

## Surprise 124

### Chapter 124 Let Me Go

The following afternoon, Cameron drove Courtney to the hotel.

“Do you want me to go in with you?” Cameron asked teasingly, wagging her eyebrows. “We might bump into Alexander, and if it gets awkward for you, I could give him an answer on your behalf.”

“Would it kill you to shut up about this?” Courtney rolled her eyes in exasperation. “Pop the trunk. I’ll leave Tina in your capable hands for now.”

“Got it,” Cameron answered, leaning into her seat. She winked at Courtney mischievously and said, “Instead of worrying about everything else, you ought to think about how you could work things out on your end, like finding a step-dad for Tina or something.”

At this, Courtney could muster no comeback. Ever since this morning, all Cameron could talk about was Alexander Duncan, which made Courtney wonder if the man had bribed her into bringing his name into every conversation.

Courtney’s mind was finally at ease after she had taken her suitcase and waved Cameron off. She went into the hotel and made her way to the room that had been arranged for her, then swiped the key card to unlock the door.

“Why am I given a suite?” she muttered in surprise. Pulling her suitcase behind her, Courtney headed toward the bedroom. She hadn’t paid much attention to the text message when she first received it, and she had been under the impression that she would be staying in a regular executive room. However, upon her arrival at the door, Courtney had wondered why she was staying on a floor that was designated for suites only.

The suite that she stood in now was a spacious one, and a partition ran between the bedroom and the living area. Just as Courtney entered the bedroom with her suitcase, she heard the sound of a door opening, followed by what could only be described as a scene that made her want to jump into a cold shower.

Alexander had emerged from the attached bathroom with only a large, white towel slung low on his hips. His hair was still dripping with water, the droplets running down his sun-kissed chest before disappearing into the groove between the towel and his skin. The sight of him sent Courtney’s thoughts running wild.

“Like what you see?” Alexander teased, regarding her with a wicked grin.

Courtney hastily tore her gaze away from him before snapping, “What are you doing here?”

Alexander took a step toward her and drawled, “You mean, you didn’t know that I’ve been staying in this suite?”

“I-I didn’t know,” Courtney stammered, swallowing convulsively. “I must have made a mistake...” Her voice trailed off as she dragged her suitcase and began to turn toward the way she came.

But before she could make it past the partition, she heard the clear, unmistakable electronic 'beep' of the door being unlocked, followed by the sound of the room service attendants conversing.

Courtney felt her stomach drop. She turned around and quickly got onto her tiptoes as she clamped a hand over Alexander's mouth. Her eyes swept the room frantically before she dragged Alexander toward the balcony outside the bedroom, thereafter shielding the both of them behind the curtain. She knew she would have a hard time clearing things up if the both of them were caught in the bedroom in their current state.

Now that they were hidden from sight, Courtney let out a breath of relief until a strong grip clasped around her wrist and pushed her hand away. "What the hell are you doing?" Alexander demanded through gritted teeth.

Courtney clenched her jaw and looked up to meet his dark gaze, pleading, "Just bear with me for a while, okay? For the sake of my job."

Seeing her like this, Alexander smirked as a mischievous gleam flashed in his eyes. He bent his knees ever so slightly, and took one step toward her. Courtney faltered at this and stepped back. However, Alexander took another step forward.

Courtney found herself helpless as her back pressed against the cool glass. She could take no further step backward, and Alexander was still closing in what little was left of the space between them. His hands gripped her shoulders, and he pinned her against the glass. He leaned forward, his broad frame eclipsing the sun.

"Let me go," Courtney protested in a low voice, her eyes wide with horror.

How could she forget that Alexander had no respect for boundaries when she was left alone with him? And why did she even bother dragging him out here in the first place? She could have left him in the room to deal with the room service! Where's your brain, Courtney?

Alexander was simply teasing Courtney and had no other intentions, but seeing her outraged like this made him realize how adorable she was when anger got the better of her. In fact, she looked very much like a defensive kitten; it was obvious she wanted to kill him, but there was little she could do in these circumstances. Her frustration amused Alexander to no end.

"Why is there a suitcase here?" The voice that came from the bedroom seemed to cut through the tension between them.

Courtney paled, feeling like her heart was pounding out of her chest. She clenched her teeth while she glared at Alexander, as if warning him that she would not hesitate to bite him if he were to attempt anything funny.

"It must be President Duncan's since he arrived at noon. He's meeting important guests tomorrow, and seeing as he's going to be with them most of the time, he's staying here in the hotel."

"Oh, but where is he now?"

"I guess he went out. Oh, right, make sure you put that suitcase back where you found it. We aren't supposed to move his things around, so maybe it's best if we clean up the rest of the suite first."

“I almost forgot about that! Thanks for the heads up.”

When it was silent once again in the bedroom, Courtney let out a breath of relief and leaned against the glass. However, before she could think that the coast was clear, the staff began to speak again, but this time in hushed tones.

“Ellie, are President Duncan and Miss Hunter seeing each other?”

“So, you’ve heard about it too. The whole hotel’s talking about it. President Duncan was seen carrying Miss Hunter down the other day when Penelope tried to jump off the building. Everyone could tell there was something going on—it’s not as if he’s being discreet about it.”

“But how about his engagement to Britney Price? Is it over?”

“Who knows? The thing is, Miss Hunter has a family of her own, and her daughter’s already in school. How shameless can she be to do such things? I used to think better of her, but now I think she probably became a manager by sleeping her way up the ladder.”

“I think so too! I heard that her husband bought her a house full of roses, but I was surprised when I found out that she’s been seeing President Duncan instead. It takes skills, doesn’t it, to even so much as approach President Duncan? Tons of other women have tried and failed, so what’s her secret?”

“There’s no secret to it, but you’re right in saying that it takes skills to do it. Very specific ones, to be exact.”

The other person made no response to that remark, but Courtney had heard enough. She clenched her fists, and her brows knitted together. She looked like she was about to burst into tears. She knew that there had been rumors going around the hotel after the incident with Penelope, and she had been ready to face the aftermath, but as reality would have it, nothing could have prepared her for when she actually heard the vicious things that were being said about her.

Alexander was staring down at Courtney. He had seen the way her expression gradually shifted from looking outraged to looking hurt. She was trying so hard to hide her grievances, which only seemed more prominent as his shadow loomed over her, and it made him feel as though someone was wrenching his gut out. He let go of her shoulders and opened the door with furious haste. The sun bore down on the both of them, casting their shadows on the floor of the bedroom.

The attendants in the room jumped. “President Duncan!” they exclaimed in unison, flustered.

Alexander’s voice was icy. “You both seem to have so much to say, so why don’t you tell us right now? Who’s been spreading these rumors, and how?”

The attendants simply gaped at him, having gone into shock upon seeing both him and Courtney standing before them.

Finally, one of them spoke. “We only heard about it from others, sir, and we didn’t know what we were saying. We’re sorry. We weren’t there at the scene and we didn’t see anything—we shouldn’t have insinuated that there was anything going on between you and Miss Hunter. We’re sorry.”

“Is that right?” Alexander gave them both a withering look, his expression stone-cold. “The person did a pretty good job spreading those rumors, and for your information, there’s more going on between Miss Hunter and myself than the both of you may think.”

At this, Courtney turned to look at Alexander with wide eyes, but before she could protest, she felt the warmth of his hand clasping around her cold one. He held up their intertwined hands and barked at the two attendants, “Take a long, hard look for yourselves.”