

Loving You In Secret by Debbie Meza

Chapter 111

Vicky stood still. "What are you trying to say?"

Nikki looked slightly hesitant. She knew Vicky was not an easy woman to deal with, and she especially knew that with just a few words exchanged.

Vicky had a strong mind. If Nikki did not provide any solid evidence, it was hard to make her crumble.

Nikki took a deep breath and said seriously, 'Mister Hart has someone special in his heart. He'll never love you.'

"Are you saying that he won't love me, but there's a chance he will fall in love with you?" said Vicky.

"I don't know if Mister Hart will fall in love with me or not, but I'm sure my chances are higher than yours," Nikki replied.

"On what ground?" Vicky asked.

I'm not able to let him fall in love with me at my current stage, but it's alright—I'm willing to wait. I'm willing to make sacrifices, and I'm even willing to take a

a substitute or a shadow

"A

sit is very close to the stage. Every time I looked at him, I can see him looking at

weird look?"

in her thoughts. "It's hard to describe the look. It's like he's using me...to

had felt this several times herself, hence why she asked Tyler if he had fallen in love with another

Tyler's first love and how much he loved Sheila. Frankly, Vicky thought the same way in the beginning, especially when Tyler chose Sheila over her all the

Tyler, however, she started to discover Tyler was not really an affectionate person. He was cold-blooded and heartless

piano, he even had the thought of marrying her. When she could no

could a person stop liking a person because of a small matter

instincts told her that Tyler had another person in his heart. However, she could not find a

What Nikki had said proved that her assumption was right.

Vicky looked at Nikki and said, "Miss Mayland, are you willing to be that person's substitute? Even if you're not the person he wants to see, miss, and love?"

Nikki smiled. "Not everyone can be a substitute. At least I have the chance now. Why can't I try it?"

"Then which part of you think you're like that person?" Vicky asked.

Nikki answered without hesitation like she had investigated Tyler thoroughly. "It's probably because we both play the piano. I heard Sheila shocked everyone because of a song she played, and that was how she captured Mister Hart's attention."

Vicky blinked and asked, "You don't think Sheila is the person in Tyler's heart."

Nikki smiled. "That's right. Although everyone else thinks that, I know that person isn't Sheila."

"Why?"

Chapter 112

Nikki said calmly, "If that person is Sheila, then Mister Hart would never have married you in the first place. I also heard Sheila can't play the piano anymore because of some reasons related to her hands. Not long after that, Mister Hart announced he'd marry you."

'She's very sensitive and smart too. But...' Vicky thought.

She smiled like she had something in her mind. "Well, do you know how Sheila injured her hand?"

Nikki had requested many people to look into this, and they all came back with nothing. Hence, she did not know how Sheila injured her hand.

Enter title...

As she looked at Vicky's gentle smile, a chill climbed up the back of her spine. She exclaimed, "Was it you?"

Vicky neither admitted nor denied this as she continued, "Miss Mayland, my husband helped you when you were in danger, and you're now using his power to secure a firm position in the bar and many other advantages.

People always say a favor should be returned substantially, even when it was just a small favor. We're not hoping you'll return anything to us, but at the very

least, please don't bite the hand that fed you and break our marriage. Alright?" Nikki did not expect Vicky to be still so stubborn after everything she said. She despised Vicky, knowing that she was also a person who seduced the man to sleep with her to ruin his relationship.

She said coldly, "Just because Mister Hart has helped me, I'm willing to be the bad person for him. I hope you'll return Mister Hart his freedom. Three years ago, you tried to make him like you, so you played the piano on his birthday in front of everyone. You weren't even good at it; the tune and key were off. Even those who didn't know how to play the piano thought it was bad, too." 1

She was extremely anguished and felt bad for Tyler.

"Mister Hart likes a woman who knows how to play the piano. You can't even do that, yet you want to lock him in this prison that you call 'marriage'. Don't you think you're being too ridiculous?"

Vicky was not even fazed by Nikki's words. All Nikki was telling her was to let Tyler go, and that was it.

No longer wanting to talk to her, Vicky spoke, "I don't know if I'm being ridiculous or not. What I want to say is you better know your place. I'm not going to do anything to you now, but if you continue what you're doing, maybe the next person who can't play the piano is you. By then, you'll know how ridiculous I can be."

Vicky no longer bothered to speak and thus left.

Vicky did not go to the bar for a week after that day. She did not want to become the main topic that everyone talked about during afternoon tea, and she did not want to see Nikki.

Vicky just entered a restaurant when she heard a gentle, attractive voice calling her name in the restaurant.

"Vicky!"

She looked up and saw a handsome gentleman looking at her with a smile.

She walked over. "Sorry, I'm late."

Sebastian shook his head. "You're not late. I came early."

Vicky sat across from him and said, "Sorry. I've been too busy lately to treat you to a meal. You've helped me a lot, and I didn't have the chance to thank you." 1

Sebastian shook his head again. "I didn't help you much. You don't have to be so kind."

Yesterday afternoon, Vicky received a call from Sebastian asking her to grab a bite together. She remembered Missus Mills telling her to stay away from Sebastian, so she did not contact him herself.

When Sebastian called her, she did not have the heart to decline him, what more after all the help he got her. She thought about it and decided to use this opportunity to make it clear to him.

Once she sat down, Sebastian asked, "Vicky, have you been here before?"

This was a fine dining restaurant with lavish and classy interior design.

She glanced around and shook her head. "No."

Sebastian said, "This used to be one of your favorite restaurants."

Chapter 113

While Sebastian and Vicky were talking, Vicky's phone rang. She took out her phone and realized it was a call from Cece. She stood up and said, "Excuse me. I need to take this."

Sebastian replied softly, "Sure."

Vicky went to a quiet corner and answered the phone.

"Vicky," came Cece's voice from the phone. "Have you been to the bar lately?"

"No. What's wrong?" Vicky asked.

Cece lowered her voice and answered, "Something happened at the bar."

Enter title...

Vicky's eyes wavered. "What happened?"

"Nikki resigned!" Cece answered.

"Resign?" Vicky frowned. "Why?"

"I don't know the exact reason either. At first, I heard she felt unwell and stopped performing for a few days. After that, she resigned. Everyone in the bar is saying that you went to give her a lecture that day and forced her to resign."

Vicky thought about it and replied, "Alright. I understand."

After that, they talked for a short while before she hung up.

On the way back to her table, various thoughts of why Nikki would resign flashed through her mind, and without Vicky realizing it, she accidentally knocked over someone. The person staggered a few steps back and knocked on a vase that was half the height of a human. 1

Crash! The vase and the person fell together.

"I'm sorry!" Startled, Vicky hurried over to help the person up. When she saw who the person was, she was stunned.

"Nikki?" she said. "Why are you here?"

Nikki fell and sat on the cold floor with humiliation and shame on her face. She bit her lower lip. "Miss Shaw, I've already resigned. Why won't you let me go? Are you only satisfied when I have no other option but to die?" 1

The commotion attracted the diners' attention. Before Vicky could understand what was happening, a tall man walked toward them.

He was drop-dead handsome with a cold impression that suffocated people.

The way he walked looked so noble and powerful. There was no expression on his face, yet he emitted a domineering vibe.

"Tyler..." Vicky did not expect to meet both of them here together and was dazed. 1

Nikki remained on the floor. Her slim and artist-like fingers were pierced by the broken vase, and she began to bleed.

Tyler's blue eyes turned dark when he saw it. He looked back at the waitress who was standing by the side dumbfoundedly. "Get Miss Mayland up and have a doctor treat her injury."

Quickly enough, Nikki was brought to a clinic.

Vicky turned to look at Tyler, who was dispersing a cold aura. When she was about to say something, the waitress who helped Nikki ran over in a hurry.

Her voice was anxious like she was about to cry.

“Mister Hart, Miss Mayland...

“Miss Mayland refuses to let the doctor look at her injuries!”

Chapter 114

Vicky followed after Tyler to look at the situation. Tyler glanced at her lightly and said nothing.

The doctor and nurse in the clinic were trying their best to persuade Nikki.

“Miss Mayland, your fingers are cut by the shattered vase. If you don’t get it treated in time, you’ll risk having infections. You’re a pianist! What if you can’t play-”

“I’d rather this than be a sting in someone’s eyes after getting it treated. I prefer to have my finger ruined,” interjected Nikki.

Enter title...

The waitress chimed in and tried to persuade her. “Nikki, this is your body. You shouldn’t do that to your body...”

“If I don’t do it, someone else will not be happy,” Nikki replied.

Just when she finished talking, the door of the clinic opened as a woman’s cold voice rang out, “Miss Mayland, are you referring to me?”

Nikki unconsciously looked up and saw the handsome man behind Vicky. Her eyes lit up at the sight.

“Mister Hart.” No one knew if Nikki purposely ignored Vicky.

“Miss Mayland’s finger is hurt. Why are you not treating her?”

“She refused to have them treated,” reasoned the doctor anxiously. “I can’t do anything.”

Vicky said indifferently, “Miss Mayland, you play the piano for a living. Your hand is more important to you than normal people. It’s best if you have them treated before you throw a tantrum.”

Nikki curled up his pale lips into a faint smile. “Missus Hart, I believe I can make the decision for my body. Don’t worry. I’m the one who chose not to have them treated. If anything happens, it’s none of your business.”

Vicky smiled and said, “Miss Mayland, it is indeed my fault that I accidentally knocked you over and caused you to fall, resulting in your fingers’ injuries. I’m sorry. Now, can you let the doctor treat them?”

Nikki’s eyes shrunk. “Accidentally?”

Vicky looked at her. “Don’t tell me you think I did it on purpose?”

Nikki unconsciously glanced at Tyler, who merely stood quietly in the room. His handsome face was devoid of emotions, and none could tell what he was feeling.

Nikki averted her sight and said coldly, “If you say you didn’t do it on purpose, then you didn’t.”

Even a fool could tell the implied message in what she said.

Vicky sighed helplessly. “I was talking on the phone just now, and I lowered my head to think of something, not seeing you in the process. That was why I accidentally knocked you over and caused your finger to be cut by the shattered vase. I, hereby, apologize to you for my unintentional action. I hope you won’t hurt your body just because you’re angry at someone.”

She was indeed at fault for looking at where she walked and knocked Nikki over where Nikki was hurt. There was no problem for her to apologize to Nikki since she made a mistake.

She thought about it and said, "I'll reimburse your medical bill and whatever loss you have."

A clear sarcasm and irony appeared in Nikki's eyes. She sneered, "I know. I'll leave Stoneford City as soon as possible."

Vicky's eyes widened. "What do you mean by that, Miss Mayland?"

"I played the piano in the bar you frequented. I resigned from the bar and played in the restaurant, yet you're there too. Stoneford City is a big city, but I don't think there's any place for me. If that's the case, it's better for me to leave."

"Miss Mayland, are you implying that I chased you away from the bar?" Vicky asked.

Nikki sported what seemed to be an understanding smile. She said with a low voice, "Of course not. I'm the one who decides to leave the bar. It has nothing to do with you or anyone else."

Every word she said was not related to Vicky. Yet, the expression and the implied message in her sentence suggested that Vicky had everything to do with her decision.

Chapter 115

Vicky was the one who forced Nikki to resign. Vicky deliberately knocked Nikki over. Vicky forced Nikki to leave Stoneford City.

Those were the messages Nikki implied in the things she said.

Nothing Vicky said was helpful, mainly because the person who should be talking was not her.

Vicky looked at Tyler, who remained silent throughout the entire exchange.

"Mister Tyler, don't you think you should say something?"

Enter title...

Tyler looked indifferent, and so was his voice as he said, "Did you go to the bar before?"

Nikki nodded. "That's right."

"When?" Tyler asked.

"Are you referring to the first time, or the last time?" Vicky asked.

Tyler's pupils darkened as he spoke, sounding intrigued, "You were there a few times."

Vicky did not hide the truth and confessed, "Yes. Miss Mayland was quite popular a while back. I was curious, so I went to take a look. She truly is talented on the piano. Of course, I wasn't busy during that period, so I went there a few times."

"And?" Tyler asked.

"And I didn't know how Miss Mayland discovered me and suggested that we should talk. I think someone recognized me at that time, but after our talk, I never went again. That is, of course, until I accidentally knocked her over in the restaurant just moments ago."

Nikki bit her lip and instinctively replied, "Missus Hart, are you saying this is a

coincidence and has nothing to do with you?”

“Other than being responsible for knocking you over, I have nothing to do with the rest of the matter,” Vicky explained.

Nikki felt incredulous when she saw Vicky pushing all the blame on her so easily. “So you never threaten to ruin my finger and make me the next person who can’t play the piano?”

There it was.

Vicky closed her eyes to disperse the chaotic train of thoughts in her mind.

All the groundwork was for this moment. After everything Nikki did, all she wanted was to have Tyler seek justice for her. If that was the case, Vicky was willing to give her the opportunity.

She said nothing and waited for Tyler to speak.

Both of them had not met for more than a week. Likewise, they seldom contacted each other too.

Over the past week, Tyler was outstation and Vicky must have taken this opportunity to go make trouble for his new lover. This must be what others thought of her.

Tyler looked at Vicky with his deep eyes and slightly intimidating pressure.” Did you say those things to her?”

Vicky thought for a few seconds before coming clean. “I didn’t say I was going to ruin her hand, but I did say something similar.”

Nikki was baffled by this and had no idea what Vicky was planning. She thought Vicky would never admit it or push all the blame on her like she did seconds ago. It was never in her plan to see Vicky admit it so fearlessly.

“Why did you say those things to her?” Tyler asked.

“Because she wants to ruin my marriage and steal my man from me,” she replied, not giving much thought to her response. “Don’t you think I’m being soft by giving a few warnings to a woman like her?”

Chapter 116

A weird light appeared in Tyler’s dark, cold eyes.

“If it’s just a warning, why did you have to say it so terribly?” Nikki asked.

Vicky looked at the cool, elegant man beside her. “Then, does Mister Hart think that what I said was too much?”

Tyler’s deep, dark eyes bore into her eyes. His fine-defined brow and eyes looked extremely cool. “What if I think it is?”

Vicky’s eyes sparkled, and she nearly could not keep up the emotion on her face. “Then, should I apologize?”

Enter title...

His deep and clear voice was subtle. “You already apologized to her a few times, and Miss Mayland didn’t accept them.”

Vicky put on a smile. “So are you trying to make me think of a solution to have Miss Mayland forgive me?”

“Since you’ve been to the bar, you should know I like listening to the songs Miss Mayland played.” Tyler’s thin lip curled up into a smile. “What if because of you, she refuses to play for me? What should you do about that? n

The smile on Nikki's face brightened, while the expression on Vicky's face became colder while she clenched her fists tightly.

"What do you think I should do?" Vicky asked.

Tyler's blue eyes locked with her eyes. "I'm asking you to say it."

Vicky saw the surprised, pleasant smile expression on Nikki's face.

A cold, cruel expression appeared on Vicky's face. "It's hard to find a threelegged frog, but you can easily find a human with two legs. If she refuses to play, she can just leave. Don't tell me you're going to take care of her like she's a god?"

Tyler squinted at this, and he turned to look at Nikki. His tone was light. "You can leave now."

Nikki barely had the time to react, and her smile froze when she heard what he said. "Mister Hart, what... What are you talking about?"

Vicky was stunned too.

"Didn't you hear what my wife said?" said Tyler, his tone still indifferent. "She asked you to leave."

Nikki felt her breath stop. She could barely believe what was happening as her eyes reddened. She found it hard to keep her calm, and she was beginning to be desperate.

"Mister Hart, I'm the one hurt today, and need I remind you that she threatened me? I never did anything that harmed her—"

"So what? My wife asked you to leave, so you need to leave," Tyler cut her off coolly.

His expression was calm and passive as usual. It was as though he was talking about the weather.

Apart from Nikki and Vicky, even the doctor and waitress that accompanied Nikki were shocked. The way this matter progressed was... unlike what they imagined.

'Shouldn't Missus insist on not apologizing, and shouldn't Mister Hart warn Missus Hart how serious the consequences would be if she didn't apologize with a straight face? Threatening and forcing Missus Hart to back down?' they thought.

It...was a turn of events no one foresaw.

Tears rolled down Nikki's eyes; she never felt so humiliated before. At that moment, she felt like she was a fool to have believed she held some form of importance to Tyler. Her cheeks were not hurt, but for some reason, they ached. She covered her mouth and ran out of the clinic weeping. The waitress and doctor exchanged looks with each other and left too.

The ambiance suddenly became quiet.

Vicky had no idea why this happened, but she felt a long-lost uneasy feeling when everyone was gone.

She did not look at Tyler as she asked, "Why are you here?"

"Nikki resigned," replied Tyler nonchalantly. "I had someone investigate her whereabouts so I could come and ask her what happened in person."

Before Vicky could reply, Tyler spoke again, his voice low and alluring, "Wasn't that what you thought of?"

Vicky answered unconsciously, "I didn't..."

Suddenly, Tyler grabbed her by the chin, forcing her to make eye contact with him.

He looked at her, but she could not tell if he was smiling or not. "Getting you to apologize to Nikki and thinking of ways to trouble you until Nikki is satisfied and forgives you... Isn't that what you think I'd do?"

Vicky's eyes wavered as she tried to avoid Tyler's gaze. However, he grabbed her chin in place tightly.

"I..." She had nothing to refute. Tyler was spot-on.

Tyler pulled his face closer to her. His eyes looked so invasive and attractive that Vicky could not stand them.

how should I punish you for thinking about

Tyler entered her

could not breathe. The closer his face was to her, the thicker his fragrance smelled. It

as if someone had frozen her. Just when Tyler's lips

ring, ring! The phone rang abruptly

It was Vicky's phone.

her. She reached for

not back yet?" Sebastian asked

when Vicky remembered Sebastian was waiting for

and said, "It's nothing. I met a friend, and

hung up, Tyler spoke with an indescribable tone, 'So

to see Tyler's dark pupils. She quickly explained, "After the accident in the restaurant, I didn't

few times. His good-looking lips curled into a fake smile. "When did you get so

Vicky fell silent for a few seconds. "You should remember the few times I met him. After I was discharged, I never saw him again. Missus Mills came to talk to me and wanted me to keep my distance from him, so when Sebastian called me out to eat, I wanted to reject him. Then I thought it would be better to tell him straightforwardly rather than to look for excuses to reject him every time. Thus, I agreed to meet him.'

After that, Tyler said nothing and grabbed her hand to walk outside, much to her bewilderment.

"Tyler, where are you taking me?"

Tyler looked at her and said, "Aren't you going to make it clear to him? Let's go."

Vicky was baffled. "You and me, together?"

Tyler's eyes darkened. "Is that a problem?"

"No." Vicky wanted to say something, but in the end decided not to. 'Nothing. Let's go.'

When they left the clinic, she noticed Tyler was still holding her hand tightly in his.

Chapter 118

When Vicky regained her senses, she found herself already in the restaurant with Tyler holding her hand. Everyone's eyes were on them the moment they came in.

Tyler was too popular to be unnoticed. No one in the upper class of Stoneford City did not know him.

Everyone was so shocked that their jaws nearly fell off when they saw Tyler appearing while holding Vicky's hand.

'Isn't there a rumor about Tyler falling for a pianist? Why is he holding hands with Vicky and appearing in public? Are they back together?'

With everyone looking curiously at them, Tyler and Vicky approached Sebastian.

The moment Sebastian saw Vicky, a smile appeared on his face. When he saw

matter to Sebastian, Tyler beat her to it, saying, "Mister Mills,

actually have the time to come to look for Vicky after being busy with work and giving your support to a female intimate in the bar...

the chair across from Sebastian, not bothering to ask for permission. His pose was so elegant and relaxed as if he was in his house. "No matter how busy I am, I can always

find time to accompany Vicky. After all, some men would try to make themselves look like good people, but no matter how much they try, they won't be able to hide the

said

at Sebastian and asked, "Am I right, Mister

"I don't agree with what you say. Likewise, those with an ill mind will always think badly of other people. When you can't fulfill your responsibility and help your woman, you shouldn't blame other

the right thing to do is to help others bully your wife? I'm astonished by this mindset, and I can't

no one was around. "There are always people who think they're righteous enough to scold others from a moral point of view. Alas, these righteous people can't do anything at all.

Sebastian could not say a word. The mistake he made in the past led to another mistake. If he held his ground firmly, Vicky might not have married Tyler and suffered so much pain.

Both Sebastian and Tyler looked poised, reflected by the way they spoke, but the table was tense with an aura only found in wars. The pressure around them was dangerously low.

From another angle, it seemed like Tyler and Sebastian were having a good chat. Only Vicky knew about the pressure.

When the ambiance was getting tense, Vicky found the right moment to break it. "Sebastian, have you ordered food?"

Sebastian looked at Vicky, and his eyes were much gentler than before." Not yet. I'm not sure if your favorite food has changed, so I'm waiting for you to come back so we can order together."

Chapter 119

Vicky requested for the waiter to attend to them. "Why don't we order now? I

The waiter came over and passed the menu to all of them.

Sebastian looked at the menu and asked, "Vicky, you used to like foie gras very much. Why don't we order one?"

Vicky never dined in this restaurant after she lost her memories. Thus, she nodded. "Okay."

"No wonder your company isn't going that well," came Tyler's out-of-the-blue remark. "You've spent all the time thinking about how to please a woman."

few words, but whenever he spoke, he would do it apathetically. Vicky often experienced how harsh he could be. She

inappropriate things, so she used the other hand beneath the table to nudge him, signaling him to stop

as she touched Tyler's hand, he grabbed it tightly with his strong hand. His bony fingers slipped into the spaces between her fingers and interlocked their fingers like they were a loving couple. This was

and she instinctively tried to pull her hand away. However, Tyler held it so tightly and refused to let go. He even deliberately rubbed the back of her hand to signal some

remained calm and elegant while sitting in the chair

speechless. 'This man looks so

noticed Vicky was looking weird and thus asked, "Vicky, why is your face so red? Are you could only say,

back at Tyler. "As Vicky's husband, you should know what

he smiled was even

listen to someone playing the piano, you should have the time to get to know Vicky's favorites, too. I mean, she's your

Sebastian's words and tone sounded gentle, yet everything he said was with purpose and aimed at potential sore spots.

Even when Vicky forgot how she used to love Tyler, her heart ached as though something was stuck in it when she heard Sebastian's pointy words.

Before this, Tyler had done many outrageous things to her. There were a few times she nearly died when she was in the hospital, and still, she did not have this sort of feeling. At that time, she was angry, resentful, and hateful. The only thing she did feel was upset.

She knew very well that Tyler's heart was not with her. After she lost her memory, the feelings she had for him diminished. It also made her expect less from Tyler.

However, those simple things Sebastian said actually stirred up a depressing feeling in her heart. Her hand was clenched tightly by Tyler's hand, and it managed to pull her back from her messy thoughts.

A bright light appeared in Tyler's eyes. His low voice was clear like the stream. 1
"You're right, Mister Mills. After marrying Vicky for three years, I do know everything that Vicky likes."

Chapter 120

Sebastian raised his brow and thought Tyler was just bluffing.

He smiled. "If that's the case, would you please order something Vicky likes to eat? She lost her memory and has forgotten many things. I, on the other hand, grew up with her, so I know her very well."

If Tyler was dealing with another man and not Sebastian, he would have handled this in a perfunctory manner. As long as Vicky did not out him and played along, it would be easy to fool the person.

However, Sebastian was Vicky's childhood friend who knew Vicky all too well. There were moments Vicky had forgotten, but Sebastian would never forget.

Sebastian knew Tyler and Vicky had a poor relationship. During the three years they were married, Tyler was not home very often. He wondered how much a man like this understood his wife.

Today was the day for him to show Vicky Tyler's true colors: a cold, heartless man. He wanted her to give up on Tyler entirely and for her to have no more hope for him.

Tyler curled his lips and glanced at the confident-looking Sebastian.

the table. As he flipped through the pages with his slender finger, he parted his thin lips and began to order. The first round of orders consisted of only ordered steak, foie gras, and escargot-the common dishes that one could find in

started to order soup, beverages, fruit, and

was stunned. Every dish Tyler ordered...was Vicky's favorite, especially the

too many cold beverages. It had been

liked to eat ice cream, but he even knew her

taken aback. "I like to
food she liked to eat when they went out to eat.
not ordered most of the foods
like ice cream and also many
time, she would eat
herself and asked Tyler when
after remembering a bad memory and said, "Blue
eyes widened.

that," replied Tyler with a

Vicky looked at him incredulously. "Are you bluffing me?" 1

Tyler pressed his lips into a tight line, showing how displeased he was with Vicky's question. He then said, "Why don't you ask your childhood friend?"

Vicky looked at Sebastian. "Sebastian, is it true?"

No one noticed the complex whirl of emotions in Sebastian's eyes. After a few seconds of silence, he nodded.

'It's true?' Vicky found it hard to believe. She looked at Tyler with an expression that showed she had a hard time processing the new information. "How did you know?"

Tyler said with a straight face, "You brought it back to the house to eat it once."

That day, he nearly died because of the pungent smell.

Vicky was at a complete loss for words at this reveal. When she saw the disgusted look on Tyler's face, however, her mood felt inexplicably better.

After they ordered the food, the table returned to its quiet moment. Neither Sebastian nor Tyler said anything else.