

The CEO's Ten Million Dollar Wife by R.C.BRIE

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Her Past

With Dom as her handsome escort, they entered the venue packed with guests and artists.

Wearing a black backless gown, with a long slit that starts from the middle of her slender and flawless thigh, men's intense gazes followed her.

If she was gorgeous four years ago, she is more stunning and voluptuous now. She aged perfectly despite living in a simple village where farming is the basic livelihood of the people.

Walking around the display of all the masterpieces of different talented artists, her eyes searched for a particular creation. The painting of herself.

She was curious about people's reaction or maybe their perceptions of Bared Soul. For several years, it was just displayed inside her room, with only she could see it. Tonight it was displayed for an audience to feast.

The painting does not reveal anything of her sensitive parts. Her pose strategically covered them as part of the concept. But instead of giving her privacy, it created chaos in the imagination of those who would see it. Her perfection captured by Dom's paintbrush is dangerously taunting. Anyone who would see her would want to know more of what was hidden.

But what draws the audience is her eyes. The soulful sadness reflected in her clear light brown eyes is capable to drown you with solemn emotions.

Even she didn't realize her eyes expressed such sadness, which Dom captured. It was the time she was cradling her broken heart. And the time she discovered a wonderful gift growing inside her. Her brave little Lucy, Lucien Wright's child.

A crowd is starting to gather in one corner, which caught their attention. Walking towards it, she could hear whispers.

"She is perfect but why such sadness?"

"It's breaking my heart looking into her eyes"

"What kind of misery she was suffering to have that kind of pain?"

"Such perfection... But it hurts me looking at her eyes"

"I'm afraid to know what made her hurt that much"

Hushed conversations rang in every corner as several people were discussing something, capturing their curiosity. Reaching the spot, they easily spotted the Bared Soul. And people are looking at the painting with earnest interest.

Standing nearby, they watch and listen to the discussion about Dom's masterpiece.

Critics, art collectors, and several guests exchanges thoughts about his creation. And listening to all of them, Lexie was fascinated by how broad their understanding of the craft was. For an ordinary person like her, she sees every picture as a picture. May it be a painting, a photograph, a scribble, a drawing, and the like. But for these people, it's beyond what has been painted or printed on papers or canvass. They see life in it.

There is meaning in every stroke of the paintbrush or pen.

To understand them more, she compared them with design, the thing she is great at.

Others may see clothes, bags, and shoes as such. But for her, she could see beyond a

good stitch and great prints. Design is her art so is painting for Dom.

They have been watching for quite some time when someone notices their presence, especially her. Several pairs of eyes turn in her direction, which made her self-conscious.

"Gabriel Simon" a man offered his hand to Dom who accepted it.

"Dominic Lint" Dom responded as they shook hands. After which, he turns to her, and with a charming smile carved on his face, he extended his hand towards her.

"Alexzia Montes" she politely smiles as she accepts the man's hand. Staring at his face, she saw him raise a brow as if trying to figure out something. Does he know her?

"Alexzia Montes" his smile widens as he tightly grasps her hand, which surprised her a bit. Though the man remains polite, she has the inkling he has something in his mind involving her.

"Nice to meet you two, the artist and the masterpiece" Gabriel raves playfully.

She doesn't know why, but she blushed. It's been a long time she was complimented by a stranger, not to mention a handsome man. She was used to the playfulness of her neighbors, especially Dom and his family, but coming from someone, looking as prominent as Gabriel Simon, she was flustered,

"Thank you Mr. Simon for such flattery" Lexie playfully retorted. A smile graced her beautiful face.

"Yes, it is. But I don't usually throw flattery. I know how to appreciate beauty but very few could capture my attention" Gabriel seriously muttered while earnestly staring at her. His intense gaze made her more flustered. But not enough to lose her composure.

"Well, thank you" she charmingly responds. She was used to flattery, though it made her uncomfortable, she will never allow it to deter her confidence.

"By the way, this is my card. You could contact me for anything you need, especially with this kind of art. I'm a collector and I know a lot of people within this circle" he smiles as he handed them his card.

"Thank you, Mr. Simon. We appreciate your attention" Dom was the one who becomes ecstatic as he receives the card. If Gabriel Simon is true to his words, Dom would greatly appreciate his help. For an artist who is just making a name, connection to relevant people is what he needs.

"Don't hesitate to contact me. I will introduce you to people who would love to meet you" Gabriel added, which made Dom smile widely.

"Especially this masterpiece" pointing at Lexie's portrait, not far from them.

"Though it breaks my heart to look into these beautiful eyes, I would love that painting to graze my home" he softly announces while Lexie was looking at the painting, unaware Gabriel was looking at her.

She was startled upon realizing where the man's eyes were the whole time after she turns to him.

"I don't want to ask why such sadness. For a gorgeous woman like you, what or who could make you this sorrowful, but as I had said, I won't dig into it. I want to keep the mystery surrounding this painting. It gives more thrill to have it and maybe, I'm hoping someday you could tell me, why?" he playfully gushed to her.

"Nothing more interesting than what is captured by the paint, Mr. Simon" she playfully retorted back.

“As they said, a picture paints a thousand words. And there will always be something interesting in someone you are interested with” he teasingly smirks.

“Such a sugary word, Mr. Simon. My partner is listening” she sneers but he just chuckles.

“I could tell who you were to each other. You forgot, I have an eye for beauty but I’m keen on details when I’m interested. You know what I mean, Miss Alexzia” he softly declares, giving her a challenging look.

Lexie wanted to counter him but he looks serious and certain of his words. He seems to be too knowing, making her cautious of her possible retort.

His intense gaze is making her uneasy, seeming to be unveiling her soul. She could feel the man knows her more than what she showed him. The glint in his eyes shows a certain familiarity, which she cannot recall she had any with him.

“Guests, ladies, and gentlemen the auction is about to start. Please take your seats now”

She was busy with her thoughts when an announcement filled the entire hall. As a response, everyone started to head to their respective seats.

“Surely, I will be robbed tonight. Count me in bidding for your masterpiece, Mr. Lint. See you around Miss Alexzia” Gabriel raves and left but not before winking at Lexie.

“Someone got someone smitten” Dom whispers in her ears, unaware of the drilling eyes on them. She playfully rolls her eyes, making Dom chuckle.

Despite enjoying the event, Lexie feels something peculiar. The uneasiness she felt earlier intensified. Her chest suddenly rumbled from her thundering heart. Taking a deep breath, she tried to relax her tensed nerves. Thinking it was just due to the upcoming sale of her painting, she dismisses the thought.

Dom brought her to their assigned table and made her seat. She smiles at him before looking around. But as she scan the entire place full of prominent people, she froze when her sight caught a familiar figure.

Stunned, she pales as she stares at the eyes staring back at her. Everything seems to freeze. She could only hear indistinct voices ringing from afar. She can’t hear anything but the violent beat of her heart. Her head seemed to explode.

Suddenly, she regretted the gown she wore when the chilling coldness engulfed her entire body. The last person she wanted to see is just across the room.

Standing not far from their table is CEO Lucien Wright with his piercing eyes set on her.