Chocolatey Tactics

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Chocolatey Tactics

by WriteOfMoon

Summary

Stelle's sulking at home after the rain crushed her plans. Perhaps all she needs is a visitor to brighten things for her.

Chocolatey Tactics

Does it really have to rain today?

With a huff, Stelle leaned against the windowpane, watching raindrops race down the glass. She idly picked a contender, tracking its path as it slid toward the bottom. Anything to distract herself from the disappointment gnawing at her.

Outside, couples dashed through the streets full of giggles despite being soaked; hands intertwined and flirtatious lips brushing between bursts of laughter.

What's with all the PDA?

Her gaze then falls on the calendar pinned to the wall.

February 14th.

Oh.

The one day of the year when the world seemed to revolve around overpriced gifts and grand gestures. She *did* initially find time to stroll through the city- only for the rain to ruin her plans.

Figures.

A sharp knock on the front door pulls her from her thoughts. With a sigh, she got up to answer, and she's met with a familiar pair of striking blue eyes.

Phainon.

Standing in the doorway, completely drenched with his hair stuck to his forehead, rainwater dripped from the hem of his jacket. "Hello there!" he greets with a smirk, before stepping inside without waiting for permission. "I knew you'd be here," he adds, shaking off his wet sleeves.

Of course, he knew. He knew she had no interest in Valentine's Day. Knew she thought it was just an excuse to wring every last coin out of lovesick fools. Still, here he was. Holding six boxes of chocolates in hand.

She blinked.

"Don't get me wrong," he muttered, not quite meeting her eyes. "I don't even like chocolate." Despite his dismissive words, the tips of his ears burned red.

Stelle narrows her eyes with suspicion. "*Phainon,*" she calls slowly. "What are you up to?" she smirked with an arched brow in amusement.

He clears his throat whilst averting his gaze; his expression almost sheepish. "Well... I just happened to see these on sale. Figured you might enjoy them, that's all." He tries to shrug it off, but the way he fidgets with the bottom box betrays his nervousness. "Don't read too much into it. It's just chocolates."

'It's just chocolates.'

Really now? He wasn't fooling anyone.

"*Six* boxes of chocolates?" she emphasized. "Tsk tsk tsk. Phainon, you're a terrible liar. Go on. Tell me what's going on. And don't lie to me or I might have to punish you," she half-teased whilst crossing her arms.

His face flushes before he attempts to compose himself quickly. "Fiiiine," he relents, setting down the boxes on the nearby table. He then sighs and runs a hand through his wet hair. "Today's Valentine's Day. You know that," he starts. "...And with everyone running around buying gifts and flowers.... I thought, hell, why not get you something too?" He's avoiding her gaze, shifting uncomfortably.

Stelle wasn't buying it. "You *also* know I don't care about those things. You didn't have to get me anything..." she comments before staring at the big stack. She lets out a huff in resignation and smiles. "But, since you went out of your way, I'll accept it. Thank you, Phainon. I'll be sure to have some," she says. Then grins mischievously, before adding, "...only after you tell me the real reason for this."

He hesitates for a moment, still refusing to look her in the eye. His cheeks burned as the corner of his lip twitched. There was no escaping this.

"The real reason..." he paused. There's a hint of vulnerability in his voice. He shifts his weight from one foot to the other, before finally mustering the courage to meet her gaze. His expression is now filled with determination. It was now or never.

"I got you the chocolates because... I have feelings for you. In fact, I have for a while now."

He seems almost surprised at his own words, as if he couldn't believe he'd actually admitted it.

Stelle, however, couldn't be too surprised. After all, the way he was acting was suspicious enough. But, it was still plenty of a surprise to hear him confess at all.

In truth, she wasn't sure how to respond. She didn't even know whether she could reciprocate his feelings.

She glances at the chocolates once more. "So... in your opinion, I'm worth six boxes of chocolates?" she teased. If only to hide her own flustered heart and buy herself time to think.

Or perhaps let him sway her on his own. Whichever came first.

Phainon's bashful expression quickly morphed into one of amusement in response, letting out a half-groan, half-chuckle. "Ha *ha*, very funny." He rolled his eyes, but there was no actual annoyance in his tone. In fact, he seemed almost relieved at her lighthearted response. It gave him an opening to play along. "Yes, I think you're worth at least six boxes, maybe even more. But I didn't want to seem too... desperate."

"Normally, people would only buy *one*. You buying six sure makes you look *six times* more desperate than the average person, you silly pup," Stelle snickered, earning a fully rose colored look on Phainon's face.

He whines exasperatedly. "Oh, shut it..." he rubs the back of his neck sheepishly. "Alright, maybe I am a little desperate. But you can't blame me, can you? You're not exactly easy to impress."

She simply chuckles. Well. He'd successfully won her over now. "Alright, alright, you sweet pup. You've earned your keep. Allow me to reward you with a treat."

She approaches him in just a few strides and tugs both sides of his collar, pulling him into a kiss. His eyes widen in surprise as she closed the gap between them. But he quickly melts into her lips, moving his hands to her waist to pull her closer. After a quiet moment, they pull back just enough to look into each other's eyes.

"That's quite the reward," he murmurs, his voice slightly hoarse. "I might have to consider buying you gifts more often."

Stelle shakes her head with a chuckle. "Nonsense. The only gift I'll ever need is standing right here," she says softly, pressing a finger to his lips. The provocative gesture caused his heart to leap. The corner of his lip quirks up into a small smile as he brushes his lips along her fingertip.

"You really know how to make a guy weak in the knees," his voice came dripped with affection. Then he gently cups her face in his hands, capturing her lips into a slower, more tender kiss. And for the first time ever, Stelle would find herself enjoying this Valentine's Day. Knowing that with Phainon, there would be many more to savor.

~ Fin

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