

Sneak Peek #4

Sergei (Her Russian Protector #5)

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*What the hell are you doing?*

I silently chastised myself while warily watching Sergei. Towering over me, he seemed so much more dangerous—and delicious.

"Come here. I'm too tall to do this comfortably while standing. It will be better if I'm sitting." He grasped my hand and tugged me back toward the low, wide club chair and ottoman in the corner of my bedroom. Sinking down onto the soft, worn leather, Sergei pulled me between his knees. The towel wrapped around his waist had climbed up rather scandalously, but I didn't dare let my gaze linger on his lap.

When his huge hands glided along my thighs and cupped my hips, I swallowed hard. "What are you doing?"

"What does it feel like I'm doing?" Sergei nuzzled my neck, his hot breath wafting across my skin.

"Everything but kissing me." Delightful shivers coursed through me, rushing through my belly and into my chest.

"I'm getting there," he promised.

I had the distinct feeling I had been hoodwinked by agreeing to let him have one kiss. Something told me that I would soon be agreeing to much more with him.

His hands slipped under my robe and the short nightgown underneath. He had the roughest palms I'd ever felt. After dating only professional types, it was something of a novelty to have such incredibly manly hands gliding over my curves. He whispered something in Russian that I didn't understand. As if remembering we didn't share that common language, he repeated, "You're so damn soft, Bianca."

I gasped when he grabbed my bottom in his big hands and gave it an appreciative squeeze. A short laugh escaped his throat as he ran his palms over my panties. Bending low his dark head, Sergei gripped the loosely tied belt of my robe between his teeth and

gave it a tug. The sides of my dressing gown fell open, and he let the belt fall from his mouth. Dragging his lips side to side along my collarbone, he whispered, "Take off the robe."

"I really shouldn't."

He smiled at my quavering voice. "Then I'll do it for you."

Abandoning my backside, Sergei pushed the robe down my arms. The silky fabric fluttered around my feet. Even sitting, he was so damn tall that we were eye-to-eye while I stood. His heated gaze burned me as it roamed my body.

Without the robe covering me, I felt incredibly exposed in the thin, too short nightgown. Though I projected confidence and was normally comfortable in my skin, I suddenly experienced a wave of insecurity. All I could think about were the imperfections marring my body. Was he comparing me to all the other women he'd dated? I feared I wouldn't measure up well.

Cupping my chin, Sergei peered into my eyes. "You're even prettier than I'd imagined."

His compliment took me by surprise. "You've been imagining me like this?"

Sergei's mouth quirked to the side. "Well...I've been imagining you in much less." He fingered the spaghetti strap of my nightgown and started to slide it down my arm. "Much, much less."

"Wait." Breathless, I put my hands on his shoulders. "We need to slow down."

"Five months, Bianca." He reminded me of how long we'd been doing this will-we-won't-we dance. "That's slow enough."

Conceding he had a point, I pressed my forehead to his. "So stop messing around and kiss me."

He laughed and wound those massive, tattooed arms of his around me. Relishing the heat and power of him, I closed my eyes and waited for the first touch of his lips. His long fingers sifted through my hair just as his mouth brushed mine. His other hand rode the curve of my spine to settle on my lower back.

With a low groan, Sergei kissed me. It was the sweetest, most chaste of kisses, but there was something incredibly erotic about it. Perhaps it was the knowledge that so much more awaited us. It was the teasing, easy beginning to a night that promised to be among the best of my life.

The tip of his tongue flicked the seam of my lips. Dropping all pretenses of not wanting him, I surrendered to his seeking kiss. Our tongues touched timidly at first and then with more confidence as we grew accustomed to the taste and heat of each other. Cradling the back of my head, Sergei deepened the mating of our mouths until my knees were wobbling. I clutched his shoulders for support and whimpered under his sensual assault.

Proving he was an attentive lover, Sergei clasped the backs of my thighs and hefted me off the floor before my lust-weakened legs gave way and I crumpled to the floor. I gasped against his lips and started to protest the caveman move but he silenced me with another amazingly perfect kiss. Straddling his lap, I was glad I had picked such a wide, comfy chair for reading.

The caress of his hands left me aching with such incredible sexual hunger. He made me feel so alive with anticipation and excitement. All those neatly collected reasons to keep him at arm's length were slowly being wiped away from the list I'd jotted down in my head. This was bad. This was so, so bad.

Except—oh my God. It just felt so, so good.

His hands sneaked under my nightgown, and I giggled at the ticklish swipe of his fingertips. He chuckled against my lips but continued his exploration. Palming my breast, he brushed his thumb over my nipple, and I moaned as my throbbing flesh tightened to a peak. He lightly pinched it, and I rocked against him. "Sergei."

"I want to see you naked." He buried his face against the curve of my neck and nipped at the sensitive skin there. "I want to see all of you."

I started to say that we needed to turn down the lights but stopped myself. Sergei didn't seem to mind the extra weight I carried. There was no faking the attraction and desire reflected in his eyes and carried in his admiring touch. He wanted me—just the way I was.

Embracing my inner sex kitten, I reached for the towel between us and gave it a playful tug. "Only if you get naked first."

"As if you have to ask!" Sergei nibbled my lower lip. "I'm going to make love to you tonight."

I hastily applied the brakes. "No."

He leveled a look my way. "Don't make me beg, Bianca." Massaging my breast, he murmured, "I want you, and I've waited so long."

Something in his voice piqued my interest. "When was the last time you went out on a date, Sergei?"

He held my gaze. "I haven't been with another woman since a week before I met you."

My lips parted with shock. "Are you serious?"

He brushed his knuckles down my cheek. "After I saw you that first time in December, I knew no other woman would ever come close. It seemed pointless to waste my time with others when all I wanted was you."

His sincerity stunned me. Guilt rocked me. "Are you mad at me?"

His brow creased. "For what, *milaya moya*?"

"Dating other guys while you were sitting on the sidelines," I explained nervously.

He wrapped a few strands of my hair around his finger. "I won't sit here and lie to you. I didn't like seeing you with those other men." He hesitated. "I was relieved you didn't bring anyone tonight—but that doesn't mean I'm mad at you. Annoyed, maybe," he said with a smile. "But never mad."

I captured his mouth in a lingering kiss. "For what it's worth, I haven't been intimate with anyone since Vivian's wedding." Deciding to be totally honest, I admitted, "No other man has made me feel even a tenth of what you've made me feel so far tonight."

"It's early yet, Bianca." He teased his mouth against mine. "I have so much more to show you."

Tapping my finger to his nose, I shook my head. "You still can't make love to me."

"But—"

"I don't have any protection in the house. Unless you have something tucked away in your tuxedo pants..."

"I don't." Then, with a careless shrug, he said, "What I really want to do to you doesn't require protection."

My core clenched with anticipation. "And what's that?"

"You'll see. Now—you decide. Here on the ottoman or on the bed?"

"I guess that depends on what you have in mind."

"First, I'm going to tear this off you." He gripped the front of my nightgown. "Then I'm going to use my mouth to trace every last inch of you." His hand slipped between my thighs so he could cup my sex. "I'm going to spend most of the night with my tongue right here."

Oh. Sweet. Jesus.