

After the near kiss with Daniel, Angela did her best to stay busy. If she hadn't opened her eyes on the balcony, she was certain he would have kissed her. She was a woman, after all, and knew when a man was attracted to her. And she hadn't imagined the pure, unadulterated lust that had been in his eyes.

He'd wanted her.

But instead of acting on it, he'd walked away, leaving them both bereft and frustrated. Angela didn't make a habit out of workplace romances, but in this instance she was willing to concede the point. She'd been so focused on her rising real estate career that she hadn't left much room in her life for romance.

She'd been celibate for two years, and she'd felt every minute of it with Daniel. It had been too long since she'd been kissed. Touched. Held in a man's arms. Was her desire for Daniel just some latent reaction to being alone or was there more to it? She was afraid to look too closely.

She returned from two afternoon showings for a mid-level condo on Thursday afternoon. When she made it back to the office, it was just past 5:00 p.m., Myrna was clearing her desk for the day, and most of the sales associates were departing.

"What are you doing back here today?" Myrna inquired.

"Busy afternoon. And I promised some sales comps to my clients tomorrow, so I thought I'd come in and get it wrapped up."

"All right," Myrna said, "but don't stay too late."

"I won't. See you in the morning." As Angela walked back to her desk, she caught sight of Daniel sitting in his office huddled over his computer.

Apparently, she wasn't the only one working late. If he didn't see her, she could knock out those comps and be done before he was the wiser.

Angela headed straight for her office and began working. She'd been going at a steady pace for nearly two hours when she sensed his presence at her doorway. Daniel had a barely-leashed energy that vibrated off him and made everyone take notice. A disturbing heat stirred in her belly.

Glancing up from her monitor, Angela saw Daniel and her heart jolted. She straightened her back, desperate not to show any sign of weakness. "Mr. Cobb."

He grimaced. "You don't have to call me Mr. Cobb. Daniel will do."

"Are you sure about that?" she asked and returned to the keyboard to finish typing the email she'd been preparing. "Because I wouldn't want to cross any boundaries."

"Angela..."

"Yes?" She swiveled around in her executive chair.

Daniel seemed as if he wanted to say something else. Maybe apologize for how he'd behaved the other night, sending her away as if he hadn't initiated that kiss that had sent both of them spiraling out of control? Instead, he said, "I thought we could sit and talk. I've ordered up some sushi from a great take-out place. We can eat in the conference room."

The last thing Angela wanted was to be alone with Daniel, and as she glanced up and peered through the glass panels of her office, it appeared they were the only souls left on the floor. "I can't."

"Of course you can," he replied. "You have to eat. C'mon." He inclined his head toward the door.

Angela was torn. Did she obey an order from her boss? Or should she listen to her female intuition,

which told her it was dangerous to be alone with Daniel?

She chose to follow his directive and rose from her chair, smoothing down her dress as she went.

When she walked into the conference room, Angela discovered the sushi had already arrived and was sitting in several plastic containers along with bowls of soup. Had Daniel set this up? Was this some sort of peace offering?

“Sit.”

Angela did as instructed and Daniel did the same, sitting across from her. He reached for a plastic container. “I hope you like sushi, because I got a little bit of everything.”

“I love it.” Angela smiled and reached for a container. Inside she discovered a mix of California, spicy tuna and Bubba rolls. Daniel slid a pair of chopsticks her way with a questioning brow.

“I can use them,” Angela responded, and deftly removed them from the wrapper and picked up a roll. She plopped it in her mouth with ease and moaned at the delicious taste.

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Daniel felt his shaft spring to life at the tiny moan that escaped from Angela’s pink-tinted lips. It reminded him of how she’d sounded when she’d been underneath him in that limo. When they’d kissed so passionately.

How could he forget it? He’d been able to think of nothing since. And it was why tonight, against his better judgment, he’d stayed behind to work late. He’d seen Angela walk in just after five o’clock when he’d been nearly done with the project he was working on. But instead of going home as would have been wise, he’d stayed behind. Fooling about on work that could have waited until tomorrow.

Why? Because he'd wanted to spend time with her. Alone.

So he'd waited a sufficient amount of time to make it appear as if he'd been working just as hard and could casually ask her to eat dinner with him.

Angela, however, was focusing a lot of her attention on her food instead of conversing with him. He wanted to draw her out of her shell again, so he tried to engage her. "You're very good with those," he said, inclining his head in the direction of her chopsticks.

"Comes with practice. I spent some time in Asia as well as Europe after I ditched college after a year."

Daniel relaxed; their dinner was shifting and he could see her softening toward him as she had before. "Oh yeah? Where'd you go?"

"Tokyo, Singapore, Beijing," Angela said. "I wanted to see the world. Experience new cultures."

"Your parents couldn't have been happy with that decision."

She nodded. "They weren't. They were always upset that I left college and didn't return, but not everyone's meant for school. I wanted to see the world."

"And did you?"

She glanced up from her plate and looked over at him. "Hell yeah. Those years were some of the best I've ever had, even when I was basically broke half the time and working the odd job here and there to go to my next destination."

"Which was your favorite?"

"I really loved Thailand," Angela said. "The people were just so friendly and the food was the best of my travels, bar none."

"Even France? Or Italy?"

Angela nodded. “Although I loved Paris, Monte Carlo and the Italian coast, Thailand had the best food and the most spectacular views of the ocean.”

“Your passport must be stamped full.”

Angela shrugged. “I actually went through a couple during that period, but eventually I got homesick and wanted to put down roots. The problem was when I got back everyone I knew was in a different phase in their life and I kind of fell behind. Had to figure out my way.”

“From where I’m sitting you have.”

“Not like you,” Angela responded. “You have a knack for salesmanship. Look at what you’ve accomplished.”

“I watched my father and emulated him. He owned a small real estate firm and he made a decent living, but he never took it a step further. I saw potential there, a niche market that wasn’t being tapped or catered to. He introduced me to some folks he knew and I took the ball and ran with it.”

Angela laughed. “Why are you giving me the condensed version? Can’t you be real with me?”

Daniel stared at her. “I am being real with you.”

“Nope,” she said as she shook her head. “You’ve told me the same thing I could read about you on the internet while I, on the other hand, have kept it one hundred with you.”

He grinned at her slang. “No one wants to hear about my struggles to start a new firm in Miami.”

“Try me.”

“Are you always this pushy?”

Her brown eyes flashed fire. “It’s got me this far in life. Why should I stop now?”

“All right.” He let out a long sigh. “If you must know, I had to take out a small business loan, but it

wasn't enough to cover the start-up costs for Cobb Luxury Real Estate."

"And?" She urged him to continue.

"The father of an associate of mine lent me the money." Daniel's mind went to Alexander Rollins and how he wouldn't be happy that Daniel was going against his son at Prescott George and supporting Joshua. But it wasn't like Alexander hadn't made a killing off the short-term investment and high interest. Daniel had paid him back. "In the end, I was able to open a small office. At first it was just me and Mary. She was my receptionist, my office manager and my marketing person all rolled into one, but I couldn't have started this place without her."

"Everyone loves Mary."

"As they should. She's been like a mother to me."

"And what of your own mom? Where is she?"

Daniel shrugged. "She lives in Tampa. Remarried after she caught my father cheating. Started a new life with a new family. Don't see her much." He didn't want to think about those dark days when he'd felt abandoned. Instead, he wanted their conversation to be upbeat. "Was that real enough for you, Angela? Am I keeping it one hundred enough now?"

She stared at him for several long moments before speaking. "It was." Then she laughed. "But don't start speaking slang. Doesn't really suit you." She rose from her chair and leaned over to gather the plastic containers on the table.

"I can help." Daniel stood and they both reached for a container at the same time. Their eyes locked from across the table. Daniel didn't let go of the container and neither did Angela. Instead, an invisible force pulled them closer and closer to each other.

When they were mere inches apart and Daniel could breathe in the fruity notes of her perfume, he thought

about whether this was the right decision. He knew he should banish all thoughts of Angela from his mind, but he'd been going crazy for days trying to ignore her. Acting as if he didn't notice her in the office.

He just had to touch her. He reached out and caressed her cheek with his palm.

"Don't." Angela tried to turn away, but he slowly pulled her back toward him.

"Angela." The precarious control he'd been holding on to finally snapped and his nostrils flared. She looked like she was ready for his mouth on hers. And without thinking of the consequences or whether it was right or wrong, he wrapped one arm around her hips and pulled her close to him, then he kissed her.

He kissed her like a starving man, again and again. Threading his fingers through her hair, he plundered her lips like he'd never kissed a woman's before. At first her palms were flat against his chest, but within seconds she wrapped them around his neck and was matching him stroke for stroke. Daniel leaned her over the table and took his fill. He'd fantasized about kissing Angela again, and he couldn't fight his desire any longer. The pull was too great.

So he gave in.

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Angela yielded to the kiss. She now knew what she'd known in that limo: Daniel was as into her as she was him. He was just better at hiding it, until now. She knew being with Daniel spelled danger, but her body was responding to his as if they fit together like two perfect puzzle pieces. His lips grazed over hers, using the right amount of pressure to coax a low moan from her.

The opening gave Daniel the entry he sought and his tongue darted inside, flicking against hers. Angela eagerly gave him the friction they both needed, mating

her tongue with his and basking in the wild sensations he evoked. She surrendered herself to it because Daniel was bringing alive a vibrancy in her, an intensity of feeling she'd never had.

Daniel was staking a claim and burning a need in her at the same time. When he tore his mouth from hers, it was a dizzying shock to her senses and she pressed her head against his shoulder, clutching him. But instead of stopping, he placed openmouthed kisses on her neck while his hands traveled down her hips and thighs.

Angela wanted more. So she didn't stop him when he lifted the hem of her dress. His hands were hot and warm as they traveled over her, kneading her fevered flesh along the way. As much as she reveled in the feel of his hands, she burned for him to touch her in that one special place.

The closer his hands inched toward her core, the more her insides began to quake, and when he finally pushed the silky fabric of her panties aside and eased one finger inside her, Angela moaned aloud.

"Daniel..." He slid in another finger and her breath caught in her throat. His fingers began slow and gentle thrusts in and out. Angela arched her hips, her head flying backward.

"Don't stop," she said when he removed his fingers, scooped her up and placed her on the conference room table. The next thing she knew, he was sliding her dress all the way up to her waist. When he pressed her legs apart and to her shock knelt on the floor and lowered his head to her, Angela couldn't believe what was happening. She didn't have time to, because Daniel caught her with his mouth.

She screamed as he sucked her, his tongue dancing up and down the bundle of nerves at her core. It had been too long since she'd been with a man, too long

since she'd felt this good. So it didn't take long for her orgasm to start building. Shamelessly, she pumped against his mouth, and he grasped her bottom in his hands and tongued her feverishly.

Pressure built inside her until it erupted. Wave after wave of pleasure hit her in full force and she bucked and moaned on the table. Daniel held her legs, lapping up her juices as Angela tried to breathe normally.

But it was impossible; her heart was thumping so loud in her chest, she was sure he could hear it. Daniel rose to his feet and bent over her, kissing her mouth. She could taste herself on his lips.

"I..." She didn't know where to begin and apparently, neither did he, because he placed his finger on her lips and shook his head. How could he not want to talk about what had just happened? She'd just let her boss go down on her in the conference room.

Flushed with embarrassment, Angela slid off the table, lowered her dress and smoothed her hair, trying to pull herself together. She watched Daniel rub his temples and start pacing the floor. He was just as disoriented and shocked by what he'd allowed to happen as she was.

When he finally stopped, he turned to her. "I-I should walk you out."

"What?"

"I should walk you to your car. It's late."

"So that's it? You don't have anything else to say?"

Daniel sucked in a deep breath. "I-I think it's best we talk tomorrow when clearer heads prevail."

Angela stared in him in stunned disbelief. Was he really going to act like they just hadn't shared an incredibly intimate moment and could talk tomorrow?

"Don't bother, Daniel. I'm perfectly capable of looking after myself. I've done pretty well thus far, no thanks to you."

She turned and quickly stalked out of the room. She wasn't going to stand there and act like nothing happened. She wasn't Daniel's plaything that he could use to get his jollies off and discard whenever it suited him. *You were the one who orgasmed*, her inner voice reminded her, but she dismissed it.

He'd enjoyed the experience; she was positive of it. He'd better have gotten his fill, because it was the last time she was allowing Daniel to come near her ever again.