

Wales

Beau brought Evie home the next morning, and she walked in to find Aaron's luggage piled up by the door. She sighed heavily and moved it up the stairs to the bedroom. She could hear him showering and shuddered. Unable to handle being in there, she went to the kitchen and made herself a pot of tea. She pulled out her laptop and sat at the kitchen table, typing a few lines into her story.

"There you are! I was starting to think I was going to have to send out a search party." Aaron came into the kitchen and bent to kiss her. She oered her cheek and continued typing.

"It's only nine." She murmured, suppressing the shudder that threatened when he put his lips on her.

"I know, but it's weird to come home and not have you waiting to greet me at the door."

"Mmm." she hummed. "I'm very hungover. Let's go get food."

"I can make you something." Aaron frowned. "It's not like you to drink like that."

"I want to go out, my treat." She smiled at him. He held up his hands with a smile.

"Okay, you win."

"I want to finish this paragraph, then I need to change, and we'll go."

"I guess being wine-drunk helped with the block?" He called as he went to unpack and start laundry.

"Something like that." She muttered. Beau texted her the restaurant, and she sent back a thumbs up.

An hour and a very forced conversation on her part in the car later, they pulled up to the restaurant, and she led the way inside. Looking around quickly, she spotted Beau and Susan sitting in the corner. "Hey, look." She pointed. "Let's go sit with them." She watched as the blood drained from Aaron's face, smiled and walked over without waiting for an answer. "Hey you two, how are things?"

Susan looked up and saw Aaron coming behind her, and her face got a little paler too. Beau, however, stood up looking delighted and hugged Evie like they were long-lost friends. "Hey! How are you?"

"Good Beau. Really good. Mind if we join you?"

"Actually..." Susan started.

"I want to just..." Aaron said at the same time.

"Of course not, have a seat." Beau smiled at her and pulled out the chair next to him, forcing Aaron to sit next to Susan.

"You know, a funny thing happened while you were gone, Aaron." Evie started evenly. "Yesterday, I went to my favorite coffee shop for a change of scenery and ran into this guy." Aaron froze, and she was sure his heart had stopped beating.

"Yeah, I also had a funny thing happen, I had to go pick up some stu from Sloane, and I ran into Nissa..."

"Okay, look, we can explain." Susan interrupted quickly.

"Oh, there's no need. We have to confess something." Aaron's face darkened when Beau spoke, and his hands tightened into fists.

"Yeah, I wasn't at Marise's last night. I was at Beau's condo. We talked pretty late, and I stayed, but we agreed."

Beau nodded. He was watching them both with so much pleasure. Susan looked like she was seconds away from passing out, and Aaron looked like he was about to snap his neck. "Yeah, we want to apologize for making you feel like you had to hide from us that you go on jobs together. That's not fair to you guys." The waiter came by and took their orders. Aaron just got coffee, Susan had toast, but Beau and Evie ordered wales, bacon, and fruit. When they were done, Evie picked up where Beau had left off.

"I mean, don't get us wrong, we considered that you two were cheating for a while but ultimately agreed that neither of you would ever do that to us. I don't know why it crossed our minds, Aaron Denton cheating on his wife with his best friend's wife. No chance."

"Right?" Beau laughed. "And I know Susan; you would never cheat on me with anyone, let alone my best friend. So we're also really sorry for entertaining those thoughts." Aaron and Susan were both staring at them.

"Of course not." Aaron said quietly. Susan nodded. "We're sorry we hid that we're doing jobs together from you both."

"Our fault." Beau shrugged. "Don't worry about it. And Aaron, you'll be happy to know that me and Evie also worked out all our differences. It turns out it was a big misunderstanding. We actually have quite a bit in common."

"We were saying we need to do more stuff together, and we both feel like we've missed out on a close friendship with each other."

"That's great." Aaron looked like he was about to choke.

Susan smiled, but it didn't quite reach her eyes. "Yes, that sounds wonderful for you two."

"I'm also taking a six-month sabbatical from work." Beau announced.

"Evie is going to help me write a novel. I've always wanted to do it, and she encouraged me last night and offered to give me a hand."

"The least I can do for buying all my books."

"You have all her books?" Susan coughed as she choked on her water.

Beau nodded. "Yeah, when she said she was a published author when we first met, I went to buy her first book out of curiosity, and I enjoyed it and bought the others. She's probably my favorite author."

"You never told me that!" Evie smiled her first genuine smile in months, Aaron realized, his stomach dropping.

"Well, I didn't want to inflate your ego." Beau shrugged.

"Oh! And there goes the advanced copy of the next one."

"No!" Beau grabbed her hand. "I'm sorry!"

She laughed and looked up to see Susan and Aaron glaring at them. Smirking, she squeezed Beau's hand and pulled free. "I might even sign it."

"You have to sign the others. I hunted down first editions."

"Beau, we never discussed you taking six months from work." Susan interrupted.

"Do we need to?" He raised an eyebrow, thanking the waiter as he got his wales.

"We probably should. You know, since we're married." She rolled her eyes.

"Like you should have told me about jobs with Aaron?" Both his eyebrows went up. "Consider us even." She didn't have an answer and sat back in her chair, pouting. "So, how did the job go?"

"Went great." Aaron muttered as he grabbed the waiter's arm. "Could we get that to go, please?" He pointed at Evie's food.

"We're leaving?" Evie looked up. "Why?"

"I'm not feeling good."

"I can bring her home." Beau said easily. "Susan and I came in separate cars, and Evie and I wanted to spend some time together afterward anyway."

"I'd like to spend some time with my wife." Aaron gritted out.

"But you aren't feeling good." Evie frowned.

"Evie. Please." Aaron looked at her. He did look a little sick, she noted with satisfaction.

"Alright, alright. We'll get together later, Beau. A dinner work for you?"

"Sounds like a plan, Evie."

"It was nice to see you again Susan; sorry to run out like this."

"You too Evie."

Evie went and paid, taking care of the bill for the table while Aaron went to bring the car around. "Thank you." She smiled at the waiter as she left him a large tip. "My apologies; my husband isn't feeling well this morning but wanted to accommodate my hangover." She flipped her bill over and wrote a quick note for Beau while the waiter assured her it was fine. "Would you mind giving this to the man we were eating with, preferably when he tries to pay and his wife isn't there?"

"No problem, Mrs. Denton. Have a great day."