

Chapter 8: Never

The receptionist stared in amazement as a beautiful being walked into his office. The people in the office gasped and whispered in awe as he passed, completely entranced by his presence.

William Doughby had long been used to the man's presence creating havoc and he could only grin. The boy was growing more and more good-looking by the day. When he had been in his thirties, he'd already been considered past his prime.

Looking at his face, William knew that the plan he had formed might not work today but he still hoped. "Welcome Demetri. Thank you for dropping by on such short notice."

Demetri spoke in a voice that resonated with power as he spoke shortly, "Just show me the girl first."

William Doughby sighed and gestured for Demon to follow him into the conference room. Demetri looked around the empty room and then at the older man cautiously.

"Don't tell me the paragon wife you've found for me is late."

"No, she is in my office next door. I just wanted you to look at her first and then meet her."

Demetri raised a brow at that. His attorney was known for his direct approach but there was hesitance in his words today...

Curiously, he turned towards the large one-way mirror on the other side of the room and saw the silhouette of a woman sitting there. Even from the back, she looked like a delicate beauty and the way her hair was tied up in a messy bun, made her feel natural. However, as the woman turned her head, Demetri's expression changed radically.

With accusing eyes, he glared at the old man and spoke through clenched teeth, "Never. This cannot be."

William had expected the denial. In fact, he would have been worried if Demetri had not denied it initially. But he had not expected this kind of vehemence.

"I asked for counsel, Mr Doughby! I did not expect you to make such a cruel joke. The girl on the other side of the glass... she is..."

"She is Nora Williams, Demetri. She is like my own granddaughter."

"She must be barely eighteen or nineteen!" Demetri bit out.

William sighed. Demetri remembered her age...

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"I'll see myself out. I do not want to look at that face again, Mr Doughby."

"Wait, Demetri." As Demetri made to leave the room, William continued, "Don't you think she is the best candidate? In the last few years the women you have dated have looked much like her, haven't they? You need to convince your grandfather that you are married to a woman of your choice. Do you think he would not have doubts about the identity of the woman you choose? Or maybe you are interested in marrying the heiress of the White Group? I think your grandfather is already in talks with..."

"You know too much, Mr Doughby. Why does the girl want to get married so young? She is interested in the money offered?" Demetri asked as he turned his back to the girl and looked intently at the man whose expression gave nothing away.

"No. In fact, she has no idea about the money that you were offering. As far as she is concerned you are looking for a wife and she is looking for a husband. I will be only responsible for up to the contract. The rest, I trust you, Demetri."

Demetri moved abruptly, and walked towards the door as he announced, "Let's get this over with." His voice carried an air of exasperation as if he was already burdened by the weight of the upcoming meeting.

Even though Demetri walked to the door decisively, his hand paused just before opening it. As if he needed to take a moment to brace himself.

Nora looked up as the door was pushed open and saw the man who entered. As her eyes met his, time seemed to have slowed down and she could only stare at the man as he walked in slowly.

Nora stood up and would have moved forward to greet him but his aura seemed to forbid it. A sense of foreboding went through her. This man was dangerous. Too dangerous. The urge to escape his gaze that seemed to be staring into her soul, Nora had to remind herself that this man was recommended by Grandpa William.

Her voice came out in a whisper as she spoke resolutely, "Hello. I have been waiting for you."

Demetri scoffed in his heart at her timid greeting. How could she possibly be convincing as his love interest when she appeared so meek and nervous? She could not even stand in his imposing presence and she would be able to stand by his side? William Doughby was going senile with his age.

With deliberate steps, Demetri closed the distance between them, expecting her to cower or take a step back. He wanted to see her falter, to prove to the old man orchestrating this charade that she was utterly unsuitable. But to his surprise, she held her ground, meeting his advance with a determined look in her eyes.

As they stood toe to toe, Demetri had to accept that he was surprised. He did not expect his girl to be so bold. Only his brothers had been able to withstand his intimidation and that too because they knew he would never really harm them.

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"You were waiting for me? Do you even know why we are meeting?"

The girl nodded and once again spoke slowly, "You need a pretend wife. And I need someone to pretend to be my husband."

His mouth kicked up at the simple straight answer. But he was not yet ready to accept the situation.

With a commanding touch, Demetri lifted her chin, guiding her gaze to meet his own. His fingers cradled her jaw and he did not miss the way she almost

flinched. " Not just husband and wife. Do you think you can handle pretending to be my lover? And be in love with me?"