

Billionaire's Accidental Wife

Chapter 15

"I know it's too hard to say no to my grandfather, but you're a business woman, right?" Shawn explained.

Catherine nodded, afraid of where this discussion was headed.

"Then you won't mind a small confidential proposition from me."

She caressed her arms to ward off goosebumps. "Make your point and get it over with, Mr. Richmond."

"Miss Brown, my point is, my grandfather likes you, and he wants to see you all the time," he said coolly. "I'm here to negotiate... and when he's out of the hospital, I'm taking him to the mansion."

"Go on, strike a bargain." She muttered and sat back in her chair, settled her laptop bag on the table, and pretended to brush the invisible dust off her immaculate but boring office attire as Shawn crouched on her table. D**n the chills his presence brought. This close, her hormones were going rascal again. And she fought against the flood of frustrated tears.

"As you know, I can help your brother's problem. Those paintings were lovely masterpieces, and I can give him contacts and clients willing to buy his art."

"And?" She thought, how on earth did he know about her problem? Her brother was good, very good at his art, too obsessed with his craft, but lacked the financial support to actually earn from a decent client or have his own gallery. However, how Mr. Richmond knew about it was a surprise. ?

"Well, I can't help him. But if you want help from me, I want something from you in return."

"Which is?"

"I want you back in my bed. For old time's sake. Surely a woman like you has no problem with s*x without commitments. In fact, by law, you are still my wife, but I do not want anything from you. Just once, let's get this out of our system. *Maybe* after a night of f****g each other, this... "he pointed to himself to her, "...this thing between us will disappear and, to make it adequately reasonable, my grandfather will be happy. After all, he was rooting for you, and maybe having you and I under one roof isn't a bad idea after one night of s*x. Let's get this silly l**t in our system and be done with it soon."

Dumbfounded!

She was being invisibly slapped by two massive, gigantic realities: that this man was nothing but an asshole.

Shocked!

The jerk added, "So what do you think?"

Rather than dress herself in the gear of hurt and anger, Catherine remembered her brother's desperation. Even though she'd never been there for him all the time, she couldn't leave him to a desperate and miserable future. If he was determined to achieve his goal, he wouldn't do it alone. The dismal image of her brother needing to live far away from her again made her feel like he was

a shattered boat out in the middle of the lake taking on water. He couldn't afford to drown.

But she has to think this through thick and thin.

"Not a good idea, Mr. Richmond, and for your information, there is nothing between us," she pointed back at him to herself. "Whatever you thought there was, it's obviously in your head only."

"Are you saying you haven't thought of me since you left my suite the other day?"

What the f**k is wrong with this man? She thought, how could he play her like this? Her heart gave a little flip. She tightened the grip on her laptop bag and looked him straight in the eye. "Hell now! And that's none of your business."

He rolled his impressively broad shoulders. "Then why are you really here? Why did you accept my offer? You can find a job better than being my secretary, remember? Or did you come back to play games?"

"I wouldn't-"

Before she could finish her sentence, Shawn's hand closed on hers, sending a jolt of insight riveting through her body. The solace with which he touched her surprised her senses. She picked up her laptop bag, then her purse.

She didn't flinch when he said, "Tell me the truth. You know you can't lie to me."

D**n, why does he know her better than anyone else? "I was always honest with you, Mr. Richmond, and your idea of helping my brother is way way stupid and degrading. And s-s*x with y you is never a good suggestion, and even if you didn't mention this to me, I like your grandfather, and yes, I will take care of him in the mansion." A wave of panic washed over her. Right now, all she wanted was to cry. How desperately she

wanted out now. Her heart had been shattered into pieces, her pride into even smaller pieces.

His ringtone broke the tension. He pulled his mobile phone from his back pocket and whispered to Catherine, "This conversation isn't finished."

The nerve!

He spoke a few harsh words as he turned to face the wall. His voice heightened. "Cousin, listen carefully. I don't care what she's threatening. Let her go to the papers. She's no different than any other parasite out there. I won't be blackmailed. She is out of her mind."

Was Mr. Richmond in some kind of trouble, again? With his so many girlfriends?

Then again, Shawn led a public life. All sorts of people slithered out of the financial world to get a piece of the Richmond fortune. The attention under which he dwelled had always frightened Catherine

The discomfort in her shoulder strengthened as she silently cursed the timing of the call. Her shoulder nerve endings already throbbed with the fervor created by his important and confidential stupid proposition, which was magnified by his darkening expression. What the hell was wrong with her? She was supposed to be running as far as she could get away from this man who never stopped yelling at his phone.

She released her grip on her laptop bag, sending it tumbling onto the floor. She took it back again,

then simply had to get what she needed and get the hell out of there. Fast.

And since nothing energized her more than the power of a deadline, she palmed her old iPhone and checked for an Internet connection so she could search for Edinburgh, Scotland's newest flight, and visit her brother. She needed to tell Dave about her work transitions before going to her secret husband's mansion on Thursday. Besides, Shawn was doing things to her body and mind she couldn't afford, not to mention the insult and degrading proposition, yet she was a little bit thrilled. Yes, she lied. Their sexual escapade in Vegas was always in her mind, and the nerve wracking incident in the hotel suite the other day never left her f*****g system either.

The Wi-Fi worked. Yes.

She scrolled through return flight schedules for the following day, Wednesday, while forcing her gaze away from Shawn's strong back. She needed to leave by tomorrow morning at the latest to get there in time to visit her brother's apartment.

Then she silently cursed the fact she'd have to stay in the whole COVID-19 lockdown with the one man who'd imprinted and shattered her heart into a million pieces at the same time. Yes, she wa

stupid. She never thought she could ever fall for him. A year ago, she just woke up one day and realized that she cared deeply for him and loved him even more in secret. Even with his too many girlfriends to even count on She ignored the fact that there was no way she would ever tell him how she felt. It was her secret and hers alone, and right now she wanted nothing but to cry her heart out and be done with the pain. She fell in love with the wrong man, who had the power to crush her insides with a few heated words. 1

She couldn't hate him though

This was her fault. All of it. She'd been the one to ignore his advances during the first two months of her job as his secretary without so much as a glance back at what happened to them in Vegas She even told him that there was no way she would even like him, nor did she intend to be one of his many girlfriends and f**k buddies. So the man stopped his advances and resumed his old life, giving her the cold shoulder and ignoring her for two years.

Under the right circumstances, wouldn't he have done the same? A little voice said.

Nothing is permanent in this world. The only person she could count on was herself. It was only a matter of time before Shawn would've moved on anyway. Everyone did. By choice or by force, everyone walks out of her life eventually.

A deep sigh escaped her as the pain between her shoulders intensified. D**n, she would never do heavy lifting again

After a minute, she focused on the four-inch screen in her hand and scrolled

Having located a flight, Catherine entered her payment information and waited for confirmation Denied " She had to blink to read the shocking word on her screen.

How could that be? It's not possible!

She pulled up her credit card statement online

Intensely, she reviewed the screen. She'd been a few days late on her last couple of fees, sure, but she'd paid her bills, fees included Desperate, she scanned every line of her statement for an

indication, some reason as to why her credit would be refuted. The twist in her stomach fastened, throwing surges of revulsion rippling through her body. There it was, Plain as the day is long and it was never a good sign, this was alarming, She was broke as hell.

“OVER THE CREDIT LIMIT.” 13

She was way in over her head. Unbelievable. Her brother, Dave must be in deep s**t to even use their life savings.

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