

CHAPTER ONE

TRISTAN AND DANIKA'S STORY CONTINUES IN ROCK BOTTOM

DANIKA

It had already been a shit of a day by the time I made it to Tristan's apartment. Shitty was really an understatement, though. It had been hell. Pure hell. Right in the fire of it.

I had too much on my plate, and my boyfriend was out of town for weeks at a time, which just sucked. Knowing that I'd get to see Tristan at some point on a day like this was all that had helped me keep it together.

I had a key to his apartment, but I knocked first, out of courtesy. I wasn't that courteous, though, because I unlocked it and walked in before anyone had time to answer.

I saw right away that they wouldn't have answered, anyway.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon, but you wouldn't know it by the state of the

apartment. Women were everywhere, slutty, groupie looking women, and I instantly felt my temper starting to boil.

Dean was lying, shirtless, on the couch. His jeans were undone, and some tramp had her hand down his pants, even as another bimbo sat hip to hip with him, sharing a joint.

Dean saw me and smiled, and I knew that this wasn't going to be a good visit. Just as I could read a different meaning into every one of Tristan's smiles, Dean's only ever meant one thing. Trouble. Not fun trouble. Just bad trouble. Ruin your day trouble.

"Hey! You come to join the party? I think your boyfriend is busy, but you know you're always first in line to suck my cock."

I walked through the living room, heading to the back of the apartment, where the bedrooms were. If I'd been thinking clearly, I'd have gone through the kitchen, but a few words out of his mouth and my brain was already too scrambled with my temper to have a mature interaction with him, if there was such a thing.

"You might not want to go back there. I believe he said he wanted privacy..."

I whipped my head around to give him one smoldering glare.

He just chuckled. "You know I think you're fucking hot when you're mad. I mean, I'd fuck you any time, but when you're mad, mmmm, now that would be a treat."

I stifled my first urge, which was to tell him to go fuck himself, because I knew he'd just turn it into a suggestion. Instead, I settled for specific and childish. "I hope you choke on one of your own used condoms, and die, you asshole," I told him, striding out of the room.

I heard him laughing behind me, and my fists clenched hard.

“Babe, I don’t use condoms,” he called after me.

“Disgusting pig,” I muttered as I reached the closed door to Tristan’s room.

I didn’t knock, just opening the door quietly. I figured girlfriend rights superseded some common courtesies.

I froze in the doorway as I took in the room.

Tristan was lying on his back on the bed, wearing nothing but his boxers, an arm thrown over his eyes, as though he were sleeping. By the agitated movements of his chest, I knew that wasn’t the case.

A naked woman, some beyond trashy, slutbag blonde from hell, was straddling him. Her hands were running over his chest, tracing his tattoos.

I was absolutely frozen, in fury, in hurt, in outright disbelief, which was all that kept me from reacting too quickly, which turned out to be a good thing.

“If you don’t get off right this second,” Tristan growled from underneath the naked tramp, his voice sleepy, and irritated, and just plain mean. “I’m going to throw you off. I told you, I have a girlfriend.”

“She’s not here now,” the slut from hell purred, still running her hands over his chest. *My* chest. “I won’t tell if you won’t.”

That was my cue to shout, yes, you bitch, I am here, but some devil kept me silent. I sincerely wanted to see how this played out. I needed to see it.

“Well, then, since you apparently don’t have an ounce of pride or self-respect, let me spell it out for you. I don’t want you. I want you to leave my room and my apartment and never come back. I turned you down three times, and you still waited

until I was passed out, and jumped me. How many times do I have to say it? I wouldn't touch you if you were my only option, which you aren't. Is that clear enough for you, or do you want me to try a different language now?"

He sounded mean, mean in a way I rarely heard from him. He was usually so amiable, bossy, yes, possessive, always, but usually just nice, and it was startling to hear his voice go pure mean.

Bimbo face seemed to get the hint, climbing off him with a pout on her face. "You're no fun," she muttered, "and I can tell that you wanted me. I got you hard."

"Don't take it personal. The fucking wind blowing gets me hard. Now get out."

She barely spared me a glance, but I had to stifle the urge to follow her and scratch her eyes out.

I stayed in the doorway, leaning against the frame of it while he sat up, rubbing his eyes. It took him a few quiet moments to notice me there.

When he did, he went white, as though he'd just seen a ghost.

He slid out of bed, moving to me, looking guilty as hell. If I hadn't just heard the whole thing with my own ears, that look would have been enough to convict him. It was a good thing I'd kept my mouth shut and let it play out. Still, I was spitting mad. I was sick to death of shit like this always testing us. It just seemed to me, that if you valued a thing, you found ways to keep it from being compromised. Groupies in the apartment had been a bone of contention for a while now.

He was in just a pair of black boxers and so it was impossible to miss the fact that he had a raging hard-on. That was the last straw for me. I just couldn't deal with this today, especially when I'd so been looking forward to a happy reunion, and not some

disgusting groupie rubbing her naked body on him.

“I need to leave,” I told him, already backing out of the room. “I just can’t deal with this shit right now. I have enough on my plate already.”

He followed me, uncaring of the fact that he was practically naked, and sporting an obvious erection and the house was full of groupies.

“Danika, you have to believe me. Whatever you think that was—”

“I know what it was. I heard what it fucking was, and I don’t care. I’m sick of this. If you cared about us, you wouldn’t be putting yourself in positions where naked whores are rubbing on you in your sleep. Dean can have his groupies live here for all I care, but I’m out.”

I turned on my heel, and strode to the front door. I had my hand on the knob before he stopped me, and he stopped me in the most Tristan way possible.

He pressed against me from behind, mostly naked, hard as a poker, and completely unmindful of the room full of people that must be watching us.

“I’ve missed you,” he whispered in my ear, his hands moving over my hands, pinning them to the door above me. “You can’t imagine how much I’ve missed you. I thought about you day and night. When I would text, and you wouldn’t reply right away, I came so close to saying fuck it all and driving home to find you.”

“I’ve been busy. I have classes, and I actually attend them pretty regularly. I always answered back as soon as I could.”

“I know, but it’s not enough. We should never be apart, not for any reason. I can’t stand it. Come back to bed with me, sweetheart. I need you. Now.”

The press of his body, that rasp in my ear, had me wet and ready and I wanted

nothing more than to give in, but I didn't intend to just let this go. It had been too big of a problem for too long, and I was sick of it. I had enough shitty things going on in my life right now. Groupies humping my boyfriend in his sleep was not going to be one of them.

"I need to leave. I'll call you later, but I really just can't deal with this right now. I'm too angry. I might say some things to you that I'll regret later, if I don't have time to cool off first."

He made a little sound of protest in the back of his throat, and of course that got to me. It had always been so hard for me to tell him no, and that had only gotten worse, the deeper I'd fallen for him.

"Please," he said, very very quietly, a word he almost never used. "I need you. Now. You can chew me a new one after. I can take it, sweetheart."

I wrenched my hands free, turning to glare at him. "It's not about chewing you a new one, you ass. It's about things that go on in this apartment when I'm away that I won't stand for. It's not about talk, it's about change—"

"Okay. Fine," he interrupted, looking earnest. "You tell me what you need and I'll see it done. Change away."

I set my jaw into a stubborn line, knowing that I was going to go down in the band's history for being a bitch for this. "No more groupies in the apartment. And wherever you're staying in L.A., for the recording, no groupies there, either. Girlfriends, dates, fine, but these sluts I see today, have got to go."

He gave a brief nod, turning his head to address the room. "New house rules. Any chick that isn't a girlfriend needs to leave. And since I know Dean doesn't have a

girlfriend, that's all of you."

Of course Dean, who was still on the couch, had something to say about that.

"Fuck you, man. This is my house, too. If you get to have your pus—"

"If you finish that fucking sentence, you know what's going to happen. Now, clear the room. The lease is under my name. If you have a problem with the new house rule, you can get the fuck out, too."

There was a lot of muttering and movement, but everyone seemed to be obeying.

Tristan pulled me out of the way as the slutty parade started to file out. He watched for a moment, seemed to think it was settled, and turned back to me, moving against me until my shoulders hit the wall.

"Anything else?" he asked, but he didn't even give me a chance to answer before he was slanting his mouth over mine, hungry and hot, and just what I'd been waiting for. It had been weeks since I'd seen him, and I was kissing him back instantly, moaning as his tongue invaded me. He thrust it in and out, fucking my mouth.

He pinned my hands to the wall, sliding a thigh between mine, pushing it high, until I was riding it, my hips moving in circles to rub against him restlessly. It wasn't enough, and I hooked my leg behind his hip, every part of me working to bring his hardness into my core.

He groaned, working his hips between my thighs until we were fitted. Our clothes were in the way, but the contact was just in the perfect spot, and I worked against him, rubbing my clit against his cock, working to a fever pitch in seconds.

"Get a room," Dean said loudly.

Tristan ripped his mouth away, turning his head to bark, "Privacy! Now!"

Dean muttered something that I couldn't quite make out, but sure enough, he obeyed. I'd witnessed this exchange countless times.

The instant we were completely alone, Tristan started stripping me. He started with my tank top, peeling it off, opening the front clasp of my bra with one swift movement, and slipping it off my arms.

He went down to his knees to work on my jeans. They were tight, so he had to peel them off slowly, taking my panties with them.

Being stripped was distracting, but not as distracting as his kiss had been, and as I became slightly less distracted, I found my mind moving to the thing that was bugging me, stupid as it was.

“You wanted her. You were hard for her.”

He paused briefly, then resumed peeling. “Sweetheart, I was sleeping. That was morning wood, and for your information, I was dreaming of you when she interrupted me. I was expecting you, and when I felt someone get on top of me, that was the first thought that occurred. It didn't last but a second, though, before I realized that it was some strange woman.”

That appeased me, but mostly because skanky groupies were now banned from the house, so it wouldn't be happening again.

The second he got my jeans free of my feet, he pulled my legs over his shoulders and buried his face between my thighs, effectively stopping any more thinking on my part. His tongue worked on me expertly, his big fingers delving inside of me, working into a rhythm that had me mindless and writhing against the wall, his shoulders pushing between my legs all that kept me upright.

He'd been growing his hair out, per my request, and I buried my hands in it, gripping for dear life.

"I love you," I cried out as I came.

"I love you, too, sweetheart," he said, as he freed himself from my legs, rising. He stripped off his boxers in one smooth motion, moving flush against me, and fitting himself between my legs. "I can't take these separations. I'm leaning towards saying fuck this record deal. You're my whole life. What's the point of it all, if I can't be with you all the fucking time?"

I couldn't respond, as he was wrapping my legs around his hips. He lined himself up at my entrance, pushing in that first perfect inch.

"Wait, condom," I said, not thinking at all. It was just sort of an instinct for me.

He froze. "Are you off the pill?"

I turned my face away, flushing. "No," I said, very quietly, wondering what can of worms I'd just opened.

He caught what my instinctive response meant instantly. He turned my face so I was looking at him, and the raw pain in his eyes just about undid me. "You don't trust me anymore? You think I'm screwing around on you?" His voice was devastated.

I shook my head, well shook it as much as I could, with my jaw held in his viselike grip. "I don't think that. We wouldn't be doing this at all if I thought that. I didn't mean for that to come out. It was just my instinctive reaction. I guess I'm feeling insecure."

He pulled my hand over his heart. "That hurts me. This is all yours right here. All of me. No one else gets a thing from me, you understand? I wouldn't do that to you.

I wouldn't make all these promises if I didn't intend to keep them."

I nodded, blinking back tears.

He moved back into me, pinning me to the wall. His forehead touched mine as he gripped my hips, shifting his hips until he was poised back at the core of me. "I'm fucking done with this record deal if it means I'm losing your trust. This is forever for me, sweetheart. I want it all with you. You're the thing that gets me up in the morning, and lets me rest easy at night. I wouldn't have survived some of the shit these last few months if it weren't for you. You're my rock, Danika, and I need you to trust me."

I nodded again, then gasped as he thrust hard into me.

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