

Leo and Teddy – HEART TEMPTER (Heartthrob Series, Book 5)
***Heart Tempter* is a standalone novel.**

Enemies to Lovers...

Teddy Behr – The fun-loving heiress whose jet-setting ways go into a tailspin at her family's hotel when she is suddenly thrust under the dominion of hotel magnate, Leo Guerra.

Leo Guerra – The darkly handsome Spaniard who has no intention of coddling the boss's daughter in spite of his weakness for leggy blondes with big, golden brown eyes.

Hate at first sight. Lust at first touch...

Unstoppable passion ignites between Leo and Teddy as they duke it out at the Riviera Hotel, the luxurious South Beach resort on the brink of a grand re-opening. Will mayhem, murder and a Heart Tempter like Teddy jeopardize everything Leo has worked for?

Chapter One



Theodora Behr sat in the dingy taxi and breathed through her mouth to block out the smell of stale cigarettes, chemical exhaust and greasy fried chicken. The cab driver's fingers glistened with the remnants of his lunch as he gestured to the multi-colored, pastel Art Deco buildings on Collins Avenue. Fighting a queasy stomach, Teddy rolled down the window and gulped fresh air, only to feel the Miami humidity slap her face like a steaming wet rag. She let out an involuntary groan that sounded like a bleating lamb.

The driver whipped his head around. "You okay back there?"

"Yes. I'm home, so that's good." If only the circumstances of her homecoming had been different, she'd feel a lot better.

"If Miami is home, then why are you going to a hotel?" the cabbie asked.

"The Riviera Hotel is my home." She fidgeted with a long strand of blond hair. "Well, sort of."

He shot her an odd look and turned his attention back to the long circular driveway leading to the Riviera.

Home. Teddy had said Miami was home because she was born there, but she had no real anchor, not even this beachfront luxury hotel in South Beach she would someday inherit. After boarding school and college, she spent most of her life traveling as the Behr Foundation's goodwill ambassador, a job she was proud of. The Riviera Hotel was the closest thing she had to home, not the lovely Paris flat Daddy had bought her nine years ago when she turned twenty-one.

The air conditioning was barely working and it was warm and stifling inside, but that wasn't the sole reason for her malaise. She couldn't shake the restless emptiness that had plagued her for months. She yearned for something more than the constant traveling. Though she enjoyed her philanthropic work for the Behr Foundation and the many countries she visited on its behalf, she longed for something deeper, more personal.

With a sigh, she closed the window and shifted her hips to dislodge the cracked vinyl sticking to the backs of her damp thighs. She dug into her Chloe bag and extracted an antibacterial wipe, a pink and gold enameled mirror compact and a wand of Spark, her favorite Chanel lip gloss color. After cleaning her hands, she reapplied her lip gloss and checked her face for signs of wear and tear.

Tired golden brown eyes stared back at her and her usual peachy complexion looked wan in spite of drinking lots of mineral water during the 12-hour flight from Ibiza. Traveling lodged between a huge athlete and a pushy woman had consequences, and not even a few glasses of chardonnay, a sleep mask or her ear plugs had afforded her any sleep.

She tried not to think about why she'd been summoned home so abruptly, but it was all she could think about of late. Daddy had been furious with her over the party she'd thrown that had gone awry, resulting in a huge loss of money and a stain on the Behr family name. He sent her a pre-paid economy class ticket and was unavailable to talk to her every time she'd called to explain. Granted it was pre-opening week at the Riviera, but still, Daddy had *always* been accessible to her, no matter how busy he was.

Worse still, he hadn't been at the Miami International Airport to meet her, as was his custom when she came home. In fact, no one had been there waiting for her, not even Sam, the family driver. Clearly, the cold homecoming was Daddy's punishment for the recent debacle—which hadn't been her fault. His retributions were usually short-lived and he didn't stay mad at her for long. She could only hope this would be the case once he understood her part in the disaster. She had a lot of explaining to do before she could begin to celebrate her 30th birthday.

A brief text from her stepmother Lola, aka The Amoeba, was all she'd gotten upon her arrival at MIA that said "Take a cab." That was it. No "Happy Birthday, Teddy. So nice to have you back." So different from the text she'd gotten from Martha Conti, her father's long-time personal assistant. "Teddy, dear, I'll be waiting for you at the front of the Riviera. So sorry I won't be able to meet you at the airport, but things are crazy here."

It suddenly occurred to her that Martha might have said things were crazy because she was planning a birthday celebration for her. The thought of a surprise party made Teddy smile for the first time since she'd entered the grimy cab. And if her stars were aligned, her friends in the staff would be there to welcome her back.

An overwhelming twinge of nostalgia overtook her when the cab stopped in front of the hotel—*her* hotel someday. Nothing would ever be the same as when she was a little girl playing in the Riviera, pretending she was Eloise at The Plaza Hotel.

Teddy's heart lifted when she saw Martha standing beside the two massive bronze hotel doors. Petite and impeccably dressed in a black and white St. John knit suit and matching spectator pumps, the middle-aged woman with the glossy brunette bob smiled broadly.

"Teddy, I've missed you. Happy birthday, dear." Martha's pretty hazel green eyes twinkled as she extended her arms toward Teddy. "Come give me a hug."

"Martha!" Teddy ran forward and lifted Martha off her feet, squeezing her compact body in a tight hug. "I've missed you sooo much."

Teddy set Martha down amid her protesting chuckles and gave the cab driver a hefty tip after he rolled in the last of her four Louis Vuitton suitcases. Closing her wallet, she made a mental note to see about getting more cash in her account because her money was running out.

Martha smoothed the strands of Teddy's long hair from her face and peered into her eyes. "Why haven't you kept in better touch, young lady? You know how I worry about you. Must I depend on Twitter and Instagram to learn your whereabouts?" She wagged a finger at her. "Or should I say shenanigans?"

Teddy gave an innocent shrug. "Shenanigans? Me?" It was hard meeting Martha's direct gaze, especially after the recent events. Surely she knew what was going on. "I'm sorry I've been a bit preoccupied lately...and...and out of touch," Teddy said quickly before Martha started asking questions. She flashed a repentant smile. "Forgive me?"

"Of course," Martha replied in her usual indulgent way, warming Teddy's heart more than she could imagine.

Teddy had adored Martha from the moment the kind woman had started faithfully working for Daddy sixteen years ago. Martha's warm, affectionate personality was the perfect buffer to Daddy's brash, high-powered one. Much of her devotion to Randolph Behr stemmed from unrequited love, something that made Teddy infinitely sad. She would have loved Martha for a stepmother instead of The Amoeba.

In many ways, Martha was like a surrogate mother to Teddy. She'd taken a keen interest in her welfare after Teddy's mother died when Teddy was only 14. Martha had never married and her only family was a pair of schnauzers named Ricky and Lucy.

A freckle-faced bellhop with a mop of chestnut curls and thick-rimmed black hipster glasses approached them. Teddy smiled at him and gestured to her suitcases. "Please take these to the Presidential Suite and..."

Before she finished, Martha led her away. "Dan will take care of your bags, Teddy. We must hurry. Leo is waiting to meet you."

"Oh *him*," Teddy said without an ounce of enthusiasm. "He can wait a bit. I'm dying to see Daddy and all the renovations I've been hearing about."

After a massive renovation, the Riviera was close to re-opening. For the past six months, Daddy had bent Teddy's ear with accolades about how Leonardo Guerra, the 36-year-old Spanish tycoon, had renovated world-class resorts in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. Anyone would think Guerra was the son Daddy never had.

When he first arrived, Martha had confided that Teddy's conniving stepmother liked the wonder boy a bit too much, making Teddy suspicious. Everything The Amoeba did merited suspicion. From the moment she weaseled into Daddy's life, The Amoeba had managed to manipulate him. She was the only person who'd been able to pull Daddy out of his deep depression and binge drinking after Mom's death. Employed at the time as a special events coordinator at the Riviera, Lola was brilliant on the job, but it was the Brazilian bombshell's seduction that succeeded in winning Daddy over at his weakest point.

To Teddy's dismay and nobody's surprise, the seductive event planner organized the most lavish event in the Riviera Hotel's history – her own wedding to Randolph Behr, the hotel's owner. After they were married, Lola convinced Daddy that Teddy needed to be sent to boarding school "for her own good." No one had understood Teddy's despair at having to leave her dear father's side after losing her mother. No one except Martha, who had been powerless to stop it.

Feeling rejected and hurt by the banishment, Teddy went wild to combat the loneliness. With no limits and an open wallet from Daddy, she traveled the globe and experienced adventures most adults never did. She relished them all, including romances that led to a few engagements, but she kept getting cold feet and breaking them off. Her plans for today's birthday celebration came to a screeching halt when she was summoned home, otherwise she'd be in a hot air balloon now soaring over Tanzania in the Serengeti.

"I'll give you a tour later, Teddy," Martha said, interrupting her thoughts. "Leo won't tolerate being kept waiting."

"Won't tolerate?" Teddy rolled her eyes. "Oh brother. He's not the boss of us."

Martha remained silent, making Teddy wonder why. She was usually more talkative when Teddy returned home after a long absence.

Saving her questions for later, she linked her arm with Martha's as they entered the majestic foyer. Everything sparkled, from the massive mint green granite columns to the Venetian crystal chandeliers. Eighteenth century Italian furniture glistened on plush Persian carpeting. Fresh flower arrangements in towering crystal vases perfumed the air alongside potted palms in Oriental urns on the mosaic pink marble floor. The hotel's interior had always been elegant, but it was even more so now.

Teddy's cell phone beeped with several text messages at once, making her smile. "Aw, more birthday wishes. Isn't that sweet?"

Martha nodded, but stopped and touched Teddy's forearm. "Better shut off the volume, dear. Leo is short on time and patience. He won't like you checking texts while he conducts the meeting."

"I don't want to meet Guerra yet. I'd rather see Daddy."

“Humor me, dear. This is important.”

Teddy could never deny the sweet woman anything. “Okay, done,” she said, shutting off the phone’s volume. “So what’s the deal with Guerra?”

“He is the best there is at what he does.” Martha sighed deeply. “Please try to keep an open mind about the changes.”

“What changes?” Teddy asked, noting the wariness in Martha’s voice. “Is everything okay here? You don’t seem your usual self.”

“I’ll explain later,” Martha murmured. Leading Teddy down a long corridor, her chin-length, brunette bob partially hid her face.

When they stopped in front of her father’s office, Teddy couldn’t help smiling. So that was it. Everyone was waiting in Daddy’s office to scream “surprise” when she walked in. Who did they think they were fooling? She was the *queen* of arranging surprises for her friends, especially birthday ones. Could Daddy have forgiven her without any explanations? This was too good to be true.

Martha hovered outside the door. “This is Leo’s office now.”

Teddy hid a grin. *As if that would ever happen.* They were certainly going to great lengths to surprise her. Who knew Martha was such an actress, acting all worried and such?

“That doesn’t sound like Daddy. He would never give up his office. Yep, there sure have been a lot of changes around here,” she said, going along with the joke.

Martha straightened her spine and knocked on the door. Marveling at Martha’s acting chops, Teddy flung the door open and drew back with her hand dramatically clasped over her heart and her eyes wide open in surprise. She waited for gleeful shouts of “Happy Birthday!”...but none came.

After awkward seconds ticked by, she wiped the pathetic disappointment from her face and scanned the large room until she spotted a tall man standing beside the bookcase. His back was to her with his head bent over a book in his hands. Turning toward her, he slammed the book shut and Teddy nearly leapt out of her stilettos at the loud crack. He might as well have fired a shot, it was that jarring.

“Where is Daddy...and everyone?” she demanded, sucking in a calming breath. She wasn’t usually jumpy, but the penetrating look in the man’s diamond black eyes set her nerves on edge.

Martha cleared her throat. “Uh... Teddy, this is Leonardo Guerra.”

“Theodora.” He strolled forward and grasped Teddy’s hand in a firm handshake. The gesture was friendly enough, but his dark countenance unnerved her.

“Call me Teddy. Everyone does,” she said when she found her voice.

“So, we finally meet. I’ve heard a lot about you.” His voice was deep and tinged with a Spanish accent, but his tone dripped with irony. Black-as-night eyes intently bored into hers.

“Only good things I hope,” she said, struggling to be civil even if she disliked him on sight. Raw power emanated from him, leaving no question that he was in command. Thick black hair framed a strong-boned face and the faint laugh lines at the outer corners of his arresting eyes were the only clue he had a sense of humor.

When Guerra didn’t return her smile, Teddy raised her chin and boldly assessed him. Success and virility radiated from his tall, broad-shouldered physique. Though she was five foot seven, she felt slight in comparison. Impeccable grooming and a well-tailored suit erased his low-born origins, but Teddy’s research had revealed him as the once impoverished son of a gypsy who had left home at an early age to make his fortune dynamically using his intellect and ambitious drive.

The slight hollows beneath Leo's sharp cheekbones and ridges bracketing his firm mouth spoke of ruthlessness. As if she hadn't figured that out with just one look at the grim set of his mouth. His handsome, yet austere, olive-toned face and the piercing glint in his eyes warned her *don't cross me*. He was indeed formidable, but she couldn't figure out why he looked irritated when she hadn't done anything to annoy him—except keep him waiting.

Breaking the tense silence, Martha said, "I'll leave you two to sort things out. Call me when you're finished, Teddy." Her flushed face left no doubt of her unease.

"Where are you going?" Teddy said, not happy her ally was abandoning her.

"I'll be somewhere in the hotel. Give me a call or have me paged when you're finished," Martha said on her way out the door.

When she left, Teddy sank into a buff leather armchair in front of the antique mahogany desk. The forceful energy emanating from Leo was intense, but she wasn't about to let him intimidate her. To relax, she swung one leg over the other and rocked it back and forth. That usually helped, but not today.

As the rocking escalated, the hem of her lettuce green silk wrap dress inched up several inches above her bare, tanned knees and she caught the flicker of male interest in his dark eyes. Designed by the owner of Michi Michi, Teddy's childhood friend and favorite Parisian designer, it was more party dress than traveling attire. The moment she left customs at the Miami International Airport, Teddy had changed into the dress and stilettos before hailing the taxi. This was Miami and once she cleared the air with Daddy, she was ready to party hard on her birthday.

Leo leaned his athletic frame against the desk ledge, all sinew and corded muscles beneath the charcoal Armani suit that fit his tall form like a dream. "I'm sure you have many questions, Theodora."

Why was he still calling her Theodora? And why had God wasted such stunning eyes on a man, dark as lava with iridescent green flecks? Her dark blond lashes needed at least two coats of mascara to look as thick and lush as his. She looked away from his eyes and collected herself.

"I do have many questions, but first tell me about you." A little charm might help thaw him out. "You have a lovely accent," she drawled. "Martha mentioned you're from Spain. Catalan or Basque?"

"Basque, but we're not here to talk about me. I'm short on time and you're late," he said bluntly.

She waved a hand at his curtness. "Don't even get me started about my experience at the airport. Some overzealous fool ordered a strip search because he found rare beauty serum ampules from China that my friend Sandrine hid in my suitcase as a birthday surprise," she said, hoping he'd warm up to her once he heard about her dreadful ordeal. Guerra's dark brows knotted over incredulous eyes as she continued, "a security guard prodded and poked me until she decided I was harmless enough to enter the good ole U.S. of A."

Leo's iPhone rang, interrupting her story. He answered it and engaged in a brief conversation while Teddy took inventory of the office. Nothing had changed since Daddy had occupied it, except there were no longer photos of her at different stages of growing up and no glamorous pictures of Lola. Either Leo hadn't been in charge very long or he didn't believe in personal touches where he worked.

He abruptly ended the call and turned his attention to Teddy.

She smiled. "As I was saying—"

"Never mind all that," he interrupted. "You must be wondering why I summoned you back to the Riviera."

“You didn’t summon me. Daddy asked me to come home. He even sent me a pre-paid ticket. Totally unnecessary. I can pay for my own airfare and I wish I had. By the time I got to the airport it was too late to upgrade the economy class ticket to a business one. I had a huge athlete on one side who drank and ate like a horse and a nosy woman on my other side who kept trying to read my romance novel.” She threw in the romance novel to keep things light, but he didn’t crack a smile.

One dark brow lifted. “What do you use to buy your airfare? Your allowance?” He sounded exasperated, pronouncing allowance as if it were a dirty word.

“I don’t have an allowance,” she said frostily. “I draw a paycheck from my non-profit charity work.”

“Is that what you call going to parties in designer gowns and schmoozing with the rich and famous?” he challenged.

“That’s not all I do.” Teddy massaged her temples against the onslaught of a tension headache. “It’s how I raise funds for worthy charities.”

“Not anymore.” Guerra set down the book he’d been holding and crossed hard-muscled arms over his chest. “You’re going to do real work now, Theodora. I’ve taken charge of the Riviera, which like you, is facing financial ruin.”

Chapter Two



Teddy sat up ramrod straight. “What are you talking about? You know nothing about my finances. It’s none of your business.”

Leo frowned. “I know you are in grave debt, especially after that debacle of a party you hosted recently.”

Teddy froze and stared at him. He was referring to the lavish bash she’d thrown in Venice for Michi and her British fiancé, Crispin McAllister Bradenton, III. She didn’t regret having the party for one second. Michi had been incredibly generous all year, providing ball gowns for her gala events and even doing a charity fashion show for free. The least Teddy could do was throw her a memorable party. Unfortunately, that’s exactly what it turned out to be—but not in a good way.

“You are mistaken, Señor Guerra, if you think you can pry into my business. My finances and personal life are none of your concern.” She leaned forward and rapped her knuckles on the polished desktop next to where he stood. “In case you have forgotten, I am Randolph Behr’s daughter and heiress to the hotel that employs you.”

“You are the one who is mistaken, Theodora,” he said scathingly. “Do you have any idea the financial mess the Riviera is in? Your father is dealing with the aftermath of a massive hurricane that decimated business and a few lawsuits that have nearly wiped him out.”

Teddy’s stomach formed a knot as Leo’s blistering gaze zeroed in on her with damning censure. “Oh. I didn’t know,” she said softly. Awkward silence ensued as he watched her incredulously.

“Your father needs you to act like a responsible adult, not an incorrigible party girl,” Leo said in a tightly controlled tone. “Your latest escapade at the Venetian *palazzo* was all over the tabloids and it was the last straw. You destroyed one of the finest hotels in Europe.”

Teddy did not want to debate over her part in the festivities that had gone haywire. She would only discuss it with Daddy and not this mean stranger. It was mortifying to have her dirty laundry aired in the tabloids. And if the exaggerations and lies weren’t enough, there was always The Amoeba. God only knew what she’d poisoned Guerra’s mind with. No wonder he was treating her like a senseless idiot.

The need to defend herself made her swallow hard and suck in a deep breath. It’s not as if she’d done everything on purpose. She was filled with remorse over it.

“Things got out of control. It was very unfortunate,” she said sincerely.

“Unfortunate for your father mostly. The turtledove stunt cost him a lot more than the money you squandered. To avoid a major lawsuit he had to make a few concessions.”

Teddy pressed her eyes shut, wishing she could be anywhere but there reliving one of the most awful episodes of her life. Her enraged father had refused to talk to her after the news hit about the ultimately destructive engagement party she’d thrown for Michi and Crispin. One of the guests, a very drunk one, had let loose a flock of turtledoves that had swooped into the grand foyer terrorizing everyone, pooping all over the place and wreaking havoc. Several birds landed on curtain rods at once, toppling the expensive silk curtains onto candles and igniting a fire. By the time the flames were put out, there were extensive damages. As a result, Daddy cut off her credit cards and sent her the ticket to come home.

Reliving the shame, Teddy anxiously twirled a strand of her hair, but then tossed it back lest Guerra think she was flirting with him. “What do you mean he had to make a few concessions?” she asked, worrying about the consequences.

“Ask Martha about it. I don’t have time. Tomorrow morning, you will begin working to pay back your debt.”

She gave him a haughty stare to cover up her nervousness. “I *do* work, and you can’t tell me what to do,” she said, glaring at him.

“Wake up, *Princesa*. Your father’s investment in this hotel is depleted and the monies that exist are in an irrevocable trust.”

“Don’t use scare tactics on me, Guerra,” she said feebly. Leo’s severe face made Teddy flinch at the awful truth. My God, she was broke! Her canceled credit cards were not punishment for her misadventures in Europe as she had assumed. Daddy had canceled them out of financial need. Poor Daddy, she could only imagine the stress he was under—and all because of her!

“Starting tomorrow, you will learn every aspect of the hotel business,” Leo said in a commanding tone.

Teddy’s hands curled into such tight fists that her nails dug into her palms. “I’ll do anything to help Daddy, but I don’t need to learn the business. I practically grew up here. I know what it takes to run a hotel.”

Guerra’s lips lifted into a mirthless smile, baring strong, white teeth. “Playing in a hotel doesn’t strike me as knowledge, and being a professional party girl doesn’t qualify you either.”

Teddy’s hackles rose. “I’ve studied at Oxford, La Sorbonne and at the Universidad de Salamanca. And I also have plenty of experience in event planning and public relations.”

Leo scoffed. “Your experience in lifestyles of the rich and famous is of no use to me.”

Teddy ignored his rude comments. He was out to rile her and she wouldn’t rise to the bait. “I expect a title commensurate with my qualifications.” Her direct gaze narrowed on his disdainful one. “The least I’ll accept is vice-president—in the public relations department. I love people and I speak French, Italian and Spanish fluently. And a bit of German and Portuguese,” she added, but it didn’t seem to impress him.

“Report here tomorrow morning at 8 a.m.—sharp.” The determined glint in Guerra’s eyes didn’t waver.

Teddy’s leg swung like a pendulum ticking away the last free moments of her life. “What will I be doing?” she ventured to ask.

Leo walked around the desk and sat in the armchair. “You’ll find out tomorrow.”

She planted both feet on the ground and bit her lip not to curse at him. “This is beyond ridiculous. You’re treating me like a brainless child, not an independent woman.”

“Is that what you call living off of your daddy’s income?” Guerra’s mocking tone insulted her.

“I draw an honest salary. The charges on my expense account are necessary for my job as the Behr Foundation’s goodwill ambassador.” Teddy’s throat ached with the effort not to yell at him.

“No more goodwill ambassador for you, *Princesa*. Your father has given me full control of your finances.” Guerra’s eyes gleamed with satisfaction when he heard Teddy’s gasp.

“Since when?” she demanded, squinting at him.

“Since I bailed you out.”

Teddy blanched. The last person in the world she wanted to be indebted to was Guerra! The humiliation was too much to bear. She felt like an indentured servant.

Suddenly lightheaded, Teddy swayed in the seat as the financial walls of doom closed in on her. She had no working credit cards and her shares were in an irrevocable trust until she turned 35. She didn't have much left in her account and only a couple of hundred dollars in her wallet.

She wasn't about to turn to her friends for help, financial or otherwise. Not even her Heart Sisters, her dearest childhood friends. Ronnie and Tasha were both married now and starting families. Knowing Ronnie, she'd charge over and punch Leo's lights out. And Tasha would fly over from Scotland and smother her with nurturing. This was one battle Teddy would fight for herself.

"Don't be afraid of hard work, Theodora," Leo said condescendingly. "It builds character."

His mockery was just what Teddy needed to jolt her out of shock. Her face heated to boiling and a fierce desire for retaliation coursed through her veins. Who did he think he was lecturing her on character building? He needed a dose of humility.

Stiff with indignation, she said, "I'm not the spoiled brat you make me out to be." Nothing would have given her more pleasure than to slap the smug look off his face.

Teddy had proudly followed the legacy of her mother's philanthropic work and had raised millions for worthy charitable organizations. The trips she had taken on behalf of the Behr Foundation had brought her to third world countries where she'd raised awareness and funds for disease control. But it was no use telling Guerra those things. Most likely, The Amoeba had already poisoned his mind with lies about Teddy. He could think what he wanted about her, but she knew the truth.

"Somebody needs to rein you in," he said evenly.

Teddy gave him a death stare. "It won't be you, Guerra. *I* am the major stockholder here."

Before marrying Lola, Daddy had assured Teddy that she would be the sole heir of the Riviera Hotel. Further honoring his pledge, Randolph had put all the shares in trust for Teddy, his only child, to be transferred to her when she turned 35 or got married.

He had provided generously in his will for Lola, bestowing the mansion and many other properties to be divided by her and Teddy. But that wasn't enough for Lola. She would never accept the fact that she didn't own a piece of the Riviera. Daddy really was too indulgent with his cunning wife, but then he'd always had a soft spot for The Amoeba. Teddy's stomach churned with disgust.

"Your shares are in trust. I now own a large portion of the Riviera shares," Leo said with cool confidence. "Your shares will be worthless if your father loses the hotel."

"Impossible. I am the sole heir of this hotel. Daddy would never sell my shares to the likes of you!" She shot up from the chair. The sooner she got out of there and did some investigating, the better. "Let's get something straight right now, Guerra," she said pointing at him. "You are not my boss. Not now, not ever. I—"

"Don't pull the heiress card around here," Leo interrupted. "The grand re-opening is next week. All employees will pull their weight or they're out of a job. That includes you. You have no leverage. None whatsoever," he said with heartless finality.

Teddy stared at Leo's long fingers pounding the keyboard and she wished she could crush them as hard as he was trying to crush her. Burning with wrath, she turned and stalked toward the door. She was through trying to reason with the most pig-headed, rude man she'd ever met.

"8 a.m. sharp. Be on time and ready to work. Unless you want to get a job elsewhere, which is fine with me. I only work with professionals," he said infuriating her further.

Teddy turned back to retort and caught him checking out her backside. For a split second, their gazes met and the air sizzled like a Taser between them. Leo cleared his throat and turned his attention to the keyboard.

She glared at him. "You'd like me to leave, wouldn't you? Well, I'm not going anywhere. I'm here to protect my assets," she snapped, to which he responded with a rude snort. "And don't ogle me, Guerra. It is not *professional*." Teddy thrust her nose in the air and sailed out of his office, her dignity intact after calling him out.

But her tenuous dignity crumbled when she entered the ladies room and noticed the back of her silky skirt was hiked higher than usual. Turning to glance in the mirror, she saw the fabric was caught on the tiny gold metal clasps that connected the sheer triangles of her nude La Perla panties. It must have happened when she shot up from the chair to argue with the hateful Spaniard. No wonder she'd felt an updraft when she'd left the office.

Deeply frustrated, Teddy smoothed her skirt down and leaned her elbows on the counter. She dropped her head in her hands and tried to block the image of herself sauntering out of his office with false confidence and a bared booty, boasting about protecting her assets. *Ugh*. He must have gotten a good laugh from her parting eyeful.

Could this day get any worse? After flashing her booty to the Spanish dictator who was now her new warden, she felt angry and depressed.

"*Happy Birthday to me,*" she sang softly as she exited the ladies room. "*Happy Birthday to me...Happy Birthday, dear Teddy, Happy Birthday to me.*"

She had to sing. The other alternative was to cry and Theodora Behr had stopped crying a long time ago.