

## In Love With My Evil Stepbrother Chapter 31

### In Love With My Evil Stepbrother

#### Chapter 31

Chapter 31: Kiss in the Rain I don't know how long that kiss lasts. By the time I come back to my sense, I'm soaking wet and shivering from fingertips to toe. So I start coughing and sneezing right into his pretty face.

He chuckles, "Alright. At least now I know how you felt about that kiss." "No! It's just — I'm freezing here. Don't you feel cold?" "No. Not really," he shrugs. "How can I feel cold with our passionate hot love burning in my chest?"

"Eww, gross!" I hit him playfully. "Eason Ramirez, I don't know you as a cheesy talking guy." "Now you know. And it's too late to have a second thought...ok enough of this. We're heading back. You'll definitely catch a cold if we stay out here a minute longer." My feet are numb because of the rain. So I have to cling on his body and stagger forward. He signs and lowers his body having his back towards me. "Hop on." I hesitate. "Umm...you sure? I weigh like "You weigh like a feather. And with your limp legs, we won't be able to make it before dawn. So hop on." I blush and climb onto his back. He picks me up with ease and starts heading towards the beach house. It's still insanely cold outside. But my body warms up again with him being so close to me.

I rest my chin on the hollow of his neck and ask. "Hey. Have you seen a movie called The Notebook?"

"No. Why?"

"You haven't? For real?" I gasp. "It's such a classic. We should definitely watch it together sometime."

"OK, so A, this isn't a college interview, so I don't need to lie about how many classic movies or books I've seen. And B, are you asking me out on a date already? Because I have some other plans for our first date and it's so much better than your boring movie night proposal." "It's not boring at all!" I yell in protest. "Hear me out. So there's a scene in the movie where the couple has a dramatic reunion and they just kiss it out right in the middle of a pouring rain

"Like what we just did?"

“Yeah and it’s so romantic. I’ve always wanted to try it out with someone before I die peacefully.” He laughs and his shoulders are shaking. I hurry to tighten my arms around his neck, so I don’t fall.

“Glad to be at your service Miss.” He teases, “You can pick ten other romantic scenes from the

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the Roy

movies, and we’ll find a time to do those as well. That’ll make an epic date night.”

Before long, we reach the terrace of a beach house. When he puts me down onto the ground, I finally realize that it’s not Katherine’s house. “So you are telling the truth? That Mr. Ramirez actually owns a house here?” I ask while he opens the door.

“Ask the top ten riches people in Boston and they all own a house in this area,” he steps aside motioning me to come in as he chuckles. “So you thought I just made that up?”

I did but he doesn’t need to know about that.

I slowly move inside and turn on the light. Wow the interior is even prettier than Katherine’s house. It’s my dream house coming to life. Eason kicks off his shoes and walks across the living room. “Come. There’s a guest room on the first floor and we’ll sleep there for tonight. I’ll run you a hot bath.” I follow him into the guestroom and then into the bathroom. He pulls out a towel, tosses it to me and then bends down to turn on the tap. I wipe my wet hairs absent-minded, staring after his back. Everything is happening so fast. After the initial rush of excitement passes, a familiar anxiety surges up in my heart.

I bite my lips and smile. “Look at you...so normal.” “You better mean that as a compliment,” he says, testing the water temperature with his hands.

“I just thought you must have a butler or a maid to do these sorts of daily stuffs, like running a hot bath, putting on cloth, cooking... I don’t know you can take care of other people like this.” “You have a very biased opinion on rich people, you know that? We have money. It’s not like we are disabled.”

I try to laugh along but my laughter comes out squeaky and awkward. My nervous is too obvious. After a short moment of internal struggle, I still decide to go for it. “Hey Eason?”

“Yeah?”

I gulp and try to say the following words in a light and carefree tone. “So where are we right now? W-what are we?”

I said it and then the bathroom lapses into silence. He props his hand on the curb of the bathtub and says nothing. I can't see his expression from the back and the awkward silence is just killing me.

Then finally, before I'm suffocated by my own anxiety, he speaks up again. His tone lighter than I thought:

“You have to ask?”

That's not the answer I'm hoping for.

“Yes, I have to ask!” I squeeze the towel in my hand and snap. “You are a very difficult person!”

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And a fuckboy who specializes in ruining girls. So pardon my questions!” He turns around and walks towards me. I'm finally able to see his face clearly. It's still very gentle and sweet, with a slight trace of amusement, as if he is finding my questions funny. I'm instantly relieved by that. “Can we save my critic session to later?” he chuckles and palms my face. “I thought my behavior spoke for itself. I've never seen you as my sister, same as you.”

I'm drowning in his deep green eyes. I hold on to my last shred of sense and murmur, “so... boyfriend and girlfriend?” “Yeah.” He smiles and gently kisses me. I think I'm melting under his lips. A short moment later, he slightly pulls away from me and says hoarsely, “wait for me in the bathtub.”

“Where are you going?” I don't want him to leave.

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“To get you some hot water. Don't worry. I'll be back shortly,” he smiles and heads outside. Then he stops by the door and turns around raising his eyebrows. “And I don't need a maid for that!”

I laugh. “Noted.”

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Eason's POV

Her carefree smile is contagious. As I walk into the kitchen, I find my lips curving upwards, smirking just like she did. Her smile makes my heart swell. I open the top drawer and take out the kettle. I've never boiled hot water in my entire life, which unfortunately she was right about. But I don't want her to see me as a stupid rich brat who can't even put on his own socks. As I'm fumbling with the kettle, I suddenly hear a gentle cracking from the terrace. I snap my head around and find a dark figure sneaking in through the terrace's glass door. "Trespassing?" I roll my eyes. "Seriously?" James steps out of the darkness and walks into the kitchen, shaking off the rain from his body. "I could ring the doorbell. If you don't mind your little 'girlfriend to be alarmed."

"Keep your voice down," I settle the kettle on the stove. "She's in the guestroom."

James grins and comes closer, nudging me with his elbow. "So, how did it go? Did it work?" I turn on the stove and smiles. "Absolutely."

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#### Chapter 32

Chapter 32: The Bathtub Eason's POV "Wow really?" James gasps in excitement. "She actually believed that you are in danger? She must really like you."

I cross my arms in front of my chest, staring at the stove while my mind flashes back to my earlier memories.

-A FEW DAYS AGO "I have an idea," James announces eagerly. "If you play it right, she'll be back in your arms at the end of this weekend." "Listening," I rub my temples and try to focus on his words. "You are not sure if she likes you, right? And she is a little-well, high-maintenance. So all you need right now is a chance to push her over the edge and force her to open up to you." "And how I'm going to do that?" "A dangerous situation," James smirks. "I checked the weather and it's going to be raining like hell this weekend. Let's say you are going for a swim in the sea and she is the only one who has noticed that your life is at stake...don't you think she will do something really irrational under this scenario? And then you can take this perfect opportunity to force out those true feelings from her." I frown, "And what if she just sits in the living room and decides to watch me drown?"

"Then this making-her-fall-in-love with you trick is a no-go," James pauses but promises." But I've seen the way she looked at you. There's some deep shit feelings there. Trust me on this. She'll pour her heart out." I rest my chin on my hands, thinking about his proposal. Actually, it's not a terrible plan. I've so fucking tired of playing this

back-and-forth game with her. It's not going anywhere and my clock is ticking. "OK," I finally say. "Let's just hope I don't end up died in the ocean." -BACK TO NOW

"Man, you should see the look on her face when she went out to find you," James is still babbling. "I was a bit afraid that she would jump right into the ocean with you. So did you talk to her? How deep is this feeling that we are talking about? Ready to throw the L bomb?"

I remain silent as my jaw tenses. The image of her desperate face pops into my mind and it doesn't give me any satisfactory feeling as I thought it would do. Instead, I felt my heart churn, as if I actually feel bad about making her sad this way.

Bullshit. Yet I immediately laugh at myself and shake of that stupid feeling.

"You done talking?" I hiss at James. "Time to leave." "But you haven't given me any of the good stuffs yet," James whines. "Come on just tell me.

What's she like when you found her? And—"

Then suddenly we both hear the door cracking. Our body tenses up immediately as Natalia's voice comes from the guestroom: "Eason, there's no clean towels here. Can you bring some extras?"

I let out a quiet sign of relieve and quickly shout back, "Sure! Be right back" They I quickly throw in a teabag to the mug, pour in hot water and shot a warming glare at James way before I head back to the guestroom.

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Natalia's POV

I've already taken off my clothes and sank into the hot bath before he returns, because I don't want him to watch me strip myself. But on the second thought, we are going to see each other naked tonight. So there's no way to avoid that.

I blush at that thought and pat my cheeks to drive away the heat.

Tonight has been such a magical night so far. We've finally opened up to each other, truthfully and honestly. There's still a lot of things to be worked on but at least we are starting a proper relationship together.

A proper relationship...my mind drifts away for a short second.

I wonder how my mom and Mr. Ramirez will react towards this. I'm not so worried about Mr. Ramirez since he's always been so nice and caring. I'm actually more concerned about my mom.

She has told me on various occasions that friends and relatives from the Ramirez family are not very fond of her. They believe that she is a total gold-digger who ruined Mr. Ramirez and his wife's marriage. So if they find out that this gold-digger's daughter-AKA myself-dares to seduce the only heir to the Ramirez legacy, it'll make things worse for mom.

I sigh in frustration. So I guess we'll have to keep this a secret for now. The sound of door opening snaps me back from my own thoughts. I look up and find Eason walks into the bathroom with some fresh towels and a mug in his hand.

"Hey," my lips naturally curve up the minute I see him. "What took you so long? I thought I heard someone talking. Did anyone drop by?" "No. It's probably the wind," he says setting the mug down on the table then lowers his eyes to look at me. "Miss me?"

He smiles a crooked smile so pretty and youthful that it makes my heart stop. So before I even realize, I've already murmured out, "yeah...so much."

I really do miss him. Even if he's only been gone for 10 minutes.

The smile on his face grows wider. Then he pulls off his T-shirt from his head and unbuttons his jeans. A minute later, he's totally naked.

in

the Bathtub

I can't help but stare at his muscular figure as he steps into the tub. The bathtub is not large enough to fit two people, not to mention that he is tall and large. So we are very close to each other and I immediately feel his hardened dick pressing against my skin.

He moves to my back and settles me between his legs. Then he nibbles the sensitive skin on my neck, as he brings his hand up to palm my breasts, gently rubbing my nipples.

I moan, throwing my head back leaning on his chest. He catches my lips and kiss me, as his hand travels downwards, into the water and finally reaches my bottom.

I return his kiss, eagerly opening my mouth to invite his tongue in. This feels so different from our first night. The first time is all about desire and lust, but now...I can feel the attachment and love.

He rubs my clit with his hand and then inserts a finger into my pussy. The hot water makes it easier. I gasp as I feel a familiar sense of pleasure rising from my between my thighs. I grab his wrist, deepening his finger into my pussy. He takes my cue and curves his fingertip inside of me, gently rubbing my inner wall. "Oh god, Eason!" I cry out. The burst of excitement is overwhelming.

"Yeah? Does this feel good?" his voice is strained and ragged. "You like it? Fucking yourself with my finger?" I suck in his lower lip with my mouth and beg, "I want you. Eason, fuck me. Quick."

"Fuck!" he groans.

He grabs my waist with one hand and slightly lifts my body. Then the next second, he lifts his hips and thrust his cock deep into my core.

"Ahh!" I gasp, grabbing his firm arms till my nails dig into his flesh. He pants and immediately picks up the speed. It's so wild and rough. The room is filled with the sound of water splashing and our body smashing against each other. He is fucking me so quick and hard that my mind is completely blank.

"Fuck, Nat!" He grits out besides my ears. "You are so fucking tight! And ready...ready for me."

"Yes, yes I am. Ahh Eason...please." I don't know what I'm saying actually. I can only call his name again and again and let him drive me crazy.

He sucks the back of my neck hard. Then he brings one hand to rub my clit and my folds while his cock keeps pounding me. The pleasure is too much! I almost scream out as my legs stiffen and my toes curl.

"No. Wait for me," he says in a forceful tone.

He grabs my waist with both hands, picking me up and pressing me down. His cock enters even deeper. I can't help but clench my inner walls as he repeats the process. Then with one hard thrust, I come and he pulls out just in time and I feel a warm liquid spill on the water. I collapse onto his chest, panting and trying to catch my breath. He holds me in his arms,

## **In Love With My Evil Stepbrother Chapter 33**

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## Chapter 33

Chapter 33: After the Storm I wake up next morning without him by my side. Yet there's a delicious smell of fresh brewed coffee and French Toast coming from the kitchen. I immediately get out of bed and head towards the kitchen.

Eason is standing in the kitchen, pouring coffee into the mug. There's already two plates of ready French Toast on the counter with some fresh berries by the side and wiped cream on top.

"Oh my god." I fake a shocking expression walking up towards him. "Did you make this? Maybe I was wrong about you being a useless rich brat." His eyes light up immediately when he sees me, and he drags me into his arms. A soft kiss lands on my forehead. "It's not too late to change your mind." I giggle and tiptoe to kiss him back. He holds the back of my head with one hand, fingers threading into my hairs deepening the kiss, while he brings the other hand down past my waist and gently squeezes my ass. I immediately feel a familiar heat building between my thighs. He has the magic to turn me on so easily. "Hey," he whispers in a hoarse and desire-filled tone. "What do you say we do something else before breakfast Suddenly, a voice comes from the back of us and makes us jerk apart: "Mr. Ramirez. Is there something else you need?"

I snap my head around and find a middle-age, very kind-looking woman standing beside the door, smiling at us. My cheeks instantly burn with embarrassment. I thought there's only the two of us here! I'm only wearing his shirt and my bottom is naked.

Eason puts his fist besides his lips and clears his throat, "No we are good. Thank you, Brenda."

"OK, let me know if you need anything else," the woman smiles. "I've laid out some towels by the pool in case you want to take a swim. And there's hand-squeezed lemonade and iced tea in the fridge. Oh and if you want to take a boat ride, I'll call the crew and let them know."

"OK thanks."

"You are welcome, sir. And I hope you enjoy that French Toast before it gets cold." She nods at us and then disappears behind the door.

I turn around and catch a fleeting embarrassment pass through Eason's eyes.

"You said you made the French Toast!" I point a finger at him and yell. "You evil liar!"

He grins, "at least I made the coffee."



He pulls me closer and tries to kiss me again, but I move back quickly.

“Wait. Who’s Brenda?” I ask.

“Our housekeeper,” he shrugs. Then he sees the worried look on my face and adds.  
“Don’t

worry. She doesn’t even know who you are.” I gulp. Yet I still can’t help but feel anxious.  
“What if Mr. Ramirez comes down here one day and she mentions this to him-”

“Hey, listen to me,” He raises my chin and palms my cheeks. “The last time they came here was like 5 or 6 years ago. And Brenda is very professional. She would never tell such things to my dad without my permission.”

“OK,” I murmur.

He smiles and lowers his head to kiss me. His lips taste like butter and cream. I’m soon tempted by him again and start to return his passion. Just when things heat up again, my phone suddenly rings. “Wait...” I escape his hungry kiss and pant, reaching out to take my phone. “Let me see who it is...it’s Alex! »

“Fuck him,” Eason curses in an irritated tone and grabs my arm. “Turn it off.”

“I have to take this. He might be worried.” I manage to break free from him and press the answer button. “...Hello?”

“Thank god Natalia! You finally answered,” Alex’s worried voice immediately rushes out from the speaker. “After you said you were going to find Eason, you just disappeared into the storm. No texts, no calls. We were so close to call the police.”

I do feel guilty about leaving the house like that without a single word. But yesterday was such a rollercoaster. My mind was so occupied by Eason that I never thought of calling them back and letting them know I’m ok.

“I’m so sorry,” I walk a few steps away from Eason’s intense gaze and lower my voice.  
“It took me a while to find him yesterday. And after that we were both exhausted and spent the night at his house. I’m sorry for getting you worried. Truly.”

He sighs. “Well, as long as you are ok...but I still have to say this: what Eason did last night was extremely irresponsible. What if he got you into any danger? Has he thought of the consequences? —” Right at this moment, Eason’s voice suddenly pops up right behind my back, “Nat. The breakfast is getting cold.” His voice is intentionally loud. I bet he was doing that on purpose to let Alex hear him. I quickly cover the speaker and shot him a warning glare. But he only lets out a cold sneer and looks away.

Alex pauses, “...he is with you?”

"Umm, yeah." I try to dislodge the uneasiness that's stealing over me and say in a light tone. "You guys are going to the beach today, right? How about we meet you there later?" "Fine. See you later." I hang up the phone and scowl at Eason. "What the hell was that?" "That guy is definitely up to something," Eason shrugs. "Don't tell me you had no idea."

He was right. I know Alex has feelings for me. But that still doesn't justify his behavior.

"But—"

"I was jealous, OK?"

My lips part slightly. I'm shocked by how straightforward he is. He takes this chance to move closer to me and gently pulls me into his arms again. "You are my girlfriend now. Am I not entitled to get jealousy from time to time? Are you mad at me?" I was mad. But how can I stay mad at him when he looks at me with those beautiful green eyes and calls me his girlfriend?

I am totally losing my mind over him.

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The weather is so good today that it feels like yesterday's storm was just a dream. When Eason and I arrive at the beach, the guys are already lying on the deck chair putting on sunscreen for each other.

"Hey Nat! Eason!" Katherine waves her arms and yells at us. "Come here! Did you guys bring the iced beer we asked for?"

"Sure!" I laugh and show her the ice bucket in my hand.

She cheers in excitement and takes over the ice bucket, as I find an empty chair and lie down, bathing under the warm sunlight.

This feels so good. Sure we had plenty of beaches in Miami back in the days. But those are public beaches and it's always packed with people. Not mention the parking was also a pain in the ass.

It feels so nice not to have to share the beach with others. I guess being privileged does have its own upsides.

Katherine is on her phone, and she asks us, "Hey my uncle said he can send some people down here and set up a barbecue grill on the beach. So do you guys want to play a round of beach volleyball before the feast to burn some calories?". Beach volleyball was our to-go game back in Miami. So I jump on board immediately, "Sure! Count me in."

The rest of the guys nod in agreement as well. "Well then, two groups...same as yesterday?" James asks. "No," Eason says quickly. "Nat will be on my team." I frown as Alex stands up from his chair, raising his eyebrows at Eason and says, "I think Nat is fully capable of making her own decision." They look at each other. Both of their eyes are alight with malice.

I sign internally. Not this again.

"Come on you guys. It's not a big deal," I say. "We'll just do the same grouping as yesterday.

Easier this way."

Eason's chest rises as if he's trying to hold back the anger. But instead of saying anything, he simply gives me a cold look and turns around heading towards the volleyball court. "Let's go." Alex pats me and Eddie's shoulder and smiles. "Let's go beat the crap out of them."

## **In Love With My Evil Stepbrother Chapter 34**

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Chapter 34

Chapter 34: Crazy Game

Eason's POV

I know it's stupid for me to get angry over those trifles. But I just can't stand Alex, with him pestering Nat like a fucking annoying fly. I stare at them gloomily across the court before the game. Natalia is talking to him and then they both burst into laughter together. Her smile is so beaming and bright that I know she must have a special feeling for him as well. If I hadn't made the move first, she would have been with him already.

I can't let that happen. The game began and I'm all in for it. James told me that fucking Alex is pretty good at sports too but I'm losing this one to him.

At first, it was still a casual game played in a relaxing and friendly atmosphere. But my intention to win was probably too obvious that Alex sensed it quickly. He got serious immediately. And it soon turned into a brutal one-on-one contest between me and him.

Fifteen minutes later, after I managed to score another point, Katherine tosses the ball aside and collapsed to the ground. Hot sweat is streaming down her face.

"No-I'm done. I wanted to burn some calories, not to have myself worked up to death. I need to lie down," she protests. "You can just watch if you want to," I tell her. I don't need her to win the game. "Can I go as well?" James groans, both hands on his knees and panting heavily. "You probably forgot. But sports aren't really my forte." "Hey," Eddie shouts from the other side. "Can we take a halftime break? I think I'm dehydrating!"

I look over to them and find Nat sitting on the ground, rubbing her feet. Did she twist her ankle?

A surge of worry passes through my heart as I take an automatic step forward wanting to come over. But the next second, Alex appears besides her and hands her a bottle of water. She takes the water and smiles at him, letting him pick her up from the ground.

...Fuck.

I turn around stiffly and head towards the deck chairs, with James shouting behind me, "...so halftime?"

"Why not!" I snap. I grab a bottle of iced water from the bucket and poured it down my head. The image of them looking and smile at each other makes my eyes burn. I've never felt this out of control in a long time.

"Hey man," James walks up to me from behind and asks. "What the fuck was that?"

"What?" I ask absentmindedly, still thinking about Alex and Nat. "The game! You! We played for fun. It's not like we were trying to win the fucking Olympics." "It didn't seem like you tried," I said sarcastically. "OK, is it because of Alex and Natalia?" James frowns. "Are you jealous of Alex? Tell me it isn't because if it is...then you are just crazy." I squeeze the bottle in my hand and stay silent. My gut reaction was to say no. But after a long pause, I sign and rake my fingers through my hairs, "yeah...probably a little." "What?" James cries out and quickly lowers his voice under my deathly glare. "Are you fucking out of your mind? This was supposed to be a game! You were supposed to dump her in front of everyone's eyes in less than two months! Remember? Don't tell me you are actually in love with her."

"Stop talking shit," I roll my eyes. "I know what I'm supposed to do. And I'm not jealous of Alex. I just need him to stay away from Nat. Like you said, there's still two months. A lot of things can happen in two months. I can't have Nat change her mind during this period of time."

"I thought you nailed her," James shrugs. "And no normal girl would choose him over you." "Yeah bullshit," I remind him. "He is her type, remember? Don't forget about her ex boyfriend."

If Natalia is one of those girls who have a bad-boy complex and fall easily for luxury gifts and frequent visits to fancy restaurants, then my plan would go much smoother.

But no. Her type is President of the student union and Mr. Goodie.

Suddenly, something occurs to me, and I snap my head around to stare at James, “you didn’t tell Alex about our plan, did you?” “What?! No!” James jumps up. “But—”

“But what?” I snap. “But like you said, he’s a smart dude. I can’t promise he won’t figure it out himself.” I grit my teeth as anxiety starts to build up in my heart. Now that I think of it, when everyone else around us only think of me as Natalia’s brother, only Alex doesn’t. He’s been holding a weird hostility towards me as if he knows what I’m up to. “Fuck,” I curse. “Why did you bring him to that damn party in the first place!” “Hey you can’t blame me for it. That was your damn party,” James spreads his hands. “And if you are worried about him that much, there’s something else you should know...I heard that he’s setting up an interview for Natalia in the upcoming week.”

I almost throw my bottle of water onto the ground. I raise my eyes trying to find Natalia but only then do I realize that both of them are gone.

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Natalia’s POV

“Thank you,” I take the ice bag he handed me and place it on my ankle. I hiss at the pain. It really hurts. “You alright?” Alex sits beside me on the sofa, lowering his head to look at my ankle. “It’s a bit swollen.” “I’ll be fine,” I smile. “Probably just need a break from the crazy contest.” He signs and says apologetically, “sorry... I don’t know what got into me earlier.” “Don’t apologize. It’s not your fault I twisted my ankle,” I shrug. “If anyone was crazy earlier, it should be Eason not you.” To be honest, I am a bit pissed at Eason. He was so caught up in the game that he didn’t even notice that I was hurt. It was Alex who escorted me back to the house and found some icebags for me.

“Hey Nat?” Alex suddenly moves closer to me and asks.

“Yeah?”

I look up and find his face all serious and solemn. He frowns and takes in a deep breath before saying, “I need to talk to you about something. About Eason.”

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## Chapter 35

Chapter 35: A Wild Guess My whole body tenses up immediately at his words.

About Eason? Why?

Did he find out about us???

Now that I think of it, we aren't very careful about hiding our tracks. There is evidence everywhere: like yesterday, like that one time in the restaurant with my mom...

I gulp and force out a smile, trying to sweep it under the rug, "but they are still waiting for us outside. Maybe some other time-

I want to escape the scene so bad.

But before I can stand up, Alex puts his hand on my shoulder and forces me back. I've never seen him like this before. "You will want to hear this Nat," he says sternly. I gulp as cold sweat starts to form on my forehead. Oh god, he is definitely on to us. What's he going to say? Is he going to judge me for sleeping with my stepbrother? Is he going to tell my parents, my friends or everyone at school? If I beg him, will he keep the secret? My mind is a mess when suddenly I hear Alex says

"I think Eason is plotting something against you." I blink and stare at him blankly, as my mind processes his words.

A moment of silence later, I burst into laughter.

"What Eason?" I wave my hand laughing. "No...you must be mistaken."

His brow furrows. Apparently, he's not so pleased about my reaction.

"Nat, hear me out, ok?" he puts both of his hands on my shoulders and turns me around to face him, his eyes flashing brightly. "Your brother-well, stepbrother-is not a very good person. I'm not saying this to make him look bad...it's how I really feel. I've always sensed something was wrong about him, but I couldn't quite put my fingers on what it was." "Till last night, I found out about something." His seriousness affects me, and my smile gradually fades away. All his words sound ridiculous to my ears, but I still can't help but ask, "...you find out about what?"

"Remember yesterday you went out to find him? The storm was like hell, so we were all worried. Katherine suggested we should call the police and everyone else agreed...except for Jarnes. And he said something really weird."

“...what did he say?”

“He said...” Alex pauses and then continues in a low voice. “... ‘don’t worry. Eason has it all under control.”

I slightly part my lips and look back at him blankly.

...Eason has it all under control?

What’s that supposed to mean?

Alex looks at my puzzled face and says hastily, “you think it’s weird too right? Like he knows that Eason would be OK. Like they’ve plotted for him to go swimming under this weather, and they’ve plotted for you to find him!”

...no way.

My back falls on the sofa’s back as I keep staring at him with a stunned look on my face.

His accusation is...outrageous!

But every time I think Alex must be crazy, a voice in my mind starts to ask me back-then why did James say that?

After a long silence, I finally open my mouth.

“But...” I clear my throat and ask dryly. “But why would he do that? Why would he plot anything against me? What’s in it for him?”

Alex shakes his head, “I don’t know. But...just a wild guess: maybe he’s doing this for the inheritance? with you back in the picture now, maybe he’s worried that you might stole his money in the future.”

Is he suggesting that Eason wants to trick me into the storm and has me killed?

I meant to laugh because it sounds so freaking ridiculous.

But my lips only twitch slightly and form an ugly smile.

“No. That can’t be it,” I stutter. “Me and my mom have no interest and no rights to the Ramirez’s money. He knows that.”

But does he? I ask myself. I also used to think that he was treating me so horribly because he’s afraid that I might steal his money. Yet that also makes no sense. If he only thinks of me as a gold-digger, why did he sleep with me? Why did he say that he

loves me and asks me to be his girlfriend? I sit there with a million thoughts whizzing through my mind. "Hey," Alex lowers his voice. "My point is, be careful with him. These rich people would do any ugly shit for money. You have no idea."

I inhale deeply and nod.

He doesn't know the real relationship between me and Eason. So he has no idea that things are even more complicated than it seems.

Alex studies my face and frowns, "You ok? I'll keep an eye for you just in case—"

A voice suddenly appears behind our back right at this moment, "Keep an eye for what?"

Alex and I both jerk around and find the entrance door is wide open. Eason is standing beside the door, narrowing his eyes at us.

When did he get in?! A chill runs down my spine and the hairs on my arms literally stand up. After what Alex just told me, I am horrified to see him sneaking up on us like that. Alex takes in a deep breath and averts his eyes, "nothing. We were just talking about how dangerous last night was."

Eason curves his lips and steps in, "No need to worry. We are both safe and sound."

I remain silent. Alex shrugs and stands up, "Fine. I'll head out first. Nat, don't forget what we just said."

He walks past Eason and leaves through the door. Eason stares at his back till he disappears, and then turns back at me.

A smile appears on his lips as he walks over towards me and sits on the sofa. He touches my ankle, "does it hurt babe?"

"Not really." My mind is still on what Alex said.

"So..." he gently rubs my ankle and asks casually. "What were you guys talking about?"

"Nothing," I reply quickly. Eason raises his brows, apparently not buying my words. But I'm not in the mood to talk about it either. I need some time alone to think

"Let's head out," I struggle to stand up, trying to keep a straight face. "I've smelled the barbecue already." He signed. But fortunately, he doesn't keep pressing me. He lowers his body and gestures me to climb up his back, "Come. I'll carry you out. Can't let you twist your ankle again."



The rest of the weekend flies by and everyone had a great time. We enjoyed a seafood feast on the beach, watched sunrise the next morning and sail out into the sea taking Eason's boat. The guys even caught a giant fish.

But my mind was on something else the entire time.

I kept thinking about Alex's words and wonder if his accusation stands on any solid ground. It's crazy to accuse someone-my boyfriend to be precise-of something so horrible based on one single sentence. But I just can't shake off the suspicion. Guess parts of me never trusted Eason. On Sunday afternoon, we all pack up our luggage and ready to leave. Katherine's car and Eason's M8 are parked outside.

I carry my bag walking towards Katherine's car. But right after I open the passenger door, a

hand coming from my back pushes the door closed again. I snap my head around and find it's Eason. He takes my bag forcefully and announces to everyone else, "you guys can go. Nat will ride with me."

I widen my eyes. My first reaction was to say no since I'm not ready to face him yet.

"But I don't

Before I can even finish my sentence, he grabs my wrist and drags me to his car. He basically shoves me into the passenger seat and slams the door shut. It all happens too fast. The next minute he has already gotten in the car and started the engine.

Before the car drives away, I catch a glimpse of Alex's worried face.

The sports car exits the parking lot and roars down the road. I grab my seatbelt and asks in a strained voice, "can you please slow down?"

"OK," he keeps his eyes straight ahead and says. "But first you have to let me know what's wrong with you for the past two days." "Nothing..." "Don't fucking play dumb with me Nat!" he suddenly snaps and startles me. "You've been acting so fucking weird after you talked to Alex! What the hell did he say to you?!" He caught me off guard. I didn't know he'd confront me like this. Suddenly my mind goes blank and my tongue twists.

And he is still speeding up as I struggle with my words. The wind wooshes by. The view outside the window becomes blur because of the speed. My heart jumps to my throat before I finally cave in and screams, "Slow down! Fine! I'll tell you!"

He snorts and hits the break. The car finally comes back to normal speed. I pant roughly trying to catch my breath while my heart is still beating wildly. Fear grips my throat making it difficult to breath.

And suddenly I find my eyes become glossy. Damn. I didn't know I'm such a cry baby before I met him. He takes a casual look at me and suddenly freezes. From my watery vision, I see his eyes widen slightly as a shocking expression takes over his face. "Nat why are you-fuck. Don't cry babe. I—I'm sorry."

He turns the wheel and pulls over the car. Then he quickly unbuckles his seatbelt and leans over, holding me in his arms. My tears break out. He pats me and shushes me beside my ears, like I'm a three-years-old. "Hey, what's going on?" he asks softly, pressing his lips on my forehead. "Was it because of the speed? I'm sorry. I promise I won't do it again. I don't want to make you cry...Fuck...I just want to know what you are thinking..."

I sob and keep quiet. My mind is clouded. Should I tell him the truth? Or not?