

Salvatore.

After a long day at the oce, I head straight to the in-built gym in my mansion to do an extensive workout session and now, I'm walking out of my closet in a new set of clothes that do not smell of sweat. As I head over to the esteemed dining area where we have dinner every evening, I can already smell the succulent roasted turkey that takes the center stage, surrounded by creamy mashed potatoes, buttery green beans, and golden-brown stung.

It is a delight and it is all thanks to our Chef. I hired Mr Koupla from overseas to be a tender to our table and he has never missed, not once. I taste my attention from the tab on my hands when I hear the chatters of children. Ciara and West, arguing over the table like something else. One would be shocked at the age difference between them due to the way they argue.

“Girls..” I say, taking a seat at the head of the table.

“West went through my things again! This is why I want to move out, she literally put lipstick on my cashmere sweater, dad!” Ciara says, furious and Lumen walks in.

“Well, if you had given me politely...I wouldn't have had to sneak behind your back!” West yells, poking her tongue out.

“Girls...that is enough! West, apologize for going through your sister's things.” Lumen says and West mumbles underneath her breath.

“Like, why the hell is she so spoilt? This is your fault, mom and dad!” Ciara says. I gracefully unfold the crisp napkin, a small act of prelude to the feast, placing it on his lap.

“Dad, why aren't you saying anything?” Ciara asks and I look at West in one glance. At the look of discipline on my eyes, her back straightens and she faces her sister.

“I'm sorry, Ciara.” She says.

“There you are, Lilas, take your seat and eat.” Lumen says and I leave my eyes on my plate. If I were to stare at Lilas, I'm not sure how long I would look at her and who knows, Ciara or Lumen may discover the desire in my gaze.

Lilas takes the farthest seat from me and Lumen sits at my side. The clinking of utensils and the aroma of freshly prepared dishes create an ambiance as each of us takes turns passing around dishes. As we eat, Lumen speaks.

“How was work Lilas?” Lumen asks and I lift my head to join the conversation. No one would nd that suspicious since it's quite normal. As usual, my breath is stuck in my throat for a second as I gaze at her. Her hair is slightly damp, silky strands that effortlessly around her shoulders.

Lilas straightens her back to answer her mother's questions and that....that was such a bad decision because my eyes immediately landed on her bosom. I can tell that she is not wearing a bra, her n*****s are staring at me, sitting in full glory.

“Pleasant.” Lilas says, her soft voice, squeezing by heart.

“Pleasant? You sound like a millennial right now?” Ciara says, chuckling at her.

“I didn't realize...” Lilas says, doing everything in her power to make sure our eyes do not match.

“You don't have a boyfriend right? Also, I think Hector likes you, he's just bad at speaking.” Ciara says and my jaw tightens at the sound of that. It's like my ears have a radar for anything that concerns Lilas.

“Is he that degenerate you call a friend?” I speak out of turn. I know a f**k boy when I see one and Hector denitely one of it.

“Dad, you have a problem with all my friends. It isn't his fault that I got drunk and wasted that night.” Ciara says.

“Yeah, it's Owen's fault! I need to speak to his father concerning your relationship and where it's heading.” I say, gazing at Lilas even though I am speaking to Ciara.

“Stop it, Dad. Lumen, say something! Owen and I are in a perfect place with each other. I'm not going to allow you to ruin things for us. We are going to get married once I'm out of college!” Ciara says.

“Salvatore, leave them. They are kids, they still have years to grow up and make a decision on what they want.” Lumen says.

“Whatever.” I say, wiping my mouth with the napkin, completely losing my appetite.

“Should I set you guys up? Hector couldn't stop talking about you that night. You should have seen him, he was asking for your number too but I have to ask your permission rst.” Ciara says and I scoff, unable to control the distaste.

“Sure...give him.” Lilas says, and I scowl, wondering why she is agreeing to everything.

“His dad owns an oil company. Sherlock petroleum.” Ciara says and I watch as Lilas interests deepens.

“Oh, really?” She says and I clear my throat, getting up from my chair and picking my tablet.

“Salvatore, you are not even halfway through your plate.” Lumen says.

“I forgot. I want to make an important phone call.” I say, walking away and staring at Lilas. She doesn't even spare me a glance. After long hours, it's midnight at this point and I'm Inside my study. I keep thinking about the conversation. At this time, Lumen would have gone to bed...the same will be the case for my kids.

I'm ustered, my usual composed demeanor is replaced by a disarray of thoughts. Frowning and occasionally running a hand through my hair. I check my watch before going through my safe. I have a key for all the doors of the house—it's just a safety measure and for the rst time, it has a use.

I pick it up and walk out of my study. The hallways are dark, but I don't need light to nd my way. I am a tenacious man, there is nothing I've wanted that I didn't get and Lilas Light will not be the rst.