

Ex Husband 311

Chapter 0311

Don't even get me started on Gunner. He is just a kid, yet I've done so much damage that I don't even know where to begin fixing what I've broken. He's my flesh and blood, yet I've done everything to run from that little fact.

I feel ashamed when I think of all I've put him through. I remember how Ava stood up for Noah. How she was ready to go toe to toe with me for his sake. I remember the fire burning in her eyes. She was ready to do anything to protect her son, yet I've done everything to hurt my

own son.

"I don't have all fucking day, Emma." His sharp voice brings me back to reality.

"I was just driving around, and I ended up here," I whisper, feeling really awkward.

The last time I saw him was when he told me that he was done with me. I never really got to know Calvin, and now I feel awkward around him. When you take out sex in the equation, we were basically strangers to each other.

"I thought I told you I never wanted to see you again... That I didn't want you in my life or Gunner's," he folds his hands around his chest and making his bicep bulge.

"I know," I answer, looking down at my feet. I feel so ashamed that it's hard to keep eye

contact with me.

We are quiet for a while, and Mom's words come back to me.

How about you start by righting your wrongs?

Was it really that easy? And would he and Gunner even forgive me for years and years of pain?

“You need to leave, Emma.” Calvin’s voice interrupts my musings. “I don’t want Gunner to come home and find you here.”

Mom’s words keep playing in my head as I stare at him. The more I thought about them, the more I accepted them. Maybe it was time I made amends. The moment they settle inside me, peace washes over me.

This is why I ended up here. My heart and soul knew that this was what I needed to do. It was time to fix everything I destroyed with my bare hands, all because I couldn’t let go of a love that was dead and gone.

“Can I stay and meet him?” I ask, begging with my eyes. “I’m sorry for all the shit I put you and Gunner through. I want to fix things. Give me a chance to fix things and redeem myself. I want to be in his life.”

He stares at me for a while. His eyes penetrating mine. I hold my breath, waiting for his answer. Waiting to hear what he has to say.

1/2

+15 BONUS

My heart drops, and my soul shatters when he shakes his head. “No, the thing is, Emma, you’re already too late. The damage you caused can’t be undone. The pain is embedded deep inside our hearts, and I doubt it will ever go away. I gave you chances over and over again, but you threw them away. You’ve broken my son’s and my hearts; I won’t let you do that again. Neither will I let us be your second choice simply because Rowan no longer wants you. We’re done, Emma.”

He doesn’t give me a chance to reply; with that, he turns, walks inside, and slams the door in my face, leaving my heart bleeding on the floor.

This is all my fault. I'm responsible for my own heartbreak. If only I'd pulled my head out of my ass sooner. If only I'd tried making amends when I had the chance. If only I hadn't been stubborn, maybe things would be different. Maybe I would have a relationship with Gunner.

I stand there for a while before walking back to my car, defeated, feeling like I've lost everything. I wipe the tears that fall down my face like a flowing river. He is right, though; he gave me so many chances, yet I blew them. I only have myself to blame, no one else.

Today's Bonus Offer

GET IT NOW

X

Ex-Husband's Regret by Evelyn M.M

Chapter 312

Letty and Corrine were supposed to be arriving in the next few minutes, but I couldn't calm down. To be honest, I don't even know why the hell I was so nervous,

"Ava, should I prepare the drinks and snacks for your guests?" Teresa asks, stepping into the living room.

I nod my head. "Yes, that will be great, thank you,"

Iris was soundly asleep in her bassinet, Noah was at school, and Rowan was at work.

I sigh in frustration. Noah was still pretty pissed at me for forcing him to invite Sierra to his birthday party. He wasn't even talking to me. Whenever I asked him a question or talked to him, he would just glare at me.

His behavior and attitude just pisses me off even more. I get he doesn't like the girl, but refusing to invite her while everyone else comes to his party is downright cruel, I refuse to have a hateful son. Besides, he doesn't even have to talk to or interact with her. I'm sure there will be enough children there to keep her occupied,

I take a seat on the floor and cross my legs. My mind moves on to Rowan. He was the other bane of my existence. Maybe I am stupid or maybe I am delusional, but I decided to give him the chance he asked for. Rowan has never begged in his life, so this must be important.

Hate me or love me, but I'm going to hold off the need to know the truth until I can't anymore. Right now, I just want to enjoy this life blissfully before things crumble, because, trust me, I know that once my memory returns, this perfect illusion will crumble.

“Ma’am?” His voice startles me, and I look up at Morris, one of the guards hired by Rowan.

I’ve made it a point to know the names of everyone who works for us.

“Yes?”

“I wanted to inform you that you have some guests.”

I give him a small smile and say, “Thank you, Morris, and let them in.”

He nods his head and leaves. Taking a deep breath, I try to calm my beating heart, and I stand up. I feel the need to start pacing; instead, I force myself to sit down and relax.

Seconds later, Letty and Corrine walk in. Letty wore a white and black off-shoulder pair of shorts, and sneakers. It made her look young for her age. Corrine, on the other hand, wore a cream vintage t-shirt, a pair of blue jeans, and nude wedge heels.

top,

a black

“Hi!” I greet sheepishly, standing up.

+15 BONUS

I wasn’t really sure what to do. Should I shake their hands? Should I hug them? Did I want to hug them?

Before I can decide what to do, Corrine rushes to me and envelops me in a hug. Seconds later, Letty joins, making it a group hug.

“Da mn, I’ve missed you so much, Ava,” Corrine whispers in my ear, emotions clogging her voice.

I don’t say anything. Just hug them back. In my current state, I didn’t really know them, but deep down, my heart and soul just connected with them. I can’t explain it. I just knew that they were my people.

Our moment is interrupted by Iris loud wails. We step away from each other as we all chuckled. I move and get her from the bassinet. She immediately quiets down, but now she was wide awake.

“My niece,” Letty squeals, taking her from my hand and peppering her face with kisses

Iris’s eyes widen, and I’m afraid that she’s about to cry, but she doesn’t. She just stares at her as if she was a specimen she was studying.

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We take a seat just as Teresa arrives with drinks and snacks. After greeting my two friends, she leaves us to our own devices.

“Da mn girl, you know how to choose good genes for your babies. First, Noah. We all know that boy is going to be as good-looking as his father. He will be giving a lot of girls sleepless nights... And now, Iris, she’s going to be drop-dead gorgeous, especially with her blue eyes; they’re hypnotizing just like Ethan’s.” Letty breaks the silence.

I just chuckle because I know it’s the d amn truth. My kids were gorgeous; there was no denying that.

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Ex-Husband's Regret by Evelyn M.M

Chapter 313

"True, but yours will also turn out good-looking... I mean, you're gorgeous and Travis, despite his flaws, is hot." Corrine chimes

"You haven't seen him without clothes; the guy is a masterpiece," Letty says with a smirk.

I crunch up my nose "Please stop," I beg her. We may not be real siblings, but all my life, he has been my brother. Hearing Letty talk about him in that regard makes me want to buff.

She looks at me and laughs, but she doesn't continue on the topic.

I turn to Corrine. "What about you?"

"Maybe you should date Gabe," Letty suggests. She's so giddy, it's amusing. "It would be so cool if we all dated the trio best friends.

"No thanks. Gabe is a casanova, for heaven's sake. It's said he has a new woman every week. Besides, he's not my type," she pauses. "Plus, I don't have time to date or be in a serious relationship," she answers with a shrug.

"So you're not sleeping with anyone?" Letty asks her.

Corrine takes a moment to answer. She takes Iris from Letty's arms and cradles her, then kisses her forehead. It warmed me that both of them loved my daughter.

"No. I haven't had sex in months," she finally answers.

"Anyone you like?" I question her.

She averts her eyes. Something flashes in her eyes. It was too fast for me to read, and it got me really curious.

"Corrine?" Letty must have sensed something too, because she says her name in a warning manner.

Her eyes look at us before they shift away again. I don't know how I knew it, but she was hiding something. She was debating something.

"Out with it," I tell her, the words flowing effortlessly out of my mouth. I felt so comfortable with them. With any other person, I don't think I would have told them that.

"Fine," she says, taking a deep breath. "Reaper showed up at my house two days ago."

Letty gasps in shock, but I just stare at them in confusion.

"Who's Reaper? I've heard Rowan mention him before."

“Reaper is the king of the underground, a crime lord. He’s a criminal. He’s the one that killed

+15 BONUS

My eyes widen at that information. Of everything I thought and wondered about him, nothing came close to Letty told me. A criminal? Seriously?

“Why would Rowan be in communication with a criminal?” I was genuinely puzzled. Reaper didn’t seem like someone Rowan would associate himself with.

“Because, one, he was your friend...”

I cut her off before she can finish her sentence. “Why the hell would I be friends with a criminal and someone that kidnapped me?” I almost shout, but then I remembered Iris. She was struggling to stay awake.

Letty glares at me, “As I was saying before you rudely interrupted me, Reaper is Ethan’s brother, meaning he’s Iris’s uncle.”

As if things couldn’t get worse, she had to just drop the final bomb to leave me speechless and confused as hell.

I watch sightlessly as Corrine stands up and lays Iris back inside her Bassinet. Once again she was fast asleep.

“I thought Ethan was adopted?” I ask confused.

Corrine and Letty proceed to tell me everything single thing. It honestly blows my mind. Who would have thought that the man that killed the man that adopted me, is my daughter’s uncle? No wonder people always say that it’s a small world.

“So what are you planning to do about him? And what did he want?” I ask Corrine, who by the look of it is confused about the whole situation.

“Isn’t it obvious? He wanted to f uck” she shrugs. “He was hoping for a no string relationship until we could both f uck each other out of our systems... As for the other question, I don’t know what to do”

I’m not promiscuous; I never have been. I’ve been with one person-two, actually-so I don’t really know what to tell her. Corrine and Letty looked more experienced when it came to sex.

“You two had a moment when he came to the hospital that day. I think everyone who was paying attention noticed. There is way that he looked at you. Like he was hungry and you were his next meal” Letty casually says, her eyes drilling into Corrine’s

Ex-Husband’s Regret by Evelyn M.M

Chapter 314

“So what do you think I should do?” Corrine asks looking at the both of us for answers.

“First thing’s first, do you want him?” I curiously ask.

That was the first question she needed to ask herself. We couldn't proceed until she answered that question.

"Well, I'm insanely attracted to him, but I don't know if I should get involved with him. The police are still on his trail, and I don't want a relationship that will blow up in my face and ruin everything I've worked for," she answers after a while.

I get what she meant. Reaper wasn't just anybody. He was a criminal, meaning getting involved with him would have dire consequences, which made me wonder what the hell I was thinking being friends with the man. I get he's Iris's uncle, but the man is dangerous and wanted by the freaking cops. 1

"I think you should do it try. F uck him once then decide from there" Letty tells her. I go to interrupt her, thinking she's out of her mind, but she cuts me off. "Hear me out. We both know that Ava isn't someone to trust blindly. Well, except for Ethan, she's a pretty good judge of character.

Even with Ethan, we can admit he's a decent guy. He only allowed greed and power to get in his head. He wanted what he thought was rightfully his. The fact that Ava gave Reaper a chance means something. She isn't stupid and wouldn't do anything that would risk Noah and Iris or put them in danger. I trust her judgement and I think you should too. 2

Besides, didn't he say he was working on something to clear his name? It might be legal, it might not, I honestly don't care, not when Travis told me the effort he is putting to make sure that Ava is safe. So yeah, I think you should give it a shot if you really want him"

Damn, I wanted to argue, but I couldn't. Letty had a good point. I would never put my children in danger or risk their safety. I may be naïve but I wasn't stupid. If I gave Reaper a chance, it meant that against all odds, against what he did for a living, against the target on his back and against his dark personality, I trusted him.

I sigh, knowing that Letty is right.

Turning to Corrine, I watch her as she thinks the entire situation through, weighing the pros and cons.

"So what will you do?" I mumble, waiting for her answer.

She takes her time, before finally releasing a breath of air. "This might be the worst mistake I'll ever make, but I think I'll take him up on the offer. I'll give it one night, and if the sex is good then I'll accept his proposal. Besides, it will suit me fine. I don't have time to date or look

1/2

+15 BONUS

She pauses before continuing. "Plus, it's another 'fuck you' to my father. He always hated me because I wasn't born a boy. That's why he gave the construction company to my brother even though I am the eldest. Nothing I did was ever good enough for him, and in retaliation, I did everything he didn't approve. Anything that could spike up his blood pressure"

Wow, seems like I wasn't the only one that didn't have an easy childhood. I'm glad though, that it didn't break her.

"I never knew that, Corrine, Why have you never said anything?" Letty takes Corrine's hand in comfort while I rubbed her back.

"It's not something I want people to know... Besides, I'm trying to move on and heal. Talking about it means, remembering, and I don't want to remember"

We nod our heads in understanding. After all, aren't I in the same situation now? I'm trying to move on and forget Rowan's past mistakes.

"Anyway" she cuts the silence after a while and faces me. "How is your relationship with Rowan?"

I groan, "We have a date today and I have nothing to wear"

Evelyn M.M

Author

Hey Loves, sorry I didn't post yesterday, I have been ill these past few days. I just wanted to apologize for that and also to thank all of you for all your support. Ex-Husband's Regret won first place in a competition I entered. This wouldn't have been possible without your continued love and support. There is no trophy, but I dedicate this win to each and everyone of you for being the best readers and fans. Words aren't enough to express my gratitude, but thank you so much from the bottom of my heart... Take care and stay safe. Bye.

Chapter 315

"Seriously?" Letty asks, shocked.

"Yes," I answer. "I went through my closet today just to be prepared, and there is nothing date-worthy there. I didn't even have a short little black dress."

To be honest, this is surprising. I remember that one memory I had of Ethan. We went on a date and I had a pretty tight red dress. Not that I was planning to wear it, but it wasn't in my closet. I had nothing but some pair of jeans and sundresses.

"Worry not, our dear friend, we will help you... In fact, I think we should go shopping," Corrine beamed in a sing-song voice.

That sounded exciting, but I couldn't help but wonder about Iris. I didn't want to bring her along because we all know that shopping is a long and tiring process, but I also didn't want to leave her here.

“I don’t know,” I murmur, biting my lips.

It’s not that I didn’t trust Teresa, but I just didn’t feel comfortable leaving her with her. It would have been okay if Noah or Rowan were around, but they weren’t.

“It’s about Iris, isn’t it?” Letty asks while searching my eyes.

Instead of answering, I just nod my head. I really wanted to go shopping. I’ve been cooped up in this house for so long that it’s driving me crazy. Besides, I wanted this experience. I never had girl friends growing up. No friends to go shopping with or talk about boys and such stuff. This was all new, even though I know we’ve probably done this before, so I wanted to

experience it.

“If it troubles you so much, I can lend you one of my dresses so that we can bring Iris with us. We can always go shopping at a later date,” Corrine suggests, and I smile.

I’ve only interacted with these two a couple of times, but so far, I like them a lot. They’re kind, lovely, and pretty great friends. No wonder I became friends with them.

“Thanks, but let me talk to Rowan first, and then we can figure something out.”

I stand up and leave them to have their drinks while I go upstairs. I’d left my phone there since I rarely use it. I spot it on the bedside drawer immediately when I get there. Picking it up, I dial Rowan’s number.

He picks up on the first ring, which just warms my heart. This is something I have noticed since I woke up. Unlike before, when he would rarely take my calls, these days, he answers on the first ring as if he were waiting and eager for my call.

“Hi darling, how’s your day? And have Corrine and Letty arrived yet?” His deep voice comes

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+15 BONUS

I don't think I'll ever get tired of hearing him call me sweet names, especially when he says it in his deep and sexy voice. There is just something about it that renders me weak in the knees.

"Hi," I squeak for some unknown reason. "It's great, honestly. Those two are, honestly, amazing. They even wanted to take me out shopping for tonight's date."

"Glad to hear that... Is the matter concerning shopping the reason you called? You do know you don't need my permission to go anywhere. Provided you have a bodyguard with you, then I don't mind."

I never thought I would ever be in this position. I hated being followed around by a bodyguard as if I were someone important, but I also understand that until they catch whoever tried to kill me, then this is my life.

"No, that's not the reason... I don't want to take Iris with me, but I also don't want to leave her here with Teresa."

He's quiet for a while. I sit down on our bed as I wait for him to speak up. Maybe he could give me a solution to my dilemma.

"How about you give me some time to come up with something?" He asks, and I nod, forgetting that he couldn't see me.

Chapter 316

"Yeah, sure"

After that, he hangs up. I breathed out, feeling disappointed that he didn't offer a solution. At this point, I think either I take Corrine up on her offer, or we just go with Iris, which will be a huge headache. Shopping with a baby usually is.

Taking the phone with me, I head downstairs. Iris was still asleep, and Corrine and Letty were chatting. The snacks Teresa had brought were almost finished.

"So, what did he say?" Letty asks after swallowing a cookie.

I answer with a shrug "Nothing much. He just told me to wait as he comes up with something."

I take my seat and pick up a cookie. Shoving it in my mouth, I chew and almost moan at how delicious it was. Teresa told me that she uses a secret recipe that was passed down from her great-grandmother. I'm yet to convince her to share the said recipe.

"Damn, Teresa knows how to bring about a food orgasm... This is freaking amazing," Corrine praised as she took another cookie.

I just smile, knowing that she's right. Noah can't get enough of them, and neither can I. Rowan doesn't really love sweet things, but he tried them once, and he had to admit that they were good. If Teresa ever decided to start a cookie business, she would sell. That's how good

she was.

We continue to chat and fill ourselves with Teresa's goodies. Thirty minutes later, there was

still no word from Rowan.

Exhaling in defeat, I turn to Corrine. "I think I'll take you up on your offer. It'll be hectic shopping with Iris and at this point, I don't think Rowan will get back to me."

"Sure... I have this black dress that I'm sure would look amazing on you," she says with a

smile.

I was just about to leave to go and change since I was in a pair of sweatpants when I heard the door open. Frowning, I pause, wondering who it was. I'm surprised when Rowan appears in the living room.

"Hello ladies," he says to my friends before coming to me. He doesn't even wait for them to greet him back.

Taking me in his arms, he kisses me like he's thirsty and I'm the only drink left.

"What are you doing?" I ask after we break apart. It wasn't even noon yet.

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I take my purse and rush downstairs Howan was seated on one of the chairs, feeding Iris who was now awake. Corrine and Letty were studying him, seeming mesmerized by him

"I'm ready," Lannounce, catching their attention.

"Great"

Both Letty and Corrine stand up and begin leaving. I walk to where Rowan is and give both him and tris a kiss. Before I can leave, he grabs my hand.

+15 BONUS

He gives me a dashing smile that leaves me mesmerized by it. “Well, you said you wanted to go shopping, so I’m here to babysit while you do your thing.”

“You can’t do that; what about work?” I ask, still stunned by the words coming out of his

mouth.

Rowan chuckles, “The good thing about being the boss is that I can do whatever the fuck I want, including leaving to babysit my daughter so that my woman can go shopping with her friends.” (2

Damn him. He knew how to make me weak with his words. How the hell have I never realized

that Rowan is a charmer? This is the Rowan I fell in love with. Not the cold, cruel man that I got married to.

“Now go and change so you’re not late,” he uttered, while his finger tapped my ass lightly.

Swallowing, I turn around and leave the room, all the while feeling his eyes on me. It made me feel powerful. I was on top of the word.

It doesn’t take me long to finish dressing up. Just like Corrine, I opted for a t-shirt and pair of jeans, but instead of wedges, I wore flats. There was no way I was going shopping wearing wedges or heels. My feet would be killing me after.

I take my purse and rush downstairs. Rowan was seated on one of the chairs, feeding Iris who was now awake. Corrine and Letty were studying him, seeming mesmerized by him.

"I'm ready," I announce, catching their attention.

"Great"

Both Letty and Corrine stand up and begin leaving. I walk to where Rowan is and give both him and Iris a kiss. Before I can leave, he grabs my hand.

Chapter 317

"Take this," he commands, giving me his black card.

I stared at the card with uncertainty. "Rowan..."

+15 BONUS

"Take it, Ava. You're now mine, meaning everything I have is as long as we're together, you don't get to use it."

yours. You

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money, but

Frowning in confusion, my eyes shift from the card to him. I didn't understand what he meant by 'I have money'. I didn't have time to question him, nor did I argue, because with the way he was looking at me, I knew he wouldn't budge.

“Fine,” I mutter, taking the card. “Thank you”

I wasn't planning to use it, but he didn't need to know that now, did he? After saying goodbye,

I leave our home. We decide to use one car, so one of the bodyguards drives us to the mall.

I was so excited that I could barely contain myself. Soon enough, we get there, and after

parking the car, we head straight to the shops while Morris follows behind.

“So what exactly are you looking for?” Letty asks when we enter one of the exclusive shops.

I look at the place in nervousness, my mind reeling from the price tags.

“Letty, I don't think I can afford anything here” I commented in a shrill voice. “The price here, is enough to give me a damn heart attack”

They look at each other before turning to me. “What the hell are you talking about” Corrine

looks at me in confusion.

“I mean, with my teacher salary, I can't afford any of this, and I don't want to use the card that Rowan gave me. Let's just look for something cheaper.”

Letty takes my hand and leads me to the couch, while Corrine asks the shop assistant to give

us some time.

"I don't know if Rowan told you this, but you're parents are freaking rich, Ava. You know who the Howell's are, right?" She asks, and I nod. Everyone knew who they were. "Well, your parents are the Howell's. Nora and Theo Howell"

I stare at her, not sure whether I should believe her or not. I haven't talked to them in a while, even though they've reached out a lot. I planned to visit them next week.

"Apart from that, you're rich all on your own, Ava. You don't need Rowan's or your parent's money. You are a freaking millionaire, so I'm damn sure you can afford anything in this shop," she finishes, blowing my mind.

"How the hell am I rich?" I asked, unable to comprehend what she was telling me. It feels like

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□

+15 BONUS

for the fact that Rowan took care of everything related to Noah, I would have been in deep shit.

"That's a story for another day," she says. "For now, let's get you something that will make sure Rowan's eyes are on you the whole night."

We get to work and after going through so many dresses and so many shops, we finally settle on a dress that all of us agree on. Since I apparently had money, I also went on shopping spree. I bought new dresses, skirts, shoes, tops and so on. I also bought somethings for the kids.

By the time we were done, I was tired but excited at the same time.

"I'm so happy for you, Ava." Letty says this while we are on our way home. "I'm glad to see this thing between you and Rowan working out."

“Of all of us, she was the one who realized that Rowan loved you even though you kept

denying it. She’s been Team Rowan from the start,” Corrine adds with a smile.

I was happy. Truly happy. My only prayer is that nothing messes it up.

Chapter 318

I look at myself in the mirror, happy with how I look. My hair was in a low bun, with curled tendrils framing my face. Tonight I wanted something different since it was my first ever date with Rowan, so I decided on a subtle but sexy, smoky eyeshadow and red lipstick.

As for my dress, I picked a black knee-length dress. It has a plunging neckline that is delicately held together by thin straps. It highlighted just the right amount of cleave, enough to tease but not come out as trashy. It had an open back that I was sure would drive any man crazy.

I continue staring at myself as I run my hand down the soft fabric. The dress was figure- hugging, and thanks to being pregnant, I now had curves in all the right places.

“Damn, babes... if I wasn’t straight, I would’ve definitely done you.” Letty praised, happiness dripping from her voice. “You’re sexy. Hell has nothing on your hotness.”

“She’s right,” Corrine chimes in.

They had left a couple of hours ago. We were now on Skype, since I wanted to get their honest

opinion. This date was important. Like I said, it’s Rowan and I’s first date, so I wanted

everything to be perfect.

“Thank you,” I smile at them.

I take a seat on the bed and put my heels on. I honestly don't remember the last time I dressed up or wore heels. Rowan rarely took me out before, even for work dinners, so I didn't really have an opportunity to dress up.

I don't know if that changed later, but I'm guessing it did since I remember how amazing I

looked when Ethan came to get me. Shaking those thoughts from my mind, I focus on my date

ahead.

"I'm nervous though," I admit. "What if we don't click? I know we are married, but what if we realize that we aren't compatible? Or what if something else terrible happens?"

Damn, this was so hard. A part of me wanted to cancel the entire thing because I was nervous and afraid. The other part just wanted to take the risk and just be in the moment.

I've wanted to experience this for so long. I always wanted Rowan to court me, to woo me, but he wasn't interested. Now it's finally happening, and all I can think of is everything that could

go wrong.

"Stop it, Ava; you're going to drive yourself crazy." Letty admonishes me. I see a shadow behind her, and I'm sure it's Travis since they live together. "Just live in the moment. Take a leap of faith and enjoy going out for dinner."

Corrine doesn't say anything, but she shows her approval by nodding her head.

1/3

+15 BONUS

I take a calming breath before releasing it. "You're right. I'm just overthinking things."

"Exactly. Be happy and enjoy tonight. You deserve to be happy, babe, and you deserve to be with the man of your dreams," Letty gushed, her smile bright and brilliant.

After we'd talked for a while, we hung up. I take my purse and give myself one last look. Corrine and Letty were right. I did look sexy, and I was loving it.

I head downstairs, where I hear Rowan and Noah before I can see them. Rowan had gotten ready in the guest bedroom while I used the masters.

I was nervous because I was dying to see his reaction. I've never dressed up for him, so I know seeing me like this will be a surprise for him.

I find them in the kitchen. Rowan was rocking Iris and blowing bubbles on her belly. She was screaming in laughter, which warmed my heart. Noah sat next to his father, looking all broody.

"Are you ready?" I ask, making Rowan look up.

At first, it's like his mind goes blank, then he takes a double take, his eyes moving slowly down my body. I see him swallow as his eyes darken into dark grey storms. Oh yeah, he definitely liked what he was seeing.

"You're drooling, Dad," Noah tells him with a small chuckle.

I can't stop the smirk that forms on my lips. Slowly, he stands up and walks the short distance to me. Holding Iris with one hand, he uses the other to grab me and pull me flush against his body before kissing the daylights out of me.

I hear Noah groan behind him.

Using all my might, I pull away from him. "You're going to ruin my lipstick."

"Don't really care," he fires back, his eyes still on my lips

"Are you ready? We don't want to be late," I ask him, stepping away from his heat that seemed to want to suck me back into his embrace.

I'd be lying if I said I didn't like the way his eyes seemed to be stuck on me. This is a whole new experience. Something I never thought would ever happen, so yeah, I was enjoying this so damn much.

"We don't really have to go," he murmurs, his voice coming out throaty and hoarse.

"You're the one who wanted this date, big man." I chuckle, "So come on, it's time for us to go"

He agrees reluctantly before he yells for Teresa. When she comes, she takes Iris from his arms.

"You look lovely, Ava," she tells me sweetly.

2/3

+15 BONUS

"Thank you, Teresa."

I give Iris a kiss on the head before turning to Noah. He was glaring at me, so I guess he was still pissed. Still, I pull him to me. He fought me, but I wasn't going to let go. After hugging him, I give him a kiss and tell him goodnight.

He doesn't say anything. He just stubbornly folds his arms across his chest.

“Noah...” Rowan growled his name in warning; he was furious at his behavior towards me.

“It’s okay”

I didn’t want anything to spoil the mood tonight, so when he doesn’t say anything, I grab Rowan’s hand and turn us around. I’ll give him a bit more time.

“I’m still mad at you, Mom, but you look really beautiful tonight.” His voice makes me stop and turn around. The stubborn arch of his brows was still there, but right now it didn’t matter.

“Thank you, my love.”

We leave after that, knowing very well that, with time, Noah will come around. I didn’t need to worry because I knew him. He was my son, and this was a way of testing if I would budge and let him have his way. Once he realizes that I’m not going to change my mind, he’ll stop being stubborn.

“So, where are you taking me?” I ask Rowan once we get into his car.

“You’ll see, I have a couple of surprises for you,” he replies. “I know you think I don’t know you, but I do, Ava.”

I smile, but I don’t say anything. I doubt he knows me. Rowan has never paid attention to me or anything that concerned me, so I’m sure he doesn’t know my likes and dislikes, but let’s wait and see.

I can’t wait to see what he’s planned for tonight.

Chapter 319

The drive wasn’t that long, and apart from having a small chat here and there, we remained silent. For the first time since I can remember, the silence between us was comfortable.

On the rare occasions that we drove together, Rowan would do his best to ignore me, while I tried my best to engage him in a conversation. It would always leave the atmosphere feeling awkward and weird.

“Why are you smiling?” I ask him when he gets out to help me out of the car.

His smile should be a weapon of mass distraction for women. Sure, he’s hot, but when Rowan smiles, it just elevates his looks to another level.

“Can’t I be happy that I’m taking my woman out?” he asks, his head tilted to the side. (2)

For some reason, I giggle. I’m not the kind of woman to giggle. I’ve never giggled in my entire life. In fact, I used to find it repulsive when a grown ass woman did it, yet I was doing it.

“I’m sorry, I don’t know why the hell I giggled.” I apologize while trying to pull myself together

He takes my hand, and I wrap it around his bicep. The intimacy between us is wild. Sometimes I pinch myself just to make sure that I’m not dreaming.

“You don’t have to apologize... It actually suits you, and I like it.”

I’m really not convinced, but I smile anyway.

We make our way to the entrance of the restaurant. Just like I guessed, the place was extravagant, and it screamed money. I internally laughed; I knew it. Rowan really didn’t have a clue about my likes and dislikes.

“Mr. Wood, your table is ready,” the hostess says the minute she spots us.

Rowan just gives her a nod, and she begins walking, leading us to our table. I ignore the heads that turn to look at us. Rowan was famous, and according to Letty, so was I because of my foundation. I hate fame, and as much as I had looked forward to this date, the excitement was starting to dwindle.

The hostess leaves after serving us wine, promising that a waiter will be by to take our orders.

“Have I told you that you look stunning tonight?” he asks, breaking the silence.

I grin at him. “No, you haven’t.”

“Well, you do, Ava. You look really stunning. I can’t keep my eyes off you.”

My friends were right about this dress, because I see the heat and hunger in his eyes. I also see

1/3

+15 BONUS

I

get what he said that day, but come on! Does he know how hard it is to sleep by his side every night and wake up to him kissing me, or every time he grabs my waist and pulls me flush against his body, yet every time things begin to get heated, he steps back?

He’s killing me slowly, and I don’t even know whether he realizes it or not.

“Thank you,” I smile, taking a sip of my wine.

My eyes scan the place. Sure, it was a really lovely place if you liked fancy places, but it isn’t for me. I just didn’t know how to tell him that. 1

“Ava?” His voice pulls me back to the present, and I look at him.

“Yeah?”

“You spaced out.”

“Sorry about that.”

I try to remain focused, but I just can't. Gosh, I feel so fucking terrible. Here I am on a date with him. A date I've been looking forward to, yet I can't help but wish that I was somewhere else. (3

His soft laughter forces me to look at him. He was leaning against the chair with one hand on the table. He looked smug and had a smirk plastered on his face. Tilting my head, I focus on him, wondering what he found amusing.

“What?” I ask in irritation. “What's so funny?”

Instead of answering, he stands up and gives me his hand. I look at him confused, wondering if he has lost his damn mind.

“Come on, Ava, we have somewhere to be,” he tells me almost impatiently.

“What about the dinner?” I asked.

“What about it? You really think I don't know that you hate these kinds of fancy places? This was just a decoy; I wanted to see whether you would tell me or suffer through it” 2

I stare at him, not really sure I heard him right. He already knew that I hated it here? I don't know whether I should be impressed or pissed off at him right now. I was leaning more on being pissed. He should have just said so from the beginning.

“Come on, our real date awaits,” he says, taking my hand and pulling me up. Before leaving, he grabs my purse and shoves it under his arm.

“What about the reservation?” I ask as we walk out.

“Don’t worry about that... Gabe and I own the place, and the hostess knew that I wasn’t

C

+15 BONUS

He helps me get in before rounding the car and getting in himself. After we’re both buckled in, he starts the car, and I turn to face him.

“What do you plan for tonight, You’ve got me really intrigued,” I tell him

“You really are impatient,” he mutters with a chuckle. “Just relax, I’ve got everything planned out, you’ll love it.”

I would be lying if I said I wasn’t giddy, because I was. After the initial shock of how he played me back at the restaurant, I was okay, to be honest. Glad that he knew that one detail about me. Though, I still don’t know how he knew that since he has never taken me anywhere.

We make small talk. My eyes widen when we stop at a drive-through. 1

“Seriously?” I ask in excitement.

“Definitely,” he smiles, making my heart skip a bit. “What would you like?”

1

I give him my order, and he repeats it to the server. Once we get our order, we drive away. I was so excited. This was shaping out to be a good evening.

“You know I’m surprised,” I begin. “I never really saw you as the kind to have a burger and fries at a drive-through. You always seemed like the wine and dine sort of person.”

He gives me a sideways look. “That goes to show that you don’t really know me as much as you think. Give me greasy food any day, any time. In fact, it is pretty much all I ate the first couple of months after you and I separated and before I hired Teresa.”

I can’t help laughing. It’s really funny to imagine Rowan eating burgers and fries every day. “If it wasn’t for the fact that I went to the gym every day, I would have a fucking pot belly.”

The image of that just makes me laugh even more. I can’t imagine him without his well- defined abs.

“Thank God for gyms then, or I would miss all the sexiness I get to see every time you take your clothes off,” I tease.

His voice is husky as he laughs. Heavens, this is what I always wanted. To see Rowan happy around me. It was finally coming true, and I’m glad that I was able to see this day. “We are here,” he tells me after a couple more minutes of driving.

Chapter 320

I look outside and gasp. The place was ethereal. It was an open space with lush grass and probably dozens of different flowers. That wasn’t even what I loved most about it. It was the view. Thousands of stars were twinkling, as if approving of this date.

“Do you like it?” Rowan asks, and my only answer is a nod.

I slowly get out of the car, breathing in the fresh air and taking in the breathtaking, stunning view. I walk almost to the edge and look down at the city below. How Rowan found this place, I don’t know, and I don’t care.

I close my eyes, feeling all my worries wash away. This is exactly my kind of scene. I just love it.

When I turn around, I find Rowan has already set up everything. There was a blanket and a picnic basket with what I assume were chocolates, strawberries, and wine. Along with it is the food we order.

I walk slowly towards him, take off my shoes, and sit down next to him.

“This is amazing, Rowan. Thank you”

He nods his head. “Anything to make you happy, darling. Now let’s eat, because I’m fucking starving.”

We eat in silence, and I take the opportunity to just admire the scenery and my date. Of course, I knew that Rowan was romantic; I saw it thousands of times when he was with Emma. I just never thought he would ever show it to me.

“I never thought I would ever be out on a date with you. I feel special today,” I tell him after we are done eating.

“Well you are and you deserve to be made to feel special every fucking day of your life... I can’t believe how fucking blind I have been all these years, not just to your beauty but also to who you are as a person. You’re my superwoman; I’m so fucking sorry it took me this long to realize it,” he says, taking my hand and holding it in his warm one.

“It’s okay. It’s in the past.”

“No, it’s not, Ava. I’m so fucking sorry I hurt you all of these years and took your love for granted. I’m not even sure I deserve your forgiveness or another chance with you. Hell, I don’t even know if I’ll ever make up for all the shit I put you through, but I promise I’ll keep trying, even if it takes all my life to prove to you that I’m a worthy man. I’ll keep trying till I earn your love and forgiveness.”

My eyes tear up, and I try my best to blink them away. The honesty in his eyes is my undoing.

to the core.

+15 BONUS

Instead of answering, I mesh my mouth with his. Letting him feel everything that I was unable to tell him with words. Letting him know that I'm willing to give him that chance. When we pull away from each other, we are both breathing hard.

"So tell me? How did you know that I have a simple taste and that I would love this place? Or was it a lucky guess?" I ask once our breathing is back to normal.

He takes a deep breath. He looks like he's trying to put his thoughts back in order after our heated kiss.

"I know you think I didn't pay attention through the years, but I did. I know you, Ava. I just pretended that I didn't"

"Really? Prove it" I challenge knowing very well that Rowan never paid attention to me.

"Fine." He release a breath of air. "You take your coffee with milk and two sugars no more no less. For some odd reason, you like adding cinnamon to it. You love ice cream. You could eat any flavor, but you always go back to plain vanilla because it's your favorite. You love that it tastes like milk since you loved milk so much when you were a kid"