

TASTE OF AFFECTION  
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**Keep reading to discover the proposal scene of Charlotte and Zaiden from *Taste of Affection.***

**CHARLOTTE**

**“T**hat can’t be a thing,” Zaiden responds with questions in his eyes.

I nod my head. “It is. It’s called Friday’s bar, and it’s not uncommon to get drunk with colleagues and bosses.” I remember, back in Denmark, this one time where we had one of the busiest days in the month at the clinic where I worked, and we got some alcohol involved. We got pretty drunk and I had to open the clinic the next morning.

It was worth it. I didn’t think so at the time, but in hindsight, I had such a good time with a few of my colleagues.

Zaiden shakes his head with a smile on his face and intertwines our fingers.

I take the last bite from my ice cream cone. We’re walking through Østre Anlæg, the park in my hometown of Aalborg. It’s a small park, but I’ve always loved the pond.

Mom's house is another ten minute walk away from here, but Zaiden takes big strides, and we get to the front door rather quickly.

"*Vi er tilbage!*" I call to Mom, who's somewhere in the house, letting her know that we've made it back. Not that we wouldn't, if Denmark is anything, it's *safe*.

Zaiden takes my jacket and hangs it up on the coat hanger together with his, and I discard of my shoes.

The stairs creak. "*Er du sulten, skat?*" Mom comes into view as she walks down the stairs.

"No, Mom, we're full, thank you. Are you up for a game of *Qwixx?*" I give her a quick hug.

"One game. I'm pretty tired from today." She smiles, always happy to spend as much time with me as she can get.

She's the same with Rosemary. Whenever she has one or both of her daughters home, she takes every chance she gets to spend time with us. Whether she feels like it or not, I know that she'd feel guilty for not spending every second she can if she doesn't.

While my mom grabs the game from the cabinet, I find Zaiden wandering to our glass bookcase that's filled with our Lego.

"I'm most proud of this one," I say once I stand next to Zaiden, then point at the Disney Castle. "It's a recent one. Rosemary, Mom, and I made this the night before Rosie left to Ireland. I left to England not too long after." I look up to my left where Zaiden stands.

He meets my eyes with a genuine smile, then leans down, and plants a kiss on my forehead. "I'm proud of you."

I huff. "It's just a Lego set."

"I don't care. I'm always proud of you, Charlie."

My heartstrings are pulled toward him and I intertwine our fingers to squeeze his hand before letting go again.

We spend the rest of the evening playing *Qwixx*, more games than one, and it's late when Zaiden and I finally call it a night, and head to my childhood bedroom. The door creaks—like it always has—and I welcome my boyfriend into my childhood.

Old Taylor Swift posters cover my left wall, above my bed, mixed with dried flowers and a few small posters with quotes written on them. Small lights light up where my wall meets the ceiling.

My mirror stands in the corner opposite my bed and postcards from all over the world are glued behind it. I knew the glue wasn't the best thing to use, but I wanted them up there, and I always said *'it'll become a problem only when it has to be taken off.'*

"This is a hundred percent you." Zaiden chuckles to himself. "I don't think you've changed at all."

"Welcome to my little girl sanctuary." I snort, taking my shirt off and throwing it on my desk chair. Bending to my suitcase, I take out my pajama shirt, then stand back up. I can't wait to take my bra off after a long day.

Hands wrap around my waist before I get the chance to, and an instant smile creeps on my face. "Come here," Zaiden whispers into my ear, then turns my body ninety degrees, until my eyes meet his in the mirror. "Look how beautiful you are."

Smiling, I cover the hand he has on my stomach with my own. We look good together.

He keeps his eyes on mine when he presses kisses on my shoulder, slowly moving into my neck.

"Zaiden," my voice is breathy.

"I know, my lovely."

We can't do anything with my mom in the house, and he knows it's a line I won't cross. Again.

I turn my head and meet his eyes in reality. Reaching my hand to his cheek, I press a kiss against his lips. "I love you."

Zaiden smiles. "I love you."

The both of us change into our nightwear and after we brush our teeth, I put on an episode of Gilmore Girls. I've seen this show countless of times, but it never bores me. Zaiden wraps his arm around me and I move into his chest until I'm comfortable. His fingers move over my skin steadily.

Twenty minutes later and fourteen minutes into the episode, Jess tells Rory he knows about the distance to Yale. I love that part. It's such a cute moment.

Jess is superior. Rosemary and I have always thought so. And I'm forever sour that they didn't end up together in the show. But in our heads, they did.

"Charlotte?" Zaiden's breath against my skin is a whisper.

"Yeah?"

"Marry me?"

My brows furrow. "What?" A breath of disbelief passes my lips.

"Marry me."

Involuntarily, a laugh escapes my lips. "You're ridiculous."

"No, my lovely. I'm serious." His voice is no longer a whisper against my skin.

I sit up, Gilmore Girls completely forgotten as I turn my body and meet his eyes. "What?"

Zaiden grins. "I had a thing carefully planned. Tomorrow, we'd go to the coast, spend the day there, and I'd propose when the sun would set. But Charlie, I can't

wait. We'll still go tomorrow, I promise, but I've been wanting to be engaged to you for months, and I can't wait anymore.

"If you want me to get on one knee, I will. I'll do anything you ask me to do, but please, marry me?" he reaches to the nightstand and effortlessly pulls a ring box out of the drawer as if he practiced the movement a dozen times before.

My sight is blurry and when I look down at the now opened ring box, a tear falls from my eye. The ring is stunning. Perfect. When I look up to meet Zaiden's eyes again, the look on his face says everything.

"Charlotte Reading, will you marry me?"

"Yes, Zaiden, I will marry you." There's not a beat of hesitation in my soul. I reach to rest my hand against his cheek and lower my lips to his. "Fuck, I love you, Z."

Zaiden places his hands on my hips and pulls me onto his lap. When our eyes meet again and I pull back, he grabs the box back from where he put it on my sheets.

I lean back a bit, watching his fingers take the ring from the box, then take my hand, and slide it on mine. "This is perfect." I look up at him once again. "You are perfect."

He smiles, resting a hand against my cheek. "Ready to raise animals on our farm even when we're old and scrawny?"

My eyes light up. "Yes! And I thought of a name for our property: The *Elskede* Acres." The *Beloved* Acres.

It's perfect. Everything in my life right now, is perfect. Nothing could ever take this feeling or this moment away from me.

I can't wait to tell Grace.

