

Chapter 34

Back to Aaron's home

Once again, Aaron and I were together in his bedroom. Neither of us spoke as we looked out over the city through his French windows. We were too exhausted to be angry anymore. After a moment, he pulled me into a still embrace.

"You and David..." I trailed off. I didn't know how to phrase this. Aaron obviously didn't want to talk about it, but it was getting more and more difficult to fight my curiosity. All night, David's eyes glistened with unbridled excitement when he'd look at Aaron, yet Aaron couldn't be more repulsed. What happened between them?

"It's not what you think," he said quickly. "And you should stay away from him. He's not the saint you think he is."

Aaron took a deep breath, then continued, "I'll tell you later, but just... Let me hold you for a little while. I'm so tired..."

He gently led me to his bed, where we fell into each other's arms. The two of us held each other wordlessly. We were a pair of wounded animals licking our wounds as time ticked by.

Suddenly, my phone lit up with a text from Vincent.

Vxncnt: You home yet babe?

Vxncnt: Sorry about earlier

My heart seethed with fury. Was the b*stard finished with Emily now? Was he back to pretending he cared about me?

Aaron sighed into my hair, "Looking at your other man..."

"You're the other man. He's still my boyfriend, you know."

I yelped when I felt his teeth sink into my neck. Frustrated, I

slapped Aaron's hand that was resting on my stomach.

"You're like a dog!" I huffed.

Still, he remained where he was and continued to kiss my nape. It tickled a bit, but I wasn't really that annoyed. His breath on my skin was warm and soothing.

"Why do you do that?" He muttered. "Say things like that? Do things like this?" He squeezed his arms around me. "I hate it..."

"The world doesn't revolve around you." I moved just out of reach of his kisses.

He didn't respond, but continued holding me quietly.

"What are you going to do now?" I spoke up. "You told them we were engaged."

I still didn't know why Aaron would come up with something like that. What did he think of me? Of us? I thought I knew where we stood, but now I wasn't so sure. Earlier, when he came on stage and walked down those steps, he was looking at me with such intense affection. He was dazzling.

Was that how he'd look at our wedd-

No.

That was a dangerous thought.

Aaron shrugged behind me, "Nothing. We are engaged."

"Quit it. You know this is nothing more than an affair. We don't need to pretend it isn't. That's not healthy for either of us." I wiggled out of his grasp and rolled over to look at him,

slapped Aaron's hand that was resting on my stomach.

"You're like a dog!" I huffed.

Still, he remained where he was and continued to kiss my nape. It tickled a bit, but I wasn't really that annoyed. His breath on my skin was warm and soothing.

"Why do you do that?" He muttered. "Say things like that? Do things like this?" He squeezed his arms around me. "I hate it..."

"The world doesn't revolve around you." I moved just out of

reach of his kisses.

He didn't respond, but continued holding me quietly.

"What are you going to do now?" I spoke up. "You told them we were engaged."

I still didn't know why Aaron would come up with something like that. What did he think of me? Of us? I thought I knew where we stood, but now I wasn't so sure. Earlier, when he came on stage and walked down those steps, he was looking at me with such intense affection. He was dazzling.

Was that how he'd look at our wedd-

No.

That was a dangerous thought.

Aaron shrugged behind me, "Nothing. We are engaged."

"Quit it. You know this is nothing more than an affair. We don't need to pretend it isn't. That's not healthy for either of us." I wiggled out of his grasp and rolled over to look at him,

crossing my arms over my chest.

He frowned. "Didn't you wanna break up with Vincent?"

"Of course I do! Just not now." I bit my lip. "That'd feel too... cheap. I'm waiting for the right time."

"And when will that be?"

I didn't answer.

To be honest, I didn't know when to finally end things with him. If I really wanted to hurt him, I would've done it when he loved me most. Except when he loved me, he wasn't cheating. It was a paradox.

"You want to break his heart when you do it." His eyes bored into me as he leaned forward.

"Shut up..."

"You know he doesn't love you as much as he used to," he pressed. All at once, his expression was provocative, domineering, and hostile. I could feel his anger radiating onto me.

"Shut up." I clenched my fists.

But he didn't relent.

"No matter what you do, you've already lost. You love him more than he loves you."

"Just shut up already!" I shoved him away and practically leaped out of the bed before storming out onto the balcony. Tears welled up in my eyes and my fingernails were

embedded in my palms.

Aaron slowly came up behind me. "You wanna know why he had to leave earlier?"

I stiffened. Lightning coursed through my veins as I waited with bated breath for his next words.

I did want to know.

"Emily posted a picture of her slit wrist a few hours ago. Captioned it with a bunch of 'Goodbye, cruel world' b*lsh*t."

His words left me stunned. No wonder Vincent left in such a hurry,

I felt Aaron grab me again, "Don't go back to him, Olive."

"So I can stay with you? So you can watch me humiliate myself over and over?!" I turned and sneered at him. Tears fell from the corners of my eyes, and I saw the corners of his mouth droop in a slight frown. His aggression had faded, and the blue eyes looking at me now were softer than they were before.

"So I can help you. If you would just leave him already, I

could..." His brow furrowed as he hesitated.

He could what?

He could be my boyfriend instead? He could love me?

Both of us knew I didn't need that commitment-not so soon after Vincent. This s*upid cheating game we've been playing has gone on for far too long. It was supposed to be just one time, but we've come back to each other again and again. At

this point, it wasn't fun. It wasn't revenge.

It was exhausting.

"Just trust me, Olive. You're better off without him. Let me help you."

"Now you want to help me..." I smiled sarcastically. "You already said he doesn't love me. That I can't hurt him. anymore. That I'm just a joke to him... and to you."

"I never said he didn't love you. It's just that you're not the most important thing to him anymore. Look, between you and Emily, I know he loves you more. But I also know you want all of his love, and he can't give you that.""

I never thought I'd be getting emotional advice from Aaron...

"You still want to get back at him except I know it's killing you to obsess over this... So stop hurting yourself over someone like him. I can help you."

"How?" My voice shook as I looked up at him through my

tears.

"I'm throwing a party in a few days for my birthday. I want you to come." He smiled as he patted my head. I sniffled and he immediately hugged me, rubbing a hand on my back.

After a night of ups and downs and insanity, we finally embraced in earnest. There were no backhanded words or mocking jeers.

We made peace with each other.