

# Becoming Strangers Again Chapter 111-120

Posted by Adminh, 113

## Chapter 111

RYAN

Taking care of the essential tasks, I left the remainder in my father's capable hands. On the same day, I boarded a flight to Canada to be with Lily and the children.

Although Angelo expressed a desire to accompany me, I insisted he stay behind to assist my father and fasten the divorce proceedings with Stephanie. His expertise and efficiency were indispensable in managing affairs back home.

Upon landing in Canada, I was promptly greeted by my awaiting car and security team, who had been informed of my arrival and were ready to escort me without delay.

They whisked me away directly to Lily's residence as per my instructions. True to form, I encountered no obstacles upon my arrival and was welcomed into the house without any hassle. My sole focus was on providing support to Lily and the children during this challenging time.

Getting out of the car, I typed in the door code and walked into the house. The first room I went into was that of Liam. Standing above his bed, I watched him sleep. Sighing tiredly, I leaned down and pressed a kiss to his forehead before walking

out.

Next, I went into Noah's room, repeated the process and then proceeded to Ethan's room. After that, I went in search of Lily.

Opening the door to her bedroom quietly to avoid waking her up because well, it is already past bedtime for every normal human.

I saw her silhouette lying on the bed. The bright moonlight peeking in from her window made it much easier to see her form, but not easy to see her face.

Relief flooded through me for the first time since the day began, a soothing balm to my weary soul. With measured steps, I approached Lily's bedside, pausing at the foot of the bed as if hesitant to disturb her rest.

As she stirred awake, her sudden movement jolting her into consciousness, a piercing scream pierced the silence of the night, shattering the tranquility of the room. My heart sank with the realization that her cries would surely rouse the boys from their slumber.

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## Chapter II

“Hey, Lily!” I called out, raising my voice to be heard over her loud screaming. “It’s me, Ryan.”

Gradually, her panicked cries subsided, replaced by calmness as recognition dawned in her eyes. “Ryan?” she echoed, her voice barely above a whisper.

I crossed the room and flicked on the lights, illuminating the space with a soft glow. Our eyes met in the newfound brightness, a spark of recognition igniting between us. In an instant, she sprang from the bed, racing towards me with unbridled relief and affection.

Opening my arms wide, I waited eagerly to envelop her in an embrace. Lily’s hand found its place around my waist, and I mirrored her gesture, drawing her close as I buried my head in the crook of her neck. With each breath, I drank in her sweet fragrance, a comforting reassurance that everything would be alright.

“I missed you,” I murmured softly into her ear, the sound of my own voice sounding foreign and strained to my ears. She pulled back slightly, meeting my gaze with a tenderness that spoke volumes. Gently, she brushed aside the strands of my hair that had grown longer because I lost interest in trimming it.

“I missed you too,” she whispered, her voice barely above a hushed tone as she stood on tiptoe to meet me at eye level. Her lips glistened with a hint of moisture as she licked them nervously, her eyes searching mine for answers, for understanding.

Emotionally overwhelmed and unable to find the words to express myself, I leaned in instinctively, closing the distance between us in a tender kiss. Our lips met in a slow, rhythmic dance.

Sensing my reluctance to engage in verbal communication, Lily reciprocated my emotions with a silent understanding. Her lips moved in perfect harmony with mine, mirroring the depth of emotion and connection that flowed between us.

As our kiss deepened, I couldn’t resist the urge to nibble gently on her lower lip, my hands instinctively tightening around her waist as I drew her closer to me. Lily responded with a soft—

hum of approval, the vibration reverberating through me and stirring something deep within my soul.

Despite the overwhelming desire to carry her to the bed and make love to her, I knew that was not what I needed in that moment. Reluctantly, I pulled away, resting my forehead against hers as we caught our breath.

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## Chapter 1

Lily's exhale was ragged, a testament to the intensity of our shared emotions. "Did I do something?" she queried, her voice tinged with concern.

Shaking my head, I struggled to find the right words. Though I harbored no affection for Stephanie, though I am about to divorce her, the reality remains that I am still married to her. "I just want to hold you tight, Lily," I confessed, my voice laced with vulnerability.

Licking her lips nervously, she blinked rapidly as she gathered her thoughts, her hands tenderly cupping my cheeks. "What happened today, Ryan? Angelo mentioned something about the Waper family," she probed gently, her eyes searching mine for answers.

Shaking my head, I gently took Lily's hand in mine and guided her towards the bed. "I don't want to talk about Stephanie or her family tonight," I murmured softly. "We can discuss them tomorrow. Right now, I just want to fall asleep holding you."

Nodding understandingly, Lily followed my lead as we settled onto the bed. She pulled the duvet over us, covering our bodies in its warmth. "Have you eaten dinner?" she inquired, her concern evident in her voice.

"Yes, I've had something for dinner," I replied, a teasing glint in my eyes. "Your kiss."

Lily scoffed at my playful remark, but a smile tugged at the corners of her lips. "You're incorrigible, Ryan," she chided affectionately. "But seriously, are you hungry?"

Chuckling softly, I shook my head. "I'm not really hungry, Lily. All I want right now is to hold you close."

Nodding in understanding, Lily reached up and planted a tender kiss on my cheek. "I don't know what happened today, Ryan, but no matter how tired or worried you are, always reach out to me or answer my calls. I was really worried today."

"I'm sorry," I apologized sincerely, my heart heavy with regret. "I just had a lot of things to handle, which is why I didn't take your call. But I promise it won't happen again."

Lily nodded, her expression softening with forgiveness. "Alright," she agreed gently. "Let's go to sleep for now. Tomorrow, we'll tackle our problems together."

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**With** a sense of relief washing over me, I pulled her close, wrapping my **arms** around her as we settled **into** the comforting embrace of sleep, knowing that together, we could face whatever challenges lay ahead

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## Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by Adminh, ?

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RYAN

Before Lily stirred from her slumber, I had already slipped out of bed, seen to the children's morning routine, and instructed the staff to allow me to prepare breakfast alongside them.

As Lily descended the stairs, radiant in her simple yet stunning summer dress, a warm smile graced her lips upon meeting my gaze. "Good morning," she greeted cheerfully. Not one to shy away from public displays of affection, I pulled her into a kiss, causing her cheeks to flush with color. "Good morning to you too, my love," I replied with a playful grin. "You look absolutely lovely and you smell nice."

Her blush deepened as she chuckled softly. "That's because I just showered," she explained, making her way to the dining table to inspect the spread of food. "Did you prepare all of this?" she inquired, turning to look at me.

I nodded proudly, pulling out a chair for her. "The kids and I pitched in," I confirmed.

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Chuckling, Lily made her way over to the boys, who were more interested in devouring the food than greeting her properly. Nonetheless, she leaned in to kiss each of their cheeks affectionately. "Thank you for helping Daddy fix breakfast," she praised them warmly.

Liam's nose wrinkled in manner that indicated he was about to share something amusing. "He burnt the food two times," he declared matter-of-factly, earning a chuckle from Lily. "He was supposed to keep stirring it, but he didn't."

Lily's eyes sparkled with amusement as she turned to me, a teasing smile playing on

her lips. "Really?" she quipped, her tone light. "Well, thank goodness he didn't burn down the whole house."

Scoffing good-naturedly, I took my place beside her at the table. "I was just a tad distracted," I admitted, offering her a sheepish grin. "I was mostly on the phone with Angelo."

Lily's fork paused mid-air as she processed my revelation, her gaze meeting mine with a mixture of curiosity and concern. "What did you and Angelo discuss?" she inquired softly, her tone tinged with a hint of apprehension. "You still don't want to

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talk about it?"

Taking a deep breath, I decided it was time to open up to her. "I'm in the process of divorcing Stephanie," I confessed, watching her closely for any reaction. She remained impassive as I continued. "I discovered that she was never actually pregnant."

A furrow formed between her brows as confusion clouded her features. "What do you mean she was never pregnant?" she pressed, her grip tightening around the fork.

Sensing her growing unease, I reached across the table to take her hand in mine, offering what comfort I could. "Stephanie lied about being pregnant, Lily," I explained gently. "She's infertile."

As I recounted everything I had learned about Waper's deceitful actions and my plans to expose him.

Waper needed to be held accountable for his deception. After all, he no longer held any power over me, so why should I refrain from seeking justice?

"What do you think about taking a vacation?" I proposed to Lily, eager to shift our focus to something more positive. "Angelo is handling my divorce with Stephanie, you're not currently tied up with work, and the kids are on holiday. It seems like the perfect time to get away."

Lily's smile was genuine as she agreed. "Sure," she replied. "As upset as I am with Stephanie for deceiving me and making me carry the guilt of her false pregnancy, I'm grateful that it was just a lie. I can finally live with a clear conscience."

Determined to make the most of our newfound freedom, I wasted no time in making arrangements. Within two days, we were on our way to Cuba. The boys were very excited to travel that they chatted away all their energy while in the jet.

After a smooth journey, we finally arrived at our destination and checked into the short-term apartment I had booked for our stay. Bringing the nanny along was essential; this vacation was meant to be a break for Lily as well. She deserved some time to relax and unwind, away from the constant demands of parenting. Plus, I welcomed the chance to have her all to myself, even if just for a moment.

The first day was spent settling into our temporary abode and enjoying the comforts of home. But on the second day, we ventured out to explore the vibrant city. Liam, in particular, was brimming with excitement, eager to experience all

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the new sights and sounds.

Under the warm Cuban sun, I found myself reclining on a beach chair, a refreshing drink in hand, while Lily played with Ethan, Liam, and Noah in the sand. It was a precious moment of tranquility, something we hadn't experienced in far too long, largely due to my past mistakes. As the boys frolicked and giggled, their joyous laughter echoed against the backdrop of the ocean, filling me with a sense of contentment.

"Ryan, pass me the sunscreen, please," Lily called out, waving the bottle in my direction.

Chuckling, I reached for the sunscreen and tossed it over to her. "You know, I think the boys are having more fun burying each other than building sandcastles," I remarked, watching as Liam and Noah engaged in their sandy antics.

Lily grinned, squeezing sunscreen onto her palm. "Well, at least they're occupied. We might actually get a few minutes to ourselves."

As Lily applied sunscreen to the boys, Ethan's voice broke through the chatter, his excitement radiant. "Dad, can we go snorkeling later? I want to see the fishes!"

I tousled his sandy hair affectionately, a smile spreading across my face. "Of course, buddy. We'll go check out the coral reef after lunch."

Liam and Noah joined in, their enthusiasm contagious. "Yay, snorkeling!"

I glanced at Lily, who nodded in agreement. "Sounds like a plan. But first, let's grab some lunch. I'm starving"

We gathered our beach gear and made our way to a nearby beachside restaurant, the boys bounding ahead with boundless energy.

"Hey, Lily, do you think we should try some traditional Cuban dishes?" I suggested, perusing the menu.

Lily's eyes lit up with excitement. "Definitely! Let's go for the Ropa Vieja and some Cuban sandwiches."

As we settled into our seats and waited for our food, Ethan's curiosity got the better of him. Tugging at my sleeve, he asked, "Dad, why do they call it Ropa Vieja?"

I couldn't help but chuckle at his question, tousling his hair affectionately. "Well, buddy, legend has it that it translates to 'old clothes' because the shredded meat

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resembles tattered garments. But don't worry, it tastes much better than it sounds."

Liam and Noah exchanged amused glances before bursting into laughter. "Old clothes? That's hilarious!"

Our meals arrived, and we eagerly dug in, relishing the authentic flavors of Cuba.

Amidst mouthfuls of delicious food, we shared stories and jokes, basking in the joy of being together as a family.

With a playful glint in her eye, Lily turned to me as we finished our meal. "So, Ryan, any room left for dessert?"

I grinned, fully aware of her intentions. "Always. Let's treat ourselves to some Tres Leches cake before we head back to the beach."

With contented smiles on our faces, we indulged in every delectable bite of the rich dessert, relishing both the sweetness of the cake and the warmth of our shared moment together in Cuba.

As the sun began to dip below the horizon and the boys' energy waned, Noah and Ethan succumbed to exhaustion and drifted off to sleep. Lily and I took turns carrying them back to our accommodation, with the nanny keeping a close eye on Liam.

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Despite their sleepiness, we made sure to bathe them before tucking them into bed, their peaceful slumber a testament to the day's adventures and the excitement of our Cuban getaway.

After ensuring the boys were settled, Lily and I retreated to our bathroom to freshen up and change.

Lily who had intently left her phone at home picked it up and read through it. Her brows furrowed in concern as she scrolled through her phone, her expression growing troubled as she read something.

Noticing her unease, I moved closer and gently retrieved the phone from her grasp, my heart sinking as I read the ominous message from an unsaved number, signed off with Jake's name.

"I SEE YOU ARE ON A VACATION WITH RYAN. I AM GIVING YOU THE LAST CHANCE TO COME BACK TO ME, LILY, OR I WON'T BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR MY NEXT ACTION"

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A surge of protective anger coursed through me as I absorbed the threatening words. "I think it's time we dealt with him," I declared to Lily, already reaching for my own phone.

"I'll have someone at the station issue an arrest warrant, and we'll open a case against him before we return."

I glanced at Lily, concern etched into my features. "Are you okay with that?"

She nodded resolutely. "Yes, I can't wait to put all of this behind us."

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## Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by Adminh, ?

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RYAN

Five days in Cuba and I don't feel like leaving. I just want to extend our stay here and if after discussing it with Lily she agrees with it, I am making it happen.

Seated at the far end of the cinema, we watched a movie, a movie that Noah, chose. I know right? It was a fair game this morning, everyone threw in their names in a bowl, including the nanny and then Lily randomly picked out a name, and it happened to be Noah, so that was how he got to choose the movie.

I hate to admit it, but the movie isn't actually capturing my interest. Probably because I am not a movie person, or because it is an animation, either way, I am not into the movie, but I am grateful that I have this opportunity with them.

Pulling out my phone, I opened the message that Angelo had sent to me earlier while I was purchasing the ticket. Lily leaned her head on my shoulder, which prompted me to kiss her temple.

"I am feeling sleepy." She mumbled, fighting a yawn.

I guess I am not the only one who's not enjoying the movie. "If you want to sleep, then do, I will wake you up when the movie is over."

She chuckled. "That would break Noah's heart." She replied, "I would rather fight sleep than make that boy sad."

"Shh..." Liam chastised, "We are trying to watch a movie."

Right. Fighting another chuckle, I finally opened the message from Angelo.

THE DIVORCE HAS BEEN FINALIZED.

My heart leaped for joy. "FOR REAL? WHEN WAS IT FINALIZED?"

"EARLIER THIS AFTERNOON." He responded instantly. "CONGRATULATIONS BOSS MAN, I AM GLAD YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY TO HAPPINESS ONCE

MORE."

I am more than excited to be on that road. "THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORT ANGEL O, I REALLY DO APPRECIATE IT, WE WILL TALK ABOUT A RASIE WHEN I GET BACK."

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“YOU BETTER NOT TAKE THAT BACK LATER.” He responded and I chuckled, shoving the phone back into my pocket.

“What’s funny?” Lily asked, peering at me.

“I promised Angelo a raise and he made a funny reaction which made me laugh.” Intrtwingn our finger, I lifted it and planted a kiss right on it. Things are indeed falling into place.

Another thought crossed my mind and I pulled my phone out and texted Angelo again..“I WANT HER REMOVED FROM MY PROPERTY ASAP. I DO NOT WANT TO SEE HER IN ANY OF MY PROPERTY FOR ANY REASON.”

“SURE THING BOSS.”

“WHAT ABOUT REMOVING THEM AS AN ASSOCIATE, HOW FAR HAS MY FATHER GONE WITH THAT?”

“HE IS NOT DONE WITH IT YET, BUT HE IS MAKING PROGRESS.”

“ALRIGHT KEEP ME POSTED ON ANY CHANGES.”

“YES BOSS.”

I shoved the phone back, trying once again to focus, and this time when I really did focus, I understood what the amination was about. Lily however fell asleep along the line.

As the movie started rounding up, I woke her up and the first thing she did was snicker. Joining her, I laughed at her reaction to falling asleep. “You looked peaceful and I didn’t want to wake you up.”

Getting her head off my shoulder, she wiped her face with her hand. “I guess I needed that sleep.” We filed out of the theater.

“I am hungry,” Liam informed Lily who turned her gaze to me.

“Should we eat out or go back to the apartment.” She asked.

“Let’s eat out.” Going back to the apartment will mean us waiting for our order to arrive, besides I want to have someone decorate our bedroom. “You guys should go ahead to the car, I need to make a quick call.”

Lily looked at me curiously. "Everything is okay right?"

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Tmakhoot Tomm I shouldn't be making a fork call, but I can't just help it" ( kissed her forehead I will make this quick, I promise"

she and the nanny took the kids to the car hire I called the agency I rented the apartment from the pickup instantly. "Mic William

You need the master's bedroom decorated w think you can make that happen?

les, rose petals, and wine. You

Sure." He replied, "Give me your location and I will come get the keys"

We are heading out to eat, I will give you location when we find a suitable

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"Alright, sir" Disconnecting the call, I shoved the phone into my pocket and joined the rest of my family in the black SUV van that I rented too. \*\*\*\*\*

Eventually, we found a place to eat and I set the man the address and instructed him to call me when he got to the parking lot.

When he arrived, he did as instructed and excused myself to meet him and give him the key. However when I returned, Lily asked me who that was.

"Someone from the agency." I responded. this morning, so I called someone to fix it

noticed the kitchen tap was leaking

Oh.." she nodded before continuing her real

After eating, the next stop was to listen to some musicals which was of course my idea. The rest of the family wanted to go back to the apartment and rest, but I insisted we listen to some music to give the man some time to do what he had to

We had to remain there until I got a call from him, informing me that they were done with setting the whole thing up. Since it was already late, I suggested we have dinner out to which everyone agreed and after dinner, we all headed home.

The boys fell asleep on the way and as usual, each person got one of the boys to shower and put to bed. I had to hasten mine up because I wanted to enter our bedroom before Lily did.

After tucking Ethan in. I hurried down the hallway to our bedroom and thankfully. Lily wasn't there yet. I lighted the candle and grabbed the rose bouquet waiting for

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Eventually, the door opened and she walked in. She halted when she saw me, her eyes widening in awe as she took in the setting of the room.

Closing the distance between us, I handed her the flower bouquet which she accepted with a smile. "What are we celebrating?" she asked.

My hand circled her waist as I pulled her closer. "My divorce."

"You've finalized your divorce with Stephanie?" she breathed out and I nodded, Standing on her tiptoe, she pulled me into a hug. "I am so excited right now Ryan." She pulled back slightly only to place a kiss on my lips. "This is allowed now right?"

I chuckled. We have been kissing while I was still married to Stephanie. "This and much more."

Lifting her abruptly, she shrieked, followed by a giggle that followed.

Tonight, I am going to make love to my wife.

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## Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by Adminh, ?

## Chapter 114

JAKE

Limping to my apartment while humming to a song I literally just formed in my head within seconds, I came to a halt when I saw men in blue coats standing outside my door and perking around as if they lost something.

An upright citizen would have asked what was wrong, but I was no upright citizen, as a matter of fact, I am someone who runs in the opposite direction when I see the cops because I exist right now under a fake name, and if caught and arrested and if my real name is discovered, I won't be getting out anytime soon.

Hurrying away as fast as I could without getting caught, I went into a restaurant and headed straight for their restroom. While in there, I pulled out my phone and called Waper. It was of no use calling Stephanie right now, because I do not think she will be of much help to me right now, especially now that she is divorced from Ryan.

She got the real honey jar and she let it slip. How st\*\*\*d.

He didn't pick up at first and I kept calling until he answered, clearly annoyed at my persistent calling. "What the heck is your problem?!" he snapped. "I am currently dealing with a lot of s\*\*t, do you think I want to add you to the list?"

That's his business. "I don't care whether you want to add me to the list or not Waper, that's not going to stop me from calling."

He sighed, his lips smacking together. "What do you want?"

Perfect question. "I got back from a walk and found the cops around my house, peeking into my window."

"And?" he deadpanned.

"What do you mean by and?" I retorted. "the cops are searching for me." I stressed out just in case he missed it the first time. "they have no business searching for me."

"What am I supposed to do with this information?" he asked irritably, "it is not like I have the power to call the cops off, so why the heck are you calling me for this matter?!"

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"give me a place to hide," I stated firmly. "If the cops are chasing after me, then I need to run from them and if I need to run from them, I need a place to hide."

He scoffed. "Do I look like someone who hides criminals?" he asked flatly.

"And do I look like someone who will be going to jail alone?" I fired back at him. "You had better give me a place to hide Waper, because if I get caught, I will be questioned and if I get questioned, I will be forced to tell who killed Sophia."

Silence ensued, ear-deafening silence. "What is that supposed to mean?"

I scoffed. "You are a lawyer, I am sure you should be able to figure it out."

"Need I remind you that it was you who committed the murder?" he asked in a sharp tone. "You do realize you will be put away for murder."

Sophia isn't the only one I have killed Waper, and once the cops find out my real name, they will figure it out. Sophia will only be part of the reason I will go to jail, but you on the other hand, when I told them who gave me the directives to kill Sophia, you will be right behind me as I go to jail."

"Fine." H gritted out, "I will give you a place to hide." Not giving a f\*\*k about his obvious anger, I waited for him to continue. "Go to A&E boutique tell them the code FR44, and they will take you to the basement, remain there till I have something figured out or until I know what is going on."

"That wasn't so hard, was it?" disconnecting the call, I typed in the name of the boutique in Google Maps and followed its directions. It led me straight to the boutique and I told them the same thing Waper told me and just like he said, they led me to the basement, to a very furnished room.

Thanking them, I made my way to the bed to sleep away my time. \*\*\*\*\*

When I woke up, it was already five am the next day. I guess I was more tired than I had thought. Picking up my phone to scroll through the news, I was shocked when I saw that I was on the news.

Apparently, I am wanted. Not only am I wanted for impersonation, but the fact that I am a con artist who is wanted for murder in my hometown. How the f\*\*k did they even find out that my real name is Reff Idris.

Who would do me dirty like this? Someone must have alerted the cops about him or tipped them off for them to have come for me.

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My first thought was Waper. I have a very dirty secret about him, but then he won't want me to go to jail for the fear of being exposed too.

Sitting upright, I ran my finger through my hair in agitation as I dialed Waper's number. Of course, the murder f\*\*k\*r didn't pick.

Maybe he is the one behind this. I sent him a text. "PICK UP MY CALL MOTHER\*\*R BEFORE I SING LIKE A LITTLE F\*\*G BIRD!"

He called me back. "Reff Idris." He called out. "you have gotten yourself in a big mess that I don't even think I can help you out of."

"Did you do this?" I snapped at him. "did you set me up?"

"Have you lost your mind?" he bellowed, "do I look like a man who would set himself up?"

Don't blame me for not thinking straight right now, I thought I would have been able to get married to Lily, get hold of the managerial duties of the hospital, get my hand on the land document, sell whatever \*\*t I have to sell, pay my debt and be free from than b\*\*d and his gangster lifestyle, then move out of the country and live a simple life, but then here I am, hiding away in the basement.

"Listen to me," Waper spoke, drawing me out of my thoughts. "I am going to look into this and try to find out who sniffed you out after that is done, we can think of a way to handle the situation."

"Sure, do that and get back to me." I disconnected the call. When I find out who is on my tail, I am going to f\*\*k them up real back. I may not be able to do anything right now, but I know someone who can. \*

Two days later, after being fed through the worker in the boutique, I received a call from Waper. "Do you have any information for me?"

"Two people went to the school which the real Jake attended." He informed me, "a male and a female to be more and the female also visited the real family of Jake and even offered his mother money. The woman confirmed the picture of Lily to be the female, but I think you already know who the male is."

F\*\*g a\*\*h\*\*s!

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## Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by Adminh, ?

## Chapter 115

RYAN

Today, we decided to stay back at the apartment and finally make use of the pool, which had been lying unattended ever since we arrived. According to Lily, the boys knew how to swim, so I didn't have to worry too much about one of them jumping into the pool, though we still kept a vigilant eye on them.

My phone vibrated in my pocket, and I pulled it out, seeing that Detective Larry was calling. I swiped the receive button and, knowing this conversation would likely involve some colorful language, I got off the lounge chair and moved away from the kids.

"What the f\*\*k is this news I'm reading about Jake?" I hissed into the phone, trying to keep my voice low but failing to hide my irritation. Lily hadn't seen it yet. because she decided to turn off her phone for the rest of the trip, wanting to fully enjoy herself during this vacation.

She somehow believes that every time she turns on her phone, trouble finds her—specifically, trouble in the form of Jake.

"It seems someone tipped him off about our arrival," Detective Larry replied. "But I assure you, we will find him soon. This has escalated from a simple case of impersonation to that of a wanted murderer."

The thought of Jake being anywhere near Lily was chilling. "Who did he kill?" I asked, my mind racing with concern.

"That isn't something you need to worry about, sir. The murder isn't connected to you or Ms. Urch in any way," he assured me. "But rest assured, we are committed to finding him soon."

This situation was infuriating. "Keep me posted," I said, reaching to disconnect the call, but Larry stopped me.

"Just in case he reaches out to your wife in any way, do not hesitate to let us know immediately," he added.

"I will," I promised before ending the call, feeling the weight of the situation pressing down on me.

I scoffed. "For the sake of everyone involved, I hope he doesn't reach out to her, or

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you guys will be draing with two murder dates Disconnecting the call, I strolled Back to the poolside, trying to rein in my frustration.

1uy who had noticed my absence, handed the nanny the towel she was holding ared approached me. "Is everything okay?" she asked, sitting down next to me. "You bwek spent

I took a deep breath, my anger simmering beneath the surface. "They weren't able as ge Jake," I informed her, and her frown mirrored mine instantly. Reaching for her hand. I held it and squeezed gently. "Don't let that bother you. I'm sure they will get him in due time"

sy licked her lips nervously. "I hope so too. I would hate to live constantly looking over my shoulder." She turned her gaze back to the boys, who were happily splashing in the pool. "How crazy is it that I introduced a con artist into the lives of my children?"

Jake is more than a con artist; he's a murderer, but I thought it unwise to share that information with her right now.

"What do you say about coming down to New York with me after this vacation?" I suggested, watching her expression closely.

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Lily bit her lower lip, deliberately avoiding my gaze. "Why?" she asked, her voice tinged with suspicion. "Why do you want me in New York?" Finally, she met my eyes. "Just because I'm not working at the hospital at the moment doesn't mean you can get me to relocate."

She was misunderstanding my intentions. I'm not trying to get you to relocate, Lily. New York is my territory; it's a place where I can protect you better. Just come stay with me until Jake is caught and sent to jail, that's all."

Her eyes softened slightly, but she still looked hesitant. "Are you sure it's just about protection?"

I nodded earnestly. "Absolutely. Your safety and the safety of the kids are my top priority right now. New York is where I can ensure that best."

Lily sighed, glancing back at the boys playing in the pool. "Alright," she said softly. "For now, until Jake is caught."

I squeezed her hand, relieved. "Thank you. I promise you won't regret it."

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I couldn't have felt more relieved at that moment. "Thank you so much," I said, feeling the weight of potential arguments lift off my shoulders. If she had refused, I knew it would have led to a tense and exhausting debate.

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A week later, our vacation finally came to an end. As much as I loved spending time with my family, I needed to get back to work. The boys weren't eager to leave either, but when they heard that they would be going to New York to stay with me, their excitement was palpable.

Lily watched them with amusement as they danced around in circles, thrilled at the prospect of going to Daddy's house. "Sometimes, I think they love you more than they love me," she said with a playful smile.

I chuckled, shaking my head in disagreement. "I think it has more to do with the fact that they don't see me that often. They're always excited to spend time with me because it's a rare treat."

She nodded thoughtfully, still smiling as she watched the boys. "Maybe you're right. Either way, it's nice to see them so happy."

I put an arm around her shoulders and pulled her close. "It is. And they'll be even happier once we get settled in New York. We all will."

Lily leaned into me, sighing softly. "Let's hope so. I just want us to be safe and together."

"We will be," I assured her, kissing the top of her head. "We'll make sure of it."

She rolled her eyes, amusement flickering in them. "Whatever." We finally checked out and made our way to the private airport, where we boarded my jet that would take us back to New York.

Prior to the day we were supposed to return, I called Angelo, informing him to come pick

us up at the airport.

The moment we disembarked and walked out of the terminal, I sighed at the sight of the fleet of security cars undoubtedly waiting for us. Angelo stepped forward to greet the boys, and to my surprise, Liam recognized him right away, though the others had a bit of trouble,

"Welcome back, boss," he greeted me with a smile. I tapped his back lightly in

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acknowledgment. Angelo then turned his attention to Lily. "It is lovely to see you again, Ms. Urch."

Lily smiled warmly. "Thank you, Angelo. It's good to see you too."

Lily laughed before pulling him into a hug. "You've always referred to me as Lily, what's with the formality?"

We all got into the car, and Angelo drove us back to the manor. Just as I had instructed, the maids had already cleaned out the kids' room, turning the guestroom where Lily had slept before into a playroom for them.

"You'll be staying with me," I informed Lily as we entered the house. "We don't have to sleep in separate rooms anymore."

"I had no plans on doing that," she replied with a flirtatious smile.

"Sir?" Angelo called from downstairs. Turning, I faced him. "Can I please talk to you for a moment?"

"Sure," I replied, turning back to Lily. "I'll be right back." Following Angelo downstairs, we entered my office, and he made sure to close the door behind him. "What is it? Did something happen?" I asked, concern flickering in my mind.

He cleared his throat, his expression grave. "I didn't tell you earlier because this isn't the type of news one should hear while on vacation."

My brow arched in curiosity. "Is this about Jake? I already heard about it."

Angelo shook his head solemnly. "This is about Stephanie."

I felt a twinge of annoyance. Wasn't I done with that name and everything related to her? "What about her?" I asked, trying to sound nonchalant.

Angelo's voice was heavy with concern. "She tried to commit suicide," he replied, his words landing like a weight in the room. "Her mother found her in the bathtub, her wrist slit, with blood all over the place."

I felt a surge of frustration. Was I supposed to sympathize with them after all they'd done? "Send her a flower if you must," I replied dismissively, already making my way to the door. This conversation wasn't worth my time. "And let this be the last time you mention or discuss anything concerning that family in my presence."

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"Yes, sir," Angelo responded.

As I reached for my phone, its familiar beep interrupted the moment. I sighed, wondering why everyone couldn't just let me settle in. "What is it, Detective Rio?" I answered.

"I have some good news," he relayed eagerly.

"Which is?" I asked, my interest piqued.  
"We found Sophia's phone," he announced triumphantly.

## Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by Adminh, ?

Chapter 116

RYAN

"I need to be somewhere," I informed Lily the moment I stepped into the bedroom.

She looked up from the pile of clothes on the bed that she intended on hanging in the closet. "You just got back." She pointed out with a frown, "Shouldn't you at least take a shower, have something to eat, and change before leaving?"

Closing the space between us, I kissed her forehead. "I won't long, I promise. I just want to meet up with, a business associate real quick."

"Right." She returned to lining the clothes. "Just make sure to be safe."

"I will." Hesitating out of the house, I grabbed my keys from Angelo. He insisted he wanted to drive me, but I told him I could handle it just fine.

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Pulling over to the restaurant where I had agreed to meet Detective Rio. He waved me over the moment I walked in.

"you know I can lose my job if they find out that I have been feeding you confidential information."

"I pay you for each piece of information you share, much higher than what you earn in a month, so don't make it seem as if you are doing me a favor."

He laughed nervously. "I guess you are right." He jerked his head towards the waiting counter. "should we order coffee?"

"What do you have for me, Rio?" I did not leave Lily to share a cup of coffee with him."

"So the phone has been found," he revealed already known information and we found out that she called a number that day she was killed."

My eyes squinted. "And have you been able to find out who the person is?"

He shook his head. "the number she called was also registered under her name." I scoffed at the irritating plot twist. "however, she also sent a series of texts to someone and we think those texts actually gave us a hint on who she must have been calling."

Why didn't he just say this from the onset? "What was the text about and who do you think she sent it to?"

Rio picked up his phone. "I am going to forward it to you." Within seconds, my phone chimed with received text.

I picked it up and opened the message icon.

MARCH 11, 10:30 am

You promised you were going to get me out of here, why are you taking so long?

MARCH 20 12 am

I can't keep staying here Mr. Waper, please call me.

My eyes widened at Waper's name. Was he the one that killed her?

MARCH 31st 9:30 pm

My mum texted me just now and she said Mr. Williams knows my location, please come and get me out of here before his

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men get here.

MARCH 1st, 10 pm

Hahey get here before you do, I am telling them you were the dog who handed the stolen design to me

RECEIVER

Lam on

"It is obvious Mr. Waper was the last person she met before her entise"

Dropping the phone, I stared at the man before me. "So why argh's you getting him arrested for murder charges?"

"We will soon, and also the team wants to ask you some questions too since your name was mentioned in the chat" Fe revealed, "they will probably head over to your place today"

"My door is always open." I have nothing to hide. "Is that all you have for me?" I promised Lily I would be back quickly,

"That is all for now."

The moment those words left his lips, I stood up and left the calheria. On my way home, I made a detour to the florist shop and got a bouquet of roses for her.

Pulling over, I walked into the house and went in search of Lily. The staff told me that she was still in our bedroom. wondered if she had had dinner just yet.

and I

Grabbing the doorknob, I twisted it open and pushed the door ly jerked and quickly showed her phone behind her out of reflex. My eyes narrowed. "What are you hiding

"Are those flowers for me?" she asked me, standing to her feet.

"Don't change the topic." I warned, closing the distance between us, "why did you hide your phone the moment you heard the door open?"

She sighed and gradually outstretched her palm with her phone lying on it. "I just received a text from Jake."

My jaw clenched with instant anger, not directed at her, but at the lunatic who thinks he has the right to text her and to think he always texts with a new number.

I clicked on the text.

HOW DARE YOU AND THAT CRAZY BAT OF YOURS LOOK INTO MY PAST, HAVE ME REPORTED AND NOW HAVE ME HIDING AROUND THAT WAS A WRONG MOVE FOR YOU BOTH TO MAKE AND I AM GOING TO MAKE SURE YOU BOTH REGRET IT.

Cussing under my breath, I lifted my head in time to see the fear in Lily's eyes. She licked her lips. "He has killed someone before Ryan, what do you think he will do?"

Dropping the flower on the bed, I pulled her into a hug. "Don't let this message stress you, Lily, he is not going to do anything" I assured her, trying to subdue my fears. "he was just upset and scared. When one is scared, they try to do things. that will make him believe that he is still in charge of his situation"

Lily shook her head. "I don't have a good feeling about this Ryan She muttered.

Pulling back, I pressed a kiss to her forehead. "I am going to need you to trust me on this" I pleaded softly. "This was one of the reasons I told you and the kids to come with me to New York He can't be with us here, not when I am still breathing"

Exhaling heavily, she nodded. "I trust you, Ryan, heavens knows do

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15:59 Thu, Aug 1

Chapter 116

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The next day, I paid my father a visit to keep him updated on what was happening. It was better to have everyone on the lookout for Jake.

"I can't believe she trusted someone like him." Dad mused as he leaned back, contemplating the situation. "This is truly fucked up."

"It is difficult to identify a douchebag because it isn't written on foreheads." I stated, defending Lily's choice. "she dated me and I ended up being a double bag too."

My father chuckled at my words, finding humor in them while I didn't. Mum who has been paying attention in silence cleared her throat. "I want to see her."

My eyes narrowed in suspicion. "Why do you want to see her? haven't you done enough damage with your mouth?"

She licked her lips nervously. "I want to apologize," she muttered and I found it difficult to believe her. "I know I messed up and I am ready to make amends."

"She is being serious." Dad chimed in, "She has been talking about it for a while now, so just let her see the young lady."

Although still skeptical, I consented. "Fine, but I will have to talk to Lily about it. If she doesn't want to see her, I am not going to force her to."

# Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by Adminh, 101

## Chapter 117

LILY

I was taken aback when Ryan mentioned that his mother wanted *to* meet with me. The news hit me shockingly, causing me to freeze in disbelief. Setting aside the medical magazine I had been reading. I lifted my head to meet his gaze, my expression filled with surprise and skepticism.

"Your mother wants to do what?" I echoed incredulously, struggling to comprehend the sudden turn of events.

Ryan chuckled softly, his tone tinged with amusement. "I know, it's quite shocking," he admitted, rising from the sofa and moving closer to where I sat. "I was just as surprised when she expressed her desire to reconcile. It took my father's persuasion for me to even consider the possibility."

"Forgive me if I find her sudden display of remorse difficult to believe," I remarked dryly, my skepticism evident. The idea that the woman who had harbored such animosity towards me, even rejecting my very existence, now wanted to reconcile as if nothing had happened seemed utterly unbelievable.

"You don't have to go if you don't want to," Ryan rasped, taking my hand gently in his. His eyes were sincere, almost pleading. "You are not obligated to be nice to her just because she is my mother."

I rolled my eyes at his words. "So what? You want me to be the bad one who refused to make peace?" Shaking my head, I pulled my hand away from his grasp and picked up the magazine again, flipping through its pages with a touch of irritation. "Do you think this has to do with the fact that she's disappointed in her choices?"

Ryan shrugged nonchalantly as he plopped down on the bed beside me, placing his head on my thigh. "Disappointed in what choices? Hating you?"

I sighed. "That too is inclusive. But more specifically, do you think she's disappointed that the young lady she rooted for and thought was perfect for you ended up being a complete scam?"

He chuckled, a low sound that vibrated against my skin, tickling my stomach as he shifted to the right, his hand gently circling my waist. "I can imagine the disappointment," he said with a hint of amusement. "I think it could have contributed *to* the sudden change of mind."

“Fine, I will meet up with her,” I conceded, though my voice held a tinge of reluctance. “But if I’m taking the kids, then you’re coming with me. She isn’t as harsh with her words when you’re around.”

Ryan reached forward and cupped my cheek, his touch tender and reassuring. “I had no intention of letting you go alone,” he promised, his eyes locking with mine.

His phone pinged on the side of the bed, breaking our moment. I stretched, picked it up, and handed it to him, returning my attention to the magazine, though my mind was still partially occupied with thoughts of the impending meeting with his mother.

Ryan cleared his throat, a sound that instantly drew my attention back to him. “The police will be coming here tomorrow to ask me some questions regarding the murder of Sophia,” he said quietly, his tone carefully neutral.

A surge of fear gripped me, tightening my chest. “Are you getting arrested again?” I blurted out, my voice tinged with panic as I struggled to calm my racing heart. “I thought your name was already cleared.”

Ryan, noticing my fear, sat up and cupped my cheek with both hands. “I need you to calm down,” he implored, his voice soothing but firm. “No one is getting me arrested, and like you said, my name has been cleared.”

Ryan’s hand tightened on my cheek, his touch grounding me as he spoke with a reassuring calmness. “I am going to need you to calm down,” he implored gently. “No one is getting me arrested, and like you said, my name has been cleared.”

Reluctantly, I nodded, trying to quell the rising panic within me. “Then what are they questioning you about?” I asked.

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Thu, Aug

Chapter 117

“A new suspect was found, Ryan revealed, his voice grave. “And it’s Waper.”

Shock coursed through me, rendering me momentarily speechless. “What the heck did you just say?” I exclaimed, my mind struggling to process the unexpected revelation.

Ryan nodded solemnly. “He was the one that handed Sophia the stolen designs, and he was the one who sent her into hiding. According to Sophia’s last chat, Waper was the last person she met and chatted with before her demise.”

The pieces began to fall into place. "So what questions could they possibly have for you instead of going to arrest the culprit?" I asked, confusion filling my words as I struggled to comprehend the reasoning behind the police's actions.

"I don't know, but you can sit it out with us." He suggested, "I am sure they won't mind."

"Sure."

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The next day, we set out to meet Ryan's parents with the boys. When we arrived, the boys got down and looked around the house, none of them remembering that they have been here before, however, when the entrance door opened and Sarah Williams walked out.

The moment the boys laid their eyes on him, they took a step back. "I don't like her mum," Liam mumbled beside me.

I don't blame him though, I never liked the woman either. Bending down to their level, I pulled them closer. "Go say hello to her," I urged and they shook their heads, "I promise you, she is going to be nice this time."

They glanced at Ryan who gave them an encouraging nod with a smile. "Go on,"

Slowly, the children dragged their feet towards Sarah, with Ryan and I walking closely behind them. Halting in front of her, they blinked up at her, their expressions hesitant. Without warning, Sarah dropped to her knees and pulled them into a hug, her shoulders shaking.

I initially thought it was an act, a calculated display for sympathy. But when she started to cry, genuine tears streaming down her face, I was taken aback. I glanced at Ryan and saw the same shock mirrored in his eyes.

Standing up, Sarah elegantly wiped the tears from her cheeks and under her eyes. Then, she opened her arms wide towards me, an unspoken plea for reconciliation.

I stood my ground, refusing to take the first step. Too many times before, I had been the one to extend the olive branch, only to be met with disappointment and pain. This time, it was her turn to take that step forward.

She took the initiative, stepping closer with each deliberate stride until she wrapped me in a tight embrace. "I am so sorry for everything," she whispered softly into my ear. "If only I could turn back time, I would do it in a heartbeat."

Pulling back slightly, I returned her embrace with a warm smile. "We all make mistakes. The important thing is recognizing them and moving forward."

Her smile mirrored mine, a sign of mutual understanding and forgiveness. "Come on in, I've prepared plenty of food." Ryan couldn't resist injecting a bit of humor into the moment. "Aren't you going to give me a hug too?" he teased. Sarah rolled her eyes at him playfully before taking Noah and Ethan's hands. Liam, however, opted not to hold hers.

Together, we walked into the house, ready to put the past behind us and enjoy the meal Sarah had prepared.

Sarah had indeed prepared an array of dishes, but my attention shifted when I caught sight of Ryan's father. His presence brought a wave of discomfort, given his past treatment of my children. I needed to gauge where his loyalties lay now.

The old man rose from his seat and approached me with a smile. "It's lovely to see you again, Lily," he greeted warmly.

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## Chapter 17

Since when was it love to get me? I thought skeptically. I wish I could say the same, sir." I responded bluntly, not one to Sugarcoat my feelings

He chuckled, seemingly unfazed by my honesty. "How good are you at playing chess?" he asked out of the blue, catching me off guard. I glanced at Ryan, unsure of where this conversation was heading.

"Not so good" I admitted recalling the occasional games I used to play with Georgina in the past, although I had never been particularly skilled at it.

He chuckled lightly. Come to my office, and I will teach you how to play, he offered, his tone surprisingly congenial.

Still unsure of what to make of his sudden change in demeanor, I nodded hesitantly. He turned and headed back to the table. "Come on all of you. I'm starving he announced, inviting everyone to join him for the meal.

Leaning towards Ryan I couldn't help but voice my confusion. What was that?" I whispered, bewildered by his father's unexpected behavior.

Ryun chuckled softly, I think that was his way of extending an olive branch between you two he explained, his eyes winking with amusement.

It took every ounce of restraint for me not to scoff at the notion. An apology would have sufficed to call a truce, but this was Richard Wars we were dealing with. He would soon er walk into the jaws of death than utter a sincere apology.

Still holding onto Liam's hand, I guided him to the dining table, where I joined what could now be considered our extended family.

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## **Becoming Strangers Again**

Posted by **Adminh**, 93

Chapter 118

RYAN

Having my father make peace with Lily is surely going to make things much easier for me. When I want to propose to her, I will have fewer things to convince her about. No woman would want to face what she faced in the hands of me for the second time.

Pulling over at the parking lot, I received a call from the detective who had sent me a text earlier to inform me that they were coming over to my house to ask me a few questions also sent me another text to inform me that they were on their way to my house.

Shoving the phone into my pocket, we walked into the house and I informed the nanny to remain in the boy's room with them. I do not see the need to have the visitors see them, not when we have one, is surrounding us.

Lily changed into much more comfortable clothes before they arrived. Seated in the living room with Lily next to me, I held onto her hand.

The detective whose name I can't really remember glanced at her. "does she really have to be here?" he asked.

"Do you have a problem with her being here?" I answered his question with yet another question. "I am not a suspect, so this is not a criminal proceeding which means she can be here if he chooses to."

He lifted his hand in surrender, leaning forward. "I was just asking."

Lily cleared her throat. "can we get on with the questions, please? My kids are going to be needing their father soon and I do not want them to meet you guys."

The older man in their midst frowned. "You do realize we do not eat babies right?" he asked, astonished at the fact that Lily doesn't want them to meet the kids."

"Just get on with the question." I gritted out, trying so hard not to snap.

The man opened his notepad. "I am Detective Joe by the way and he is my associate, Detective Kellen."

Their names aren't important to me, I just want to get this over and done with. When I didn't respond, he continued with his statement. "we have just a few questions for you."

I nodded, silently telling him to go ahead. "what is your relationship with Mr. Waper?" he asked.

I frowned at his question. "I do not have any relationship with him at the moment, so your question should have been what was your relationship with Mr. Waper."

He waited for me to continue and I waited for him to correct himself. When it dawned on him that I wasn't going to say anything else, he scoffed before repeating himself. "what was your relationship with Mr. Waper?"

"He was a business associate. His law firm was our legal team, and then he turned my father-in-law which he isn't anymore and that is that."

He nodded and wrote down something on his tablet. "What happened between you two? I noticed you kept using was in your statement. How did you serve both business and personal relationships with him?"

"Don't you think that is a rather personal question?" Lily interjected.

Detective Kellen moved his gaze lazily her. "I understand that you are here trying to support Mr. Williams, but at the same time, let us do our jobs. It is being suspected that Mr. Waper killed someone because of Mr. Williams here, and we are trying to find out what really led to the act."

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Chapter 118

7 squeezed Lily's hand, silently telling her to stay calm.

"If you interrupt us again Ms. Which, we will have to tell you to leave"

She shrinks back into my embrace "I am sorry"

Kellen gave her a sharp nod before returning his attention as I asked earlier, what went wrong?"

I have no reason to protect Waper. "We found out about his personal problem which could be a problem for the company if it comes to light."

The man continued to inscribe. "And what problem is that?"

He has a gambling addiction that has buried him into debt that he won't be coming out of any time soon," I replied,

Letting go of Lily's hand, I leaned forward, deciding to let the cat out of the bag. He is going to jail anyway. "I do not know where Sophia's death falls in in all of these, but Waper wanted to scam me off my money to pay off his debt. I found out about it, cut him off business, divorced his daughter, and cut them totally off my life.

"Fraud." Detective Kellen pointed out, "It seems his list of charges keeps getting longer."

Curious, I arched a brow. "what is that supposed to mean? What other charges is he facing?"

tag invasion." He replied. "we dug it out while looking into him and his law firm." He turned to Lily, "Your ex-wife, does she have any connection with him?"

I nodded. "her ex-fiancee as you all know is a fraud and a murderer but at the same time, we found out that he was working with Japer too." I locked my lips, "maybe they were planning on scamming her too."

He chuckled. "Who would have thought that the man who is being envied by some men was actually broke." He pocketed his notepad. "that will be all for now. Please do well to keep your line open and accessible to us in case we need any more questions

"Sure." He stood to his feet and I followed suit, accepting his handshake, "I hope you all can handle this case quickly so my family can get back to their normal life routine."

"We will try our best sir, please do have a lovely evening." He gave Lily a sharp nod before walking out of the house with his associate closely behind him.

"That went well," Lily muttered standing to her feet. "I guess I was just being scared for nothing."

Tuning towards her, I pulled her in and placed a kiss on her forehead. "Didn't I tell you that this meeting wasn't a big deal?"

She chuckled. "Well pardon me for doubting, it is not every day that I or someone I know gets visited by the cops. No offense to them, but they never come with good news. They never come with news that you have won a lottery, it is either you are getting arrested or the news of someone's death."

I kissed him again, this time on the cheek. "I promise you love, this is going to be the last time." Grabbing her hand, I led her up the stairs. "what do you say about a hot shower together?"

Lily slapped my arm playfully. "How can you think of something so naughty after a tense moment?"

I shrugged. "I wasn't feeling tense." I didn't kill anyone nor did I commit any crime.

"Well, I was." She argued, "I literally sweated through my ass the whole time."

Laughing, I scooped her up and carried her up the stairs. "the more reason you should allow me to help you relax."

She giggled. "Yeah? So what do you have in mind?"

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600 Thu Aug 1

Chapter 118

G

"A whole bunch of naughty things"

## Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by Adminh, ?

Chapter 119

JAKE

I can't keep hiding for the rest of my life. It's glaringly evident that Waper no longer possesses the necessary means to facilitate my escape from this country. There's only one i

individual I can think of who holds the key to providing me with a fresh start, a new identity, and a life free from the shadow of imprisonment.

Pulling up my phone, I initiated the call to the next person in line who could potentially assist me in achieving my aspirations. The only way to persuading Ryan to comply with my requests lies in having either Lily or any of the bastards she bore for him on my side.

I dialed Veronica's number, fully aware that I had already fulfilled her desires. Now, it was her turn to reciprocate and grant me the assistance I sought.

Initially met with silence, I couldn't help but speculate that her failure to answer might be attributed to the multitude of phone numbers that I have, only one of which she had stored in her device.

We had a deal: I would orchestrate a scandal to remove Lily from her seat, and in return, she would ensure that it reached every damn blogger. Surprisingly, she delivered on her end of the bargain.

Now, it was time for her to honor the favor I had extended to her. If she didn't, I would be the one disseminating information to bloggers.

I persisted in calling her until she finally picked up. "If this is a spam call, I swear on everything I've worked for in my life, I will find you and make you regret it," she threatened sharply.

I couldn't help but chuckle. "Thankfully, it isn't a spam call," I replied softly, trying to diffuse the tension.

There was a pause on the other end of the line before she spoke again, her voice sharp with irritation. "And who the fuck is this?" she snapped. "Get straight to the point, or I will disconnect this call without a single ounce of remorse."

"Have you forgotten my voice so quickly, bitch?" I retorted, frustrated that she couldn't recognize me, especially after the countless orgasm encounters we'd shared. "This is Jake," I reminded her, disappointed by her lack of recognition.

When she inquired about what I wanted in return for helping her, I initially expressed a desire to have sex with her. And truth be told, I still harbored that desire, regardless of her age. However, a thought crossed my mind, and I decided to take precautionary measures by recording our sexual encounter—something Veronica was unaware of. "Do

you remember my voice now?" I challenged.

She scoffed dismissively. "I wonder why you're calling me," she gritted out. "We promised never to call each other after that night."

How ironic, considering she had called me three times since that night. "You called me three times after that night," I reminded her pointedly.

Veronica cleared her throat, clearly uneasy. "What do you want?" she asked, cutting straight to the point. "I assume you're calling for something."

"Lily," I remarked, cutting straight to the point.

"And what about her?" Veronica responded, her tone guarded..

"She's in New York right now," I informed her, knowing full well that going to New York to retrieve her was impossible without getting caught. "And I want her back in Canada."

"And how do you propose I do that?" she asked nonchalantly. "Last I heard, she's staying with her ex-husband, laying low and playing the role of wife. It's practically a dream come true for me. So, tell me, why should I disrupt that? For what? Your

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## Chapter 119

dick

"Your nudes, I corrected, and she fell silent. "This time around, Veronica, it isn't a request from my side, but a blackmail

"What nonsense are you spitting?" she bellowed angrily. "What are you doing with my nudes?"

11

"Nothing, really," I replied with a chuckle, trying to lighten the mood. "I never once jerked off to the video, so let's just say I kept it for situations like this."

Holding my fourth phone tightly, I sent the video to her. "That's a copy of the video to prove that I'm not bluffing. Once you're done watching it, send Lily down here, I intend, my finger hovering over the disconnect button.

"Wait!" she called out urgently, her voice betraying a sense of panic. "How am I supposed to do that?" she blurted out, her breaths coming in hurried gasps. "How am I supposed to get her to come to New York?"

"The hospital, I replied confidently. Bringing her here should be relatively easy. "Lily will never ignore a summons from the hospital, so have them send for her"

"And on what grounds, exactly?" she demanded, frustration evident in her tone. "You can't just issue a summons letter from the hospital without any legitimate reason"

"Then think of one I deadpanned, my voice tinged with frustration. I don't care what grounds you conjure up or what elaborate tale you spin to get her here. All that matters is that she arrives in Canada before the week draws to a close. Tick to emphasized. Endang the call. I tossed the phone onto the bed and sank back into the pillows

As I drifted into a full sleep, my mind raced with visions of a future where I could finally shake off the shackles of my past. If all goes according **to** plan. I'll emerge from **this** uncathed. Let my debts, vanish into **thin** air, adopt a new persona, and embark on a fresh chapter of my life

The following morning, I stirred from slumber to the persistent ringing of my phone—one of the many disposable devices I've amassed over the years. With teary, sleep-laden eyes, I fumbled for the device and clumsily brought it to my ear.

On the other end of *the* line was Wager—the only person **who** passes this particular number "Are you prepared to get me **out** from this predicament?" I quired fatly my exhaustion evident in my tone as I braced myself for the inevitable **conversation**

"Yes, I am getting you out of there," Wager responded, and my eyes snapped wide open.

Suddenly, I **was** fully awake. "Are you taking me out of the country?" I asked, **the** possibility sending a surge of adrenaline coursing through my veins

He scoffed in response. "Do I look like someone who has that much money?" he retorted, his tone dripping with sarcasm, a **reminder** of his financial struggles despite his outward appearance of wealth,

"Then where are you taking me? I inquired, my interest waning as I realized this conversation might not lead to the resolution I sought.

"Somewhere, anywhere that isn't your current location," he replied cryptically, his words **failing** to instill confidence or

reassurance

I considered disconnecting the call at that moment. "I don't trust the staff at that boutique not to give away your location," he added, his voice tinged with paranoia

Confusion clouded my thoughts. "I've been here for over two weeks. Why would they suddenly change their minds and hand me over to the authorities?" I asked, trying to make sense of his cryptic warnings

"Because there's an insane bounty on your head," Waper deadpanned, his words hitting me like a sucker punch. I nearly

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choked on my own spit—at the revelation. "I'm guessing you weren't aware, but it might interest you to know that there's a five hundred thousand dollar bounty on your head. If I were in those ladies' shoes, I'd seriously consider handing you over to the authorities."

Fury surged through me at the betrayal. "Fucking bastards," I muttered under my breath. "So how do you intend on getting me out of here?"

"There's a secret passage down the hallway," Waper informed me matter-of-factly. "You'll come across an old picture of my daughter Stephanie. It's not just for decoration. Lift it and open the ground beneath where it hangs. You'll find a staircase. Follow it down to a tunnel, and then follow that tunnel to the very end."

"And which turn am I supposed to take in the tunnel?" I pressed for more details, needing every piece of information to

ensure my escape.

"Take a right," Waper clarified. "When you reach the end, you'll encounter an old man who will genuinely help you."

"Sure," I replied, my mind already racing ahead to the next steps. I rose from my seat and began hastily packing the few belongings I had with me. "I'll call you once I reach my destination." With that, I disconnected the call.

Once I finished packing, I followed Waper's instructions, eager to put as much distance as possible between myself and the danger lurking behind every corner. I couldn't blame

e those women for considering turning me in for the hefty bounty. After all, I might have done the same in their shoes. I would have definitely done the same.

## Becoming Strangers Again

Posted by **Adminh**, 112

### Chapter 120

#### STEPHANIE

My eyes opened and as I stared at the white ceiling, I was reminded once more that I was saved, I was reminded that very soon, I was going to be stripped of my freedom, I was going to be forced to go with a man whose sight does nothing but repulse me.

Tears prickled my eyes before it rolled down my cheeks. How unlucky I am in this life, maybe in the next life, I won't be so unlucky, I won't be born into a family where the parents suck, where the parents are more bothered about saving their own heads.

Sitting up, I looked up and glanced around, taking notice of the **fact** that the very object that could be used to inflict harm was gone. Scoffing bitterly, I wiped my tears.

They must think I am crazy, the nurses must think I am that self-obsessed rich kid who thinks it is okay to attempt to take her life if her demands are not met.

Well, fuck them, because I am that child who would rather jump off the balcony and fall to my death than go with that old bastard.

The door opened and my mum walked in. She halted when she saw me sitting up and halted. "Steph?" she approached me slowly as though she was walking on eggshells. "how long have you been awake?"

"Long enough to be reminded that I am still a part of this earth." I retorted, glaring at her.

She took a seat beside me and took my hand in mine. "I can't believe you actually wanted to leave me."

Disgusted by her, I pulled my hand away from her grip. "What difference is it going to make? I am going to be leaving with that man soon just because Dad was crazy enough to take more money from him to gamble more."

I mean how stupid can he be? You lost money through gambling, and you borrowed more money to gamble, hoping to recover money from the gambling to pay back the money you lost through gambling.

“at least I get to see you and visit you sometimes.” She argued.

Tears rolled down as I glanced at my mother, hoping that she would take pity on me and get me out of there. “Take me away from here.” I pleaded. “Get me out of this country. I am sure they can hide me so that he won’t find me or maybe get the police involved so that can face a jail term for his crime while I get protection from the cops.

Shaking her head, she got off the sofa and joined me on the bed. “Let’s not talk about that right now.” She dared to suggest. “I have more important things to discuss with you.”

My jaw dropped with shock. “What can be more important than the fact that your only child is about to lose her freedom?”

Mum rolled her eyes. “Don’t be dramatic.” She chastised, “For a moment Steph don’t make everything about you. The man is wealthy and if you play your cards well, you can become a widow soonest and you will be free from the shackles of marriage with enough money in your name.”

Reaching forward, she cupped my cheek. “We did our best to **save** you, to get it out of this, but things didn’t go as planned, so here we are.”

More tears rolled down my cheeks. “what offense did I commit to get them as my parents? “Get out.”

She scoffed. “I am going to need you to listen to me Stephanie, after that, I will leave.” Ignoring her, I lay back on the bed, but that didn’t give her the hint that I wasn’t interested in whatever she wanted to say. “your dad is wanted for a murder and tax invasion case”

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My eyes snapped in her direction, my brows jerking in shock. “Since when is he wanted for murder?” Tax invasion I can understand, but murder is just too crazy.

“Since Today.” She replied, “You don’t need to know all the details because the little you know, the less involved you will be in the case.”

How...what is she even saying

“So someone tipped him off that he is being accused as the murderer in Sophia’s case and he is getting arrested this afternoon, so he is in hiding right now, hoping to leave the country soon.”

Why am I even surprised? I mean he planned on killing Lily and the kids. I guess she should be happy that my marriage with Ryan didn’t work out or she would have been buried six feet below with her three kids by now. “Why are you telling me all this?”

“The cops might ask you some questions, I just wanted you to be prepared. Be careful with the answer you give them and if they ask you when last you saw him, tell them you saw him last night.”

I frowned. “I have never seen Dad since I got admitted here.” I argued, “There is no way I am lying to him.” he is so not worth it.

“I am not asking you to lie for him, Stephanie, I am telling you that you will lie for your father.” She retorted. “I know he has not been the best father,”

“Nor have you,” I interjected.

She groaned, running her fingers through her hair, “don’t be a pain in the ass Stephanie,” she gritted out, “just do as you are

told.”

Slowly, I moved my head away from him, blinking to keep my emotions away. There is no need to cry in her presence, it is not going to change a thing. “Did he do it?” I asked quietly.

“Does it matter?” she asked and I scoffed, already getting my answer.

He did kill her. “Why?” I turned to face her again. “if I am going to lie and cover up for him, I need to know what happened. and why he had to kill her.”

She sighed. “It wasn’t the plan to kill her.”

Of course, she knew about his plan. I won’t be surprised if she was the one who advised him to carry on with the plan.

“The plan was to get Sophia to steal the plan of the YAEH group get you married to Ryan, make you conceive his baby then put him behind bars for theft and have you and your son run and manage his finances.”

Shit. This couple is really deranged. “So why kill her?”

“The stolen design Sophia submitted was produced faster than expected, and Ryan was going to find her, and finding her means her spilling the beans and your father couldn’t have that, so he had Jake do the needful.”

Jake? Is that what he had against my father? “so he thought it was okay to just take someone’s life because it was inconveniencing him?”

“Stephanie,” she tried reaching for my hand but I pushed her away. “I understand that you may hate us right now, but you need to do the right thing.”

“fine.” I spat bitterly, “I will fight his battles for him again while difference this time is that when he is done running, he won’t meet me here.

runs away from it like the fool that he is.” The only