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“All I Know”—DaniLeigh

“West Coast”—Lana Del Rey

“Beautiful Dirty Rich”—Lady Gaga

“Summer Love”—Justin Timberlake

“Money Honey”—Lady Gaga

“Love Don’t Cost a Thing”—Jennifer Lopez

“Bleeding Love”—Leona Lewis

IF LOVE HAD A PRICE

Every heart has a price.

She offered him $10,000 to seduce her father's gold-digging fiancée.

He countered with $15,000 and a kiss—from her. At any time he chose.

Kris should've said no, but she was desperate to get rid of her stepmother-to-be, and the gorgeous actor with the wicked grin was perfect for the job.

So she agreed to his terms—not knowing that doing so would cost her a lot more than money and a kiss…

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He did it for the money—which he desperately needed.

The kiss was just a bonus—or so he told himself.

Melting an ice princess like Kris started as a challenge, but by the time Nate realized there was more to Kris than meets the eye, it was too late: he had fallen.

But they're not just from opposite sides of the track—they're from different worlds. And when those worlds collide, Kris and Nate must decide whether they're willing to give up what they have for what could be…

CHAPTER ONE

"I'll pay you $10,000 to fuck my stepmother."

Kris's mouth curled into a smirk when the green-eyed Adonis stopped walking and turned, his handsome face a curious mask of boredom and disbelief.

He'd ignored her for the better part of the summer, which she didn't appreciate.

No one ignored Kris Carrera.

But he was perfect for her plan, so she was willing to play nice. And by nice, she meant not ripping his balls off and tossing them to the cougars that stalked Rodeo Drive in a pack of bad Botox and tacky Versace.

Oh, and her $10,000 offer was pretty sweet, too. But for the daughter of one of the richest men in America, ten grand was a drop in the bucket.

"You're mistaking me for someone else." Adonis's whiskey drawl slipped over her skin, as smooth and dark as onyx. Polished at first glance, but rough beneath the surface. "I'm not a prostitute."

Kris's smirk sharpened. She closed the distance between them until she could count every sun-kissed strand of his wavy brown hair and see the veiled fury glittering in his green eyes.

The fury was interesting. She supposed most people wouldn't enjoy being pegged as a prostitute, but the tense set of his jaw told her there was a deeper reason behind his anger.

If Kris cared, she'd ruminate on the reason.

She didn't.

All Kris cared about was throwing her gold-digging, fake-titted stepmother-to-be onto the streets, and Adonis here was going to help make that happen.

He was exactly Gloria's—aka the Stepmonster's—type: tan, ripped, and so gorgeous he looked Photoshopped. Bonus points for the ability to string two words together in a coherent sentence without using the term "dude."

He was every straight female's type, really, and he was the perfect candidate for the job. All she had to do was convince him.

"I should've been more clear," Kris purred. "I'll pay you $10,000 to *pretend* to fuck my stepmother. Whether you actually stick your dick inside her is none of my concern."

Adonis barked out a laugh—a low, husky sound that caused her stomach to flip in the strangest way.

It better not be that sandwich I ate earlier, she thought.

If Kris got food poisoning, she'd sue the cafe they'd just left to kingdom come, which would be a damn shame, because she liked the place. Located between her family's Beverly Hills mansion and her summer job as an assistant to top Hollywood publicist Bobbi Rayden, Alchemy Cafe was an airy haven of perfectly crafted lattes and eye candy—including the chiseled hunk standing before her.

She didn't know his actual name, so she'd secretly dubbed him Adonis after the beautiful Greek god. He was a waiter at Alchemy, though she'd bet her last dollar he was also an aspiring actor or rock star.

This was L.A., after all.

"Lady, you must be on drugs. I'm not going near your stepmother, if you even have one." Adonis narrowed his eyes. "If this is for a prank show, you're wasting my time. I don't do reality TV—especially ones I didn't consent to."

Kris bristled, both at his mocking use of the word "lady" and the fact that he was wasting *her* time by being so stubborn.

His immunity to her charms also irritated her. Kris rarely engaged in flirting or romantic affairs, but she expected a certain level of drool when she turned on the heat. Big brown eyes, full lips, and a petite, curvy figure—including a natural set of 36Cs—usually caught a guy's attention.

But no, Adonis here looked about as interested as a cardboard eunuch.

Wisps of irritation curled through her.

"This is not for a prank show." As if Kris would touch something as tacky as reality TV. "My time is precious, and I won't spend it arguing with you, so here's the deal in a nutshell: my father is getting married to his gold-digging fiancée this fall and refuses to listen to reason, so I'm going to *force* him to see reason. AKA, toss her out with nothing but the cheap clothes she wore when she seduced him at that bar she was working at."

"And you're going to do that by hiring someone to fuck—sorry, *pretend* to fuck—" The sarcasm was evident. "Your future stepmother."

"And take photos of her doing it." Kris shrugged. "She'd cheat on my dad in a heartbeat after she becomes Mrs. Carrera. I'm saving him from future heartbreak."

Kris cared about her dad, even if he was so busy she only saw him a few weeks a year. She *knew* he could do better than that redheaded pile of trash, Gloria.

Not to mention, Kris still hadn't forgiven the Stepmonster for convincing her father to cut her off *over Christmas break.*

Luckily, Roger Carrera soon caved to his only daughter's silent treatment and reinstated Kris's credit card privileges—albeit with a monthly limit—but Kris never forgot a slight.

She would make Gloria pay.

"How are you so sure she'll cheat?" The fury had bled out of Adonis's eyes, replaced by derisive amusement.

Kris ticked the reasons off on her fingers. "One, she's half his age and looks like Jessica Rabbit while my dad, bless his

heart, is no George Clooney. Two, she has zero morals. Three, judging by the way she eye-fucks other guys when she thinks no one is looking, she has a thing for young, muscly, pretty-boy types." She ran her eyes over Adonis's sculpted lips, sharp jawline, and broad shoulders. "Someone like you."

Although she wasn't sure Adonis qualified as a pretty boy. He was beautiful, but he exuded a raw, intense masculinity that eluded most of the plastic-perfect Ken dolls living in L.A.

Kris grimaced the second the thought crossed her mind.

She'd clearly been in the so-called City of Angels for too long, because her inner dialogue was starting to resemble that of a bad rom-com character.

"I'm flattered." The sarcasm returned. A breeze swept by, ruffling Adonis's floppy hair. "But it's still a no."

Kris sputtered in disbelief. "Are you kidding? It's $10,000. You don't even have to kiss her. Just make it look like you're fucking her. You're an actor, aren't you?"

Adonis's brows snapped together. "How did you know that?"

"Please. This is L.A. If you're a good-looking waiter, there's an eighty-five percent chance you're an aspiring actor."

"Fair enough." He rubbed his jaw. "Why me? There are plenty of actors in L.A. who'd jump at the opportunity."

"I told you, you're the Stepmonster's type." Although Kris would never admit it, Adonis also intrigued her. She'd been a regular customer at Alchemy since she landed in L.A. three weeks ago, and he was the only male staff member who'd never spared her a glance except to ask if she'd like a refill. That, plus the fact he just turned down $10,000—money he needed, if the beat-up old car he'd been about to get into before she stopped him was anything to go by—made him a smidge more interesting than his Y-chromosome compatriots.

Kris averted her eyes from the beat-up car in question. Just looking at its scratched paint and dented driver's door made her skin itch with discomfort; the sad old thing was like the visual equivalent of polyester.

“And I told you, I’m no whore,” Adonis said softly.

The air between them crackled with tension, and the hairs on the back of Kris’s neck prickled with unease. Her senses had never been more alert, picking up everything from the way Adonis’s muscled chest rose and fell to the faint, not-at-all-unpleasant scent of coffee and leather that wafted from his clothing.

“We’re going around in circles.” Kris struggled to maintain her cool demeanor. “Like I said, you don’t actually have to sleep with her. This is an acting job. You’ll be *acting* as her lover. Seduce her, get her into a compromising position where my P.I. can snap a few quick pics, and you’ll be $10,000 richer. It’s the easiest job you could ask for.”

Adonis leaned against his car and crossed his arms over his chest. With his hard glare and insouciant slouch, he resembled a modern-day James Dean, with a dash of Liam Hemsworth thrown in.

“Make it $15,000, and I’ll think about it.”

Disbelief swirled in Kris’s veins. “You’re fucking kidding. You’re *negotiating* with me?” Who the hell did he think he was? “Ten grand was already a lot for a minimum amount of work. I could hire any wannabe actor in this town for that price.”

“Then hire them.” A mocking smile flirted at the edges of Adonis’s mouth at her subsequent silence. “If it was that easy, you wouldn’t be arguing with a waiter in a parking lot.” Somehow, he made the word “waiter” sound like an insult toward Kris, even though he was the server. “What’ll it be, princess?”

She ground her teeth. “$15K and you’ll do it?”

“I’ll think about doing it.”

Kris was this close to punching him in his perfect face. She should’ve worn her Dior cocktail ring today—then her punch would’ve *really* hurt.

“Fine.” Her agreement surprised herself. “Give me your phone.”

Adonis did so without a word—another surprise. Kris had expected him to deny her request, given how hellbent he seemed on making things difficult for her.

She added her number to his contacts and texted herself from his phone. “What’s your name?”

“Nate.”

Nate. It suited him, somehow.

“I’m Kris, with a K.” She returned his phone, her tone crisp and efficient. “You have forty-eight hours to decide. If I don’t hear from you by Monday at five p.m., the offer goes to someone else—someone who wouldn’t be foolish enough to let the deal of a lifetime slip through their fingers.”

“Princess, you’d have to offer me a lot more than $15K for this to be the best deal of my life.” Nate’s gaze dipped to her lips, the tiny movement charging his words with a sexual innuendo that sent an unexpected blast of heat through Kris’s body. His mocking smile reappeared. “Talk to you in forty-eight hours. Or not.”

He climbed into his car and drove away, leaving a fuming, strangely turned-on Kris in the parking lot.

CHAPTER TWO

Nate Reynolds's good mood evaporated the second he stepped inside his house. The booze-drenched air clogged his nostrils, and the familiar sight of his father passed out on the living room couch with a half-empty bottle of Jack Daniels clutched in his hand chased away any lingering amusement Nate felt after his conversation with the beautiful brunette from the parking lot earlier.

Kris.

She'd been a favorite of Alchemy's male staff since she first showed up at the cafe a few weeks ago. She was a regular now, but her perfect hair and designer clothes screamed "spoiled princess," which was why Nate had steered clear of anything resembling flirting. His coworkers could drool over her sultry looks and aloof haughtiness all they wanted, but uppity rich girls weren't his type.

However, she'd turned out to be more intriguing than he'd expected—fiery and sharp-tongued, instead of dull and vapid like the few heiresses he'd hooked up with in the past. Kris's extravagant five-figure offer didn't hurt, either. Nate may not like spoiled rich girls, but he had no problem taking their money, and God knew his family needed the green. However, the idea of selling his body for cash—even if he was only pretending to do so—caused his stomach to churn with nausea.

Nate had forty-eight hours to decide whether his values were worth the roof over his head.

I'll deal with it later.