

The Kiss 1121

Chapter 1121

Erench YTS WON out her cell to dial up the man she'd decided to cut ties with.

The cal connected almost instant, but the man on the other end didn't utter a word.

DR Sorted, "The Blanchet, what the hell is this?"

HS Camilar de ce may chod "Ms. Mendoza, so you've decided to dump me, and you're already on a full-name basis?"

She didn't call him us to how him tak smack!

Sarchet wele adults. Don't you think it's a bit childish to restrict my freedom just because you're pissed off?"

The store On you noticed has upset?"

Frowning and oing to keso her cool, Ellinor retorted, "Call off your dogs. I need to get out!"

And where are you sonnige to go?"

"Where Iso and what I do is my business, I don't have to report to you, do I?"

Ther was to selling whether Theo was angry or not. "Once you marry into the Blanchet family, you need to play by our rules. We're a couple; t's only normal that we keep tabs on each other."

Ellinor had had enough, "Thea me te not even registered. What gives you the right to control my life?"

e simply soled Stay put, I come back when I have time."

With that he hung up.

Ellinor was so pissed off that she was ready to chuck her phone out the window. What the hell was that?

Who did he think he was?

Stad Theo finally shown his true colors? Were all those times he was understanding, apologetic, and sweet just a big fat lie?

What a joke!

Ellinor gritted her teeth, reminding herself to keep it together. She had to figure out a way to get out of there.

Meanwhile, at Crescent Societ.

Chase was sipping his coffee in his office, somehow feeling a bit restless.

He got up and decided to go chat with Ida.

As he opened the office door, he noticed a male coworker yammering away with Belinda Wesley under the guise of work. Belinda didn't brush him off but was actually laughing at his jokes.

Normally, Belinda wouldn't entertain such advances, and if she did, she'd do it with a poker face.

Chase squinted his eyes. He was a bit surprised. After everything that went down, he didn't expect Belinda to still be here.

The male coworker, mid-laugh, noticed the boss and immediately put on a serious face. He greeted Chase and then scurried back to his own desk with the documents Belinda had helped him bind.

Belinda, noticing Chase, blinked in surprise, then stood up and bowed, formally asking, "Mr. Larios, is there anything you need me to do?"

Chase smirked and walked towards her, "Not at the moment. But I am a bit surprised to see you here."

Belinda replied politely. "The job pays well I have no reason to quit unless the company fires me."

Chase chuckled, "Isn't your uncle's company even better? He would give you a better position, a better salary, and you wouldn't have to do trivial things there."

Chapter 1122

"Mr. Larios, you're right. My uncle will go all out to sort things out for me, but I don't want to rely on him forever. I want to stand on my own two feet and tough it out a bit."

Chase appreciated her attitude, "Good on you. Was that coworker who was talking to you earlier hitting on you?"

Belinda was taken aback, explaining. "No, he just needed me to help him bind some documents because his stapler was broken."

Chase clearly didn't buy her explanation, "That guy's not bad; he's a hotshot from a prestigious university, plus he's pretty good-looking. You might want to give him a chance, since our company doesn't frown upon office romances."

Belinda's eyes flickered slightly, feeling a wave of unspeakable embarrassment, but she didn't get angry; she simply nodded, "If he really likes me. I'll give it a thought. Thanks for looking out for me. Mr. Larios."

Chase paused for a moment, then chuckled, "Alright, get back to work. If anyone asks for me, tell them I'm in Ms. Gipson's office."

"Sure," Belinda replied.

Chase headed to Ida's office, subconsciously adjusting his tie and feeling a bit stuffy.

The CEO's office wasn't far from the Deputy's, just a few steps away.

Given his relationship with Ida, Chase didn't bother knocking; he just pushed the door open, "Ida, did the boss call you? I have a funny feeling today. It seems like... what?"

Chase didn't notice what was happening inside the office room when he was speaking. But when he did, he was stunned by the sight.

Ida was being kissed on the neck, pressed against the office's large glass window.

And the man pressing against her, Chase recognized him. It was Byran Howard!

Seeing Chase burst in, Ida calmly pushed the man off her, straightened her clothes, returned to her desk chair, picked up the now-cold coffee from the desk, took a sip, and looked at Chase, "What were you saying?"

Chase snapped back to reality, "I've just got this uneasy feeling; I'm worried about her being taken advantage of by that Mr. Blanchet."

Ida adjusted her gold-rimmed glasses, "I share your concern. I'll give her a call later to check in."

However, Chase had already forgotten his initial intention. His eyes were filled with mischievousness as he walked over and poked at the mark on Ida's neck, "Ida, never thought you'd be so wild, huh?"

Ida frowned, and before she could speak, Byran swatted away Chase's hand.

Byran had a protective look on his face, "What the hell are you touching? You're a man. You can't just touch other women like that!"

Chase's hand was swatted away, but he just laughed, looking at the hot-blooded Byran, "And what were you doing just now?"

Byran, young and a bit shy, blushed at the tease, frowned, and said angrily, "I'm not like you! Don't compare me to you, and don't touch her again!"

Chase smirked, "How are you not like me? In what way? Aren't you a guy too?"

Byran blushed even more from being teased, "My relationship with her is different!"

Chase laughed even harder, "Oh? What's your relationship with her? How come I don't know?"

Byran, feeling a bit angry and too embarrassed to say it out loud, nudged the coffee-drinking Ida next to him lightly, "Hey! You tell him what our relationship is!"

Chapter 1123

Chase naturally turned to Ida and asked, "What's the deal between you two?"

Ida took a sip of her coffee calmly and stated, "Nothing."

Chase snickered, then looked at Byran and said, "Did you hear that, mate? Ida says there's nothing going on between you two!"

Even without Chase's provocation, Byran was already ticked off by Ida's answer, "What do you mean there's nothing going on? That day you... you totally... you had me..."

The more he said, the redder his face got and the more tongue-tied he became. Byran had no clue what he was doing!

Ida frowned, sharply rebuking, "Shush! If you don't know what to say, then don't! Buzz off. Don't disturb my work!"

Byran was so pissed off that he couldn't say a word and slumped in a chair nearby.

Ida didn't even spare him a glance, looking at Chase. "Anything else?"

Chase looked at Byran, laughed, and whispered to Ida, "Ida, I'm not blaming you, but you're being a bit harsh. The kid's just a kid."

Ida glared at him, "What kid? He's all grown up already! You think I like this? He's like an annoying fly that I can't shake off! It's driving me nuts!"

Chase laughed again, "When did this happen? I don't recall you having any ties with him."

Ida rubbed her forehead, replying, "That day at the hotel. After you left, he came..."

Chase asked curiously, "And then you guys..."

Ida cut him off. "Enough. Don't get ideas. I was just messing around that day. I was forced into it!"

Chase looked skeptical.

Since Chase and Ida were close, they usually chatted quite intimately.

It was normal on any other day, but that day, in Byran's eyes, it was like a capital offense!

Byran, who was already pissed, saw how close Chase and Ida were and got even more furious. He pointed at Chase and said, "If you're

bit further away!" talking to her, just talk! You don't have to be so darn close! She's not deaf; she can hear you even if you're

Chase didn't care about these rules. The angrier Byran got, the more excited he became, so he purposely hugged Ida and said, "I like it this way, so what? Before she met you, we were like this every day, sometimes even sleeping together! Mr. Howard, you just came too late!"

"Ah! You..." Like an angry cat, Byran charged at Chase, "Stand up! Let her go!"

Chase held Ida in his arms and said, "I won't let her go; what are you going to do?"

"Ah! Are you nuts? Why are you hugging someone else's girlfriend? Let her go! Don't touch my girlfriend!" Byran blurted out their relationship under the pressure.

Chase reached his goal, laughing as he let Ida go, "Oh, so she's your girlfriend? Mr. Howard, you should've said so earlier! If you had told me before, I wouldn't have touched your girlfriend!"

Byran's face turned red. He pulled Ida over to his side and said, "If you dare touch her again, I won't let you off!"

Chapter 1124

Chase waved dismissively, "I'm done with her! Mr. Howard, only you would fancy such a sly and workaholic woman!"

Byran kept a poker face, not too pleased with Chase's description of his woman.

Ida took off her glasses, massaged her temples, and said, "If you've got nothing else, buzz off. I'll catch up with you later."

Chase shrugged and chuckled, "Alright then! I won't disturb you two lovebirds. I'll go make a call to the boss!"

Ida warned, "Don't blabber unnecessary stuff at her!"

Chase flashed an OK sign, realizing Ida didn't want him to spill the beans about her and Mr. Howard to the boss.

That Mr. Howard was the half-brother of the boss. Was Ida involved with him because she feared the boss's wrath?

Once Chase had left, Ida put her glasses back on, giving Byran a chilly glance, "Have you had your fun? If you're done, you can go home and do your homework!"

Byran retorted confidently, "I've already finished my homework!"

Ida responded with slight annoyance, "Then go do what you need to do. Don't disturb me at work!"

Feeling slighted, Byran wasn't too pleased, but he clearly tempered his temper when dealing with Ida. "Okay, I won't disturb you. But promise me you won't get too close to Chase; I don't think he's good news!"

Ida sat down at her desk, casting a playful glance at him, "Why should I agree to your terms? You really think we have something going on?"

Byran frowned, then blushed, "You still doubt our relationship? Don't worry, I'll take responsibility!"

Ida was amused by his naivety, "Dear sir, who said I need you to take responsibility? Just because something happened doesn't mean you have to be responsible for it. Don't tell me you can't handle that?"

Byran's face turned red, a mix of embarrassment and anger, "Anyway, if you don't let me take responsibility, then you'll have to be responsible for me! I...it was my first time!"

Hearing him mention "the first time," Ida felt a headache coming on. She should've known better than to mess with a simpleton like him!

The day Chase left; she was forced by this man to answer some questions in the hotel. She teased him, hoping to scare him off.

But who knew that man had such a strong ego? He actually stripped his clothes off! She played along, teasing him a few more times and pushing him onto the bed!

For a taste of thrill, the man turned the tables, pinning her underneath him.

Ever since then, he's been sticking to her like glue! She couldn't shake him off!

Just then, he came to the office spouting nonsense, pinning her against the glass, and biting her. He was like a little wolf with sharp teeth, almost puncturing her artery.

If it wasn't for Chase walking in on time, she would've been devoured by that little wolf again!

Byran didn't think too much; he just knew that once he made up his mind about something or someone, he wouldn't change it!

"Hey! I'm hungry. When can you take a break? Can we go out for lunch together?"

Ida, engrossed in a document, responded casually, "I usually have lunch in the office."

Byran looked unhappy, "What should I do then?"

Ida still seemed unbothered, "If you're hungry, go find something to eat yourself. Eat whatever you want. No one's stopping you."

Byran's eyes widened, his face taut with dissatisfaction.

Chapter 1125

Ida raised an eyebrow at him and asked, "Aren't you leaving yet? Are you short on cash? Need me to give you some for food?"

At the mention of Ida giving him money, Byran, who had just felt ignored by a woman, was suddenly filled with motivation. He believed that Ida was showing concern for him.

"No need! I have money, but you should accompany me for dinner; you can't just abandon me here!"

Ida scrunched up her eyebrows, "Sorry, in my book, there's no such thing as 'should' or 'shouldn't'. Only kids keep stressing 'should' and 'shouldn't'."

Byran continued, "I'm not a kid!"

Ida smirked, "Did I say you were?"

Byran angrily crossed his arms and sat down in a huff. He had never been treated like that by a woman before. This woman was simply insufferable! It was infuriating!

Ida ignored him completely, adjusted her glasses, and focused on her work, as if he didn't exist at all.

After finishing her paperwork, she was about to call her secretary to collect the files when she looked up to see Byran napping on the couch. Ida frowned, initially planning to call security to take this brat away. But then she remembered that he was the boss's half-brother, and the boss was quite fond of him. If anything happened to him, the boss would surely be upset.

Begrudgingly, Ida rubbed her temples, grabbed her regular blanket, and went over to cover him.

As she did, Byran suddenly opened his eyes and said, "Ida, I knew it. You do care about me!"

Ida was exasperated.

Originally, she was carefully covering him with the blanket, afraid that any big movements would wake him and cause more nuisance. However, then that the brat was awake; Ida showed no kindness, yanking the blanket up and covering his entire face!

Then Ida turned around and walked out of the office.

Byran pulled off the blanket, got up, and followed her out. He saw Ida instructing her secretary at the door to fetch the files and quickly approached.

The secretary glanced at Byran, who had come out of the CEO's office, with curious look in her eyes.

Ida felt annoyed. She finished instructing her subordinate and left, but Byran was still following her.

Fed up, she stopped, turned around, and asked, "Why are you following me?"

Byran replied, "I don't know. I just go wherever you go!"

Ida pulled a sardonic smile, "Even married couples don't need to follow each other everywhere, right? Mr. Howard, please respect yourself!"

Byran blushed, "Did you say 'married'? Uh... I'll find time to talk to my family, and then I'll take you to meet my parents! They probably also want me to graduate from college before getting married, especially my brother, who wants me to prioritize my studies! But if you're eager to get married, we can register first! I can promise you that I will be responsible for you till the end. I won't be unfaithful!"

"Enough!" Ida found it more ridiculous the more she listened. That gentleman seemed to live in a soap opera, thinking that sleeping together once meant they had to be together!

How laughable!

She had never thought about getting married and certainly didn't need a kid to be responsible for her!

"Mr. Howard, you might've misunderstood me! What I meant was, leave here, stop following me. You'd better spend your time doing your own thing! Do you understand now?"

Byran snorted, "We're on winter break. I've finished my homework, and I just happen to have time to accompany you."

Chapter 1126

Was Byran a bit slow on the uptake?

"I don't really need your company," Ida said.

Byran shrugged, "Women are always saying one thing and meaning another. Just now you were worried I'd catch a cold and even helped me cover up with the blanket."

Ida stayed silent.

If they weren't seeing eye to eye, there was no need to talk more than necessary.

Ida ignored Byran, quickly heading towards Chase's office.

The secretary's spot at Chase's office was empty, which Ida found odd. Before entering, she turned to Byran sternly, "Wait here; don't follow me in."

Byran was a bit ticked off, "Why? What are you up to with Chase?"

"I'm working. This is a company; Chase is my collaborator and coworker! You're not an employee here, so you don't have the right to go in there with me to discuss work." Ida stated.

Ida's serious demeanor made Byran a bit miffed, "Alright, alright! I won't mess up your work; go ahead; I'll wait out here."

Ida gave him a cold look, then knocked and entered Chase's office.

Byran, like a dog waiting for its owner outside a supermarket, waited obediently yet anxiously. He even thought about eavesdropping by pressing his ear against the door.

"Byran?"

After hearing his name, Byran snapped out of it. He turned to see Belinda, who was holding a coffee cup, looking surprised, "Is that really you, Byran? What are you doing here?"

Byran was also surprised to see Belinda, "I was about to ask you the same question! What are you doing here?"

Belinda sat down at her desk, "I work here. What's so surprising about that?"

Byran's eyes widened, "What? You work here? Aren't you working at Theo's company?"

"Oh, my uncle Theo's company was dull, so I decided to work here instead to challenge myself!" Belinda replied.

Byran, suddenly having a thought, asked, "Does your company hire part-timers? Can I apply?"

Belinda looked at him suspiciously, "You want to work here? Why? Don't you have your own company?"

Byran made a face, "My own company's boring. I'm constantly under my brother's watch and always getting criticized. I want to be independent like you."

Belinda was skeptical, "Our company probably doesn't hire high school students."

Byran frowned awkwardly, "I'm about to graduate."

"Well, we don't hire part-timers either."

"Then how did you get in?" Byran asked incredulously.

Belinda rolled her eyes, "I'm not like you! I'm a university graduate; I submitted my resume and got in through a normal interview."

Byran huffed, "Oh, so university graduates are all that?!"

Belinda found him childish, "I'm not going to argue anymore! You still haven't told me why you're here. Just now you were sneaking around and pressing your face against Mr. Larios' door to eavesdrop!"

Byran felt a bit embarrassed. He cleared his throat, trying to defend himself. "I wasn't eavesdropping! My girlfriend is in there, so I was just worried about her."

Belinda was taken aback, "What? You have a girlfriend?"

Byran lifted his head slightly and smiled. "Is it strange that I have a girlfriend?"

Belinda couldn't help but laugh, waving her hand, "Very strange! Who would want to date a childish guy like you? Hahaha."

Byran's face fell, "You're the childish one!"

Chapter 1127

They had no idea that the soundproofing on the main office door wasn't as good as they thought. As a result, their conversation seeped through.

Ida was sitting opposite Chase at his desk with a throbbing vein visible on her temple.

Chase, however, seemed highly amused. "What's up?" He asked jovially. "You look a bit peeved. Are you annoyed at that guy?"

Ida shot him a glare. "Cut the crap, Chase. Do you really think I'm interested in him?"

Chase propped his chin on his hand as a smirk played on his lips. "Whether you are or not, you've already gotten involved with him."

Ida massaged her forehead as a look of regret appeared on her face. "I wish I hadn't. Can you help me shake him off?"

Chase cocked an eyebrow. "Actually, there might be a way, but I don't think you need to be in such a hurry to dump him. There aren't many sincere guys like him around these days. Are you sure you don't want to give him another shot?"

"Of course not! Just help me figure out how to get rid of him."

"That's easy." Chase said. "Just call his brother, Balfour, and tell him he's bothering you. His brother will take care of it."

Ida had considered this approach but was hesitant. She was worried that Bryan might be punished by his brother. After all, Bryan's pursuit of her wasn't exactly one-sided. She had shown interest first.

Ida's silence made Chase raise an eyebrow. "Are you worried that Byran will be reprimanded when he gets home?"

Ida snapped back to reality, and her brows furrowed. "He needs a good talking-to. Let his brother handle him!"

She whipped out her phone and dialed the office of the president of the Howard Group.

After watching Ida finish her call with Balfour, Chase couldn't hold back his amazement. "I can't believe you actually made that call."

Ida shot him a disdainful look as she adjusted her gold-rimmed glasses. "Less chatter, Chase! Did you call our boss?"

The mention of their boss, Ellinor made Chase sober up. "I did, but she didn't answer."

"No answer?" Ida felt something was off. "She should be awake by now!"

"I'm afraid my number might have been blocked by Mr. Blanchet." Chase said, looking worried. "You try calling her."

Ida dialed Ellinor's number, but there was no answer.

They exchanged worried looks, both sensing trouble.

"I sent her a text, but she didn't reply. That's unusual."

"Do you think Theo found out we told Boss about his secret marriage overseas and is trying to cut us off?"

"Could be! Should we go find her?"

"If Theo is really blocking us, we might not be able to get into the Blanchet Villa."

Meanwhile, outside the office.

Byran and Belinda were still arguing.

"Hey, Byran." Belinda asked tentatively, "You just said your girlfriend was in Mr. Larios' office. Why would she need to see him?" She was wondering if Chase, the notorious womanizer, had brought Byran's girlfriend into his office.

"I don't know." Byran replied. "She must have some business with Mr. Larios."

Belinda was taken aback. "Who is your girlfriend? Why would she need to see Mr. Larios?"

With a hint of pride, Byran pointed in a direction. "Her office is over there. Do you think she's qualified to see Mr. Larios?"

Chapter 1128

Belinda was sipping her coffee when she nearly choked. "What did you say? Your girlfriend is our general manager, Ms. Gipson?"

Byran nodded, "Yep, that's right!"

Belinda was utterly shocked. To her, these two were like oil and water; how could they possibly be together?

"So you're saying... you're going to be my boss's husband?" Belinda muttered.

Byran said, "I'm going to marry her into the Howard family!"

Belinda took a sip of her coffee, "But man, you scored big time by snagging Ms. Gipson. She's notorious for being a workaholic, never giving any man the time of day."

Byran's eyes lit up. "Really? She doesn't pay attention to men?"

Belinda nodded, "Yep! Plenty of handsome partners have tried to woo Ms. Gipson. They showered her with gifts, but she turned a blind eye, either returning them or tossing them away. Many of us thought she wasn't into men."

Byran was pleased to hear this. He had been a bit worried because he was wondering if she was this friendly with other men. Hearing what Belinda said made him suddenly feel relaxed.

Ida wasn't as open as she appeared.

Just then, the elevator dinged, and the doors slid open.

Quinton, flanked by two burly bodyguards, stepped out, headed straight for Byran, and grabbed him.

Byran jumped, "Who? What? Quinton, what are you doing here?"

Quinton responded, "Mr. Howard, your brother sent me to fetch you."

Byran asked anxiously, "My brother sent you? How did he know I was here?"

"It was me who told him." Ida emerged from her office, her face expressionless.

Byran was stunned and then asked, "You called my brother?"

Ida adjusted her glasses, "I didn't want to, but you wouldn't listen. You wouldn't go home, so I had to call your family to pick you up."

Byran looked hurt, "How could you do this to me? I just wanted to have lunch with you, and you called my brother?! You know he scares the hell out of me! How could you?"

Ida felt a pang of guilt after seeing his hurt expression.

Quinton held Byran back, "Mr. Howard, let's go home."

Byran said angrily, "No! I'm not going! Let go of me!"

Quinton sighed and signaled his bodyguards to stop being gentle. They took Byran away.

And so, Byran was taken away. Quinton turned to nod courteously at Ida before following the bodyguards out.

While watching Byran's retreating figure, Ida let out a sigh of relief, but her brows were furrowed.

Chase, who had emerged at some point, lazily leaned against the door, "So you are worried about him?"

Ida snapped out of her thoughts and glared at him, "Buzz off!"

Chase shrugged. While grinning, his gaze drifted to a stunned Belinda at her secretary desk.

Chapter 1129

Belinda was having a blast chatting with Bryan when suddenly a group of guys came and whisked him away. She was still trying to wrap her head around the situation as she nibbled on her coffee straw in a daze.

"Look at you, having a blast with your coffee?"

The sound of Chase's voice snapped Belinda back to reality, and she put down her coffee.

Chase had a grin plastered on his face, "I didn't tell you not to drink. Why so jumpy? But how come you're hogging all the coffee for yourself and not getting me a cup?"

Belinda stood up to explain, "Mr. Larios, this coffee wasn't my order; it's on the house from some colleagues. Plus, it's a budget-friendly option; it might not be to your liking, so they didn't bother getting you this."

She was careful with her words, not wanting to land her colleagues in hot water.

Chase raised an eyebrow. "Is that so? How do you know it's not to my liking? Gimme, let me give it a taste."

Give it a taste? He didn't even order anything, so what was he trying to taste?

Belinda was flabbergasted, watching Chase with wide eyes.

Chase sauntered over to her desk, picked up the coffee, took a sip, and nodded, "Not too shabby! Get me one next time."

Belinda was gobsmacked. She was blushing furiously, completely at a loss.

Wait, hold up! Don't go overboard!

- Chase never had any self-control around women; he was probably kissing and sleeping with a different woman every day, so what was a sip of someone's drink?

He must've just done it out of habit, not because it was her coffee. Even if it was another woman's, he'd still take a swig.

Belinda banished these thoughts from her mind, took the coffee from Chase, and tossed it in the trash, "Sure, Mr. Larios, next time someone's getting coffee, I'll make sure they get you one too."

Chase squinted his eyes. He watched Belinda toss the coffee in the trash and chuckled. "Didn't know you disliked me that much. Sorry for ruining your coffee."

Belinda frowned, coldly replying, "No worries, I'd already had half of it; I usually can't finish a whole cup anyway, so I always end up throwing it away."

Chase's expression turned serious. The girl who used to be head over heels for him was now so indifferent that he was having a hard time getting used to it.

But wasn't this exactly what he wanted?

Ida came over and reminded him, "Alright, enough teasing your secretary! Let's get down to business!"

Chase snapped back to reality, turned serious, and said, "Ms. Wesley, I need a favor."

Belinda slightly bowed, "Mr. Larios, feel free to tell me what you need."

"It's not work-related; it's a personal favor actually."

Belinda looked puzzled, “Personal? Mr. Larios, what personal favor could you possibly need from me?”

She better not have to go get him condom again!

Chase slung his arm around Ida’s shoulder, “We’re both planning to visit the Blanchet Villa later, but we’re afraid the Blanchet family might not welcome us, so we might not be able to get in. You’re related to Theo, right? I figure that if you come with us, it should be smooth sailing.”

Belinda was a bit confused, “Mr. Larios, why would you and Ms. Gipson suddenly want to visit the Blanchet Villa together? Is there something special going on?”

Chapter 1130

Chase continued, “We want to go check on Ellinor and see if she’s expecting. We plan to bring her some gifts.”

Belinda looked puzzled, “If you’re visiting Ellinor, I reckon you and Ms. Gipson can handle it. Just tell them why you’re there, and the Blanchet family should welcome you. There’s no need for me to come along.”

Chase frowned, “It’d be safer to have you with us. If they don’t let us in, we won’t have wasted our trip with you there, right?”

Belinda felt something was off, but Chase’s reasoning was sound. So, she agreed, “Alright! Do I need to wait until I get off work?” Chase replied, “No need. If you’re free now, we can leave immediately.”

“Why the rush?” Belinda blinked and checked the time on her phone, “I don’t have much going on today. Alright, let’s go now.” Belinda grabbed her bag, slipped in her phone, put on her jacket, and got ready to go to the Blanchet Villa with Chase and Ida.

On the way to the elevator, Chase noticed a coffee on the desk of a male colleague who had previously flirted with Belinda. It was the same type Belinda had been drinking. They also exchanged a knowing smile.

Once in the car, Belinda took the front passenger seat, while the two bosses sat in the back. The driver started the car, and they began the journey.

Belinda leaned back, watching the scenery out the window. Suddenly, she pulled out her phone and shot Ellinor a message. “Ellinor, Mr. Larios, Ms. Gipson, and I are coming to see you. Anything you fancy eating? I can pick it up for you.”

After waiting for several minutes without a reply, she exited the chat and saw a message from her colleague Jacob.

Jacob texted. “What are you doing with Mr. Larios and Ms. Gipson?”

Belinda responded. “They need my help with something.”

Jacob replied. “Wow, you’re involved with the big bosses?”

Belinda texted back. “I know the place they want to visit!”

Jacob asked. "Will you have time for lunch? Can you buy lunch where you're going?"

Belinda paused. It had been a while since someone showed her this much concern. Touched, she was about to respond when...

Chase's voice came from the backseat, "Ms. Wesley, I don't mind you chatting, but it'd be best not to disclose our itinerary and destination." Belinda stopped typing, instinctively hid her phone, and looked back. Chase was lounging casually with no sign of having peeked at her phone.

"Mr. Larios, you're overthinking. I didn't reveal any specifics, just some vague info."

Chase chuckled, "That's good then."

Belinda had a feeling Chase was being a bit sly today but couldn't quite put her finger on it. She quickly replied to Jacob, "I'll make sure to eat; I gotta go now!"

Jacob quickly texted back. "Be careful on the road. Call me if you need anything!"

"Will do!" Belinda exited the chat with Jacob and checked one last time, but Ellinor still hadn't replied, so she put her phone back in her bag.

Chase watched Belinda as she was texting with his eyes slightly squinted. It looked like he was smiling, or maybe irritated.

"Do you fancy that male colleague?" Chase asked teasingly.

Belinda was taken aback. He must have been peeking earlier; how else would he know who she was texting?