

Chapter 18 Dad's Surgery

Liana POV

My eyelids are still heavy, and I must get them open. I want to sleep more but my doorbell does not stop ringing for a second.

I stammer out of bed and inch as my sore muscles protest against the movement. Holy mother, Axel gave me one hell of a workout last night. I know full well I am a novice when it comes to intimacy, but I swear, that man is insatiable.

I glance at my watch and grunt as I notice it is only seven in the morning. No wonder I am still this tired. Whoever is at my door must have a bloody good excuse.

"I'm coming," I shout as I pull a robe over my naked body and run to the mirror to quickly tame my hair.

"Dammit," I grunt as I see the monstrous hickey on my neck. I realized he had a fascination with kissing my neck, but I had no idea he was going to leave a mark.

How the hell am I to cover this in the summer? I grunt as I rummage through my closet. Thanks to Wyatt, my options really are limited. I am left with no other choice than a halter neck dress.

The doorbell starts its annoying chiming at the same time as my phone rings. Bloody hell, what is going on this morning?

"Hello?" I answer without looking at the number as I walk barefoot to the door.

"Why aren't you opening the door?" Axel asks annoyed.

"Why did you leave at three in the morning just to be back at seven?" I snap at him. "You could've spared us both the agony if you stayed."

"Is that an invitation?" His voice is low and seductive, and I roll my eyes as I yank open the door.

Stunned, I look at the three men in front of me.

"It's not you," I whisper.

"No," he chuckles. "It's my men coming to replace the door. They phoned and said you're not answering the door."

Only when he says the words, do I notice the door and toolbox they are holding.

"Just a moment," I smile as I quickly rush back to my room.

"Are you fucking insane?" I hiss as I gather the evidence from our passionate night and push it underneath the bed. "You can't send them at this hour without a warning. One look at the bedroom and they'll know what happened here."

"Are you ashamed?" I cannot tell if he is serious or teasing me.

"You're such a jerk," I grunt as I end the call and walk back to the front door.

"Good morning," I am a little out of breath. "Sorry for making you wait. I had no idea you were coming."

My phone rings again and I decline the call when I read Axel's name before I switch it off. The things I want to say to him at this moment do not require an audience.

I lead the men to my room and hurry to the kitchen and turn on the kettle.

"Hellooo?" A female voice sings from the front door and I close my eyes. What now?

I take a deep breath and march to the door. A woman in her early forties is standing on my doorstep, holding a pie.

"Hi," I greet cautiously as I wipe over my hair. I am acutely aware that I have not combed my hair or brushed my teeth.

I am not ready to face the world and now I am faced with a Stepford wife. Her hair is tied into a perfect bun and her makeup is flawless.

"I'm Carol," she smiles brightly. "Here's something to welcome you to the neighbourhood."

She pushes the pie into my hands, and I blink a couple of times to regain focus.

"Thank you," I pull myself together and smile at her. "Please come in."

"I'm sorry, things are a bit hectic this morning," I apologize self-consciously as we walk to the kitchen. "I wasn't expecting visitors so early and haven't cleaned up yet."

"Oh, I'm sorry," Carol says. "I can come back another time."

"No," I laugh softly. "I wasn't referring to you. I'm talking about the men fixing the bathroom door."

"Drew told me I shouldn't come so early," she replies. "But I have been dying to meet you."

"Drew?" I ask as I try to figure out how he fits into all of this.

"My husband," she smiles lovingly. "I wanted to stop by yesterday, but he told me you were busy."

"I'm delighted to meet you, Carol," instantly, I like her. If she is mated to Drew, I know we will get along.

"Would you like coffee?" I offer as I place the pie down.

"I don't want to impose," she smiles politely. "I only wanted to introduce myself."

"Nonsense," I take out another mug. "I would love some company."

"In that case, you make the coffee and I'll cut the pie," she says.

Carol talks nonstop as we enjoy our coffee and pie. But I do not mind it one bit. She is funny, interesting and entertaining. It is not long before I spill my guts and tell her everything about Wyatt and how I ended up living here.

The men have replaced the door and left hours ago and it is nearly lunchtime when Drew walks into the kitchen.

"You're home early," Carol looks at him in surprise.

"Axel is in a mood," Drew pulls a nervous face before he kisses her. "Angela showed up at the office again."

For reasons unbeknown to me, an uncomfortable feeling settles in my heart. All the women are in love with Axel. Why does it bother me that Angela is one of them?

"And you should turn your phone back on," Drew makes his eyes big at me. "Axel's looking for you."

"He can kiss my ass," I grunt and Carol gapes at me.

"You shouldn't say things like that," Carol says with big eyes. "You will get into trouble."

"Honestly, Carol, I don't care," I say nonchalantly, and I mean it. "If he didn't go all Hulk on the door last night, he wouldn't have sent people at the crack of dawn to fix it. And I would've been in a much more pleasant and compliant mood."

"Why did he break the door?" Drew chuckles mischievously. "Did you lock yourself in there by accident?"

"It was no accident," I grunt. "He was overbearing, and I needed space."

"I never heard of such a thing," Carol laughs nervously. "No woman in her right mind will tread at the future alpha like that and get away with it."

"She didn't get away with it," Drew laughs heartedly. "That's why he broke down the door."

"And nearly gave me a heart attack in doing so," I join in the laughter.

"But why ..."

"Liana," Drew cuts off his wife and he looks at me seriously. "Jokes aside, phone Axel. It's about your father."

"Excuse me," I mumble as I get up and rush to my room to get my phone. Why did Drew not say that when he got here?

Hastily I turn on my phone and stare in horror at all the messages and missed calls. Even my mother has phoned. With trembling fingers, and my heart beating in my throat, I dial Axel's number.

"Where the hell have you been?" Axel answers without saying hello.

"At home," I whimper as I sit down on my bed. "I forgot to switch my phone back on."

"Your father's surgery has been moved up to this afternoon," he barks in my ear. "Drew will take you to the hospital."

"Oh ... okay," I stutter as I process the information.

"You need to leave in thirty minutes," he says and ends the call without waiting for my reply.

"s**t," I mumble as I get up and run to the kitchen.

"My dad's surgery has been moved up and ..."

"I know, Liana," Drew says calmly. "Get ready, I'm waiting right here."

"Thanks," I shout as I dart to my room.

I take the quickest shower recorded in history and brush my teeth. I put on the same dress that I was wearing earlier. I do not have anything else suitable for the hospital that will cover the hickey. I brush my hair and tie it into a ponytail.

"I'm ready," I shout as I grab my handbag and sandals.

"Let's go," Drew smiles as he walks to the car.

"Where's Carol?" I ask as I lock the door.

"She already went home," he explains as he holds the passenger door open for me and I get it.

"I like her," I admit as Drew starts the engine.

"So do I," Drew chuckles as he brings the car into motion.

"You were right about Axel," I say as I put on my sandals. "He's not happy."

"Can you blame him?" Drew asks gently. "You've been ignoring him the entire morning."

"He asked for it," I snort as I take out a hand mirror to apply makeup.

"Liana," Drew sighs heavily. "This is none of my business and I swore I wouldn't get involved, but you shouldn't treat Axel like this. It's not fair."

"Drew, I know you mean well," I look at him. "But my relationship with Axel is complicated, and ..."

"You're sleeping with him," Drew surprises me.

"How did you know?" I gape at him. I am not even going to bother denying it.

"I did the math," he grins. "Axel won't tolerate an employee disrespecting him like you do."

"I feel so ashamed," I admit softly before I confess everything. Talking about it takes a moment to unburden my shoulders but at the same time, embarrassment and disgrace hit me.

"I'm a despicable person," I wring my fingers together and avoid looking at Drew. I cannot bear to see the disappointment on his face.

"Don't be so hard on yourself," he surprises me. "I've known Axel my entire life and now I know your never. You approached him for a loan. He's the one that propositioned you. Axel would never pay a woman to sleep with him. He likes you, Liana. That's the only logical explanation."

"That's just stupid," I protest but I cannot deny the slither of excitement. "If he liked me, he would've said so and asked me on a date or something."

"And would you have said yes?" Drew asks softly.

I do not answer him, and I look out of the window at the passing scenery. Truth be told, I would have said no. How can I possibly go on a date with a man when I am still pining over Wyatt?