

Taming A Billionaire

#Chapter 171 - One Hundred And Seventy-one: That Betrayal! - Read Taming A Billionaire Chapter 171 - One Hundred And Seventy-one: That Betrayal!

Chapter 171 - One Hundred And Seventy-one: That Betrayal!

Maya's point of view

It all happened too quickly for anyone to comprehend but we all saw the water bottle fly straight to Kim's face.

Pandemonium broke out.

Grandmother didn't know what to do or who to comfort: me that was bleeding through the stomach with my face scrunched or Kimberly who had a hand to the side of her eye and howling in pain.

"You child, what have you done?!" Grandmother cried out in despair, still at a crossroads on who to help.

There was a bewildered look on her face as she stared at the kid who hurt Kim but sat expressionless with her arms folded across her chest.

"I'm sorry grandmother but you must have suffered a lot," Isabella said, confusing granny further.

"Huh?"

"At such an age, you still have to deal with that witch"

"Who are you calling a witch?" She asked.

"The ugly one with that witchy grey eyes" Isabella as matter of fact pointed in the direction of Kimberly.

It was surprising to me, the proud Kim I know would have wolf out on the kid but since she was bearing the pain in good faith, it could only mean one thing - she knew who Isabella was.

Kimberly knew she couldn't speak against her nor touch a strand on Isabella's head unless she wanted to die an early death.

"She has witchy eyes?" Grandma was astounded, "Is that why you threw that at her because you don't like her eyes?"

Isabella was surprisingly polite to my grandmother, "Of course not Maya's granny" she said with gestures and all, "I might enjoy torturing people but some specimens don't deserve to get my strength and time wasted on them which was why I threw it.

Isabella went on, "Moreover, I wouldn't have wasted my energy by throwing that if she hadn't hurt Maya"

"Hurt Maya?"

Isabella facepalmed and I knew that was the time for her to spit fire from her mouth so I tried to intervene but Isabella was faster.

"Grandma, I get that all your senses are failing with age but I bet some of your brains cells are smart enough to figure out that Maya started bleeding after that witch hugged her"

I scratched the back of my head. Well, that one was manageable, I guess?

Grandmother frowned, "What are you trying to say?"

"Kimberly hurt me, " I told her this time.

"It was not intentional," Kim was quick to protest, "I was just trying to pull out of the hug when my elbow mistakenly hit her"

"Really?" Isabella scoffed, "Your frail Granny who cannot walk without shaking hugged Maya and left yet nothing happened to her but when it comes to your turn, your healthy arm deteriorates and deviates from its position?" She attacked Kim who opened and closed her mouth helplessly, unable to defend herself.

"Moreover" I supported Isabella, "You came to visit a patient, the first thing that should cross your mind is my safety yet you were careless and hurt me - it shows my place in your heart ."

Grandma turned her fierce gaze on Kim, " Is that true?!" She queried, stomping her walking staff on the ground angrily.

"Grandma, it's a misunderstanding. Maya has always held a grudge against me, she's purposely turning you against me" came her pathetic excuse.

I bet if she wasn't scared of Isabella, she would have tagged the little girl as my accomplice. Tsk tsk, what a great master planner.

Kim must have schemed this meticulously on her way here, she just never knew Isabella would be here nor speak out on what she did.

"Just because I'm old, you take me as a stupid woman, right?" Grandma's features grew dark while she slowly approached Kimberly whose blood had drained from her face.

"Of course not," she answered, putting on a nervous laugh and taking a few steps back.

In reality, Grandma had no actual power in Kim's household but there has been this innate fear and respect imprinted in us from birth that we showed her.

"Get out! "

"Grandma, I never -"

"I said get out !" She boomed, motioning to the door.

In haste to pick her purse from my bed, Kim's face was revealed to us and I couldn't help but gasp at the black eye Isabella gave her.

"I don't want to see you back here!"

"Don't bother yourself, I'm not returning!" She glowered at granny, striding out of my room.

"Notwithstanding you did it out of defense but you're not to hurt anyone ever again " I scolded Isabella sternly, making sure granny heard it while she was dealing with Kim.

"Except that one" I whispered to her, a smirk tugging my lips to the side and lifted my hand as Isabella noiselessly gave me a hi-five.

But when granny turned around, I became mean with her, "You child, do you hear me?!"

I knocked her on the head yet winked at her from the corner of my eyes alongside a secret thumb up.

"Ouch" Isabella cried out in pain, rubbing that painful spot however winked back, signaling she perfectly understood what I was doing.

"Don't beat the child too much. If I had punished you that way, would you have grown this tall?" Grandma scolded me for disciplining Isabella.

Hurhurhur, look at this woman! I couldn't even count the numerous times she punished me during my childhood and to crown it all, I was quite naughty.

Spanking, pulling my ear, pinching, scolding, doing squats and sit-ups, solving maths problems- I hate maths, kneeling, and extra chores; I suffered in her hand - literally.

But she did those with love and knew the limit she should go. She never once abused me as my mother did.

"Grandma" Isabella's character did a three-sixty degree turn leaving me dumbfounded. It was as if I was seeing an upgraded version of Anabelle.

She pouted and let three drops of tears fall down her face, hugging my granny around the waist with an aggrieved expression.

"I can't believe you have the nerve to hurt such a cute, poor child " Granny lifted her walking stick to beat me but I quickly pointed to my soaked gown.

"Granny, I'm a patient!"

And what the f*ck! What a cute child! Had she forgotten the cute child called her other granddaughter a witch minutes ago?

"Where are those doctors, they should come and do something about that" That old woman referred to my reopened wound yet her attention was fixed on Isabella.

Great, I forget grandma loved children more than her own life else she wouldn't be bugging me to give her grandchildren at my age.

Nose wrinkled in displeasure, I reluctantly called for assistance through the intercom and they responded immediately - perks of being in a VIP room.

The doctor stitched me up with a warning not to go beyond my temporal limit.

Yeah, grandma didn't tell him someone ripped my wounds open but lied that I tried to lift something heavy.

Truth be told, I sensed my wound ripped open that time Adam pressed his hand into my side, it hurt like a bitch then. Kim was just unlucky enough to carry the brunt of the blame.

"Granny, feed me," Isabella demanded.

Yeah, that was the latest happening. Isabella has been sabotaging my granny's attention for the past hour.

"Of course my little girl, who would resist this cute face of yours" she pinched her cheeks playfully and? Isabella giggled.

A scene that freaked me out. Just a close glance and one could see the goosebumps appearing on my arms.

It was like watching Anabelle but with Isabella's face as she and my granny communed. This little devil imitated Anabelle's mannerisms so much I? couldn't spot any difference.

That was so creepy. I tried to imagine if Isabella was my doppelganger, she would imitate me flawlessly.

Gosh, I was spooked out.

"Aaah, open your mouth" Grandma signaled her.

"Aaah" Isabella widened her mouth, granting the spoon access.

She chewed on the fried rice with her mouth whining and her eyes rolled back to show how much she enjoyed the food.

"Is it sweet?" Granny asked with anticipation.

Isabella smiled sheepishly at her with a thumbs up, "Your food is the best, granny"

"What a cute child" this old woman smiled back and tousled the hair of that little imp who didn't seem to mind.

My jaw dropped. That betrayer!

Each time I tousled her hair, Isabella would glare at me but here she was stretching her face to the point I noticed she has dimples for the first time.

I looked down at my food served on a tray, resting on top of my laps and waiting to be eaten.

For some reason, it suddenly looked unappealing to me instead, I wanted the one Isabella was eating even though it was the same food.

I was still contemplating the food when Eden returned as promised.

"Granny, you came" Eden switched on his flattering skills, "I now see where Maya got her beauty from"

"You're not bad yourself young man" Granny laughed, "You must be Maya's friend"

"Yes, I am "

"Alright you two have fun, don't mind me," she said, "As you can see, I'm having the time of my life with this little angel here"

"Yeah, it's obvious" Eden was as shocked as I was the first time. No one could blame him, Isabella being this humble and totally unlike her? That was unbelievable!

He looked away with difficulty, finally settling his attention on me, and was quite taken aback to see my sulky face.

He frowned, "What's wrong?"

"Feed me"

Chapter 172 - One Hundred And Seventy-two: The New Family Head

Niklaus' point of view

I was sorry yet was not sorry.

I didn't hit women but Tina made me break that tradition today. Women were delicate beings and meant to be protected not abused but some just bring the punishment on themselves.

I was just so angry and lost it; my hand moved of its own volition and swapped her across the face. I was embarrassed not because I hit her cause she deserved it - I wasn't going to sit down and watch Maya get abused mentally and emotionally-? but the kids were watching.

That was not a good example to set, especially to Isabella who was quick on picking all my negative traits. Moreover, I was trying to be a good father to her so I didn't want to be known as the father who wouldn't hesitate to hit women when angered.

But the thought of Maya made me angrier - the thought of her already giving up on me. This was selfish but I didn't want her to date anyone else until I'm done dealing with Tina.

Heck, who was I kidding here? Even if I dealt with Tina, there was still my father Adam who for reasons known to him was blunt in showing his dislike for Maya- not to talk of Sakuzi.

God! Why was everyone against me and Maya? What did we do to deserve this? At this rate, it'll take me years to sort this out before thinking of settling down with her.

These were the thoughts that surged in my head as I threw blows at the punching bag before me.

Knowing I'll just end up transferring my aggression on innocent workers if I return to the office, I came back home to blow off steam in my gym.

My jabs grew fiercer and harder as I thought over my losses this past month.

Lately, aside from my improved relationship with my daughter - which Maya made possible- I couldn't find a reason to smile.

I had all the resources and money I could ever wish for but still had no happiness. I could get anything I wanted, go to any place I desired, fakers and bootlickers surrounded me, people cowered at my sight yet I couldn't find peace - I was not fulfilled.

Something was still missing from my life.

The sudden ringing of my phone interrupted the flow of my thoughts - yeah, I finally recovered it from my mischievous daughter.

"Hello" I picked up and listened to the message from the other line.

"Thank you" I ended the call and returned the phone to the pocket of my pants sewn at the side

Taking off the boxing gloves, I wiped away the sweat on my forehead and left the gym, proceeding to the direction of my room for a quick bath.

I was just notified that the old man was back and I needed to have a down to earth discussion with him. After I met him in Maya's room earlier, I was unsettled and had a feeling he was responsible for her sudden change in character.

My father must have threatened or said something that made Maya have a change of heart towards me. We've broken up? Yes, but we were still on talking terms and not the cold and dismissive attitude she used on me earlier.

Once done with the showers, I didn't put much thought into dressing up since I practically look good in anything. so I dressed up in jeans and a casual shirt and found my way out of the house.

Isabella was still not home but I was not bothered since she was with Maya. I knew she was in safe hands and good company unlike my ex-wife Kay.

Micheal drove me to Adam's place, the drive was so quiet it felt like a graveyard.

He had put on the radio earlier but I was against it, I needed to think so I preferred absolute tranquility - nothing to distract my mind from its train of thoughts.

By the time we arrived at my destination, I noticed the old man had made twice as much the security at his place. It appears Gerald's unpredicted attack has made everyone security conscious.

Gerard was dead, murdered by the one and only Sakuzi who didn't hesitate to use that opportunity to get rid of his enemy - our enemy since everyone in the mafia world was so grateful he was gone, no one liked him.

The foolish man was so obsessed with having revenge on us that he wasn't smart enough to put on his guard.

Since Sakuzi had the ledger, Gerard believed both were in the same boat and wouldn't harm him. So he focused on hurting us who had subdued him for so long that he forgot that Sakuzi was a patient lion.

But Sakuzi was smart, he knew if Gerard could rise against us just because the ledger moved out of our possession, what's the assurance Gerard wouldn't turn against him in the future once he loses the ledger too.

It was better destroying the enemy now he was still a paper tiger than when he grew actual claws.

So he took out the conceited Gerard who had set out with few of his men that day with no clue that danger was around the corner; he came to hunt a prey and was hunted instead.

"You should be at the office at a time like this" Adam said as soon as I stepped into his study - the same room he hit me weeks ago.

It was hard to catch this man since he was in charge of our ammunition company and had to confirm the weapons were in good working condition to prevent accidents from happening - a responsibility bestowed on every family head.

"What about you? The company must be doing so well since you have the time to visit Maya in the hospital" I replied with a sarcastic tone.

My comment caused him to lift his head from the paperwork he was going through.

"I was bored, so I decided to pay Isabella's longest-lasting nanny who I heard had an accident a visit, what's wrong with that?" He said pointedly, hinting that Maya would always remain a nanny in his memory.

I neared his desk, towering over him but he wasn't intimidated; he looked relaxed and stoic.

"I know you did something to her"

"What do you mean by that?"

I growled, "Don't play games with me, father! You said something to Maya that made her turn out that way"

We stared hard into each other's eyes, a stare down that none of us was willing to back out from until he shook his head in disappointment.

"I'm so disappointed in you"

"Unfortunately, I stopped caring about what you thought about me when mom died"

I saw an unknown emotion flicker across his eyes but he was quick to resume his impassive features. My mom has always been a touchy spot between us.

My mom had died when I was pretty young from cancer of the lungs leaving Emily and me behind. Adam has always been a strict man, but his hardness came to light after her death.

Rumors plus the little fact I captured from my childhood revealed that Adam had loved my mother with all his heart even though her attention was on someone else - she loved another person who I had no clue about.

Yet, Adam did everything possible to marry her hoping that once they were husband and wife, she would eventually love him back but that didn't happen.

Yes, they lived as husband and wife, he treated her and they even performed their conjugal rights blissfully yet he never owned that heart.

Mother tried to hide it but Adam still found out she craved for the one she loved. He continuously lavished gifts and did everything to keep her mind off him but none of it seemed to work.

They argued sometimes but she didn't speak back, only kept silent and allowed him to vent his feelings until he found out that she was not affected by it.

Slowly Mother withered away until she escaped this reality through death when she could have fought hard for them - for her kids.

After her death, the once loving father they knew disappeared forever. Love became a fairytale he despised to hear.

"My decision is final" he dismissed, going back to his work.

"Why Tina? With or without her, the company would do well. In fact, she's the one gaining from us "

"And Maya didn't gain from you?" He challenged

I licked my lower lips, my blood aching with the need to describe what a blessing Maya was to me.

"Maya is different and to be frank, she did me a lot of -"

"You need a proper woman from a respectable home, who has the power to back you up when you're down" Adam cut me off before I could finish.

"I don't need her backup"

"And you need Maya's?" His intent gaze bore into mine, "Tell me what she can offer you? Sex? Power? Money? Which of those can't Tina give you?"

"My heart! Maya has my heart!" I yelled.

I watched his heart narrow into slits, "You useless son!"

Adams's face distorted into anger and he stood abruptly, picked up the golf club that was always beside his desk, and tried to hit me with it again.

But I took the club from his grip and flung it halfway across the room much to his surprise.

He punched me in the nose without warning and while I was recovering, pulled out the gun from one of the drawers, hitting me on the head with its butt.

But I pulled out my gun from the waistband of my jeans and pointed it at him, pulled the trigger, and fired.

The bullet escaped through the space between his neck and hit the glass display case where he kept all of his awards, the glass shattering to pieces.

"I'm no longer that ten years old you push around the way you want!" I said in an outburst.

I purposely missed but the threat was obvious - the next time would be a perfect shot. I was only going easy on him because he was my father but my patience was slowly thinning.

"I fulfilled my promise by staying away from Maya, but touch a strand on her again and I wouldn't hesitate to fight you head-on" I warned him straightforwardly.

He chuckled, "You're going to fight me? With what?"

" I'm the new family head"

"You were chosen and have not been inaugurated, so I remain the one in power" Adam pointed out.

And he was right, I was just chosen for the new family head role but my father's regime was not over and still required two years before he should step down and hand it over to me.

"So perhaps, before you declare a war, know your capability," My father said triumphantly.

Father underestimated me, it was? time to reinforce.

Chapter 173 - One Hundred And Seventy-three: His Heart Missed A Beat

Eden's point of view

I must be going crazy.

Just now I found myself smiling just because I remembered Maya was sad to see me go, what the f*ck.

This was slowly getting out of hand, and why was the thought of Maya making my heart beat so fast.

My hands clasped my cheeks and I slapped myself hard on the face, "Snap out of this Eden!"

Something was wrong with me, I was going mental else why would I be laughing to myself when clearly, no one amused me.

Besides, all of this nonsense would have ended if I had just gotten her to bed that night. By now, Maya would have been wrapped around my finger and not the other way around.

But then I went soft on her, aborting the whole plan and now I have to find another way to get her to be mine without being obvious or forceful.

The door to my office was pulled open and Liam, my shadow guard strode in with a serious face. The look on his face told me he had something important to relay to me.

Closing the documents on my desk I asked, "What is it?" eager to hear what he had to say.

"I've found him"

My brows furrowed in confusion with my intense gaze focused on him,? "Found who?"

"The driver"

I stood from my seat abruptly, a look of shock mixed with disbelief flashing across my face, "Where is he?"

"Just as we thought, he has been abroad all this while," Liam narrated, placing pictures of a man wearing a hoodie with dark clothes on my desk.

I took one, scrutinizing the face of the man who caused the misery of my father Eric. From the picture, it was obvious he had no idea he had been captured on a security camera since his face was not hidden.

In the other pictures, he had his face hidden with a hoodie and cap. He was quite vigilant judging from the way he adjusted the cap carefully to conceal his face.

"Though we don't know his exact location, with this we can track him down by checking out places he has frequented the past days since we now know his identity"

"You're right" I agreed with Liam, eyes still fixed on the photos.

"We need your orders to proceed with the plan since he's very smart and might figure out we are onto him,"

I smirked, " You're not going to do anything"

"Huh?" Liam was bewildered, "What do you mean we're not going to do anything?"

"Exactly"

"But you've been looking for him for years and now you have the golden opportunity, you're going to throw it away just like that ?"

"We must be careful not to alert the enemy," I told him.

And by the enemy, I meant Adam.

After my father Eric had that accident, the culprit was found and jailed but my father could not be selected as the new family head due to his disability - the role needed someone capable and on his feet. So Adam was elected and inaugurated as the new family head instead of my father.

I grew up hearing the story of my father's sacrifice for his elder brother but I always had a feeling the incident was a setup.

So I did my secret investigation and found out the culprit held in jail was a scapegoat. He was not the man who caused the accident and was merely used to accomplish an already laid out plan.

Though Adam was the eldest and the rightful heir to the title, no one chose him - not even his father, my grandfather - because he was too ambitious.

Adam would, no scratch that, must get anything he wanted even to the point of hurting someone - he just doesn't care as long as he wins.

So all hands pointed to my father Eric instead, choosing him for the new family head and casting Adam aside.

Compared to Adam, my father Eric was more compassionate though he could be really mean.

So when the accident occurred, everyone suspected Adam since he was the only one who would benefit from it.

However, there was no evidence to support the accusation, so all mouths shut.

As the new family head, he held authority and power so no one wanted to get on his bad side, and judging from Adam's horrid nature, he would not hesitate to shut them up.

"You're going to give up on him like that after so many years of searching?" Liam asked in disbelief.

The look on his face told me he wouldn't hesitate to smack me across the face if he could do so.

"Who said anything about giving up?" I asked Liam.

His head whipped up surprised, "What?"

"Find a gang and affiliate with them, let them purposely cause trouble for him "

"And in the guise of chasing him down, we could always have our eyes on him without the fool knowing our true intentions until it's time to strike" Liam finalized.

"Bingo" I acquiesced.

Awe glinted in Liam's eyes, "You're truly worthy to be the next family head" he praised me.

"Really?" I was surprised.

"Yes sir, you have the brain, charisma, and looks, what more could they ask for?"

"Exactly, what more could they ask for?" I mumbled absentmindedly under my breath.

"Sir, any other request"

My thoughts moved to Maya instantly, perhaps I should get her a bouquet of roses?

Wait a minute, what for? Get well soon roses?

Gosh, this was so lame. I'll just seduce her my way with the cute smiles and handsome face.

I glanced up at Liam, "No nothing, you can leave"

"Sure" he bowed slightly and left.

Once he was out of the office, I let out a quick sigh. Why was Maya slipping into every one of my thoughts?

This was bad, it seems today I have to activate level two of my seduction handbook.

Step two: Keep her on tenterhooks.

After spending enough time with Maya tonight, I'll treat her like she was the only precious thing in the world.

After that, I would disappear for two days: during that period, there would be no calling, texting, or checking up on her in the hospital. It would be like I abandoned her completely which would elicit two results.

First: Maya would call me which means I was slowly gaining a place in her heart already without her realizing it.

Secondly: She would not call me which means I don't mean much to her - yet.

If the second one comes to play, I'll make sure to unite with her after two days.

When she asks the reason for my abrupt disappearance, I would reply that it was a personal matter.

No matter how much she hassles me for an answer, I'll still claim it's a personal issue.

Then I would treat her specially again but this time, disappear for three whole days.

This time, even if Maya is a vampire and has a dead heart, there was no way on earth she wouldn't be moved enough to call me.

And from there level three would be activated but that would be after level two was accomplished.

My phone rang, rousing me from my train of thought but I picked it up since it was coming from my housekeeper and had to involve Annabelle.

"Hello" I listened attentively to the message from the other side which caused me to frown when I heard the rest of the news.

"Send her home at once" I ordered her, ending the call.

It appears that Isabella had once again tried one of her tricks and incited my daughter into joining her. That girl was a bad influence on my kid but Anabelle doesn't listen- she adheres to the girl like glue.

Once I was done with the pile of paperwork and settling some disputes with my artist, I headed back to the hospital to begin my plan.

But I was surprised to see Maya's grandmother when I arrived. Though we haven't met officially, it wasn't hard to recognize the woman after going through Maya's background.

Her arrival was not that shocking since she was the only one on good terms with Maya.

"Granny, you came" I welcomed her, switching on my flattery skills, "I now see where Maya got her beauty from"

"You're not bad yourself young man" the woman laughed, straining her wrinkled face
"You must be Maya's friend"

"Yes, I am," I said innocently, knowing Maya would not be delighted if I suggested more to our relationship.

"You can call me Eden" I introduced myself.

"Sounds like a good name" she chuckled, after assessing me with her thorough gaze.

"Alright you two have fun, don't mind me," she said, "As you can see, I'm having the time of my life with this little angel here"

"Yeah, it's obvious," I said, disbelief washing over me.

It was hard to believe that it was Niklaus' brat aka respecter of no man, that was sitting on the couch like an obedient dolphin and getting fed by Maya's granny.

That girl disliked strangers touching her talk more feeding her, was the world coming to an end?

I shivered, this was the most shocking scene in my life- aside from the time Maya nearly committed suicide.

I tore my gaze from the girl, focusing on Maya but was surprised when I saw her saturnine look.

What now? Why were women's problems so numerous and complicated?

I grimaced, "What's wrong?"

She pouted "Feed me"

But that simple sentence made my heart miss a beat.

Chapter 174 - One Hundred And Seventy-four: Lets Get Married

Eden's point of view

But that simple sentence made my heart skip a beat.

Wait a minute, what the hell was going on here? I was supposed to be the one taking the approach in seducing her, not she enticing...well me?

"What's wrong with your hands, why can't you eat with it ?" I tactically refused.

Maya pouted but then the intentional clearing of the throat from granny left me confused, why was she pushing me into feeding her granddaughter?

I was the one supposed to take them by surprise not the opposite, why was my plan backfiring on me?

"Each time I try to lift my hands, it keeps affecting my chest which in turn hurts me"
Maya lied through her teeth.

Don't get me wrong, I would not have hesitated in feeding her but my senses were tingling, meaning: I was being used here.

"Eden, since you're her friend why don't you help her out, or do you want her to starve"
Grandma was in support.

I couldn't help but feel like this woman was matchmaking us together.

Yes, Maya and I would be together if granny successfully coerces her into dating me but I want the success to be as a result of my effort and not because we were forced together. Besides, doing it my way would cause Maya to fall for me faster.

"Sure" I agreed to feed her, knowing there was no way I would refuse doing the woman the favour - I respected old people.

"Grandma, don't worry, I'll feed Maya by myself " Isabella who has been quiet all this while, offered her services willingly.

But as soon as she tried to rise from the couch, grandma held her back.

"You little child, if you feed Maya, who would feed you?" she asked the girl without knowing Isabella was smart and had seen through her plans.

I laughed inwardly, it was apparent the girl still had hopes of Maya and her father getting back together - she needs to wake up from her dream real fast.

As far as Adam was still alive and had said no to Maya being together with his son Niklaus, his decision would remain the same.

Even if my dear cousin flees with Maya to a place where no one would find them, Adam would scour the earth just to locate them and when he does, Maya would be a goner - that was just how much investment he has placed on his son.

Also, Niklaus would not think of departing: he has Isabella and would want to give her a better and stable life that doesn't involve running away from her grandfather in fear of being captured back home.

Surprisingly, Isabella didn't argue with the old woman, pretending to be the doll she has been since I arrived, though I could feel her evil glare on me.

"Are you feeding me or not?" Maya complained, rousing me from my reverie.

I took the food bowl that was resting on her lap and began to feed her. A gesture that drew a smile from her mouth. Maybe, I was making progress in making her fall for me - not bad, I guess.

All was going well until the girl couldn't take in the spoonful I gave her resulting in some of the rice falling on her body.

"Does your mouth leak?" I scolded, clearing away the mess from her body.

By the time I was done and glanced up, I discovered that a grain was resting beside her lips.

I shook my head in disbelief, "You're such a pig"

Maya rolled her eyes and wiped her mouth with the back of her hand but she still didn't locate the grain.

Sighing, I gestured to her, "Come, let me help you"

Maya came closer while I lifted my hand towards her face. I took away the rice but my thumb mistakenly brushed across her lower lips causing electricity to course through my body.

I froze, my breath went still as we stared at each other's eyes. Time seemed to stop and I realized for the first time how beautiful her eyes were - they sparkled.

Maya pulled away, destroying the moment yet bringing me back to my senses. I cleared my throat awkwardly, why was the room suddenly hot?

Feeling two pairs of eyes staring at us intently, I assumed my cool demeanor and fed Maya who thankfully appeared unbothered by whatever spell was cast on us seconds ago.

I was grateful when Maya was full, indicating I stopped feeding her. For unknown reasons, I was unsettled and kept feeling butterflies in my belly as if something huge was going to happen tonight- something that would change my world.

"You're such a fine man" Granny took over from me with the flattering, why were my skills slipping tonight?

I was supposed to be the one in control, be the one charming the ladies and not the lady - plus the granny - bewitching me.

"Thank you, mother" I accepted the praises, hoping to turn the situation in my favor.

"He's so humble too" Grandma cooed," Such a shame, this granddaughter of mine doesn't know how to pick a fruit"

Maya, who was taking a glass of water at that time, choked on her drink. She glowered at her, "Seriously, granny?"

Granny continued gushing her grievances, "Tsk, tsk, such a shame" she shook her head, "My training all those years has been a waste. Now, you want me to die without a grandchild"

"Alright, Isabella, I think this is the point where you should be leaving," said Maya who obviously wasn't comfortable with where the discussion was heading.

"Why?" The brat cocked a brow, "I think it's getting interesting."

"Children your age are preparing for bed by now," I told her.

"Uncle, I'm not a child"

"Wait, he's your uncle?" Granny who was left behind in all the happenings asked in shock.

"Second uncle to be precise" the brat clarified.

Maya told her "Granny, it's a long story "

"Which can be cut short" she insisted.

So Maya spent the next thirty or so minutes explaining everything to grandma; how we were related and all.

It made me uncomfortable each time Niklaus' name was called but the change in granny's attitude after the explanation was obvious.

"So you dated his cousin?" Granny pointed to me, but there was a slight irritation in her voice.

"Not really," Maya answered.

"Liar, liar, pants on fire" Isabella pointed out.

"Well, kinda" Maya gave in, thanks to Isabella telling on her.

"And now you're dating him?" Granny's pointing finger didn't leave my direction.

My breath held, waiting for Maya's answer. I didn't say a word, knowing the girl would deny me as expected- Maya was too in love with Niklaus to acknowledge me.

Her gaze met mine briefly before returning to her granny's.

"Yes, I'm dating him"

I glanced up, bewildered beyond words, what the hell was she talking about? The shock was too much since my mouth remained agape while Isabella facepalmed.

Everything was going contrary to what I planned tonight. Maya was supposed to be the one being speechless, not me.

"Is that true, Youngman?" Granny's tone was stern and my name had changed to "Young man"

"H-huh?" I was tongue-tied, everything took me off guard.

My gaze moved to Maya and I saw her signal, she wanted me to concede to her claims. Gosh, this was not what I planned.

"Yes, we're dating"

The deep exhale of relief from Maya

assured me that I did the right thing but my head was scolding me for taking such a risky and useless move- this wasn't the plan!

Grandma's gaze turned fiercer than the former me would have peed in his pants but I have seen more intimidating people- Adam being the first.

"After hearing what your cousin did to my grand-daughter, give me one good reason why I should let you date my precious daughter?"

I said it! Thanks for foolishly landing yourself in trouble, Eden! Good work, give yourself an applause!

"Granny, I -! "

"Hush, this is between him and me " She shunned down Maya who tried to interfere.

I shut my eyes and reopened them, replying "I have no reason"

"What?" Granny was stunned.

"Keep going, this is good" Isabella taunted me.

"You said it, she's your precious granddaughter. So no matter what I say, it would never be enough for you"

She frowned, "So you don't have a valid reason why you're dating my daughter? You're just fooling around with her?"

"Of course not!"

Immediately, I grabbed Maya's hand and intertwined our fingers together confessing, "Honestly, Maya is not the best girl I've seen so far. Firstly, she eats like a pig "

"Hey, I don't eat like a pig!" she defended herself which I smiled at and continued.

"But I love it because she's real and doesn't pretend to be what she isn't just to attract a man's attention"

This time, everywhere was so quiet that a pin dropped will be quite loud.

"Secondly, she has a crappy temper and fights like a man at the slightest provocation "

"Hey, I'm too patient and - "

I silenced her again, but this time by pressing my finger against her soft lips which made my heart beat a million miles per hour.

Pulling away, I pretended to be unaffected and continued my make-believe speech with a hint of truth in it.

"Notwithstanding all her flaws, I love her for who she is - I love the fact she's Maya and I wouldn't wish for anyone else but her. Not even her doppelganger"

I waited for her response but when Granny didn't say a word for a while, I knew I'm doomed - she didn't believe me.

"This is so romantic," Granny said out of nowhere, cleaning invisible tears from her eyes while Isabella sighed, defeated.

I took a breath of relief, that was close.

"Can I please talk to Maya for a while" I requested," We won't be long"

"Sure you two can go" she gave me her consent without hesitation, "You? can get married if you like too, I won't be a hindrance"

Maya sighed as I helped her move the IV stand and we walked out of the room.

It was already late, it should be around seven in the evening but the bulbs shone brightly, illuminating our paths.

We strolled to the garden, I helped her to the walkway bench because of her injury.

Both of us sat in silence, alone with our thoughts until I asked her, "When are you planning to tell her the truth?"

" What truth?" Maya feigned ignorance to my surprise.

"That we're not a couple" I reminded her.

She chuckled, "I was not kidding, Eden"

My expression changed, what in the world was she talking about?

"Let's get married, Eden"

I was flabbergasted, words disappeared from my mouth and I just didn't know how to express how I was feeling.

Just as I was about to laugh at her ridiculous proposal, Maya did the unbelievable.

She drew closer, took my face into her palms, and kissed me without warning.

I froze, my brain refusing to process what was happening. It has been one surprise after the other.

This wasn't supposed to be, my brain ordered me to push her away.

But when my hands came around her instead, I molded her to me and kissed her back.

Chapter 175 - One Hundred And Seventy-Five: Her Heart Is With Someone Else

Maya's point of view

I knew I was taking a huge risk here but then, the will to survive was greater.

Adam was right, without power I was nothing. So now, I needed that sovereignty - the capability to torment him as long as he lives.

That good Maya was gone, I've let avarice take over because I didn't want to be treated like shit anymore; being a villainess sounds much appealing.

But I had no sponsor, no one to support me in this cause of mine. Niklaus who would have done a good job at being my backer sadly, no longer belongs to me.

So now I set my eyes on Eden, he was the only person who disliked Adam and Niklaus all together though he's a good pretender. But the problem? He's a lone wolf, so I need to give him a good reason why we ought to work together.

"Let's get married,?" I told Eden and saw the confusion on his face, followed by disbelief and finally, shock.

I couldn't blame him, this was a ridiculous request. Moreover, the first time he gave me a proposal to be with him, I threw it into the back of my mind because I was in love with Niklaus.

Now, love could go to hell!

Eden's mouth was agape, it seems my words had a heavy impact on him cause he couldn't find the words to say.

Suddenly, I saw a faint outline of a smile try to pull his lips to the side and I knew Eden didn't believe me, he was about to laugh at me to scorn; he needed conviction.

So I did the most unbelievable thing, something he never thought I would do to him in this lifetime: I took a gamble by kissing Eden.

At first, he stood still like a bamboo tree, unmoving from the surprise. From the contortion on his face, I could tell he was not thrilled by my action but just when I thought he would push me away, his arms went around my waist, pressed me against him as he conceded to my kisses.

I believed I was the one in control until his tongue gained access to my mouth and sucked the life out of me. I had to admit, Eden was a damn good kisser.

When we came up for air, we were heaving as if we just ran a marathon. Still, I hardly took enough air, when he pulled down my head and kissed me once again.

However, there was something different this time. He was testing me to know if I meant what I said or just pulling his legs or fooling around with him.

I responded with the same fervor, kissing him with a needy ferocity that was born out of lust. The earlier kiss had some emotions in it but this one? Just for the fun of it.

I would have gone on with his game if my chest didn't hurt from the dwindled oxygen causing me to whimper and he let go.

Eden stared into my eyes with a blazing intensity which made me a bit shy considering the hot kiss we just shared, but his next comment dashed all my hope.

"You're not up to the task" he declared and stood up from the bench.

"What" I stood after him, "No way"

"What do you mean no way?" He turned towards me, vexed for God knows why.

"I've made up my mind, nothing can stop me now," I told him, hoping I appeared firmer than I looked.

Eden threw his head back and laughed, "You of all people Maya? Ready to marry me all because you can't win over Niklaus and daddy Niklaus has stepped on your ego, so you want me for revenge?" He saw through my plans.

I swallowed, there was no going back this time so I had no choice but to admit it.

"Yes, I want to use you, Eden."

"Then I'm sorry to burst your bubbles but no would do"

"Isn't that what you planned to do with me too, use me against Niklaus?"

His eyes widened, I guess he thought I was that stupid not to notice his intention towards me. Niklaus had warned me times without number the kind of person he was and Eden's intentions towards his past ex's which I was now one.

"We could use each other, Eden. Both of us have a common enemy and together we could win this fight" I lowered my voice and added, "My only condition is that you don't hurt Niklaus and his daughter"

There was a long silence between us, his scrutinizing gaze didn't leave me even for a split second which made me shift uncomfortably on my foot.

Then he trudged towards me till our bodies were touching, he lowered his head towards my ears and whispered, "I'm sorry buttercup but I work alone"

Done making his point, he whipped around and proceeded to leave when I yelled after him, "I know about your father Eric"

Eden stiffened, stopping right in his tracks. He turned around and strode back to me with a darkened gaze that sent chills down my spine.

I unconsciously took a step back, his gaze was murderous yet he covered the distance between us with huge strides, holding me in place before I could move back.

"Who told you about that?!" He snapped furiously at me.

I gulped but his tight grip on my arms hurt to the point that I cried out in pain which drew his attention, he let go at once.

"How do you know about my father? Have you been snooping around me? " Eden towered over me, though he seemed to have calmed down, I still sensed the fury in his taut voice.

I answered briskly, "With Isabella around, there's nothing about the Spencer's you can't know"

Yep, that was true. Being around Eden those past days in the countryside taught me a few things about him nor did I forget to mention, I had glimpsed through a page on his diary he had mistakenly left open that day, I had gone into his room to alert him of Isabella's sickness.

His relationship with Adam was quite cordial, I had been shocked when he had expressed his sheer hatred for the man throughout the page.

So during the chickenpox episode, I asked Isabella what happened to Eden's father and from there, some revelations began to be disclosed.

Isabella was like the Spencer's family private Wikipedia, there was hardly anything she didn't know about them unless the secret was not yet disclosed.

"That brat" he cursed with anger.

"Why don't you want me to join forces with you? I'm not going to disrupt your plan or anything as fine as you don't physically harm your cousin. I just want your power and assistance " I explained.

"Simple," He looked straight into my eyes saying, "You're too softhearted, I can't deal with the likes of you till death does us apart "

Sincerely, I was hurt by Eden's words but I didn't let it show, this was no time to shed a gallon of tears.

"Then why were you hell-bent on seducing me? I knew that was your previous intention"

"Yes, it was " he didn't deny my accusation.

"But now I'm offering to be your wife, which is much better than the hide and seek game you're playing with me" I pointed out.

He smirked, "Yes, it's easier but it doesn't favor me at all"

"What?"

"I intended to seduce you till you were head over heels in love with me, then proceed to use you against Niklaus since he still has this lingering affection for you. But now..."
Eden faltered, his gaze running over me in a way that made me shiver.

"You have a motive, which takes your attention away from me" he went on, "Moreover, I never planned to settle down with you. Just wanted a fun that would last as far as Niklaus has his eyes on you and when his interest diminishes, I discard you since you've served your purpose"

My ears rang with his words which made my heart throb, I had really taken Eden for a good friend these past days amid his Intentions - which was why marrying him would have been livable.

Yet both cousins were players.

"Also" he continued, "I want a woman I would own body and soul, not one whose heart beats for someone else while making out with me."

My throat dried up making it difficult to speak. I just kept staring at him like a moron unable to refute that blame.

"This life is not suited for you Maya and don't ever bring on this topic with me. Happy recovery" Eden kissed me on my right cheek and left without looking back.

Making out with him while my heart beat for someone else? How had he noticed that? I had made sure to kiss Eden with the same passion as him, though I could not help but envision Niklaus was the one who had his lips on mine.

I sighed and plonked down on the bench, wiping my face with my palm. This was so messed up, an epic failure. What was I going to do?

Chapter 176 - One Hundred And Seventy-six: Cause A Wave Across The Internet

The third point of view.

Kim was so embarrassed by the black eye that she bought polarized sunglasses as soon as she stepped out of the hospital. Today was obviously a bad day for her.

She was still angry over losing her mother and had returned to the office when grandma called, suggesting the both of them go and visit Maya.

Kim had considered turning the request down but after Tina's call hours ago, she decided to go ahead and try to see if she would get any dirt on Maya. Also, tormenting that scum would improve her sore mood.

Who knew her plan would backfire? She had never predicted that Niklaus' brat would be there nor had expected her plan would be busted.

Kim had heard stories about the girl's daring behavior but never believed it until today.

A ten-year-old plus girl threw a bottle of water at her face? It was absurd. Had it been any other kid, she would have given that brat a good spanking on the butt and sued her family afterward since she was a good lawyer and was confident in winning the case.

But the Spencer family was different!

They not only had money but power too. Even if Kim had all the evidence in the world, as far as they wanted Isabella out of that mess, nothing would stop them from winning.

So she had no choice but to play it cool. Kim had seen the angry side of Niklaus when they captured Maya, talk more Isabella? He would wipe them out of the surface of the earth this time.

Moreover, Niklaus was her target; she had to play the changed person role well. She had planned to take pictures of the black eye Isabella gave her and send it to her father but there was no guarantee that the sassy brat would not relate to Niklaus what happened.

Kim was not an idiot, she had knowledge that Niklaus was not yet over the breakup with Maya which made her completely different from that fool Tina.

Niklaus just came out of a messy relationship and time was just the number one thing he needed - he needed alone time to successfully forget Maya.

Yet Tina kept invading his space and forcing herself on Niklaus hence his strong dislike of her.

Kimberly would not inform Tina of her reckless move, after all, if that witch fails today, it'd be her success and chance to snatch Niklaus from her clasps.

She had everything planned and hoped the universe would be on her side.

Kim was driving home when her phone rang, causing her to look down at the caller ID.

"Hello? Yes, it's Kimberly speaking"

With her eyes glued on the road, she listened to the information being reported to her through her earpiece.

"Alright, stay put. Don't ever take your eyes off her and get me something juicy -you know what I mean"

Kim ended the call, a small smile playing at the corners of her mouth. She refused to believe that Maya was a saint, which was why she had hired a private investigator to secretly snoop around for interesting news.

She had to provide something worthwhile for Christina else that bitch would take out her anger on her instead.

If not for the fact she took pleasure in seeing Maya suffer, she would have reconsidered this parasitic partnership with Tina.

Kim drove home and parked her car in the garage but her eyes couldn't help but settle on her mom's car- she was back home.

Determined to have a down to earth conversation with her, she strode into the house and headed in the direction of her parent's bedroom.

Kim knew her father was not yet back else she would have caught sight of his car.

So without knocking, she yanked the door open and walked in. "What in the world have you been up to mo...?"

Kim's eyes almost popped out of her eyes, she wished she could undo what she just saw. She couldn't move from the shock, just froze like a statue

Her mother Angela was on top of her father Alfred and both were naked. She just caught her parents having sex - not to mention her mother was vigorously riding her father whose face was contorted from pleasure.

Her parents who had a feeling that their carnal adventure had been busted, turned around from surprise, their eyes collided with their daughter's.

"Shit!" Alfred cursed and brought up the sheet around him and his wife, hiding their nakedness.

That move snapped Kim out of her thoughts, she sprinted out of the room, banging the door shut on her way out.

Kim's cheeks were flushed, her heart pounded against her chest plus the sweat running down her forehead. She loved her father and mother but that was the grossest thing she had ever seen - catching her parents in the act.

Of course, having sex was the way her parents procreated her but seeing them do the procreation? That was highly disturbing to her mental health. Kim wished there was a way to erase this memory - forever.

Unknown to Kim, while she was distressed mentally for watching that puke-inducing scene, Angela, her mother was relieved mentally she saw that.

After Valentino had revealed the fact that her daughter had been tailing her, she knew at once that Kim had searched her paper bin and found out everything.

Her daughter Kim was incredibly sensitive and smart, she must be thinking that she was cheating on her father.

Well, who wouldn't think so, after the way she had run out of the office plus the roses which had not come from her husband and the cheesy words Armani had written on that card- that was concrete evidence.

One couldn't tell how relieved she was to discover Kim wasn't in the office when she returned, which gave her enough time to carefully go over a plan to cover up this slight disturbance caused by that jerk.

Angela rain checked on the date with Alfred, offering to give him a good time at home instead. She purposely drove her husband home with her car since she knew that would be the first thing Kim would look out for.

Her daughter Kim was hot-tempered and overly curious when something this level was bugging her. So she surmised Kim would storm into her room straightaway without knocking and so far, everything went according to plan.

Angela knew this would not keep Kim from asking about the flowers and the card, but catching her parents having sex would assure Kim that her parents were very much together - contrary to her thoughts of mother cheating on father.

But of course, Angela continued with the act which meant scolding her daughter for banging into her room without knocking.

Kimberly sighed, rubbing her temple as her parents scolded her ears off for coming into their room without the common courtesy of knocking.

Kim scratched the back of her ears. Gosh, she was twenty-seven for christ's sake and didn't deserve all these lectures.

Recently, she had contemplated moving out of her parent's house but the thought of Maya coming over and occupying her position changed her mind.

She had to be around her parents twenty-four hours, seven days since the human heart was fragile and could change any moment.

After the long talk with her parents, her father decided to leave both mother and daughter to have a private talk as if sensing the tension between them.

A huge silence reigned, no one talked until Angela cleared her throat and asked, "You seem like you had something on your mind earlier?"

"Are we going to play this pretend game, mom?"

Angela paused for a while, her tongue ran over her lower lips, and sighed, "I know what you're thinking Kimberly but trust me when I say it's not what you're thinking"

Kim chuckled, "I caught my mom hurrying to God knows where after an unknown person sends her red roses and an ambiguous card"

"It was from a friend who I haven't seen in ages," Angela said to her.

She knew better than to tell Kim that she met Maya's father, Valentino would skin the life out of her.

"Fine," Kim stood from her couch,

"Let's hope that friend of yours remains a friend, else dad would be notified the next time such a thing happens "

Angela sighed in relief, that was a narrow escape. Besides she wasn't foolish to meet up with Valentino again. She just hopes that the daredevil finds another object of fascination.

Meanwhile, Kim had just observed her night rituals, hoping to settle for the night when a notification came into her phone.

She picked up her phone, glancing through the pictures sent by the investigator she had hired with her mouth agape.

What the hell

Suddenly, Kim started a burst of maniacal laughter - one that made her stomach hurt.

Maya and Eden? She did not see that one coming! This news would cause waves across the internet - when the time was right.

Chapter 177 - One Hundred And Seventy-seven: Choose Both Of Them

Maya's point of view.

I felt like a fool after Eden left but his words hurt more, it was like I was the one being played all this time. I knew Eden's intentions towards me but him saying it out loud, sounded cruel.

But the embarrassment from getting rejected was greater, this was the first time of offering the rest of my life to someone on a golden platter yet it was kicked away like it worth nothing.

This refusal was supposed to bring me back to my senses, make me abandon all about this revenge plan but instead, it intensified my determination to win.

I had decided to make it to the top and would prove it to that man.? Adam made fun of me, treating me as if I was shit and now, I would show him that even a small banana peel could cause the demise of an unknowing victim.

When I got to the room, Isabella's face was the first thing I saw, and got to know that granny went to relieve herself.

"I don't need to guess you failed, your facial reaction discloses better than a mirror" She pointed out, using her face as reference.

Her statement made me frown, was I taking this rejection too hard?.

I grumbled, "I must have scared him with the impromptu proposal, I'm sure he would come around when he sees reasons with my offer"

Isabella laughed at me, the kind of laughter one gives a kid who hasn't realized that there's no treasure at the end of a rainbow.

"What's funny?" I asked, not liking her mocking laughter one bit; I was not a fool.

"No pun intended Maya, but if Eden wants to settle down, he would marry a woman from a powerful background such as Tina - I doubt he would go for that witch though no matter how power-hungry he is "

"Oh right" It dawned on me, I was a nobody and had nothing to offer him aside from my body. Isabella was right, I must have been deluded to have mentioned that useless deal to Eden.

"Dad and Eden are frenemies, they work together against those that plan the downfall of the Spencer's but the power struggle between both was apparent.

"Eden would need a strong woman to bring Niklaus down and grandfather knows that, which is why he can never allow you to be with my father, that would be - "

"Lowering his status" I added for her.

Isabella left the couch and came to sit beside me on the hospital bed, "I know it hurts but that's the truth, Maya"

To my surprise, Isabella's gaze softened which made me blink twice to confirm the sympathy I saw there was real.

"If you know all this, why encourage me to go for your father. I know you've been trying to bring us back together" I disclosed.

Isabella sighed loudly and shrugged her shoulders, "I seriously don't know, Maya. Perhaps, I was inwardly wishing that some kind of miracle would happen between you both. And so you don't mistakenly fall in love with Eden in a bid to forget Niklaus"

I was astounded, so this was what this little girl had in mind all along? No wonder she would go to all lengths to achieve it, Isabella was quite committed.

"I'm sorry Isabella but I can't keep pining for your father. You said it yourself, I can't be with him. So the earlier I forget about him, the better" I told the little girl, hoping she would understand.

"You're not possibly in love with Eden, right?"

"Of course" I denied her accusation yet I couldn't help but notice the way my heart skipped a beat - no, that was normal.

That moment, granny came out of the toilet causing our discussion to come to an abrupt end.

"Where's your boyfriend?" The absence of her son-in-law was the first thing that the old woman noticed.

"He had things to do in the office so he had to leave early" I answered but the disapproval on her face was obvious.

"Going back to the office at this time? Why do you girls of nowadays like a rich workaholic who would not have enough time to take care of you" she mumbled loud enough for me and Isabella to capture her words

I rolled my eyes in response, this woman was too dramatic - Angela and her daughter must have inherited that gene from her.

Not long enough, Isabella's people came to get her home. The girl was reluctant to leave but the stoic face bodyguard sent to help escort her home, reminded Isabella of the mess she created and the punishment awaiting her; she wouldn't want to add to that.

"Fine, whatever" Isabella got down from the bed slowly, " I know you're going to miss me when I'm gone so you better do the hugging now"

"I'm so touched that I'm close to tears" I? placed a hand on my chest dramatically to express my overzealous gratitude.

"Do whatever pleases you then" Isabella was prepared to leave when I pulled at her arm and hugged her, careful not to reopen the restitched wound.

"Thank you for your support, Isabella" I rested my chin on the girl's shoulder, absentmindedly running my hands through her hair before dropping a kiss on her cheeks.

Wonders shall never end! I exclaimed mentally. To my utmost surprise, Isabella didn't drop any jibing speech that would make my jaw drop or make me flick her on the forehead, instead settle her attention on my granny.

Isabella moved to drop a kiss on top of her forehead, something she didn't do to me - that partial kid! Nevertheless, it warmed my heart to see she had bonded with my grandma real fast.

After that, she obediently left with the guards without pulling any trick leaving granny and me alone.

"You like her father, don't you?" Granny asked out of nowhere.

"I don't know what you're talking about" I tactically evaded that one.

" You can't lie to me, " she insisted.

"How do you know what's in my heart?"

"I can't see your heart but I've raised you for years and known you like the back of my fingers, Maya. Eden isn't your boyfriend, is he?"

There was a moment of silence between us yet Grandma didn't take her knowing look off me.

"Fine, you win" I gave in, there was no way I could beat this woman hell-bent on drawing the truth from my mouth.

"He's not my boyfriend," I confessed.

"Then why make he seem like he was your boyfriend?"

"Because I want him to be"

Grandma was taken aback, "Why would you want him to? You don't love him. The way I see things you like Isabella's father, isn't it?"

I bite on my lips, "You want to know why?"

"Of course"

I stood from the bed, "Because I'm sick and tired of people looking down on me " I told her with every anger in me.

"I'm tired of some rich douche treating me like a piece of shit all because I have no power! I hate being tagged an illegitimate child! I hate being unable to communicate with my mother even though I have one! I hate being lonely! I ha-ha-..."

My voice cracked at the end and before I could tell what was going on, I had started to bawl my eyes out. I crumbled to the floor while grandma approached me and wrapped her arms around my shoulder as I sobbed.

My heart felt like it was being repeatedly stabbed at. All the frustration, pain, and failures I've experienced all this while washed over me, I cried harder.

"Hey, it's okay" Grandma consoled me, she laid my head to her chest, "Is going to be alright"

But those words made me cry more; the more she spoke, the further I cried an endless stream of tears.

"I'm not going to judge whatever you do as long as you do something that makes you happy. Niklaus? Eden? You can choose any - in fact, you're free to take both"

Funny thing was, Grandma had a way with words and before I knew it, I had a smile on my face after the tears stopped.

I readjusted our position on the floor, choosing to lay my head on her shoulder and granny rubbed my back soothingly.

She didn't spend the night over, due to her health but I felt her presence throughout the dusk which made me sleep like a baby.

The days afterward passed in a blur, filled with visits from the two devils - Isabella and Anabelle - and their male companion Pedro.

I didn't catch a wink of Eden, I guess my proposal must have upset him to the extent he avoided me.

Neither did Niklaus come over, his fiancée Tina must have kept him busy - If you know what I'm talking about.

Angela didn't bother to visit either. Well, what was I expecting? I was not the chosen daughter, Kim, so her valuable time would not be wasted on me.

I couldn't have been more grateful when I was finally released. The smell of the strong acid and antiseptic from the hospital was beginning to upset me; plus the limited freedom.

Grandma and the kids organized a small party filled with eating and drinking- milk and juices - no one was permitted to touch alcohol.

I felt relaxed with them until I began to unwrap the presents they got me and stumbled on one that didn't come from any of them.

I read the note attached to it.

"Let's have dinner together princess - Love from Sakuzi"

My blood ran cold, what silly game was this psychopath planning this time.

Chapter 178 - One Hundred And Seventy-eight: No Chickens In This Team

Isabella's point of view

"Hey, Maya, you alright?" I asked when I saw Maya who was smiling moments ago, turn pale.

"No, it's okay" she sniffed and quickly put away a card from my view which made my brow raise in suspicion, " I just suddenly felt sick" came her silly excuse.

I mean, who was she kidding, it's a known fact that Maya is a terrible liar. Whatever she saw in that card that distressed her to this level must be bad. Since she didn't want me to know, I would not prod.

"You're sick?" Anabelle picked up on our discussion, she sandwiched herself between Maya and me, feeling her temperature with the back of her hand.

Anabelle pursed her lips, a look of confusion crossing her features as she tilted her head side to side contemplatively, "You don't feel sick to me" she observed.

"Someone doesn't always have to be physically ill to be sick" Maya, the lecturer began, "Sometimes you could be financially, mentally or emotionally sick"

Anabelle frowned which made me snort at her, this one probably was above her level of understanding.

Lately, Anabelle was becoming an eyesore to me. I was kind of mad at her and her father altogether.

How could uncle Eden get Maya's attention on a free golden platter while my father Niklaus had to work off his butt for it?

He even got hit by grandfather just so he could guarantee her safety but what did Eden do? Nothing! Yet he got to receive a proposal from Maya- though that one was doomed to fail from the initial.

There were a few times his action confused me but I always knew uncle Eden was never serious with Maya. He just wanted to play with her to irk my idiotic father who loves her - I wonder if my father has figured out the "in love" part yet?

Occasionally, I hate the way my brain works, it's almost as if I could see the world's problems and it's weighing me down whenever I try to think of a solution - just like this mess.

But this problem was above my head. If I attempt to interfere with grandfather's plans for Niklaus and Tina, there's no doubt he would send me abroad- away from Maya and Niklaus.

Sigh, this was so depressing.

It seems I'm falling in love with Maya

: she is the only person keeping me sane in this insane family and she has to reciprocate my love by being my mother.

I can't even imagine Tina being my mother; the thoughts alone sends chills down my spine. You guys would probably ask why I despise Tina so much?

I mean she's not the only girlfriend out of my father's numerous I -can't- even - remember - their - names - girlfriends that I disliked, yet why was the degree of hatred I had for Tina special?

Well, the answer is simple: I'm afraid to turn up like her in the future.

It was quite obvious that once she comes to be my mother - whether I like it or not - her behavior would rub off on me with time.

I mean, look at that woman, her fashion sense sometimes is a crime against normalcy. Have you seen those claws she has for a finger, it's quite a mystery she hasn't plucked out someone's eye.

Talking of plucking out eyes, is Maya's eyes insured? I've seen a lot of women go gaga in the process of veering for a man's attention.

What if that crazy woman misunderstands my Maya one day and engages her in a fight and in the process, injures her eyes.

The scene looks impossible but with Maya around, the impossible seems possible. That "woman"? called Maya - note the sarcasm - is a klutz; she's the only one that chokes on a simple liquid constantly.

Seems I have to work extra hard to get the money that would be enough to indemnify her whole body, that way my heart would be at peace.

Also, that would be compensating for the whole pains my family of assholes caused her.

"Maya, are you financially sick?" Anabelle began one of her foolish questions that gives me the urge sometimes to bash her head against the wall and see if some sense could come in.

Soon enough, we'll be eleven yet here she was behaving like a five-year-old kid. Ugh! It was so irritating.

"You moron, does this place speak of wealth?" I gestured to Maya's simple apartment.

As usual, Maya's displeased orbs rested on me.

"Watch your language, young lady" she warned with her piercing gaze.

I rolled my eyes, what's the difference between Anabelle and a moron - thankfully she doesn't cry as fast as SpongeBob anymore.

Immediately, the door to Maya's apartment opened to reveal Cecil and Emily.

Oh, the ever-busy mother decided to take some time off work to visit her bestie, how shocking. But it was more surprising to me seeing aunt Emily.

Ever since she left grandfather's manor, it's kind of hard getting a hold of her. But I loved the look on her face, she looked happier than when she was with grandfather- as if a huge limitation was finally taken off her shoulder.

Yet I was uncomfortable with this new situation. Both of us - aunt and I - had grown up with Adam around us and he must be used to that company. It was obvious he would not force me back with him since I was with my father now but I worried for my aunt, she had nobody, save him.

"Emily, Cecil!" Maya was happy to see them, putting an end to our conversation.

"Umm, Is that my mom?" Asked Pedro who had a red plastic cup in his grip, looking in the direction of the enthusiastic embracers.

I sassed, "Oh don't worry, it's her ghost who came to life to haunt you for eternity"

Pedro sighed and shook his head at my attitude but who cares? Instead, I snatched the cup from his grip and without taking a glimpse, gulped down the whole content but spat the whole of it back into the cup, handing the cup back to him.

He wrinkled his nose "That is gross"

"Not as gross as what you just gave me to drink" I gagged.

"I didn't give it to you Isabella, you took it away from me without asking" he corrected.

"What's the difference, anyway?"

"One involves the use of 'please' while the other doesn't which is rude" he explained.

"Then receive my apology, knight of justice"? I taunted him, and did I forget to mention that ever since Pedro had his eleventh birthday days ago, he's been more outspoken and taller and more handsome - I didn't say that. In summary, he's becoming more appealing to my eyes.

"What in the world was that drink?" I asked, following him into the kitchen as he poured the juice infected with my saliva down the sink.

"Nothing. Just did justice with a few of the juices Maya made. I mixed strawberry juice with orange, lemon and added cream to it- which I found in her refrigerator"

My shocked face distorted into one filled with disgust, "I can't believe I took that vomit-inducing concoction drink into my belly. That's an abuse of my intestines"

"Isabella, there's fun in creating the unimaginable," Pedro said with a? proud look as if he produced something worth a genius record, "You just have to be open to anything"

"Your taste bud is obviously open to any...." I faltered when something came into my mind, a smile broadened my face.

"I don't like that expression, you always do that when you have a trick up your sleeve" Pedro detected.

"I don't care what you say but if your taste bud is still open to anything, you might want to join in on this plan of mine" I threw the bait, now he has to grab the hook and be hooked.

"No way" He rejected my offer without second thoughts.

I came closer, "I know you want it, Pedro" came my whisper into his ears.

Pedro could not withstand my enticement for long, he eventually buckled, "Fine, what's the plan?"

"There's an apple Martini Maya hide under her bed from grandma since today, we could have a taste of that"

"Impossible!" Pedro declared so loud that I had to close his mouth with my hand. Thank God we were in the kitchen so no one heard him yell.

"Are you crazy?" I whisper-shouted, " Do you want our plan to get busted"

"What plan?" Someone said from behind which made us jump out of our skin.

I turned around to see Anabelle coming towards us. Yolk, I actually thought it was someone important.

"What are the two of you planning?" Anabelle inquired, crossing her arms over her chest with narrowed eyes.

Pedro lifted his hands in the air, "I'm not involved, it's all on Izzy"

I snorted, why do all of them like putting the blame on me? In the end, I give them a good time which they should be grateful for.

"It's none of your business, Anabelle. I don't need a blabbermouth spilling 'my' plan to her superordinate, Maya"

"I know I talk too much but if it's fun, I could join and get to keep the secret, I promise," she said.

I scrutinized her thoroughly. Well, there are a few times she does keep her mouth shut.

Pedro was bewildered, even the sensible kid Anabelle was joining in this crazy plan of mine.

"You're going to join Isabella in taking alcohol?"

Anabelle scratched the back of her head, "I see Dad take it sometimes but he won't allow me to have a taste, it makes it curious"

"Oh don't worry, I've tasted it" I encouraged her.

Her eyes brightened, "You have? What does it taste like? Also, did uncle Niklaus permit you to take it?"

"Trust me, it tastes like heaven and I stole it to be honest"

"Oh," Anabelle said.

"This is crazy" Pedro tugged his hair, "Maya specifically prepared the juices so we don't touch alcohol. You do know you're blatantly disobeying Maya?"

"When have I ever obeyed Maya?" I questioned him.

"Approximately, none," Anabelle thought over it.

"Thank you" I appreciated her for being useful this time.

"So are you in or out? Trust me when I say I don't need chickens in this team"

Chapter 179 - One Hundred And Seventy-nine: Where Is Your Horn.

The third point of view

"So are you in or out? Trust me when I say I don't need chickens in this team"

Pedro was in a dilemma, he was the oldest amongst them, so was supposed to make the right decision yet Isabella had a way with words and could be quite persuasive.

"You're running out of time" Isabella tapped her foot impatiently, she didn't have much patience left.

The more time they spent indecisively, the faster Maya was liable to catch them being alone in a secluded corner of the kitchen - a telltale sign of their impending mischief.

"What's your plan?" Pedro finally inquired which brought a smile to her lips.

"Simple, we have our fun while Maya's still distracted"

"What?"

"From my hypothesis, your mother Cecil, my aunt Emily and granny is? sure to keep Maya busy and preoccupied enough not to notice our disappearance - "

"That is all?" Anabelle was quick to ask.

"That is not 'all' because you interrupted me before I was through with my words" she scolded Anabelle who bit back the rest of her questions.

"As I was saying before I was interrupted" Isabella stressed her words, intentionally maintaining eye contact with her cousin.

"It would create suspicion if we all left at once so, I would be the first to leave for Maya's room and secure the target - the Martini" she went on, gesturing to several points on a made believe invisible map on the counter.

"After that, Pedro would be the second to slip out unnoticed. He would head to the kitchen and grab three glasses from the shelf before grabbing the rest of the ice - "

"The ice in the bucket has been used up" Pedro pointed out, "Maya used them all on her juices"

"Fine, we'd use pre-formed cubes from the freezer tray" She suggested.

"Why do we need ice for the martini, when we could drink it like that?" Anabelle began her one of a kind questions.

Pedro's mouth quirked, from the way Isabella's face had contorted, Anabelle was about to receive one of her special lashings.

An irritated yet covered up with a fake smile stretched her face, "Why we need ice?" Isabella questioned her back, lifting her brow, "Then, why do we wear undies even after we put on pants?"

Anabelle rubbed her chin, beginning to think, "There are a variety of reasons why we wear panties but the most apparent function is to act as a barrier between one's bits and bottom layers"

A cruel smirk crossed Isabella's features, "So you're this smart yet you keep leaving me LOST FOR WORDS!"

Ugh! Isabella formed her hands into paws as if she wanted to claw out her younger cousin's eyes out of irritation.

Anabelle quietly wiped away the saliva ejected on her face. She pouted her lips like a falsely accused prisoner. How was it her fault that she was overly curious and her senses kept going in and out like a network status bar?

"Since you're so good with socializing, you'd keep the unsuspecting women busy for about five minutes before making your departure." Isabella, the chief superintendent of their little impromptu squad commanded her and added, "Make sure they're engrossed in the discussion before taking your leave, understood"

"Yes sir, yes sir!" Anabelle stood at attention, saluting Isabella theatrically.

Isabella facepalmed, she considered removing her cousin but she was afraid of this little moron throwing a tantrum and exposing their rendezvous.

Isabella clapped "Now, everyone spread out. To your position in one, two - "

Annabelle looked left and out cautiously before she did a flip, then rolled out of the kitchen which made Isabella's and Pedro's jaws drop.

Their eyes met and held, they began to communicate telepathically: what was wrong with that girl, did she think they were acting a spy movie or what?

The chief superintendent shook her head and left, making her way towards Maya's room which wasn't locked as expected, mwahaha.

It wasn't hard to find the drink because Maya didn't know how to hide stuff or perhaps it was the fact, she didn't have any hiding place in this room of hers that was equivalent to her walk-in closet back at home.

"Gotcha!" She exclaimed, pulling out the bottle and half of her body from under the bed.

"Now, we wait"

Isabella leaned against the bed, waiting for her accomplices to arrive and as planned, Pedro was the first to come into the room.

"Here they are," Pedro said and passed a small bucket to Isabella which contained the cocktail glasses, ice cubes, and apple slices.

He shrugged when he saw the girl's gaze settle on the fresh apple pieces.

"I thought you would want to garnish the drinks with the apples like they do in the movies"

A smile curved Isabella's face,

"Great minds think alike" she gave him a thumbs up.

Since Anabelle would be arriving soon, Isabella decided to prepare the drinks in advance.

She grabbed the appletini and poured the electric green liquid into the three glasses. Adding cubed ice, she stirred until the martini was chilled before moving ahead with the garnishing.

As if on cue, Anabelle stepped into the room just as Isabella was through with the drinks, sweating and heaving as if she ran a marathon.

"Why are you breathing like a gorilla with a deviated septum?" Isabella frowned.

Anabelle plonked to the ground exhausted, "If you think it's easy to make conversation with three grown adults and shake grandma off my tail, you can go try yours"

Isabella thought over it, "Well, you do make sense" she noticed Maya's granny was really clingy.

"But don't worry" Anabelle waved her away, "I sweet-talked her into leaving"

Well, maybe Anabelle does have some usefulness. Though Isabella wondered what she said to Granny for her to leave her precious granddaughter Maya and head home.

"Alright, no time to waste. Grab your glasses, everyone" Isabella urged them.

"Are we going to toast as Daddy does on ceremonial occasions?" Anabelle asked with a hint of excitement.

"Yes, Anabelle. That is what we're obviously about to do" Isabella gestured to their glasses lifted in the air. She mumbled under her breath, "I wonder sometimes whether a zombie ate your brain "

"So cool" Anabelle cooed, not minding her cousin's exasperated look.

"To our first coming of age alcoholic drink ever - well, to you guys to be precise" Isabella pointed out the fact that this wasn't her first time.

"Fine," Pedro groaned.

"To our first coming of age alcoholic drink" The trio chorused, clicked glasses, and proceeded to drink from it.

Isabella threw her head back and finished the content in one gulp.

Pedro glimpsed at her and followed her step, scrunching up his face afterward when he felt a mysterious warmth journey down his throat.

Anabelle stared at the both of them inquisitively, took a large sip yet wrinkled her nose.

"It tastes sweet yet sour and I feel the burn in my throat" Innocent Anabelle felt her throat with her hand.

"What are you drinking, water? Milk? You're drinking alcohol, dumbhead" Isabella said sarcastically.

"It feels awful yet it feels good and did I forget to mention the apple taste is so good" observed Anabelle.

She savored her drink slowly, taking the sliced apple into her mouth.

"This drink has a much gentler flavor and lower alcohol content which I hope you both don't get drunk from," Isabella told them while downing another glass.

"I need a refill" Pedro lifted his cup which made Anabelle finish hers in a hurry, presenting her cup quickly to the superintendent.

"Me too"

"This is not milk" Isabella warned both.

"Please"

"Fine, a second glass, and we're done. Better we keep some for Maya before she goes gaga when she finds out? - half bread is better than none"

So, Isabella poured out the drinks for the second time and the third for herself.

"I'm curious about something," asked Pedro who currently had a flush on his cheeks and eyes going unfocused.

"Sure, go ahead" Isabella shook the dizziness out of her eyes.

He pointed at her, "Why do we two always follow you into danger every time"

Isabella began to laugh but burped in-between, " Because I'm the alpha female and you two losers" she pointed sluggishly at Pedro and Anabelle, " Are my followers - you are my beta and my moronic cousin, the omega "

"I-I no omega " Anabelle's words slurred and stood to her feet unsteadily.

"Where are you going?" Isabella eyed her because she moved, stumbling about like an intoxicated person.

"Pee, bathroom" she pointed with no sense of direction.

"That is not the toilet..."

Isabella watched Anabelle head to Maya's wardrobe, swing the double door open, and locked herself in.

"Great" Isabella slapped her forehead and threw up her hands in surrender, "I give up"

She was yet to recover from the shock when she felt a weight on her shoulder. Pedro was relaxing against her, his hot breath fanning her neck.

Her eyes narrowed, "What are you doing?"

Pedro ignored her question, instead focused all his attention on his hand threading through her hair.

"Why do you look beautiful?" Came his strange question.

"Why? You don't like it?"

"No, I like it. But you're a devil - where's your horn?"

Isabella yanked away his hand searching her forehead for the so-called horn out of irritation. This was not how she planned this, these losers ruined everything - they couldn't handle the little alcohol.

"Shit" Isabella cursed when she heard Maya's voice coming in the direction of the room.

Drunk or not, she sprang up to her feet like a cat causing Pedro to drop to the ground since he has been using her body for support.

"What should I do?" She panicked until an idea came into her mind.

It was obvious Maya would pull her ear and would take the brunt of the punishment because she's the only one awake during the peak of Maya's anger - they would face this together.

With lightning speed, Isabella dragged and pushed Pedro under the bed, alongside every evidence of their little drinking fun before joining him.

The door clicked open at that moment but Isabella was secured under the bed which had bed linen that hid them from view.

She just hoped that Anabelle's bladder was full enough to keep her in that wardrobe till Maya left.

Chapter 180 - One Hundred And Eighty: Where Are The Kids?

Maya's point of view

Cecil and Emily proved to be the best company ever, the two of them knew the best thing to say which got my ribs cracking.

Grandma joined in our conversation at first but Anabelle snatched her attention and I don't know what that little imp said to her but she decided to leave.

"You're going?" I asked, surprised. She didn't seem to be choppy or in a hurry, so that kid Anabelle could not have said something that upset her - I wonder what they discussed about, though.

"Yes, I'm an old woman and can't keep up with you young people" she excused herself as she got to her feet with the help of her walking cane.

"Alright, grandma. Give me seconds so I could escort you -" I told her straightening my clothes, trying to get on my feet.

"No, don't see me out, Maya. You have friends over " She declined my offer.

"What nonsense!" I said, "My friends would not object to me seeing my granny out "

"Of course" Cecil and Emily supported me.

"I said I'm alright beside, my maid has already informed me of her arrival plus I have the best company with me," Granny Octavia told me, referring to Anabelle who held her hand, smiling back at her.

What charm does this woman use? The old woman seems to have some kind of secret techniques she used to capture children's hearts. Previously was Isabella, now was Anabelle, tomorrow might be Pedro; who knows?

If it had been Isabella, I would have refused right away but Anabelle had a clean track of being a good kid, and also, she was humble and innocent. I mean, look at her, what kind of harm could that cute little kid inflict on someone?

"Alright" I rose to my feet and gave my Nana a long, warm hug which I concluded with a peck on her face,

"Thank you so much, granny".

Left for me alone, I wouldn't want granny to return to that residence all alone but I don't have the power yet to take her away.

I could move-in with her, but I knew Kim's mother and her offspring, both were lionesses waiting to pounce on their prey which was me.

Once I stepped foot, in the name of cohabitating with Nana in that property which was financed by Angela, I was sure the awaiting predators would trap and try to do everything to keep me from escaping their clasps.

Moreover, even if I found a separate place for granny to stay with me from now henceforth, I knew the woman's personality like the back of my hand.

She would still go back to Angela and Kimberly after one or two of their tearful performance, that was just how soft she was - a trait I inherited from her.

"Come back right away" I tousled Anabelle's hair.

"Yes, aunt Maya!" She replied energetically, booming that smile that could melt the heart of even the toughest warrior.

Gosh, I wish my future kid would be as cute as her. Isabella wasn't bad though but I can't imagine seeing that sly smirk on the face of my kid - having one Isabella was already driving me crazy.

As soon as Granny left, we girls continued our gossip but my eyes would wander to the door from time to time to check if she had returned.

Annabelle came back as fast as she could and from the looks of things, ran to my apartment since she was sweating.

"You're back"

"Yes," she heaved.

"Thanks for helping me out sweetheart. You can get a glass of chilled water from the refrigerator to calm yourself, alright?"

"Sure" she replied and left.

That was the last I heard from Anabelle but I didn't put many thoughts into it since she was probably hanging around with Pedro and Isabella.

"Congratulations, I heard you got a role in that movie - what was its name again?" Cecil scratched the side of her head in thoughts.

"Finding Paradise" Emily answered before I could.

"Yeah, that's the movie. Netizens got their eye on that one which is sure to hit billions in the box office judging from the attention it's getting. You're quite lucky"

"Yeah, I'm lucky" I gave a smile that didn't reach my eyes because that reminded me of Eden and my epic failed proposal.

"Talk about you, I hear this season's collection is a blast"

Cecil was a popular fashion designer which was why she was quite busy and hardly had time for her son- she was quite in demand.

She was two years older than me, I was happy for her yet couldn't help but get envious of her great achievement sometimes.

Cecil sighed, " Trust me, Maya, it gets so overwhelming occasionally you might even think of giving up. I'm actually thinking of going on a break after this season and get to spend time with my son.

"My work has kept me away from him for too long that's it's beginning to bother me. I need to get active in Pedro's life and guide his footsteps as he grows up. Besides, dumping him on Isabella and Amanda is beginning to gnaw at my conscience"

"Oww, spoken like a true mother. This makes me miss my late mom" Emily wiped away invisible tears from her eyes with a finger.

This conversation felt incredibly cool like we were having a girl's hangout. So I picked on Emily, "Your turn, what's going on with your life after you abandoned Adam all alone in his mansion"

Emily rolled her eyes yet replied, "Just catching up on my lost highschool fun that was ruined with the presence of my father's bodyguards"

My eyes collided with Cecil's, a knowing smile on our lips, "Why do I feel like your definition of fun involves clubbing and a great sex life" Pedro's mom brought it up.

"Because it is" I supported Cecil's claim, "I mean, look at her. The once calm and reserved Emily is gone; she even dyed her hair" I gestured to the few trace of purple in her hair.

Emily laughed, "Ladies, I got my? freedom after so many years, it's worth doing so many crazy things for"

"So, who's the lucky guy?" Cecil inquired with excitement, "I have no time to date the cute guys so I'll be happy to hear yours"

"No way, I'm not giving this heart to some cute ass who would step on it like it was some cheap artifact afterward"

I frowned, "You're trying to say you have multiple partners?"

" Kind of "

"Emily, STD, and pregnancy are real. Not to mention the fact you're turning out to be like your brother"

"Point of correction" she waved that red-painted finger, "I make use of protection- I have a truckload of it - besides, why do the guys have to be the one to collect the jars of heart? I dislike that stereotype." Emily was pissed off.

"If Niklaus can go out and have a good time out there, why should I be stopped from doing the same?"

I scratched the back of my head awkwardly, while Cecil chewed on her lips, the once exciting conversation had plummeted faster than gravity having its effect on a body.

This has always been a touchy subject thanks to the fact that society has shackled women to certain standards we should live up to.

A man having multiple partners was news but not a shocker since it was a boost to his ego. But a promiscuous woman would sure make the headlines for weeks while drawing accusing stares and rebukes from the general public.

Well, what was Emily expecting anyway? It has already been designed that way from the beginning of time - we, the weaker vessel should remain unblemished.

"So there's no special one amongst all of them?" Cecil was still adamant about hearing this juicy tale.

"Well, there is one and Maya knows him well"

I blinked, pointing to my chest, " I know him?"

"Yes, you do. It's Judy"

My jaw dropped, you have got to be kidding me, "Judy, no way!" I yelled from the shock, "Does Adam know about this?"

"I don't have an idea and I don't care to know. It's my life to live, so he doesn't get to tell me who I sleep with and who I don't"

Alright, I'm going to back out of this one. From what I've seen and he has done to me so far, the Adam I know would never let his precious Emily get laid by a mere bodyguard-well, they're technically using each other, anyway.

Out of his children, Emily sure looks like the only one who hasn't seen the level of her father's cruelty. I bet it won't be long before Adam gets proactive.

But I won't say that out loud - I don't want to be the party pooper. Also, Emily looks like a kid who tasted candy for the first time and can't get enough of it.

The girl was clearly having the time of her life with this newfound freedom. So if I said something contrary to what Emily desires, I'll become an enemy who doesn't want her progress. So here I am, minding my own business- mouth zipped unless asked.

Cecil squealed, "How good is he in bed?"

"I'm so not curious about that but I'll be glad to hear that" I shamelessly joined in the dirty conversation.

Emily fanned her face, a flush on her cheeks as she recalled everything.

"On a five rating, I'll proudly give him five stars. You should see the way he thrust into me"

The girl got to her feet and demonstrated his pumping action in a sexual way that got Cecil and me screaming our lungs out like love-starved teenagers.

"Oh my God!"

"And he seems to have this endless stream of energy. The first time, we did it for about five times"

A blush crept up my cheeks when I recalled that weeks ago Niklaus and I had sex for the first time. I was so glad that the kids were not here to listen... wait a minute, talking about kids.

I looked around "Am I the only one that noticed the kids has not been spotted around for a while now?"

Emily and Cecil came back to their senses as they too searched around the living room.

"You're right"

"They don't seem to be here"

Why do I have a bad feeling about this?