

# Love Me in the Dark - Chapter 5. The Boss

The Boss

KREW

One thing I loved about being away from the city, I could focus on things at hand, making my work a lot easier. I had my office all to myself without someone barging in, and no traffic to piss me off and waste my time.

Aside from the charities I supported, I found more ways to help in my own way and be the son Dad had raised me to be. When I met Anna and Caleb, I realized how fortunate I was to have certain privileges that others had not.

“Can I help?” River asked warily.

Still, I tried and overlooked the fact that we were going to live under the same roof together. I fought with Kai over the phone when I told him about the woman he wanted to buy her silence was with me, thanked my sister. Considering she was a Rouge, Kai became raving mad.

“Make yourself useful. Just don’t break anything.” I cooked in the kitchen once a week to help Anna feed her guests, and now I just found an annoying and hot as fuck partner in crime. Her kitchen was old-school to the stone oven she used. Anna was very hands-on and very particular with cooking styles. She used most of her spices from the herbs she planted in her garden. And I would like to think it helped save mother earth, not that I was an environmentalist.

“I don’t know you can cook,” River remarked.

“Then you don’t know anything about me. You should try to be a little bit less judgmental to someone you don’t know shit about.” I was a douche again, but that was the truth. She did judge me even though she apologized profoundly.

She silently picked up the knife.

“I hope you’re not planning on using that on me.”

Instead of answering me with her sass, she sliced some mushrooms in silence. I felt terrible that I couldn’t keep my lividness to myself. She did change my life, though, but I learned to forgive her a long time ago, and she never had to ask. I wasn’t also this douche. I used to keep my opinion to myself rather than sharing my emotions, but with her, I couldn’t keep my mouth shut.

Still reveling in silence, she grabbed the bread and took the poor thing’s fate in her hands.

“If you wanna stay with me, and the fact that I’m now your boss, we should learn how to communicate. Don’t think for a minute that I would be lenient because you’re a friend of my sister. You’re now my employee, and you talk to me with respect when I am talking to you. That’s what an employee should do.”

“Yes, Mr. Selik.” Irritated countenance had crossed her beautiful feature. Call me Mr. Selik again, or you find your hands pinned above your head as I press you against this wall.

Two hours later, we were in front of three platters full of Artichoke crostini with mushrooms.

We had breakfast in silence. I spent an hour stealing glances at River while she appreciated the vast lush view around us. Up to this moment, I couldn’t shake off how beautiful her eyes were, so mesmerizing that I could get lost with a little effort. And how could I ever forget what we did in that break room? That was one of the boldest things I’d ever done in my life. I was supposed to ask her

out and tell her what I knew, but things didn't go as I planned when she was so gorgeous and showing some interest.

She was like an angel back then, so delicate, pure, and innocent as she stared at me with those big blue eyes, then I took that opportunity handed to my on a silver platter—I kissed her. Here we go again. I couldn't believe I was bringing this up again.

Finally, we arrived at my house, and still keeping her mouth shut.

“Meet me in my office in ten minutes.” I didn't like companions a lot when it was only to waste my time and strength, but they said no man is an island. I just disagreed with people doing the work for me when I could do it on my own, or when someone made decisions for me—what to do even to clothes I should wear. It would only piss me off.

She nodded before she headed upstairs. For the last four years, I learned a few things about River Rouge. She'd been working as an assistant in an advertising agency., had a roommate named Journey. She was a dog lover but didn't have a pet. She was a foodie, coffee lover, and disliked white chocolate. Obviously, no boyfriend at this moment, but she'd been on a date a couple of times.

I wondered why it did not work, though. On the other hand, and as selfish as I was, I was pretty damn happy about it.

A knock on the door interrupted my thoughts.

“Come in.” I kept my eyes glued to the screen of my laptop, but I could feel her checking out of my office.

Nothing too fancy about this room other than books on huge and tall shelves as a prop, the fern Anna gave me, a black couch, and my desk. She didn't have to know that I had a secure man cave in this house with state-of-the-art surveillance. When I told her I would keep her safe, I meant every

word I said. After I moved in here three years ago, I hired a company specialized in building a panic room to do something for me in case of an emergency. That was how I had a high-end office equipped with bulletproof walls that were built to withstand intruders and even hurricanes. It had an ultra-resistant and impenetrable armored door with cutting-edge technology that included biometric recognition opening.

River had to gain my trust first to know that kind of ultra-secure sanctuary in this house existed, unless it was necessary, or her life could be in imminent danger.

“What is exactly the work you offered? My last job was assistant—”

“I know.”

“How?” I could sense her clamping her mouth shut.

“I did a background check on you.” One big fat lie. But she didn’t have to know. “You’re a good girl. Not a single parking ticket? That’s impressive. I wondered if it has something to do with the cop’s nephew?”

“I don’t think it’s any—”

I rose my gaze, drilling into hers. “Don’t fuck with me, River. You screwed me once, and I won’t let that happen again.” Asshole move, Krew. Jesus, how did I turn to be so presumptuous? Mom would not be so proud of me for how I acted toward a fine lady.

Her spine stiffened, face turned pale. She drew her bottom lip into her mouth. Damn, I’d love to be the one to do that. Christ! I shifted my gaze off of her, or I wouldn’t be able to drag it away any longer. River was like a Renaissance art. The more you kept it, the higher its value.

Fuck. Now, I'd fucked it up royally, and I could feel her slipping through my fingers, but I would not apologize for my action.

Denying would only make a piece of shit. There was something about River the first time I looked at her picture like a warmth filling my chest—a surge of protectiveness imbued inside me. It was always here somewhere deep down, until now.

Now that River was here, I should have done something—to impress her. Yet here I was, tragically failing. Instead, I was pissing her off for some stupid reasons—my little payback. Not that I could do anything about it—it was a human instinct, a defense mechanism.

Forget impressing her, Krew. Shit.

River was now my employee, and I would never fuck an employee. I had a code, and I had no intention of breaking it even if it was River lying naked in my bed. It was not that she wanted to or willing to, she made it pretty clear the first time. Besides, she was here to hide from that asshole who was frightening her to death.

“My PI is already working on your case. I hope you don't mind me giving the authority to search and watch your apartment if in case your boyfriend would appear. I can call someone to inform your friend if you wish to know that you're safe somewhere.”

“Thank you. He's not my boyfriend, and he didn't call. He just appeared out of nowhere—”

“It doesn't matter now.” He wouldn't be any longer if he was. “What matters is once we gather enough evidence to put your stalker in jail, you can have your life back, do things you want. As of now, everything you do is on my terms. You won't go out of this house without my permission. The security agency I hired is adding cameras to my property as we speak. Your safety is crucial to me.

Among other things. I promised my sister to keep you safe, and this is what I'm going to do whether you like it or not."

"I can't afford—"

"Not everything has a price tag, River," I say drily. "Contrary to your fucking beliefs."

She swallowed uncomfortably. "I'm—"

"Funny how three years of resentment had changed someone. You've been apologizing a lot since you arrived."

"I was about to say I'm grateful." A faint smile lifted the corner of her mouth.

"Whatever you say." I lifted the bags from the floor and put them on top of the desk. "These are for you." I pulled out two boxes from my drawer. "And these where you can start your job. You won't call anyone except Kryz and me. Do you understand?"

She nodded.

"I need more than that."

"Yes, sir. I won't," she replied quickly, almost comical.

"No social media." She was just like Krystyn, posting anything the camera could capture, until two weeks ago.

"I get it. No social media, no calls, email to friends, and whatnot. I kinda Wikihow to get rid of stalkers, but he still managed to find me."

“Not anymore. Hopefully, if you follow what I told you. And knowing that your stalker is a police captain’s nephew, it would be hard to get rid of him—”

“Get rid of him?”