

*This excerpt contains adult material. It is intended for readers 18 years of age or older.*

I loved New York with the kind of mad passion I reserved for only one other thing in my life. The city was a microcosm of new world opportunities and old world traditions. Conservatives rubbed shoulders with bohemians. Oddities coexisted with priceless rarities. The pulsing energy of the city fueled international business bloodlines and drew people from all over the world.

And the embodiment of all that vibrancy, driving ambition, and world-renowned power had just screwed me to two toe-curlingly awesome orgasms.

As I padded over to his massive walk-in closet, I glanced at Gideon Cross's sex-rumpled bed and shivered with remembered pleasure. My hair was still damp from a shower, and the towel wrapped around me was my only article of clothing. I had an hour and a half before I had to be at work, which was cutting it a little too close for comfort. Obviously, I was going to have to allot time in my morning routine for sex, otherwise I'd always be scrambling. Gideon woke up ready to conquer the world, and he liked to start that domination with me.

How lucky was I?

Because it was sliding into July in New York and the temperature was heating up, I chose a slim pair of pressed natural-linen slacks and a sleeveless poplin shell in a soft gray that matched my eyes. Since I had no hairstyling talent, I pulled my long blond hair back in a simple ponytail, then made up my face. When I was presentable, I left the bedroom.

I heard Gideon's voice the moment I stepped into the hallway. A tiny shiver moved through me when I realized he was angry, his voice low and clipped. He didn't rile easily... unless he was ticked off with me. I could get him to raise his voice and curse, even shove his hands through his glorious shoulder-length mane of inky black hair.

For the most part, though, Gideon was a testament to leashed power. There was no need for him to shout when he could get people to quake in their shoes with just a look or a tersely spoken word.

I found him in his home office. He stood with his back to the door and a Bluetooth receiver in his ear. His arms were crossed and he was staring out the windows of his

Fifth Avenue penthouse apartment, giving the impression of a very solitary man, an individual who was separate from the world around him, yet entirely capable of ruling it.

Leaning into the doorjamb, I drank him in. I was certain my view of the skyline was more awe-inspiring than his. My vantage point included him superimposed over those towering skyscrapers, an equally powerful and impressive presence. He'd finished his shower before I managed to crawl out of bed. His seriously addictive body was now dressed in two pieces of an expensively tailored three-piece suit—an admitted hot button of mine. The rear view of him showcased a perfect ass and a powerful back encased in a vest.

On the wall was a massive collage of photos of us as a couple and one very intimate one that he'd taken of me while I was sleeping. Most were pictures taken by the paparazzi who followed his every move. He was Gideon Cross, of Cross Industries, and at the ridiculous age of twenty-eight, he was one of the top twenty-five richest people in the world. I was pretty sure he owned a significant chunk of Manhattan; I was positive he was the hottest man on the planet. And he kept photos of me everywhere he worked, as if I could possibly be as fun to look at as he was.

He turned, pivoting gracefully to catch me with his icy blue gaze. Of course he'd known I was there, watching him. There was a crackling in the air when we were near each other, a sense of anticipation like the coiled silence before the boom of thunder. He'd probably deliberately waited a beat before facing me, giving me the opportunity to check him out because he knew I loved to look at him.

Dark and Dangerous. And all mine.

God... I never got used to the impact of that face. Those sculpted cheekbones and dark winged brows, the thickly lashed blue eyes and those lips... perfectly etched to be both sensual and wicked. I loved when they smiled with sexual invitation, and I shivered when they thinned into a stern line. And when he pressed those lips to my body, I burned for him.

*Jeez, listen to yourself.* My mouth curved, remembering how annoyed I used to get at pals who waxed poetic about their boyfriends' good looks. But here I was, constantly awed by the gorgeousness of the complicated, frustrating, messed-up, sexy-as-sin man I was falling deeper in love with every day.

As we stared at each other, his scowl didn't lessen, nor did he cease speaking to the poor soul on the receiving end of his call, but his gaze warmed from its chilly irritation to scorching heat.

I should've become used to the change that came over him when he looked at me, but it still hit me with a force strong enough to rock me on my feet. That look conveyed how hard and deep he wanted to fuck me—which he did every chance he got—and it also afforded me a glimpse of his raw, unrelenting force of will. A core of strength and command marked everything Gideon did in life.

“See you at eight on Saturday,” he finished, before yanking off the earpiece and tossing it on his desk. “Come here, Eva.”

Another shiver slid through me at the way he said my name, with the same authoritative bite he used when he said *Come, Eva*, while I was beneath him... filled with him... desperate to climax for him...

“No time for that, ace.” I backed into the hallway, because I was weak where he was concerned. The soft rasp in his smooth, cultured voice was nearly capable of making me orgasm just listening to it. And whenever he touched me, I caved.

I hurried to the kitchen to make us some coffee.

He muttered something under his breath and followed me out, his long stride easily gaining on mine. I found myself pinned to the hallway wall by six feet, two inches of hard, hot male.

“You know what happens when you run, angel.” Gideon nipped my lower lip with his teeth and then soothed the sting with the caress of his tongue. “I catch you.”

Inside me, something sighed with happy surrender and my body went lax with pleasure at being pressed so close to his. I craved him constantly, so deeply it was a physical ache. What I felt was lust, but it was also so much more. Something so precious and profound that Gideon's lust for me wasn't the trigger it would've been with another man. If anyone else had attempted to subdue me with the weight of his body, I would've freaked out. But it had never been an issue with Gideon. He knew what I needed and how much I could take.

The sudden flash of his grin stopped my heart.

Confronted with that breathtaking face framed by that lustrous dark hair, I felt my knees weaken just a little. He was so polished and urbane except for the decadent length of those silky strands.

He nuzzled his nose against mine. “You can’t smile at me like that, then walk away. Tell what you were thinking about when I was on the phone.”

My lips twisted wryly. “How gorgeous you are. It’s sickening how often I think about that. I need to get over it already.”

He cupped the back of my thigh and urged me tighter against him, teasing me with an expert roll of his hips against mine. He was outrageously gifted in bed. And he knew it. “Damned if I’ll let you.”

“Oh?” Heat slid sinuously through my veins, my body too greedy for the feel of his. “You can’t tell me you want another starry-eyed woman hanging on you, Mr. Hates-Exaggerated-Expectations.”

“What I want,” he purred, cupping my jaw and rubbing my bottom lip with the pad of his thumb, “is you being too busy thinking about me to think about anyone else.”

I pulled in a slow and shaky breath. I was completely seduced by the smoldering look in his eyes, the provocative tone of his voice, the heat of his body, and the mouthwatering scent of his skin. He was my drug, and I had no desire to kick the habit.

“Gideon,” I breathed, entranced.

With a soft groan, he sealed his chiseled mouth over mine, stealing away thoughts of what time it was with a lush, deep kiss... a kiss that almost succeeded in distracting me from seeing the insecurity he’d just revealed.

I pushed my fingers into his hair to hold him still and kissed him back, my tongue sliding along his, stroking. We’d been a couple for such a short period of time. Less than a month. Worse, neither of us knew how to have a relationship like the one we were attempting to build—a relationship in which we refused to pretend we weren’t both seriously broken.