

Excerpt from *Imperfect Intentions* (Book 1)

She swivels on her heel and makes a beeline for the door, but I catch her wrist and pull her back to me. Our bodies collide, heating my veins with more than anger.

“This discussion isn’t over,” I say, pinning her to me with a hand on her lower back. She turns her face to the window. “I say it is.”

Letting go of her wrist, I grip her chin and make her face me. “Giving you money and making you come are benefits for me, benefits I’ll enjoy greatly, but you don’t have to hate it. If only for once you weren’t so fast to lose your temper, you’d see the only thing standing between you and happiness is how you choose to look at this arrangement. You can look at it as just another prison or you can see my intentions for what they are and let me take care of you. You can enjoy my protection and all the ways in which I want to please you, or you can resent me and wallow in your childish resentment and anger. Whatever you choose, this is happening. You’re mine, Violet. Nothing will change that, not your defiance and not your little rebellion. The sooner you accept your fate, the easier it’ll be for you.”

She listens to the whole speech with the resentment I asked her not to harbor simmering with unshed tears in her eyes. She’s hard-headed and nothing if not determined to resist me, but I’ll find a way to break her.

Wrapping her fingers around my wrist, she moves my hand away. “Are you done?”

“Yes.” I take in her stunning features. “I haven’t held back. I’ve said everything that was on my mind. If you’re brave enough to be honest, I’m listening.”

“I hate you,” she says, her nostrils quivering. “There. Is that honest enough for you?”

It takes much more patience than I possess, but I manage restraint. “One day, Violet Starley, I’ll put a smile instead of a frown on your face.”

Indifference her choice of defence, she dons a mask. “I’ve seen the inside of your bedroom. It’s nothing extraordinary. Now you can take me home.”

I brush a tendril of hair from her face. “You didn’t think it was going to be that easy?”

She jerks her head away. “What do you want from me?”

“I want you to understand that actions have consequences. You can hate and despise me, but you won’t disrespect me. If I send you a message, I expect you to react in an appropriate manner of politeness by replying to express your gratitude for my concern. If I ask where you are, it’s because your safety is important to me. You will send a response promptly and without argument not only to factually inform me about your whereabouts but also to reciprocate with gratefulness for the fact that I’m taking my responsibility seriously.”

Her voice trembles with fury. “You’re so full of shit. I wish you could hear yourself.”

“I need you to tell me that you understand. I’m not going to regurgitate the same argument every time.”

“Why don’t you just plant a tracker in my phone?” she asks with a good dose of sass. “It’ll be easier.”

“I’m already tracking your phone,” I say, relaying the truth in an even tone. “Replying to my messages is about the principle of the matter.”

“You bastard,” she cries out. “When did you do it?” Anger tints her cheeks red. “The night at the restaurant? You had no right.”

“I loaded an app on your phone when I programmed my number, and I disagree. Seeing that your safety is my priority, it’s my responsibility rather than my right.”

“Damn, you’re good.” She utters a cold laugh. “You’re so good you actually believe yourself.”

“In time, so will you.” Splaying my fingers over her jaw, I tilt her head back. “Do you know why, my darling? Because it’s the truth.”