

## What Happens In Vegas - Free Novel by C. Qualls

### Chapter 13

We're waiting in the airplane. It's less than 15 minutes to take off and my newest guard has yet to show up. I turn my head in Corey's direction. "Find out where he is. Also start thinking of selecting a replacement."

Corey makes two calls then tells me; "he's here sir, he got lost in the terminals."

I shake my head. "Useless. Corey keep an eye on him, he's starting to cause unnecessary trouble."

Julia wraps her arms around my waist and leans into my chest. "We're not late, we still have time. Relax."

I kiss her head. She's not in her usual work attire. Instead, she's wearing a flowery wrap dress that accentuates her curves, but allows her to move. Her sandals are off and her legs are curled under her dress. "Can I get you anything to drink?" The stewardess asks us each in turn. Julia gets a lemon lime soda with mint. Corey asks for a water. I ask for a coffee. Our drinks are served and finally the kid shows up. 4 minutes to take off. The stewardess stores his luggage and points out his seat across from Corey.

Julia falls asleep on the flight. I am on my laptop and my guards are discussing strategies for the trip. It's a 7 hour flight, which puts us in Vegas right around 4 pm. I have Corey and Jesse get the rental car that Julia arranged for our use for the duration of our stay. "Did you decide which show you want to see?"

Julia bites her lip. "Yes, but I haven't bought tickets yet. I didn't know when you would be free to go."

I tilt my head and my lips turn up on their own. "You're the one that arranges my calendar. Silly girl. You pick the day."

She smiles and immediately pulls up the show times. "It's done. Saturday night, 7 pm show at the Mandalay Bay casino." Corey pulls up in the car. He opens the door for Julia and helps her in. I walk around to my door and slip inside. Julia tells Corey which hotel to go to. I chuckle.

“What’s so funny?” I pull her in closer and whisper in her ear. “It’s Jarrett’s hotel.”

Jarrett only has the one hotel casino, however, his father owns several. This hotel is Jarrett’s pride and joy. He likes to suck up to his distinguished guests and greets each one upon arrival. We pull up to the main entrance. Jesse steps out and opens Julia’s door to help her stand. “Corey get everyone checked in.”

Julia stops me. “Isn’t that my job?” Technically yes, it is her job, but I want her beside me. She continues speaking. “I have all the details and payment information. It would be easier for me to handle it.” Corey doesn’t even bat an eye, he heads straight over to the concierge as he was instructed. “Fredrick, why did I come if you’re going to make Corey your assistant?” I raise my eyebrow and my lips twitch up on one side. Her face blushes, more than from just being in the sweltering heat of Vegas. I notice sweat glistening on her forehead so I guide her inside where it’s cool.

Jarret spots me and makes his way in front of us just as Corey returns to stand beside Julia. “Draven, you didn’t tell me you would be staying in my hotel.” He extends his hand and I shake it.

“My assistant made the arrangements. I only just found out.”

Jarret looks to the beauty at my side. “What a capable woman.” I hear his double meaning and look to Julia for a reaction, there is none.

I clear my throat. “Julia meet my old college buddy Jarret VanDermon. Jarrett, this is my wife Julia.”

Julia steps forward with a sinister smile on her face. “Mr. VanDermon, I’ve heard so much about you.” Julia makes good on her word. Her hand flies faster than I can see. The resounding slap can be heard across the room. His subordinates all have a look of shock on their faces. My guards and a few other men are holding back their laughter. I tighten my jaw to keep from laughing, but I definitely can’t hold back my smile. I’m so proud of her in this moment. That’s right gentleman, this feisty siren is mine. I tighten my hold on her waist. Before anyone can move, Julia shoves her pointed finger in his face. “You deserve that.” She raises her eyebrow challenging him to deny it.

He clears his throat. “I guess I do.”

Julia then extends her hand. "It's a pleasure to finally meet you." Jarret chuckles, then shakes her hand. Julia continues to speak. "I must also thank you. Your carelessness led to our spontaneous marriage." She steps closer and plants a kiss to the cheek she just slapped.

Jarret smiles. "Damn, Draven. You lucked out with this one. She's hot and spunky. I like her." Julia and I both laugh.

In our suite, I leave Julia to unpack and get situated. "I'll be back shortly. I have matters to discuss with Corey," I tell her. I kiss her then turn out the door.

Corey is already expecting me. "Sir, Anthony and Li have already arrived. Their rooms are across the way. They have both checked in with me. Darius informed me this morning that Kyle is tailing Ms. Cavanagh. She has a sexual partner, but we have no information on him as of yet."

I nod. Corey is always efficient. "Very good. I want Jesse with you, he's been acting up too much lately. Anthony and Li need to check in with Jarrett. He needs to approve their security access. They are not to be seen by Jesse or Julia. I don't need either one to get suspicious."

Corey nods. "Understood." Corey picks up three files and hands them to me. "Recruits, sir."

I look over the first file. "Is he related to you?"

Corey stands straighter and tilts up his chin. "Yes, sir. He's my little brother. He has some trouble with authority, but his marksmanship is top notch. Don't tell him I said this, but when it comes to weaponry, he's better than me."

That's high praise coming from Corey. "I want him on the first flight to Taiwan."

Corey nods. "Yes sir. These two are already in Taiwan one has three weeks left, the other returns the end of next month. We have four more there now, but in the end..."

I make the final decisions of who gets to be on my guard. "Find me five or six more guys to send to Taiwan. I want another detail just for Julia's safety."

I spend the rest of the day in meetings. I'm attempting to expand to this side of the country. I already looked at other cities, mostly in California, but so far I have not made any decisions. Julia is taking notes of the meetings. I have her

behind me so I'm not distracted by her. It's not working very well. I still think about her constantly. The last meeting of the day comes to a close and it's already almost 8 pm. I know Julia has got to be hungry. "What would you like to eat?"

She doesn't even blink, she just answers. "Taco Bell."

I raise my eyebrow and shake my head. "Not happening. It made you sick last time. I will find a clean restaurant that serves tacos. Will that suffice?"

She huffs, but gives in. "Fine. But for the record, it's not the same."

I find an appropriate restaurant located in a nearby casino. The atmosphere is dark and comfortable. We are shown to our private room and our drink orders are taken immediately. Julia looks at the menu and frowns. "What's wrong?"

She looks at me with innocent eyes. "They don't have dessert here. Fredrick, I think I may cry. Even Taco Bell has dessert."

I take her hand and kiss her fingers. "There are many booths and restaurants in the casinos. I'm sure we can find something that will satisfy your sweet tooth. Either way, I'm already looking at my dessert." She rolls her eyes and returns her gaze to the menu.

Dinner is pleasant. Julia finds a gelato vendor as we make our way back to the hotel. "Why do you enjoy sweets so much?" I ask her while we're walking along.

"It's not just sweets, it's food in general. You met my mom. She's all about her looks and she's so superficial. When I was little she would put me on diets because she thought I was getting too fat. I was 6 years old when I was on my first diet. My dad always told me I was perfect the way I was and that looks aren't important. Then he would take me out to eat, just the two of us. Every time he was on tour, I would be forced on another fad diet. I hated it. Dad told me that just because someone appears pretty doesn't mean a thing. Their attitude and behavior can change the way they look. I didn't understand at first. I sure do now. My mom was beautiful, but not any more, even though she looks the same. My dad said it's more important to be healthy than skinny. As long as I feel healthy, I eat what I want. I'll switch to more healthy choices on occasion, but Gerry makes pretty balanced dishes."

I see Julia in a much different light. She doesn't pig out. She eats what she wants because she likes it, no other reason. She's not fat by any means. She's perfectly healthy. Her way of thinking makes sense. "Do you want a bite?" She asks as she places a spoonful in front of my face.

"I don't eat sweets."

She shrugs her shoulder. "Your loss... Why is that?"

I take her spoon and taste the gelato. It's too sweet and it makes my jaw tighten. "I don't like that one." I take a drink from her water bottle that she bought with the gelato. "I have no idea why I don't eat sweets. I guess it's because sweets are childish. That's what I was taught, at least. I was treated like an adult from a young age."

She finds a bin and tosses the dessert away. I raise my brow in question. "It was too sweet, I didn't like it much." She takes a drink of her water. "My stomach hurts now."

I take her hand. "Let's get you back to the room. I'll rub your belly until you feel better."

In our room we're both exhausted. Julia heads straight for the bed where she kicks her shoes off then lays down. I follow her lead. She lays on my arm while I untie her dress. I rub slow, gentle circles on her tight belly. She hums her content. "I don't think I could ever live in a place like Vegas. It is too hot. On the weather, they broadcasted that there is a heat warning in effect. What is a heat warning? Like it's so hot outside be careful not to burst into flames."

I laugh at her joke. "Just make sure you always have water."

She begins removing my tie. "You too."

I lean forward to give her a kiss. "Are you worried about me?"

She begins unbuttoning my shirt. "Always." She leans up and kisses my chest.

Curiosity takes hold of me so I say. "You care about me?"

She rolls her eyes. "Duh. Of course I do."

My hearts is racing in my chest. I knew deep down that she cares about me, but hearing her say it... I'm elated! "How is your belly?"

I don't wait for a response, I kiss her lips as I push her open dress off. Julia wraps her arms around my shoulders. Her kiss is sweet and gentle. She slides my shirt off. "Fredrick. Do you care about me?"

I look at her innocent face. I see a touch of doubt in her eyes. "Silly girl. Of course I care about you. You're so dear to me." A gentle, sweet smile shows on her beautiful face. She kisses me with a need I can feel. I remove the remainder of our clothing and enter her gently.

I go slow and just feel her body and mine. Her warm depths contract. Her soft flesh is smooth and sensitive. I glide in and out deeper with a steady pulse, but still remain gentle. Deep. Slow. I watch her face, her rapture, her desire, her pleasure. I can see everything as clear as crystal. The pressure increases. Deep. Slow. I think of her, only her, my wife. I make sweet love to my wife. Is that what this is? Is this love? Her mouth forms an O shape. Her head tilts up. I nibble on her delicate neck. She's losing control. Her hands grip the pillow. Her eyes are shut as tight as possible. She's whimpering and panting. I kiss her under her ear and bite down. Her body reacts and she let's go. Her response sends me over and I release with her.

We catch our breaths. Julia smiles with her seductive gaze. I return the same look. I run my fingers through her hair, it's damp with sweat. She's everything to me. She's changed my life. It's been such a short time together, but it has felt like a lifetime. Again I wonder, is this what love is? I look into her eyes. "Tell me you love me."

She smiles. "You first."

I can't. I want her to love me. I want her to stay with me. Always. "I don't want our marriage to end in a year. Can we renegotiate our deal?"

She shakes her head. "We don't need to make a deal. I'll stay with you as long as you want me."

My heart is about to beat out of my chest. "That's what I want. I want to be in a relationship with you. One that's more than just a piece of paper that crept up on us. You're more important to me than that."

She traces the side of my face. "You're so perfect. How did I get so lucky?"

I let out a single laugh. "Silly girl. I'm the lucky one." She closes her eyes and grins bigger than the Cheshire cat. Her eyes are taking longer to open. I know

she's exhausted. I finally pull out of her. I loathe that part. The instant disconnect hits me every time. I just want to be buried inside of her always. I lay on my side and pull her back to my chest. I kiss her cheek. "Go to sleep, and dream of me."

She barely nods. "Hmm, I will." Our breaths steady and we both quickly fall asleep.

Julia's knee in my thigh is not the best feeling to wake up to. Her body is curled up into a ball and she's hugging a pillow. I move to the side and check the time. My alarm is set to go off in 12 minutes. I turn it off and start my daily routine. Julia's first alarm sounds just as I'm putting my tie on. My phone buzzes on the nightstand. It's a number I don't recognize. Very few people have my number, so I answer. "Draven."

A crying, whiny voice sounds on the other end. "Darling, my father is going to jail for life. You have to help me."

What the fuck did I just hear? "Ms. Cavanagh. You're insane if you think I'm going to help you or your father. You are nothing to me. Don't ever call me again. That bastard murdered my father and you have the nerve to ask me to help you? Your father is going to jail. Just as he deserves. End of story. Period!" I hear a gasp, but it's not from Ms. Cavanagh. I hang up the phone and look at Julia. "What is it?" I ask.

She's looking something up on her phone. "Oh, shit!" She drops her phone and rushes to the washroom. Curiosity takes hold of me so I pick up her phone. She has open an app that is a very pink calendar. I quickly understand why she freaked out. She's 4 days late... Holy shit! She's 4 days late.

I knock on the door. I can hear her retching inside. I try to open the door, but it's locked. After a few minutes I hear the shower running. I dial Corey. It's the first time ever I don't know how to say what I need. "I need you to run a quick errand immediately. I need you to get a pregnancy test. Discretion please."

I hear a throat clear on the other end, followed by a very awkward; "yes, sir." Corey is quick. He brings the pink box back just as Julia's shower cuts off.

I excuse him then knock on the washroom door. "Julia. Can I come in please." She unlocks the door, but doesn't open it. I take a deep calming breath then slowly open the door. She's on the floor with her arms wrapped around her knees. Her head is buried and she's wrapped in a white bathrobe. She's up

against the farthest corner from the door. She's scared. I can see her shaking like an animal caught in a trap.

I set the box on the counter and squat in front of her. "I know you're scared, but we agreed to be together. That includes this. We don't know anything for sure yet. Can you take the test please." She lifts her head just enough for me to see a tear fall down her delicate cheek. I wipe it away with my thumb and kiss her wet head. She takes a deep breath then nods. "Would you like me to step outside or can I just turn around?" The washroom is quite large and the toilet is sectioned off. I really want to be here for this, but I don't want her to be uncomfortable.

"Stay. I need your help. My hands are shaking."

I open the box and read the directions out loud. Pretty straight forward, just pee on the end of the stick then cover it and lay it flat. I open the gray envelope from inside of the box and hand her the stick. I walk around the partition and wait.

I'm holding Julia in my arms, she's still shaking, but not nearly as badly. We're both holding our breaths as we watch a line of moisture make its way across the little window on the stick. This moment feels like a lifetime, but it is really only about 20 seconds before a pink cross appears. It's positive. She looks up to my face, which I know has a goofy grin. It's positive! She's pregnant! My wife is going to have a baby! She breaks the silence, "Fredrick, y-y you're okay with this?" She has an odd look on her face; guilt, surprise... is that hope?

"Yes, Mrs. Draven. I'm okay with my beautiful wife carrying my baby." I rub her lip with my thumb. She smiles under my touch. "I'm more than okay," I say before I kiss her mouth.