

Chapter Ten

Adrik

“Fine. But I don’t have to like it,” she said as she crossed her arms underneath her breasts. Her pouty lips making me use every ounce of self-control to not lean in and kiss them. Instead, I laughed and kissed her forehead. She leaned into me, and I heard her breath catch ever so slightly. She took my hand into both of hers. Her cool hands made me feel a warmth in my body that I hadn’t experienced before.

“Thank you,” she said. She looked into my eyes, and I could tell that she was still very scared but trying to be strong in the moment. Ugh, I would rip this city apart to find that piece of shit that dared to hurt her.

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“Of course, solnishko. You should get some rest again.”

“Yeah, so about that, I’m gonna forego the whole nightmare thing for a while. I won’t be able to sleep again for a while.”

“Then, come. We will put some arnica on your purple neck,” I said as I grabbed her hand, pulling her out of bed to follow me to the kitchen. I was secretly very happy that I would have a few more minutes alone with her.

“Oh...wait...” she said as she gently resisted against me. I turned back to her and noticed that she was wearing an oversize t-shirt. And only an oversize t-shirt. My eyes trailed down her body, drinking in her porcelain skin. I caught myself starting to think about her long legs wrapped around me when I saw her pulling at the bottom of the t-shirt, trying to cover herself more. Seeing the

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embarrassment on her face, I kissed her forehead once more and said, “apologies. I’ll meet you in the kitchen.”

I didn’t have to wait long until she appeared in the kitchen, this time wearing a pair of leggings under her oversize shirt. As she walked in, she was pulling her long, curly hair into a ponytail. It just didn’t matter what she did, I found her absolutely stunning. The fact that she was so comfortable with me, in her home, while she just woke up and had zero makeup on, and seemingly didn’t care that she was in her pajamas was a new phenomenon for me. The women I had been with in the past were the type to look like they were about to go to a dinner party at any moment. A few of them even slept in full makeup. When I was younger, I thought it was attractive, but as I had gotten older, I found it more repulsive than anything. Beauty comes from within. When you spend so much time trying to make the

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outside look pretty, it's usually because the inside is ugly. This woman standing in front of me with zero makeup on, in her pajamas, with barely contained hair, a purple neck, and bruises on her arms was more beautiful than any woman I had ever seen.

She caught me staring at her and grinned slightly. "Hi."

Just her little smile made my whole world brighter. I couldn't help myself. I grabbed her hips and lifted her onto the counter in front of me. I adored the way she squealed and grabbed onto my arms to steady herself. Her laughter was infectious, and I found myself drunk on the sound. I stepped to the side to grab the arnica cream I picked up on the way over. She crisscrossed her legs so I could stand directly in front of her. I struggled to get the box open. She grabbed it from my hands and stabbed it with one of her

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thumb nails, opening it easily. She handed it back to me, with a very proud look on her face. I couldn't help but smile back at her.

“See? What would I do without you?”

Her grin widened and a small chuckle escaped her lips. I opened the tube of cream, squeezing out a small amount on my index finger. I reached up with my other hand and tilted her head back to give me full access to the now very colorful bruise on her neck. I touched the cream to her neck and noticed her flinch.

“Does it hurt?”

“No, it's okay. It was cold. It surprised me.”

I squeezed more cream onto my finger but warmed it between my index finger and thumb before applying it to her neck this time. Once I was done with her neck, I lifted the sleeve of her shirt and applied it

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to the bruises up and down her arms. I hated seeing any marks on her milky white skin, but at least I felt like I could help make them better.

I was finishing up with the smaller bruises around her wrists as she leaned back and uncrossed her legs, dangling one leg on either side of me. My breath hitched and I hoped she didn't notice. I kept my gaze on what I was doing, but I could feel her looking at me intently. Once I was done, I took both of her hands in mine and kissed the back of each one.

In a very quiet, almost whisper, I heard her say, "thank you."

I looked up to see she had tears threatening to fall. The tears making the colors in her eyes dance in the brighter light of the kitchen. I reached up and held the side of her face, concerned I had hurt her in some way. "No, why the tears? Did I

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hurt you?”

She chuckled. “No, the opposite, really. You could say I’m not used to people taking care of me. It’s a nice change.”

I felt that tightness in my chest return. Like a tear in my heart to hear that she had been mistreated in any way. Not knowing her past or what to say to make it better, I was at a loss. I just looked at her, still mesmerized by the dancing colors in her eyes. Without really thinking, I put my hand on the back of her head and pulled her toward me. I slowly leaned closer, watching her face to make sure she was okay with it. I felt her hand grasp my shirt and timidly pull me toward her. My lips touched hers. I felt her tense up, but then immediately relax, as she returned the kiss and pressed her lips to mine. Her legs moved closer to my body. I put my hands on either side of her face, gently holding her face while I deepened the kiss. She

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responded by parting her lips, allowing me access. It took all the self-control I had not to just devour her right then and there. She wrapped her arms around my neck, and I moved my hands down her body to her hips, scooting her closer to me. She squealed against my lips as she felt me pull her closer and instinctively wrapped her legs around my torso. I groaned as I deepened the kiss even more, tasting every inch of her mouth with my tongue. After a few moments, she pulled back slightly, looking into my eyes and over my face. She brought her hands to my face and lightly traced the features of my face. I closed my eyes, reveling in her light touch.

I felt her press her forehead to mine. I opened my eyes briefly. She was resting her forehead against mine, her eyes closed. I felt her inhale and a small sigh escaped her lips. I wrapped my arms around her waist and held her against me. I could feel the faint shaking in her legs and knew she

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was fighting demons. I squeezed tighter, trying to make her feel as safe as I could.

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Lisa Signore

OK, I have to say I am really enjoying this story.



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Lily Marks

love ❤️ this



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