmental. I knew what that looked like.

"How long has this been going on, Brooklyn?"

"Not long, I was feeling overwhelmed. I was handling everything, but I found myself losing control. Lucas, when I did it at

first, I hated myself. I was embarrassed and couldn't believe I fell back to old habits. I tried; I did, to deal with the stress in other ways. However, I turned to other devices and drinking didn't seem like the best option."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"I was ashamed. Dammit, I'm strong."

Supposed to be strong, I thought.

"You're also human. We all make mistakes. Fall off the wagon, but you have always gotten back up and told me."

I could hear the hurt in his voice.

"I felt rejected. More like a stupid whore who knew better to sleep with her boss. I became a cliché." Tears started to fall. "See! I'm crying over a man! A stupid, arrogant, doesn't deserve me, man!"

"Brooke, that man is not going to get the best of you. You hear me? He just gave you some of that good juju sex and it's messed you up." He smiled.

I laughed, sniffing.

"Damn, he gave it to you good and messed up all your senses up."



Sadly, it was true. After William left me wanting more, I had been a wreck.

A wound up mess.

"You will just need to flip that script on him."

I shook my head. "I can't. He said we will never do it again."

"Babe, he was telling himself that. Why do you think he's been out of the office and away from you?"

"Work?"

"Come on. He really did a number on you."

He surprised me as he stormed away, and then returned with a hand mirror, before he pushed it in my face.

"Brooklyn Scott. Do you see the woman in the mirror? The goddess who can slay even the ugliest beast. You can do anything your heart desires. You do not need to go back to food for comfort. You can dust yourself off and get up and ride that bike again!" he said enthusiastically.

"Ride that bike?"

"Girl, you know what I mean. You made a few mistakes. So what! That will not define you. You are Brooklyn Scott. You only needed someone to remind you of that."

He was right.

I needed to be reminded who I was and an asshole like Mr. Warren shouldn't be my downfall. I needed to remember what I had to go through to get to where I was. How I had to go against my parents' wishes, and through my mom's judgmental rants. It was hard to leave my family, but I did and stopped hurting myself.

"Lucas, thank you. Thank you for always being there."

He sat the mirror down and pulled me into a hug so tight we fell to the floor. I laughed as he squeezed harder.

"I love you so much. If you ever feel that urge, you come to me, got it?" He kissed my forehead.

I nodded and we stayed on the floor holding each other.

<>

The next week, I took some time off—without Mr. Warren's permission. I went to group every day that week. Lucas joined me for a couple of them; however I needed to get my bearings straight again.

I learned some new exercises to assist when those urges come up again. I even started yoga to relieve the tension and stress. I was missing outlets in my life to de-stress. Sex with William unleashed something I had been missing. Stress relief.

The next week when I came back to work, I was determined to change some things around.

<William>

"What the hell do you mean she took a vacation, I didn't approve that!"

"I did." My brother Aiden said, as if it were something simple.

"I'm her boss."

"That you are, but you weren't here. Look, Will. Gianna will be helping out while Brooklyn is away, okay. I'll see you in ten for the board meeting," he said, leaving my office.

Another week...

I could barely stand not seeing her last week.

It was my choice to combine both meetings into the same week, however I didn't realize that not seeing her would be hell.

Apparently, sex with Brooklyn also made you senile. My mental faculties had been taken by her. The negotiations had gone horribly wrong. I couldn't remember the numbers or the crucial elements to land the deal. I was a babbling buffoon trying to cover my ass, but nothing seemed to work. That was something that had never happened before.

My cock was doing the thinking for me. I had blue balls syndrome that wasn't going away.

Why the hell did I not take care of things when I had the chance?

I had to become the reasonable boss, realizing that nothing good would happen from us having sex.

Nothing good was happening from us not having it.

Another week....

Damn it!

<>

Brooklyn was testing the hell out of me. I told her what those skirts did to me. She had the audacity to wear the most obscene outfit to the office. I didn't know if I wanted to order her home to change or lay her over my knee and spank her before drilling the point into her.

I circled around my office, pulling my hair, trying to decide what the best course of action was.

"Mr. Warren." Brooklyn said, knocking on my door peeking her head in. "I have something for you to sign."

I watched her walk straight to the front of my desk and bend over placing the files by my laptop.

The bulge pushing forcefully against my pants twitched, aching to be let loose.

I glanced up her legs, looking longer in those damn black high heel shoes. Her garter belt was showing and I stepped closer to get a better look. My hands fisted at my side, while I tried to control the urge not to touch. Her plaid pleated skirt was barely covering her ass, and I could see her lacy bra in that tight ass top she called a sweater.

She was killing me.

This was my punishment and I knew it. I told her it was over and she was determined to make me regret it.

Why, was what I wanted to know?

She was the one that hated me. She sided with Sophia, and I knew the names she called me before she said them to my face. Asshat was calmer than the other names.

I shouldn't have let my attraction for her take over my common sense. I didn't want to lose her as an assistant. She was talented and gifted, and could go far with training.

My training.

The lump grew larger in my throat.

Just like Sophia, I thought.

I trained my ex. wife into what she is today.

How did that work out for you?

Brooklyn wasn't Sophia, but at one time, Sophia was like Brooklyn.

I couldn't do it again.

I looked up and Brooklyn had this smirk on her face. She was facing me and apparently saw me ogling her.

I fixed my tie and walked up to her. "Thank you, that will be all, Ms. Scott."

Her startled reaction flashed across her eyes before another reaction showed. One that I knew would be trouble.

She was angry. Not the stomp and shout type of madness, but the calculating type of anger. I could see her planning her next move, and I knew then that I was already over my head.

## Chapter 10

<Brooklyn>

It was too easy.

After I figured out to dress like a Nun every day. Mr. Warren was ready to pounce. Some days not in a good way. When his ears turned red, I knew I was pushing my luck.

Nun may be too liberal. More like a hot teacher.

Mr. Warren had a type, and he was dumb enough to tell me, so I had to play on that weakness. Good or bad, it was worth the extra frustration.

My work frustration.

He was determined to make me hate my job.

If it wasn't a pleasure to make him suffer, I would have quit.

Well...not until I found something I liked that paid the same. That was the challenge. William compensated me well. To well.

Each day I would go over his calendar, legs crossed and always showing my garters. I made sure I left the flats at home and wore colorful heels. My sweater or blouse was always conservative but I made sure my skirts were short.

His eyes would glide up my legs until meeting mine, and then he would glare or curse.

Lately, he started missing our morning meetings, and I knew he was avoiding me. However, I found myself missing the assbat on those days.

Mr. Warren held his ground, and the excitement to break him became my obsession. Until the weeks turned into months.

I wondered if it was truly all me; that I was just a plaything. I found myself beginning to have dark thoughts again, and I tried everything to keep them at bay.

I could see his attraction for me daily, but that's all it seemed to be, just an attraction. He scratched his itch and now



seemed to be over me.

I began to not care about the perks or salary anymore. Even though no one in the office knew what had happened between us, I decided to leave for my own peace of mind.

I was naïve to sleep with my boss and I found myself hating not only Mr. Warren, but myself.

<>

<William>

There she goes again slamming things.

Brooklyn had been like this for weeks.

I was starting to miss her sweet and kind act. We both knew she was being a seductress, and I had to picture her as Sophia every time I looked at her in order to control my urges.

Those stupid heels, tight sweaters, and those skirts...! I hated those damn skirts of hers.

Who the hell wore garters these days?

I thought I could be strong, but each day that passed proved me

wrong. Avoidance was my only option—which was hard to do—because she controlled my life.

Brooklyn was in charge of scheduling everything and seeing her to go over my calendar wasn't working anymore. Firing her wasn't an option, so emails and phone calls seemed to work; until I came up with a better plan.

That was three months ago, and I still had no plan. I thought of transferring Brooklyn to another executive, but she was the best assistant I had ever had. Finding her replacement would take too long, even though her position was well sought after.

When Human Resources asked me for a reference for her, I was shocked. Apparently, she was looking at other opportunities, which was ludicrous. We were the top agency. That's why she worked for Sophia.

Brooklyn wanted to grow in the company, and I knew it was because of me that she wanted to leave. I was willing to send her to another department so that she could learn other areas; but I touched every department, and she could learn more from me than anyone else. This was another reason why she took my offer to stay after Sophia had left.

Now, she wanted to leave, and I stalled HR until I could come up with an alternative offer.

I shot down every idea, and it was inevitable, Brooklyn would do better working under me—with me—if she wanted to excel in this business.

That's what I had told myself.

I had to deal with whatever my attraction was for her so I could help her. I wanted to help her, but this time it would be different. Sophia has a different mindset than Brooklyn, I told myself.

I just hope this doesn't blow up in my face.

<>

"Brooklyn wants to leave the company."

Her laugh made me sick to my stomach.

"You wanted her to stay." I reminded her.

"I'm surprised she stayed this long. What did you do?" She smirked.

Sophia crossed her legs, and I noticed. She always did that when she was horny. However, this was a different time, and she had cheated on me. Who knows how many men had tasted her.

Bile came up.

"She has some warped views about me. It seems she thinks I was

the one who cheated, but we both know you couldn't keep your legs closed."

The smirk turned into a scowl. "You..." Her eyes narrowed. "We aren't going to harp on the fact that you were never willing to do what other men were. You might have hid her from me William, but we both know you cheated before I made my mistake."

Now I had to laugh. She always assumed I was unfaithful when I had been nothing but committed to her. My father's health had been in jeopardy and the company was going through a transition. She wasn't getting the attention she needed and used that as an excuse.

"I never cheated on you." I stated. "The lies you filled Brooklyn with have caused her to be biased."

Sleeping with her had another thing to do with it, but I rectified my mistake.

She glared. "What makes you think she can't do better here?"

"She reminds me of you."

She leaned forward and smiled. "She is talented. I told you she would go far."

"With the right people."

She leaned back crossing her arms. "I have to admit, you taught me a lot."

"I taught you everything."

Her brow rose. "Yes, you did." She grinned.

I could see the thoughts passing through her mind. She was difficult, like Brooklyn, but sex seemed to always make things better. She wasn't my assistant, but I stole her from finance when she found a five year error in the books. We would have late night sessions going through the ledgers. It was in those sessions that I found out why she worked for us. She wanted to move up to our Sales Department.

I gave Sophia examples of projects we were working on and her insights were impressive. I made sure she learned as much as possible by moving her through other departments. Even after we were married, she still wasn't where she wanted to be, but was working her way up to her goals.

She was not given any special treatment after becoming my wife and proved herself well.

"We were good together," she said.

"Apparently not that good."

"Hmm...well, like I said, Brooklyn is a rare gem. I will help her out."

I nodded and then called Brooklyn into my office.

<>

<Brooklyn>

When I stepped into Mr. Warren's office I was surprised to see Sophia. She always came by my office before she would see William.

"Brooklyn," she gasped.

She rushed over and pulled me in. "My god, you are so tiny." She squeezed my arms.

She looked back at Mr. Warren. "What the hell, William!" She shouted. "What have you done?"

He looked in total shock before his eyes narrowed at hers. "We just discussed this."

"You didn't tell me she wasn't eating again."

His eyes bulged out.

My head dropped in shame. I had told Sophia about my eating disorder.

"Oh, oh. I'm sorry, Brooklyn," she said softer. "I didn't mean to...I am just worried."

"I know, Sophia. It's okay. I've just been dealing with some things, but I'm getting better and it's under control."

I looked into her worried eyes and she nodded with a tight grin.

"Okay. Well, please take a seat," she said.

I couldn't look at William. He was too quiet.

I sat across from his desk and Sophia sat in the lounge next to me.

"Ms. Scott."

My head snapped up at my name. I couldn't read his expression but I could see a level of concern.

"It's been brought to my attention that you are considering leaving Warren International Realty."

My eyes widened in surprise, however I shouldn't have been. I had put Warren International down as a reference of employment.

"I wish you would have come to me and told me."

"William," Sophia snapped. "Brooklyn, we are just concerned with why you want to leave."

I looked at William surprised by her "we".

"Before I left, we discussed why working for William would benefit you and your future in this industry. Is the work becoming too much?"

"No, it's actually challenging."

She smiled. "I know he can be an ass, but you can handle him. There are many asses up the corporate ladder, and I know that can't be why you want to leave."

I chuckled.

"The compensation package isn't the reason, it's over the top." Mr. Warren stated.

"William!"



"No, it's very generous." I said.

Sophia made sure I was well compensated.

"Then why Brooklyn—Ms. Scott?"

"Mr. Warren..." I paused, not knowing what to say.

It had been emotionally draining being near him. I thought I could handle our working relationship, but it was my attraction for him that seemed to cloud my judgement.

It was hard to focus when he was around. His scent was everywhere and there was no escape from him. I looked at moving to another department, but I wouldn't learn as much as I would with him.

I tried to focus on the work, but he made it difficult to concentrate. My desire for him wasn't dying out. It seemed to be growing and I couldn't find a way to stop it.

Lucas had set me up on a few dates, but I wasn't interested. I hoped and tried, but no one panned out. The only conclusion I had was to leave and make a fresh start and allow my broken heart to heal.

Sophia looked between Mr. Warren and me before leaning back with arms crossed. I looked at her and saw something unfamiliar in

her eyes.

"Brooklyn, if leaving is what's best for you, then you have my blessing." She said.

"What?" Mr. Warren looked at her

"William, like I said. All I want is for Brooklyn to be happy and seeing her this way tells me that being here isn't the best place for her."

"Are you kidding? We just went over why staying here would be to her benefit." He narrowed his eyes to her before looking at me. "Brooklyn, I know I can be...challenging." We both chuckled. "I know that we have had our differences and made a few mistakes along the way. I made a few mistakes along the way. I may have let my personal....needs...get into the way of what's best for you. However, you are an asset to this organization. I can see you growing with us. Whatever offer that was made; we are ready to make a counter offer to keep you here. You will be receiving a new title and will be over seeing more projects. You will be exposed to new departments, and I will personally make sure you have whatever you need to continue growing within my company."

I stared at him, not sure if what I heard was possible. For the first time, Mr. Warren had showed some kind of promise for my work. I wasn't stupid.

Warren International Realty is one of the top realty companies in the US; and there would be numerous highly qualified individuals to take my place. Hell, I wasn't qualified

for the salary they offered.

Did he say counter offer?

However, as I stared into his blue eyes, I wondered if it was possible to try. I thought I had been trying, but that was surviving. Knowing he respected my work and what happened between us was...complicated, and he was willing to bring in Sophia to change my mind. That spoke volumes.

They were always civil to each other but at some point got under the other's skin.

I also noticed the change between us. Sophia was leaning toward me smiling and at ease earlier, and suddenly she seemed cold and distant. She was never like that with me.

I looked over at her. She would have had a lot to say. Offer up her opinion, if I wanted it or not, but she just stared at me; and not in a friendly way.

I looked over at Mr. Warren who also seemed to notice her mood swing. He looked back at me with what seemed to be need? Maybe I was reading into it, but he looked desperate and I couldn't understand why.

"Ms. Scott, do you accept our new terms?"

"Mr. Warren, I'm....appreciative." Shocked was more like it.  
"Your offer is very generous. Would it be okay if I think about it?"

I heard Sophia huff under her breath. "Of course, Brooklyn. It's smart of you to weigh out all of your options." She said, with a smile.

It appeared she was back, but her eyes said otherwise.

I stood and before I exited his office, he said, "Brooklyn, it's a good offer."

I didn't look back as I walked out.

## Chapter 11

### Brooklyn

I was still in shock over the meeting I had with William and Sophia. Lucas was in shock as we mulled it over with some wine.

Lucas wasn't as shocked per say, he believed in my talents. He was more interested that William brought out the big gun, Sophia to help convince me.

He remembered their ugly divorce and was surprised to think that Sophia would help him. He cheated on her, and then took what she loved most, which was her job.

I told him she would do it for me and she did. She always had faith in me. However, we both were puzzled about her sudden coldness.

I tried to speak to her later that day, but received her voice mail. I had tried a few times since, and nothing. This was totally unlike her. She would have at least responded to my text, after I noticed the dot, dot, dots, as she read my text.

Lucas had a theory, but would think more about it after he came back from his conference. He would be gone for four days, leaving the house to myself for the weekend.

<>

When I arrived to the office Friday, Mr. Warren had left a message that he was across town for a meeting, and not to expect him back into the office.

I was glad that we wouldn't see each other. He had given me space for the few days he was in the office that week, but it was still tense between us. I was stalling, trying to see if we could work together... professionally again. It seemed to be working, but he wasn't around. My thoughts of him didn't

disappear.

His offer was a chance to do what I had always wanted. I was ready to make that leap and accept on Monday.

<>

When I went home that evening and heard a bang on my door, it seemed that Monday wasn't going to do.

There I stood staring into Mr. Warren's eyes.

<>

We studied each other for a moment before I realized we hadn't spoken. "Mr. Warren...I'm surprised to see you."

"May I come in?"

"Of course." I stepped aside, making a mental note that he looked incredible.

He had on a pair of torn washed out jeans and a gray V-neck t-shirt that showed his fine chest hair. He was more tan which only made him look hotter. His blue eyes popped and his dark hair was a mess.

I was going to be a mess if I didn't stop ogling him.

"Ummm, did I forget something at work, or did you..."

He shook his head. "No. I'm here... well..." He stood staring.  
"I'm here to find out if you've made a decision."

"Ummm, yes."

We stood staring.

"Should I take the silence as you aren't accepting my offer?"

"Oh, no." The silence was me thinking how in the world I was going to work with him looking like that. "I made my decision but..."

"But...?"

He took a few steps closer, towering over me as I smelled his cologne. It was woodsy, manly and distracting.

"Ms. Scott?"

"Yes?"

I looked into his eyes, realizing that was a very bad mistake.

He moved in closer. "Your decision?"

I shook my head. "I was going to accept your offer."

There was an audible sound of relief that left him.

"Wait, you were?"

"Mr. Warren, to be honest, the offer is perfect. However, our mistake you keep reminding me of seems to be a huge factor between us."

He nodded and then took my hand. The sparks that ran through made me quiver for a split second.

"May we?" he asked, leading us to my sofa.

He signaled to sit down and sat next to me.

"Is what happened between us the reason for you not eating?"

My eyes felt like they bugged out.



"I didn't know," he said softly. "Sophia explained."

"She shouldn't have! I told her in confidence."

How could she?

Was that why she wasn't responding to my messages? She felt guilty for disclosing my secret.

"She shouldn't have told you."

"No, she shouldn't have, even if her motives were personal. It doesn't change the fact that I could have been the reason you felt like hurting yourself."

I stood and turned away from him. "It wasn't about you, William. It was me, feeling guilty about... the mistake, as you call it."

He wrapped his hands over my shoulder. "I should have been stronger. My attraction for you... I should have controlled it."

I turned to face him.

"Was it only attraction?" I asked, seeing the conflict in his eyes.

"No."

I closed my eyes, took a deep breath, and looked back into his. "I couldn't stop thinking about you. About us. The attraction I have for you wasn't diminishing, and it was affecting my work. I hated myself for letting you get the best of me."

"Here I thought the same thing."

His words sounded sincere.

"Why push me away?"

"I saw Sophia in you."

I stepped back. "How?"

"When she was like you, I mean. When she started moving up the ranks. She was hungry to learn everything about Warren International Realty. I mentored her, poured all of my knowledge in her. Fell in love with her." he said softly.

Hearing that made my stomach turn.

"Was broken by her." He stepped close to me. "When Sophia cheated on me, I realized I couldn't trust my judgment. Of all the people I trusted, she was the one that broke my sense of trust."

"She cheated on you? But she said—"

"She wanted to believe I cheated on her to make her feel less of a bitch, I assume. I had all the proof that I needed and she couldn't find one speck of evidence on me."

"I can't believe it! She made you out to be a heartless monster." I threw my hand over my mouth. "I'm sorry."

"No apologies necessary. I did become heartless. Unfortunately, I think my hatred for her has rubbed off on you. That's on me. However, the thought of hurting you... I'm a fool, Brooklyn. I should have never let you go. I should have explained my side of the story when I knew Sophia was spreading lies. I'm a coward and cared what people thought. How was I not man enough to keep my wife satisfied in bed?"

"I can't see that being a problem." I said out loud, not meaning to.

William smiled, and I wanted to see him smile like that more.

"Sophia broke her vows, Brooklyn. I'm sure things led up to it, but we are supposed to learn from our mistakes. Learn and move-on. It's harder to do, but worth it in the end."

"I was very hesitant to stay, William."

"Brooklyn, things can be different between us. I am confident

that if we are honest and open, we can work together. If not, my brother has agreed to take you on."

"Really?"

"I have already explained that we like to keep talented individuals in our company, versus them being the competition." He smirked.

I laughed. "That's a strategy."

He laughed openly.

"Okay, I think this can work. But, I would like you to train me."

His smile grew bigger, before going back into the unreadable mask.

"It's a deal."

Chapter 12

Brooklyn

Miracles do happen.

Mr. Warren made good on his promises, and I am busier than before and learning so much more.

I won't lie, the attraction is still there, and there are times when I find myself gazing at him. Other times, I have caught him looking at me. However, he has gone out of his way to stay as professional as possible.

Then there are times when he is a total asshat. Many times, but it's working.

<>

"Why aren't you seeing this?" I yelled.

"Everyone isn't going to always agree with you, Ms. Scott."

"I understand that, Mr. Warren. However, this is a great idea."

He stared me down before grabbing the files. He knew I was right.

"I will present both reports and let marketing decide."

I smiled.

He snarled.

<>

My smile grew really big when we came back into his office and marketing had decided that my idea was better.

"Ah, don't be such a sore loser."

He shook his head. "This is my company, Ms. Scott. I never lose."

True.

"The Ferguson account is doing well."

He packed up his laptop and nodded. "Very well. How are you enjoying it?"

"It's challenging, but I'm learning a lot."

"Good."

I watched him look for his keys and grab his suit jacket.

"I didn't realize you had another meeting?"

"I don't. I have dinner plans."

"Oh... I didn't see that on your calendar?"

He paused then said. "This is personal."

I looked at him, thinking if I remember him ever having anything personal come up. If he had, it escaped me. "Oh, well enjoy."

"Thanks." He walked out the door without looking my direction.

Well, okay then.

<>

"Why do you look so glum sunshine?"

I kept flicking the remote. "No reason, Lucas."

He folded his arms and stood in front of me. "Ah, huh. Spill it."

I took a sip of my wine. "William went out to dinner."

His eyebrow rose as he searched into my eyes. "Okay...?"

"Like dinner, dinner."

He laughed. "With a woman I presume. Isn't that a good thing? You two are work buddies, not bed buddies."

I rolled my eyes, looking back at the TV watching channels fly by.

He laughed, and then sat on top of me. I refused to move over, but he pushed hard enough to where I did.

"I thought you two were being honest with each other. Keeping things 'professional.'" He said, with air quotes.

"We are."

"But are you being honest with yourself? That boy going on a date shouldn't bother you. You've been on dates." He threw the sofa cushion at me.



I hugged it and spoke into it. "Yes, but that was just for fun."

"I see," he laughed. "His date shouldn't be for fun?"

"No!."

"Did I tell you how much I love you when you are jealous and unreasonable?"

"I'm not jealous."

"Ah huh."

<>

"How was the date?" I asked.

I wanted to take it back but it just fell out of my mouth. I came into the office telling myself to forget about it and not to mention it, but apparently my mouth thought otherwise.

"How was dinner, you mean?" He didn't even look up from his desk.

"Oh, it wasn't a date?" I asked, strolling toward his desk.

He stopped shuffling papers and looked up. "I didn't say that. It went well, thank you. How was your evening?"

I bit the inside of my jaw, trying to control my facial expressions. "Oh, mine was very good. I had dinner too."

He chuckled to himself.

Nothing else was said and I left his office.

"Ms. Scott?" he said through the intercom.

"Yes, Mr. Warren."

"Did you want to go over today's calendar?"

How could I have forgotten?

That was why I was in his office.

I had to go back in, looking like an idiot, and he had a smirk on his face when I sat down.

Asshat.

<>

We finished his schedule and I realized it was going to be a long couple of weeks with late hours. Looking over the following week, Mr. Warren was going to be attending a conference in Spain. He stated he would be visiting his father after the trip and would be working from Italy.

"That's exciting."

"No, it's not, but I need to see my father."

"Is everything okay?"

He looked up at me. "Yes, he is well. Thank you."

"Good."

I entered more items into the iPad and felt his eyes on me. I looked up to find him staring.

"Is there something else, William?"

"No. "

<>

"Should we order dinner, Brooklyn?"

"Yes, I am starving."

He picked up his cell. "Armand's, two specials please, and have Heidi select something nice to compliment that."

I looked up from the pile of files on his table. "Oh, very nice. First name basis?"

Armand's was one of the best restaurants in the city.

He shook his head and grabbed another file. We had been going over new potential listings.

<>

This is amazing. I said sipping the red wine that I had already forgotten the brand name.

"Heidi does a great job picking wines."

"Hmm."

He smiled. "What's with the 'hmmmm.'"

"It seems you are familiar with Heidi's skills."

His brow arched. "Maybe..."

I peered at him behind my wine glass and watched him set the files down. He picked up his glass taking a sip then asked. "You seem interested lately in my extracurricular activities."

"I don't think so." I set the glass down.

"Well, I am interested in yours."

I looked up at him.

"Does that surprise you?"

"It should...but I can see why you would be interested."

"I want to make sure you're happy."

I wasn't sure where this conversation was headed, but the air between us grew thick. "That's all?"

He smirked. "That's it."

"Well, things have changed..." I said under my breath.

His expression fell.

"Isn't this cozy." I heard from behind me.

I placed my glass down, and looked over my shoulder. "Sophia," I said looking at her.

She walked in, swinging her bag, looking between William and me.

"Late night session? Brooklyn, I thought you were smarter than that."

"Excuse me?"

"William and I had many late night sessions, didn't we?"

"Sophia." He warned.

"Mr. Warren, I left the Simpson contract in the file room. Do you mind grabbing it? I have something private I need to say to Sophia."

He looked shocked that I would ask him to step out of his own office; however his expression quickly turned quizzical before he left the office.

I waited until the door closed then unleashed. "You were my mentor! I trusted you, and I have to find out from William that you lied to me? You cheated on him?"

She narrowed her eyes then laughed. "Is that what he's going with to get you to sleep with him? Come on Brooklyn, I thought you were smarter than that."

"How dare you! I have been nothing but loyal to you. The moment you think we have been together you don't return my calls and you accuse me of sleeping with William?"

"When did he become William, Brooklyn?"

As we stared each other down, William walked in.

"Sophia, what do you want? If it's to start crap, you can leave."

"I was only asking Brooklyn when you two got together. Was she the one, William? Brooklyn is the knife still in my back from when you slept with my husband."

William leaped forward. Chest heaving and quickly growing red. "Sophia, you cheated on me! You led Brooklyn to believe I

was unfaithful. You are the one that destroyed our marriage."

I watched as they glared at the other.

"I better go..."

"No. Sophia, leave, now."

She came and stood in front of me. "I trusted you."

"Sophia, nothing happened..."

"Don't lie to me Brooklyn. It might not have happened when I was here, but it has happened. I can see it in your eyes."

I looked down and she sighed heavily.

"She doesn't have to explain herself to you."

She chuckled darkly. "No, she doesn't."

I looked at Sophia seeing my mentor fade away as she left.

I sat on the sofa and stared out at the city. It was dark and the city lights sparkled in the distance.



"Brooklyn, are you okay?"

"I loved her like a sister... I would have never betrayed her, but..."

"It wasn't your fault."

"You know that isn't true."

He grabbed a hold of my hands. "Brooklyn, I am not going to pretend I didn't hear Sophia speak about your situation. I didn't want to pry or assume, but I don't want her selfishness to be the cause of you harming yourself."

"I was embarrassed. At the time I felt like things were spiraling out of control."

"I didn't help, and for that I am sorry."

I cocked a brow. "What was that?"

"You heard me."

We both laughed.

"Seriously, I am proud of you. You have achieved so much and you will make a great VP one day."

I nudged him. "VP, huh."

"I am a great teacher."

"Yes, you are."

"So was Sophia," I sighed.

"Hey, I am better looking."

"Yes, you are."

We sat in silence for a moment.

"What she said, about us. I didn't think it was obvious."

I watched as his lips pinched.

"Did someone else say something?"

"My brother."

"What!"

"He just saw me looking at you in a meeting. I played it off, but he had a hunch. He said that's why I have been grouchy."

I laughed loudly holding my stomach. "You have been a grouch ever since I met you. I never knew how Sophia could stand it—I mean—sorry. Not what I meant."

"I know what you meant."

"What she did was crappy. Really horrible, and now that I know you better, how could she think you would be unfaithful. You are faithful to the core."

His eyes smiled at mine, but no words came out.

He walked over and poured another drink, leaving me to finish off the bottle of wine.

"Are you happy?"

I looked at William. "Happy as in happy, happy?" He nodded. "I am, I mean, I would like to be happier. Work is good. I'm not complaining, I just want... well... things."

"What type of things?"

"A date." I covered my mouth. The wine was making me too honest.

He threw his head back laughing. "I thought you had a date, the other night."

"When?" I asked wide eyed.

He shook his head. "That week you were rushing. I think it was a Thursday, you had on that blue dress that compliments your eyes."

Did he just say what I thought?

"Ummm... that was just a friend of Lucas'. You know my gay roommate."

"Ahh," he chuckled to himself.

"I'm surprised you noticed. I mean you had that 'dinner' the other night."

He smiled. "Yes, there was that."

My stomach turned and I didn't like his expression.

"That good?" I asked, with a clipped tone.

He studied my face then said. "It wasn't as good as New York."

He thought that was a compliment, but it was a dagger into my heart. I stood up gathering my things.

"Hey, we aren't done." He stood.

"I think I have had enough. I can finish up tomorrow."

William grabbed my right hand and stopped me. "What did I do?"

"It's nothing... I'm tired."

He pulled me closer to him. "Brooklyn, what is it?"

I shook my head.

He swept a piece of loose hair strands behind my ear, and I shivered. It was noticeable and yet he stepped in closer.

I refused to look up at him, knowing he was staring.

"Brooklyn, look at me."

His hand went under my chin, lifting my face so our eyes met.

"I went on a date." He stated plainly.

I closed my eyes holding back the disgust.

"The first one since that night in New York."

That shocked me, after the way he had pushed me away.

"By the look on your face, I need to explain some things. I went on that date to prove to myself that I could get over you. Over what happened that night, but it only proved that I couldn't. I tried to get you out of my mind, but all I thought about was you. We kissed, I won't lie. I tried to take it further, but all I kept thinking about was you. Nothing more happened. These past months have been good. Really good between us, and I didn't want to ruin what we were establishing."

I smiled a bit too big. "You didn't want to ruin our friendship?"

"I wanted to ruin it. Many, many times. But, I can't be responsible again for causing you pain. I made a lot of mistakes with you, Brooklyn. Things are finally going right and I can't stop thinking about you... dreaming about you... wanting you."

"William..."

His head moved down as mine moved toward his. My stomach turned, knowing that what happened next could change everything.

Was it worth it...?

When his lips softly touched mine...

...Yes, it was worth it.

Chapter 13

Brooklyn

"It's beautiful here."

I looked out onto the blue Mediterranean waters. It seemed unreal at times.

Will and I had stayed in bed until noon. William had gone to see his father which left me time to shop around town. Italy was surreal.

When he asked if I wanted to come with him on his business trip, I thought he was joking. We had been together a few weeks. However, when he mentioned visiting his father, I knew we weren't at that point, yet.

He said he wanted to take me to the convention, and I was happy to attend. When he told me we would stop by his dad's that freaked me out. So much so, that I had been too chicken to spend time with the senior Mr. Warren. However, when William said we were going over to dinner, I had no choice and was a nervous wreck.

Mr. Warren Sr. was incredibly kind and charming. William had his father's looks, but they said he resembled his mother. She was beautiful. There were pictures throughout the house of their lives together. I had the chance to see William as a child. He was adorable and chunky. Something he would get teased about, he said, but he was cute as a button.

The entire trip seemed like a dream. We drank wine on the patio on warm summer nights, and I ate myself silly, which made William happy.

He would check on me from time to time, asking if I had eaten



breakfast, lunch or dinner. I knew what he was doing, and made a note to bring him to one of my group sessions when things became... well more.

Until then, I ignored him, which drove him crazy, but made me happy.

<>

I enjoyed the different sides of William. However, the more domineering side that came out when he would get annoyed with me was the most fun to play with.

I laughed to myself remembering just how fun it was last night.

My cell rang and I smiled just looking at his picture. It was one of him scowling at something he didn't like. It made me laugh every time I saw it.

I needed to change that picture.

"Hello, beautiful."

"Hello, Asshat."

He laughed.

I would never get tired of hearing that.

"You look amazing in that blue sundress."

"Did you see me this morning?" There was no way he could have. I was still in bed when he left.

"I love how your hair flickers with golden strands as the sun hits it."

I looked around, but could not see him anywhere.

"Will, where are you?"

"In your dreams."

I laughed. "Always. But really, where are you?"

I jumped startled by the pair of arms that wrapped around my waist. Warm air tickled over my skin as he bent down to kiss my neck.

"It was hard to leave you this morning."

I tilted my head, giving him more access. "You mean this afternoon."

He turned me around. "Ready for bed?"

I laughed harder. "It's only three o'clock. How can you not enjoy this view?"

He kissed me softly, wrapping my body closer to his.

I am sure our PDA wasn't being appreciated, but we didn't care.

Will released me leaving me breathless and wanting more. I looked into his eyes and said, "I've seen enough."

The End

