

Her Secret 26

CHAPTER 26

“Ah...River...stop pushing...” Lana let out a soft groan, feeling her body being stretched out at an alarming state. She could feel her limbs being pushed to its limit with a painful burn by River’s brutal assault. River sighed in response to her over dramatic reaction while completely ignoring her continuous pleads for him to stop. “It...hurts!” Lana cried out when she noticed that River was clearly not paying any attention to her as he continued to push against her.

“Stop whining. You wanted to do this, remember?” River countered with an absent-minded glance.

Lana looked down at him with a frown. “Hah...I didn’t think you’d be...such an aggressive asshole. My bad, I should’ve guessed it!” she snapped at him as she turned her face away. She then carefully reached down to brush his hand away from her lower back, trying her hardest to steady herself so she wouldn’t fall off. After a few tries of Lana slapping at the back of his hand to indicate that he should move it, River ignored her as he always did and his hand did not budge an inch. His persistence was getting on her nerves.

She then grabbed the edges of his fingers and tried to pry his hand away from her. River rolled his eyes at her feeble attempt and proceeded to swat it away with a single swipe, like one would do a common fly. Lana pulled her hand back as though his touch was fire and was about to spew profanities dedicated to him, when River without warning pushed her further. The ladder that he was holding steady with his free hand slightly wobbled from the sudden impact.

“River!!” Lana frantically cried out loud as her hands went to grip tightly on the top of the ladder. The cool metal stung her palms from the intensity of her grip.

“Calm down, you won’t fall as long as you don’t move all of a sudden.”

“Oh? So it’s my fault that you moved the fucking ladder?”

“If you just did what you had to do then we won’t be in this situation right now,” he argued, realizing that his hand was still firmly pressed against her lower back for support. He placed pressure on his fingers, feeling them dig deeper into her skin. He could feel the warmth her body offered even though he was touching her over her t-shirt. Strangely, the sensation was one that he could get used to.

“Can you just let me go already? It’s starting to really piss me off.” Lana snapped. It was evident to her that she was starting to be more aware of his presence, especially since his grip was dangerously close to her bottom. She could feel herself slightly blushing from the mere thought of it, but her anger was overshadowing any other emotion at that point.

“You do know that if I move my hand away, you’d probably fall off the ladder right? I mean, if that’s what you want then okay. But don’t blame me for anything.” He said, loosening his grip, but his hand

still lingered over her back in a protective manner.

“Wow, how rude. I’m not that clumsy! If anything, you are doing a pretty bad job at holding the ladder still. Are those muscles just for show?” she sneered as she glared down at him.

River clicked his tongue but forced a smile. “Look, if you weren’t so stubborn and didn’t fucking insist that you wanted to put the banner up yourself, then we would probably be done with that by now,” he gestured at the banner hanging loose over the booth.

Lana could feel her neck straining from looking down at him. “I only wanted to do it because you kept teasing me about my height!” she growled.

“How is it teasing when I was simply making an observation?” He raised an eyebrow at her.

“Hah! Observation my ass. That condescending tone of yours was really telling!” she fired back.

“But look where we are now, my point was clearly proven. You’re so short that you can’t even reach the top of the booth.” He sighed.

Lana felt the last string of her patience snap. She lifted her leg that was closest to River off the ladder and kicked in his direction. She was hoping that she would nudge his side just to get him to shut up but River could see her actions coming from a mile away. He took a step back and watched as Lana’s balance on the ladder faltered. Her leg dangled over the ladder clumsily. She attempted to reposition her leg on the ladder but this only led to her slipping on the edge and the next thing she knew, she was falling off the ladder.

She shut her eyes tightly and braced herself to make impact with the hard ground below but River reacted swiftly by holding his arms out. He easily caught her in his arms before her body could even reach the ground. Lana opened her eyes slowly, wondering why there was no harsh impact. She met River’s azure gaze looking down at her.

At that moment, she could feel her heart threatening to escape her throat from the adrenaline she just experienced. But at the same time, her senses felt heightened as she could feel River’s clenched muscles against her back and under her knees. He was carrying her as though she did not weigh anything. His face was composed and rather expressionless. She averted her gaze from his before and mentally scolded herself to never do something that stupid when she’s on a ladder ever again.

She wanted to open her mouth and thank River for saving her but before she could catch her breath or even allow the adrenaline to pass by, she noticed that Maddison, Steven and Mrs. Hathaway were back with the supplies. She felt her face heat up as they were watching them in complete silence.

Maddison looked completely baffled but as for Steven and Mrs. Hathaway, they looked almost happy to see the two in such a position.

“...What the fuck are you two doing...?” Maddison asked hesitantly, unsure if she even wanted to know what was going on with the two of them.

Before either one of them could answer, Steven placed the boxes that were in his hands on the ground in a rapid motion and pulled out his phone. “Suzie is not going to believe this!” he exclaimed as he positioned his phone to get a picture of Lana being carried bridal style by River.

“Hey! Stop that!” Maddison warned as she tried to block the camera with her free hand. Even if she did not know what relationship River and Lana had with each other, she knew that the potential rumours that might spread would be a hassle for River to deal with.

Lana was so stunned at the entire situation that she found herself at a loss of words. She then snapped back to reality and was about to tell River to put her down but before she could say or do anything, River let out a tired sigh. He then proceeded to drop her to the ground. She fell on her bottom with a painful thud.

“Argh!” she groaned as the pain spread rapidly throughout her body in warning. Thankfully she wasn’t dropped from a high height but the sheer impact her body made to the ground was enough to make her eyes water. She was certain that her butt would be bruised on the next day.

Steven and Maddison froze in place when they witnessed what just happened, unsure how to react.

“That’s karma for you.” River whispered to her with a sneer. His expression then changed into a concerned look. “Oh, I’m so sorry! I slipped.” He said loudly for the other three to hear but it was clearly a fake apology.

The edge of Lana’s lips twitched into a forced smile. “You fucking...” she muttered at him. She then stood up with a huff and dusted her pants. “No harm done, but thanks for the help earlier!” she forced herself to say in an enthusiastic manner.

River scoffed as he walked past Lana and made his way to the ladder. She watched silently as he tied the banner on the top of the booth with ease. He hopped off the ladder and gave Lana a side-way smirk. Lana’s hand twitched, desperately wanting to punch that smirk off his face. She then started to wonder if she could even survive the entirety of founder’s day with River constantly being there by her side.

It was the week of the Rosecliff founder’s day and after school the students and teachers would head over to the town square to help set up the stalls and booths for the weekend. Lana and the rest of the ticket booth team members followed Mrs. Hathaway to where the booth was located. She told Lana and River to set up the booth by hanging a welcome banner over it while Maddison, Steven and her went to pick up some other supplies.

Everything was going smoothly as River pulled out the ladder and positioned it by the booth while Lana unrolled the banner to pass to him. She thought that maybe they could go about their day without any petty arguments building up between them but River just had to open his big mouth.

After an uncalled for insult over Lana's short stature, she decided to put the banner on herself just to spite him. But, she was too short to even reach the top of the booth, hence leading River to push her forward in an attempt to make her stretch forward so they could finish their job faster. But of course, nothing ever goes as planned when the two of them are together.

"Are you okay...?" Steven asked as he slowly approached Lana.

Lana turned and glared at him. "Did you take it?" she said through clenched teeth.

He laughed nervously as he slowly backed away from her, pretty certain that she was about to attack him at any moment. "I don't know what you're talking about..." he averted his gaze.

"The picture!" she hissed. "If you took it you better delete that shit right now, Steven Choi!" she scolded.

"No! Chill! Maddison blocked my camera...so I didn't take it..." he replied, clearly saddened over that fact.

"Good. And Steven...if you ever mention this to Suzie or anyone else, I will hunt you down." She threatened.

Steven swallowed hard and dropped his gaze down to the floor in defeat. "Yes, ma'am..." he mumbled.

Lana walked away from him, trying her best to calm herself before the growing wrath inside her exploded in a fiery fit.