

Wild Night 111

Chapter 111 - That's My Friend

Once it was time to leave for the Cinema, Lucy met Tom by the car. Neither of them said anything as they gazed at each other. To a casual observer, it would seem like they were two lovers staring at each other, but that wasn't the case.

As Lucy looked at Tom she wondered how her boss' knowledge of her relationship with Sonia was going to affect the dynamics of her job at the office, and what she was going to do about her relationship with Tom if her boss eventually gave her the go-ahead to get a new driver.

The major reason she had gotten herself involved in all this mess of trying to please him by helping him get the lady he liked and being his temporary girlfriend was that her boss had said she couldn't fire him and that if he left she would have to lose her job too. Now that she had decided to help him be the perfect boyfriend, she wondered what would happen after now if he was unable to get Anita and if the CEO still fails to grant her permission to change her driver.

Tom who was also staring at her and wondered why she could have asked Sonia to tell Bryan that she worked with his brother. Was she interested in the CEO after all? Had he misjudged her in haste because he wanted her to be the one? He hoped not, cause he was already more interested in her than he had been in all the past ladies combined.

"You look nice," Tom said, breaking the silence between them as he looked her over with a smile.

She was dressed in a short denim skirt with a black bodycon turtleneck tucked into it, and a pair of black sneakers to match.. Her hair was packed in a ponytail as usual and her glasses were back in place on the bridge of her nose. The only sign that she was wearing make-up on her face was the lipgloss on her lips. Seeing how she was dressed, she could easily pass for a college student.

"Thank you," she said with a small smile as she also took note of his outfit. Tom was dressed in khaki combat shorts with a white t-shirt and black sneakers which matched the baseball hat on his head.

"You are driving?" Tom asked in surprise when she auto unlocked the car and got into the driver's seat, while he remained standing where he was by the bonnet of the car.

"Yes. We are not going to work, so I figured you don't have to drive us today. Get in," she said jerking her head in the direction of the front passenger door as she shut her door.

Tom smiled a little before walking over to where she was, "I should check the car to make sure it's fine before we leave," Tom said, motioning for her to unlock the bonnet.

Once he checked the bonnet to make sure everything was okay, he went around the car and got into his seat, "Do you know where we are going to?" Tom asked as he put on his seatbelt. Since Lucy was new to the city he knew she didn't know her way around.

"She said we should meet at Eastside Cinemas. Although I told her I don't know the place, she thinks you might know it since you are not new to Ludus. So do you know it?" Lucy asked as she turned on the car's ignition, but made no move to set the car in motion.

Eastside Cinemas? Of all places to go to, why did it have to be there? Tom mused with a slight scowl. That had been one of the places he had asked Anita to meet him for their date and she had

stood him up after he waited for over two hours for her to show up, "Sure. I know it," Tom said with a nod.

Anita didn't matter to him in any way. As long as he was going out with Lucy, it was fine. He at least had a girlfriend who he was sure wouldn't stand him up. How could she even stand him up when she was the one driving them to the place? Tom reasoned with a grin.

"Good. So make sure you point me in the right direction," Lucy said as she reversed the car.

"Left," Tom called to her so she would know the direction they were going. Lucy said nothing as she took the left route.

"I was wondering something," Tom said as he watched her while she drove.

"What?" Lucy asked without sparing him a glance.

"Even though you warned me you were probably going to fall asleep halfway into the movie, I'm surprised that you slept off so soundly in my apartment," Tom said, making color flood her cheek in embarrassment.

"I guess it's because I ate too much, the clothes were warm, and I don't do movies much..." She stopped when Tom chuckled.

"I guess that explains why you snuggled closer to me when I carried you?" Tom asked with a teasing tone and chuckled again when she turned to look at him in disbelief.

"I'm not saying I mind that you did. I just wanted to be sure you are not that comfortable with everyone," Tom said with a serious expression in his eyes.

"I don't visit others or spend the night at their place," Lucy said defensively.

"It's a relief to know that," Tom said with a nod.

"So, I took the liberty to make us a list of things we can do as a couple, as I told you I would do earlier," Lucy said after she drove in silence for a while.

"You have?" Tom asked, sounding not so surprised.

"Yeah. Hold on," she said as she kept her eyes on the road, and reached into her bag which was on the space beside them for a sheet of paper, "Here, I made you a copy," she said as she handed it to him.

Tom took the paper from her and he raised a brow when he saw that the first two paragraphs had been ticked already, "Sleepover at boyfriend's house, and watch a movie with boyfriend at the Cinema, why are they ticked already?" He asked, glancing at her curiously.

"I slept over at your house last night, remember? And we are on our way to see a movie," she pointed out.

"That sleepover doesn't count since you did it before you thought of creating the checklist, and you can't even call that a sleepover. You only dozed off at your boyfriend's place. Besides, don't you know that most ladies visit their boyfriends and stay with them for days? Even weeks?" Tom asked, making Lucy's brows pull together in a frown.

"Not all girlfriends do that. Left or right?" She asked when they got to another intersection.

"Right. Not all girlfriends do that but I want my girlfriend to do it. I'm teaching you how to be my girlfriend, remember?"

"That doesn't make sense. I am your next-door neighbor and seeing me every day..."

"Would you like me to move out of the house? I could move to a different place," Tom suggested making Lucy laugh out loud at the joke.

She turned to look at him when she didn't hear him laugh, and stopped laughing when she noticed that he was looking at her with a serious expression, "You...you are joking, right?" She asked with a wavering smile.

"Why? You don't want me to leave?" Tom asked with a slightly raised brow.

Tom leaving? That wouldn't be such a bad idea. Actually, it would be a great idea. That way she would have to worry less about him being her neighbor after their relationship comes to an end. And if her boss gave the go-ahead for her to replace Tom with a different driver, then she could finally relax and not ever have to worry about his presence in her life anymore. But how would he get the money to move? Where would he move to?

"You don't have money to..."

"My friend's place is available. I could move there, and you can visit me and sleepover as much as you want," Tom suggested.

"Your friend would let you do that?" She asked, thinking that it would be really awesome if he could move once they returned from the Cinema. But then again that would also make coming to her house to pick her up in the morning difficult.

Seeing the thoughtful expression on her face Tom could tell that she liked the idea, but he couldn't understand why. Was she still that uncomfortable around him?

"Sure. But you'll have to visit me a lot. Take the next turn," Tom called out to her abruptly when he noticed that she was about to miss the turn, and Lucy quickly did as she was told, almost causing the vehicle behind them to slam into their car.

The driver blared his horn angrily and swore at them before driving away, "Sorry. Should I drive instead?" Tom asked when he noticed that her face had gone pale.

She quickly shook her head, "No. It's fine. I'm okay," she said more to herself than to him as she drew in a shaky breath and kept driving.

Although Tom didn't believe her, he chose to let her be. Neither of them said another word to each other until they got to the cinema and Lucy parked the car.

"Maybe we could discuss the checklist some other time," Tom suggested, wanting to push it off as far as possible since she had said they would break up once they had done everything on the list.

Lucy gave him a nod as she picked up her handbag and reached out to open her door.

Once they got out of the car, Lucy's cellphone started ringing and she took it out to see that the call was from Anita, "Hey! We just got here, are you inside already?" Lucy asked as she met Tom's gaze.

"I'm just driving in... Oh! I can see you both," Anita said excitedly as she quickly hung up, making Lucy turn in the direction of Anita's car which she recognized from the previous day. Tom followed her gaze and squinted against the glare of the sun reflecting on her windscreen so he could see who was inside the car.

"That's my friend," Lucy announced, watching Tom with interest to see his reaction as Anita drove over to the available parking space next to their car.

Lucy grinned when she saw Tom's eyes widen in surprise as Anita got out of the car, and she mentally patted herself for giving him such a beautiful surprise. He would be happy to spend the day in the company of his soon-to-be girlfriend.

Anita? She was Lucy's friend? How? Since when? Why????? He wondered as he looked from Anita who was smiling at them as she approached where they were standing, to Lucy who was also smiling cheerfully at him like she had just done something great. Oh, no!

Chapter 112 – Cupid Matchmaker

Tom looked at Anita with a blank expression on his face as she approached them. Unlike Lucy who was casually dressed, she was dressed in a blue strapless romper and black suede high-heeled sandals, and her hair was let down as the only covering on her bare shoulder. No matter how classy she looked, she would remain a cheap golddigger in his eyes, Tom thought as he looked away from her to Lucy who was still grinning cheekily.

What did she do so good that she was happy about? Tom thought with a scoff.

"Hi! It's nice to..."

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Tom grabbed Lucy's hand and dragged her to the side before Anita could complete her greeting, leaving her standing there to watch them both in amusement since she had been expecting that sort of reaction from Tom. Although she was surprised that Lucy didn't tell him about her.

"What are you doing?" Lucy asked with a frown as she tried to free her hand from his grip.

"How is she your friend?" Tom asked, glaring in Anita's direction before returning his gaze to Lucy. Of all persons in that building to become friends with? Why did it have to be Anita? Why?

Lucy smiled at him, thinking he was feeling shy because he was surprised to meet his crush this way, "How do people become friends? Don't worry, I think she likes you too, so no need to be shy," Lucy said in a conspiratorial whisper, which made him look at her with a puzzled frown.

"Likes me too? How?" Tom asked, glancing at Anita who was standing there with an awkward smile on her face as she fanned herself because of the heat, while they both continued to whisper.

Lucy smiled again, "I never would have figured you to be so shy around someone you like. It's cute. At least you now know why I said we can't tell my friend about our temporary relationship. Don't worry, I just reasoned that it would be wise I become friends with her, that way I can learn more about her and tell you all you need to know to get her. I got you," Lucy said as she flashed Anita an apologetic smile.

Help him to get her? Wait a minute, she was really trying to matchmake them? The moment he had seen the smile on her face earlier, he had suspected this but had discarded the idea to be ridiculously

silly, but he was actually right? What on earth would make her think that Anita was the person he was in love with? How had she managed to jump to such a farfetched conclusion like a toad?

"Let's join her," Lucy suggested as she tried to walk away, but Tom pulled her back.

"I don't want to hang out with her. I don't like her," Tom said plainly, making Lucy raise a brow.

"Since when? Come on, stop acting like a shy little boy. You are not confessing your feelings to her yet, so there is no need to be... What are you frowning at me for?" Lucy asked when she noticed how Tom was frowning at her while gritting his teeth like he was seriously annoyed about something.

Shouldn't he be thanking her? Why was he upset?

"I am not shy. And I really don't like her!" Tom said through gritted teeth.

Lucy snorted, "Yet you had lunch with her and stood me up? And when I asked you if she was the one you said yes, so what are you lying for? Tell that to someone else," she said with an eye roll.

Tom tried to remember the day Lucy was referring to and all that happened to make her think Anita was his mysterious lady. His eyes narrowed when he remembered the time she asked him if the lady he had lunch with was the lady he liked. He had said yes since he believed Lucy didn't know what Anita looked like and thought it was best to just tell her it was Anita... His eyes widened in surprise when he remembered that she had eaten lunch at the cafeteria that day instead of her office. Was it possible that she had seen him with Anita? For God's sake what was all this complications for? Just when everything was going well, and now this? And why was Anita playing along? Why was she here when she wasn't even interested in him and didn't want anyone else to know about their history?

"You see? You can't defend yourself. Let's go in before the movie starts without us," Lucy said as she stubbornly walked past him and went to join Anita.

"Is everything okay?" Anita asked in mock concern as she glanced in Tom's direction. She really hoped Tom hadn't revealed the truth about their relationship to Lucy.

"Yes. Sorry we kept you waiting. He is usually very shy around pretty ladies," Lucy lied with a sweet smile, "Let's go in. He will join us soon," Lucy said before glancing in Tom's direction, "Meet us inside after composing yourself," she said with a wink before walking away with Anita who glanced at Tom with a knowing smile that twitched the corners of her lips.

Tom ran his fingers through his hair as he watched them walk away. How was he going to tell Lucy that Anita wasn't the one he was interested in? If he said she wasn't the one, Lucy might want him to show her the lady he was interested in. Oh, God! Why did things have to be so complicated just when he was trying to stop telling her so many lies? What could he do now? Tom asked himself with a sigh as he walked into the building.

He saw people trooping towards the area where the tickets were being sold to the direction that led to the various viewing halls. He looked around as he tried to find Lucy.

"Hello! Are you Mr. Tom?" A uniformed guard asked as he approached him.

"I am," Tom said as he glanced at the guard curiously.

"Your friends have gone in already since the movie is about to start showing. They said I should hand you this ticket, and ask you to join them in the third viewing hall," he said as he handed Tom the movie ticket.

"Thank you," Tom said as he took the ticket from him, and headed in the direction of the halls. After he handed his ticket to the guard by the door and was checked, he walked into the hall.

Standing by the entrance, he looked around as he tried to adjust his eyesight to the dark hall, and then Lucy raised her hand and flashed her phone's flashlight so that he could see where they were seated.

The first thing Tom noticed as he approached where they were seated was that Lucy was seated at the end of the row with only a space between her and Anita. The only other empty seat on the row was next to Anita, and after that seat, three guys who looked like college students were seated there.

What the seating arrangement simply meant was that if he was going to sit close to Lucy, then it had to be between her and Anita, unless he wanted to sit on the next row, Tom reasoned with an inward groan.

How did any of this make sense? Why didn't Lucy just sit in the middle between him and Anita since she was going to obviously be the moderator of this awkward hangout? Tom reasoned in frustration as Lucy adjusted her legs to give him room to get to his seat, and once he passed her, he sank into the seat.

"I didn't know what you would want so we got you a can of Coke, I hope you don't mind?" Lucy asked, glancing at him with a smile as she handed the drink to him.

"It's fine, Thanks."

"I didn't want to have popcorn, so we got a large box. You can share with Anita," Lucy said with a small smile, reasoning that they would be able to brush hands as couples do in movies while taking popcorn from the same bowl.

Tom gritted his teeth in annoyance, "I don't have the appetite to eat anything either, so I guess she can have it all to herself," Tom murmured as he directed his attention to the screen.

He couldn't tell Lucy that Anita was his ex. He wasn't sure why, but he just didn't want to remember that he had ever had anything to do with Anita. Plus he had asked Anita to forget their history and not bring it up, so it wouldn't be nice to bring it up either.

"Hi!" Anita greeted, flashing him a small smile.

"Hi!" Tom responded without looking away from the screen.

"We seem to be running into each a lot these days, don't we?" She asked with a small smile.

"I wonder why it is so," Tom said, hoping she would stop talking and just focus her attention on the screen since he was making it as politely clear as possible that he didn't want to talk to her.

"I think..."

"I think we should focus on the movie since that is why we are here," Tom said a little too sharply, making Lucy who had been eavesdropping on their conversation elbow his side.

"Don't be mean! You are going to ruin your chances with her by playing hard to get," Lucy hissed in at him in frustration.

Hard to get? She thought he was playing hard to get? Tom almost chuckled at the hilarity of the ridiculous situation he had found himself in.

He took in a deep breath before turning to face Anita, "What are you doing?" He asked in a whisper, but the annoyance was clear in his tone.

"Focusing on the movie since that is why we are here," Anita said without glancing at him as she carefully picked a popcorn and placed it in her mouth.

Tom sighed, "I suppose I should tell her about us, what do you think?" He asked, trying to see her reaction, and as expected her head turned to look at her.

"I thought we had an agreement," Anita reminded him under her breath, but he could hear the warning in her tone.

"If you remember we have an agreement what are you doing here with her?" He asked under his breath so that Lucy wouldn't hear them.

"You like her, don't you?" Anita asked with a slightly raised brow, and a knowing smile danced on the edge of her lip.

"That doesn't answer my question!"

"Let's just say I'm here to play cupid. I figured she is more suitable for you than I am or can ever be, and to make up for the past I want to help pair you both together," Anita said with a pleasant smile that made Tom narrow his eyes.

What was this? Both of them were playing cupid with him? He felt like laughing at himself and crying for himself at the same time. What did he do to deserve this?

"I don't remember asking for your help," Tom said, trying to control his emotions.

"You don't have to ask. I feel like I owe it to you considering how things went between us. So don't worry about me. Although I think she likes you, she has only good things to say about you," Anita whispered conspiratorially.

Of course, Lucy would have only good things to say about him to Anita because she was also trying to matchmake him with Anita. Lord have mercy, what was he going to do about this?

"If I like her, I can very well talk to her by myself, I don't need your help, so stay clear off me," Tom warned.

Lucy smiled to herself as she listened to their whisperings even though she couldn't hear anything they were saying. She was just glad that they were communicating and focused on each other. She was a good matchmaker. Perhaps she should consider a career in matchmaking?

'Nice one, Lu. Nice one,' she patted herself mentally.

Chapter 113 - Conference Call

After staring at the screen for a while without following the movie being shown on the screen, Tom turned to Lucy, "I will be outside," Tom whispered to Lucy as he tried to stand up.

"What? Why? The movie barely just started. Is something wrong?" Lucy asked in concern as she glanced at Anita to see if something was wrong, but Anita's gaze was fixed on the screen.

"Everything is okay. I don't think I enjoy the movie, and I need to make a phone call outside. I will join you when I'm done," Tom said as he stood up, and waited for Lucy to adjust her legs before walking out of the row.

"Wait," Lucy called out before he could walk away, making some of the viewers near them turn to look at them as they frowned at the noise, "Sorry," Lucy whispered to them before turning to Tom.

"You should go with the car key," she said, extending it to him.

"Thanks," Tom said as he took the car key from her before walking away.

Once he left, Lucy turned to Anita, "Did something happen between you both?" She asked in concern. She couldn't believe that after she had just finished commending herself on a job well done in bringing them together Tom had decided to leave.

"Not at all. I think he would have preferred to be here alone with you," Anita said, flashing her a small smile.

Lucy giggled at the statement, "Nah. He would have preferred to be here alone with you, trust me. He likes you," Lucy whispered conspiratorially since she believed Anita liked Tom as well.

Anita's perfectly carved brows shot up, "You are mistaken. You are the one he likes," Anita said, and Lucy shook her head with an amused smile.

"Don't worry, I'm sure you will find out soon enough that he likes you," Lucy said with a confident smile before returning her attention to the screen once again.

After Tom left the movie hall, he walked over to the parking lot, unlocked the car, and dialed Jade's line as he sat on the driver's seat. It was Sunday and as such, he knew she wouldn't be at the office, and if anything she would be in her study at home looking over a case file or just resting.

"Sup!" Jade greeted distractedly once she received the call, but her eyes were still on the open page of the hardback crime novel she was reading.

"Do you have a minute?" Tom asked with a note of urgency in his tone, which prompted Jade to sit up on her bed and drop the novel next to her.

"Sure. What's up?"

"I need your opinion on something," Tom said with a frown.

"Okay... What's up?" Jade asked, waiting to hear what the problem was.

Tom looked at the screen of his phone when he heard the notification of an awaiting call,

"Hold on, Bryan is calling. Let's have a conference call, that way you both can tell me what you think," Tom said as he received Bryan's call and made it a conference call where all three of them could speak to each other at once.

"Hey, Bryan! I was just talking to Jady before you called, so it's a conference call," Tom informed Bryan.

"Hey, sissy! How're you doing?" Bryan asked curiously.

"If you wanted to know you should have called," Jade hissed at him.

"I would have called if I wasn't on this damn wheelchair," Bryan said, trying to turn the table.

"What wheelchair?"

"A wheelchair? Why?" Tom and Jade asked simultaneously. Their concern was evident in their voice.

"You see? Maybe if you had bothered to call to check up on me you would have known that I twisted my ankle," Bryan said with a smug smile, knowing he had succeeded in turning the table.

"When did that happen? How come you didn't mention it when we discussed this morning?" Tom asked in concern.

"Sorry, it slipped my mind. I slipped in the bathroom on Friday night. Sonia is fine, she went shopping with Mia, hence I'm calling now," Bryan explained.

"Good to know you are okay, Yan. Tom, how was your dinner date last night? And what was the issue you needed my opinion on?" Jade asked, bringing Tom's attention back to the issue they were discussing.

"You need her opinion on something? Why didn't you call me first?" Bryan asked grudgingly.

"Tsk! I can't believe after all these years you are still always competing for attention with me. What a shame," Jade said, clucking her tongue.

"You wish," Bryan muttered.

"Listen up. I'm outside this Cinema hall. Lucy is inside with Anita, who happens to be my ex-girlfriend, and for one reason or the other they are both trying to matchmake me with each other," Tom said, catching both their attentions at once.

"Wait, what? Your ex-girlfriend is friends with Lucy? How? And why are you outside the hall? Are you stalking them?" Bryan asked while Jade listened patiently as she waited for Tom's response to Bryan's questions.

Tom took in a deep breath before going ahead to explain how Lucy had suggested they see a movie with her friend, and how he had found out the friend was Anita. He also went on to give them the details of his relationship with Anita and how he now owned the company where she worked. He also told them how Lucy had come to the conclusion that Anita was the lady he liked.

"Wow!" Bryan and Jade exclaimed in unison after he was done.

"So you mean Lucy is trying to help you win Anita, and for some twisted reason the gold-digging Anita is trying to hook you up with Lucy?" Jade summarized, and Bryan burst into a fit of laughter.

"Damn! I don't wish to be in your shoes right now," Bryan said with an amused smile.

"What do you guys think I should do?" Tom asked wearily.

"Why not just tell Lucy that Anita used to be your girlfriend? It's not a big deal, especially as Anita doesn't even know your true identity," Jade suggested.

"The thing is, Anita and I already agreed not to tell anyone about our past," Tom added.

"I don't think Lucy is just anyone at this point. She deserves to know your actual relationship with Anita, that way she won't feel like a complete fool at the end of the day," Jade reasoned.

"And what if he tells her about it, and she insists on seeing the lady he likes?" Bryan countered.

"Of course she has every right to ask to see the lady, but don't forget that Tommy also has every right to not tell her who the lady he likes is. And if she insists, you can just tell her that she is the one you like. That is surely going to shut her up," Jade said matter of factly.

"Or you could just say you will tell her about it after your temporary relationship ends," Bryan suggested instead.

"Temporary relationship? Are you dating her already, Tommy?" Jade asked, making Tom raise a hand to comb his fingers through his hair. He was mixing up his conversation with Bryan and Jade. He could no longer keep track of who he was telling what to.

"You weren't aware?" Bryan asked happily since he knew something Jade didn't know about.

"Yeah, I was able to convince her to be my girlfriend," Tom said and went on to explain how he had been able to do that.

"Hm. You are sure you want to keep up with this deceit for long? She is going to be pissed when she finds out everything," Jade said thoughtfully.

"Women and sentiments," Bryan murmured with a dramatic sigh, "So what if Tom here finds out she isn't all he thinks she is and changes his mind about wanting a relationship with her? Her being upset or not won't matter then. The important thing right now is for him to be sure that she is what he wants, after that he can apologize and find ways to make it up to her," Bryan said, making Jade sigh.

"For his sake, I hope it will be that easy. Tommy, I really think you should just tell her that Anita is your ex-girlfriend, I'm sure it isn't that big a deal," Jade said, and Tom sighed.

"Alright. I will. Thanks," Tom said with a sigh.

"By the way, I and Sonia will be featuring in a reality show. I thought you should know," Bryan announced.

"A reality show? Since when did you start doing that?" Jade asked in surprise.

"Since I twisted my ankle and can't meet up with the deadline of some pending jobs."

"That's great. I will be sure to follow the show. Can't wait to see my sister-in-law," Jade said in a mocking tone, as she still didn't believe that Bryan was genuinely engaged to Sonia.

"By the way, when was the last time either of you heard from mom or dad?" Tom asked when he remembered that it was almost a week since he last spoke with his mother.

"Monday," Bryan and Jade responded in unison.

Tom sighed. He also last heard from his mother on Monday, "Maybe we should consider paying them a surprise visit soon?" Tom suggested.

"Once I wrap up this case, I will make time for a visit. Have you been able to speak with Harry?" Jade asked hopefully.

"Yeah. He's on it. He said he will get back to me within 48 hours, so let's wait until then."

"What are you guys waiting for? What is Harry getting?" Bryan asked, sounding lost.

"Harry is helping me find a witness for my case," Jade explained.

"Thanks, Tommy. If that's all, I got to go now, love you both," Jade said before hanging up.

Bearing Jade's advice in mind, Tom returned inside the hall to join them since he didn't want to leave Lucy alone in Anita's company.

Lucy who was already beginning to doze off, sat up when she saw Tom standing beside her, and she let him pass to his seat.

"Where is she?" Tom asked as he sat down.

"She left to take a call," Lucy said with a yawn, "What took you so long?"

Tom turned to her, "Listen, I think there is a misunderstanding between us. Anita really isn't the person I'm interested in. I don't even like her," Tom said with a scowl, wanting to get that out of the way before Anita returns.

Lucy frowned, "You don't? But you said..."

"I know what I said. But I'm serious. She really isn't the one. Anita is... She is my ex-girlfriend," Tom said, making Lucy blink at him in surprise.

"Your ex?"

Chapter 114 - Spontaneity

Tom watched as the surprised expression on Lucy's face shifted into disbelief and then amusement as she raised a hand to her mouth to muffle her laughter, "You almost got me for a moment," she said, hitting his shoulder playfully with her other hand.

Tom grabbed her hand on his shoulder as he gazed into her eyes, "I'm serious, Lu. I don't want to have to lie to you about this too."

Lucy's brows pulled together in a confused frown, "Too? You've lied to be about something else?"

Tom sighed as he let go of her hands, "Yes. And I'm not going to tell you the truth yet either. I'm just trying not to tell you too many lies, that way when I finally tell you the truth you won't be too mad at me hopefully," Tom said still looking into her eyes.

Lucy looked back at him without saying a word as she tried to remember most of the things he had told her and which one of them could be a lie. When she was unable to come up with anything after a while, she decided to think about that later, and just focus on the issue on ground.

"So you mean Anita is one of the ex-girlfriends you told me about? How? What happened between you both?" Lucy said as she looked at him curiously.

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If Anita was truly his ex as he has said, then he sure did have a high taste in women. What had she been thinking, assuming that someone like him that liked someone like Anita would ever be interested in her. She and Anita were far apart in many ways, and she wasn't even thinking so because she suffered from an inferiority complex. No. It was nothing like that. Anita exudes grace and elegance in every way... While she on the other hand, she was just there. She was pretty and had a good dress sense, and she loved to believe she was intelligent too, but Anita was all of those things and more.

"Remember the first time we met? At the club?" Tom asked, and Lucy gave him a nod to say she was following, "I was waiting for Anita to show up, but she stood me up as usual," Tom said, making Lucy's eyes widen in alarm.

"How could you be waiting for her to show up and then take a random stranger home? What if she had arrived at the time we were leaving the club and seen us together? Maybe that's why she broke up with you and became friends with me," Lucy blurted out.

"If you are not here to watch the damn movie can you both get the fuck out of the hall? People are trying to concentrate here! We didn't buy the tickets just to hear your stupid discussion!" The guy behind Lucy growled at them angrily.

"Sorry," Lucy apologized guiltily.

"We should leave," Tom said as he stood up and waited for Lucy to do the same.

"But Anita..."

"She can find her way home. Let's continue outside," Tom said, and Lucy reluctantly stood up and followed him outside.

Neither of them said anything until they both got into the car. Tom asked took the driver's seat this time, and Lucy sat in the front passenger seat before turning to look at him, "What if she saw us leaving the club together that night?" She asked with a concerned frown, continuing the conversation from where they stopped in the movie hall.

"She didn't."

"How can you be so sure?"

"Just listen, okay?" Tom said and then went ahead to explain how he had met Anita and how her attitude towards him had changed once she realized he was a handyman, and how he had finally broken up with her.

Lucy couldn't say she was very surprised by his revelation that her attitude towards him changed when she found out he wasn't as wealthy as she probably assumed he was, since that was the impression she already had of Anita after spending such a short time with her. She couldn't imagine a person like Anita settling with someone she would consider to be 'beneath her.

"If that is the case, why did she ask that we hang out together? Maybe she has realized her mistake and wants to make up with you?" Lucy asked thoughtfully.

"No. She is trying to matchmake us, in the same way, you were trying to do," Tom announced, making Lucy's eyes widen in surprise, and then she burst into a fit of laughter.

"You mean we were both playing cupid?" She asked as her body shook with laughter, while Tom watched her, unamused.

Lucy stopped laughing when she noticed the annoyance on Tom's face, "I'm sorry. I really thought she was the one you liked and that she liked you too. I was only trying to help," Lucy said apologetically even though there were still traces of amusement in her eyes.

"You see? This is more reason why you should just show me the lady you are interested in. How can I help you if I don't even know her?" Lucy asked defensively.

"I already told you how to help me. Just stop being so curious about who I like, and focus on being my girlfriend instead," Tom said, making her sigh.

"It must have been really awkward being there with her, right?" Lucy asked with pursed lips, as she tried to imagine how he must have felt, while she kept gloating like she was doing him a huge favor. There was no way she could open that matchmaking agency now.

"It was."

"Well, at least now I have no reason to go to her place anymore and be forced to sip tea as though I'm having lunch with the Queen of England," Lucy said with a sigh of relief which made Tom chuckle.

He remembered she had mentioned something about her friend being a perfectionist and a little too proper for her. So she had been talking about Anita then? "You don't like her?" Tom asked curiously, wanting to know what Lucy honestly thought of her.

"Well, I don't hate her either. I'm just indifferent. I just think she's a little too much," Lucy said, making him chuckle once again

"What do you mean by too much?"

Lucy pursed her lips and narrowed her eyes thoughtfully as she tried to figure out the best way to explain it, "Although she tries not to show it, I think she feels like she is better than everyone else. I'm not sure I know how to explain it, but everything about her is just too organized for my liking. I won't like to have an enemy like her," Lucy said with a sigh.

"Why?"

"Are you really asking me that? People like her can be really dangerous. If she takes so much time in making sure she appears perfect even when she is eating cookies and sipping her tea, then imagine how much time she can spend in plotting against you," Lucy said with a mock shudder, making Tom double over with laughter.

"If you thought this way, why then were you still trying to play matchmaker?" Tom asked after he stopped laughing.

"Because I thought you liked her," Lucy said with a shrug.

"Even if I liked her, shouldn't you have tried to discourage me from pursuing someone like her? Isn't that what friends do? Or am I not your friend?" He asked with a slight frown.

"Mind you, I never said she is a bad person. I'm only telling you what I think about her. I could be wrong about my assumption. I can't discourage you from pursuing someone you like based on my

assumptions. And I won't be telling you this either if you hadn't told me she was your ex," Lucy said with a shrug.

"Okay. Tell me honestly, from the little time you spent around her, and from the little you know about me already, did you really think she was good for me? Would she have been perfect for me?" Tom asked, wanting to know how much Lucy knew him.

Lucy sighed, "I think she probably would have complicated your simple life. She lives an expensive lifestyle and you won't be able to afford it," Lucy said before looking out of the window instead, "Her car is no longer here," Lucy said with a slight frown when she observed that a different car was parked in the space where Anita had parked her car.

"I guess she decided to leave after I asked her to butt out. Since she is gone, let's go somewhere else," Tom said, feeling relieved now that he had listened to Jade and had told Lucy the truth about his relationship with Anita.

He was glad that Lucy had been able to see through Anita on her own, now he didn't have to worry too much about her hanging around with Anita anymore.

"Where do you suggest we go to?" Lucy asked as she took out her journal, wanting to see if there was something on her list that they could do.

"Somewhere that isn't on your list. Girlfriends are spontaneous, Lu. It's boring when you have to make a list for everything. Sometimes you should just go with the flow. Let's just drive around so that I can show you around the city," Tom suggested.

"Can we go to your friend's house before going home? I will like to have a good look around. I wasn't able to do that the last time cause I was in a hurry to get to the office," Lucy said, surprising Tom.

"Why do you want to see the place?" Tom asked in confusion. He would need to call the butler to inform everyone that they were coming so that they wouldn't blow his cover.

"I don't know. It just looked really lovely. At first, I thought it was a hotel. Can we just go there? Your friend won't mind, right?" Lucy asked hopefully.

Tom's lips pulled curved at the side in a smile when something occurred to him, "Do you realize that today makes it a week since we met?"

"It is?" Lucy asked in surprise. It was just a week? Why did it already feel like she had known him for over a year? How come it was only a week yet she was so comfortable with him? This has to be the longest week of her life.

"Yes. Would you like us to spend the night over there? We can go to the office from there tomorrow," Tom suggested.

"Didn't you say it's your friend's family's house? Will they be okay..." Her words trailed off when she remembered that if they had been okay with him bringing a lady over to spend the night the last time, then they would be okay with her sleeping there too.

"Don't worry, no one is there apart from the Household staff," Tom assured her.

"Oh! But I didn't plan to spend the night..."

"Spontaneity, Lu. You said you want to see the place. We could just go back home, pick up whatever you need or get them on the way, and then we can drive around the city before heading there in the evening," Tom said, suddenly feeling the urge to see her in his house. He wanted to see how much she liked the place, and how she would relate with his staff.

Lucy sighed, "Are you sure it'll be okay? Isn't it a bit impromptu? We could just do that next weekend. Besides, are you forgetting dinner with the neighbors?" Lucy reminded him.

"Oh! I almost forgot about that. Alright then, next weekend it is. After work on Friday, you're going to pack up all you need, and then we can spend the weekend there, cool?" Tom asked as he turned on the car's ignition.

"Cool..." Lucy's words trailed off when her phone started ringing and she took it out from her handbag to see that Anita was calling, "Hey!"

"I'm sorry I had to leave. Something urgent came up," Anita lied.

"Oh! It's fine. I hope everything is fine?" Lucy asked.

"Yeah, my dog is feeling sick so I have to take care of it. Let's hang out some other time. Just the both of us, okay?"

"Alright. Take care... Of your dog," Lucy said before hanging up.

"Her dog is ill, huh?" Tom asked in amusement since he could guess the call was from Anita.

Lucy grinned, "Yeah. I guess you were right,* she said, remembering all he had said a while ago about her always coming up with excuses using her dog. That was a pretty silly thing to do for someone who looked as smart as Anita.

"Do me a favor, don't let her know you are aware she is my ex, okay?"

"Why?" Lucy asked in confusion.

"We agreed not to tell anyone. And I also want to see what she is up to, and why she is trying to matchmake us. Just play along, alright?" Tom said, and Lucy nodded.

"Cool."

Chapter 115 - Miss Me?

After his phone call with his siblings, Bryan moved around the house aimlessly in search of anything he could do to while away his time until Sonia returns from her shopping with Mia. He paused when he suddenly realized what he was doing.

Why was he waiting for her and trying to while away his time? Surely his life wasn't so boring without her that he didn't have better things to do in her absence. He didn't need Sonia or anyone else in his life, Bryan thought with a scowl as he moved over to the living room and turned on his Play Station console. He set up the game and started playing as he tried to get thoughts of her out of his head.

As he played the game against the computer his mind flashed back to his time at the game arcade with Sonia the last time, and how she had cussed every time she lost a game. He grinned to himself as he repeated some of the cuss words she had used, every time the computer won against him.

He sighed when after playing several games yet Sonia remained on his mind, and then he dropped the game pad on the table. What was he going to do about this sudden attraction to Sonia? Now that he had kissed her, he knew it wasn't going to take long before things progressed from just a kiss. Only God knew how far he would go the next time.

His eyes drifted to his phone on the table when he heard his message notification tone, and he reached for it. He raised a brow when he noticed that the message was from an unsaved number, and his traitorous heart skipped a beat when he clicked on the message and realized it was from Sonia, because of her picture which was attached to it.

His lips curved in a smile before he could stop himself when he saw the picture she had sent. Typical Sonia. It was a selfie of herself with a goofy expression on her face. Her eyes were staring at her nose like she had crossed eyes, and her tongue stuck out of her lips like she was making fun of him. The accompanying text read, "Miss me?"

He really wished he could say he didn't miss having her around the house. Somehow she had been there for only a couple of days, but his home already had a different feel without her in it. Even though they argued and fought most of the time, she was still the most exciting and beautifully exhilarating lady he had come across.

"Wait, what? You've got to slow down, Bryan!" Bryan cautioned himself in alarm when he realized what he was thinking.

This was a major danger signal. How could he be already thinking that the green-eyed witch he was trying to get rid of was the most exciting lady he had come across? Yeah, maybe she was, in all honesty, but he didn't even like her! Or did he? Bryan thought with a slight frown. No, he didn't like her. Even though she was fun to be around, she was also stubborn and annoying, and those weren't attributes he wanted in a lady.

He would be damned if he ever admitted to her that he missed her anyway, Bryan thought as he responded to her text, "No. The house is more peaceful without you."

After sending the text it occurred to him that he didn't even have her phone number the whole time she had been under his roof. How had he forgotten to do that? He asked himself as he tried to save the number she had used in texting him. What other name could be more appropriate for someone like her other than her original title? Green-eyed witch.

He had a satisfied smile on his face after saving her number and raised his head when he heard the sound of the doorbell. He sighed in relief knowing that it was probably his manager at the door with the production team, so he directed his wheelchair to the door and opened it to see his manager standing there with the CEO.

"Hey!" Bryan greeted them as they both walked into the house, "Where are the others?" He asked as he looked behind them before looking from his manager to the CEO.

"I figured I get some things straightened out with you before they get here," the CEO said as he looked around the house, before looking at Bryan, "Where is she?" He asked, referring to Sonia.

"She went out to get some clothes," Bryan said as he turned his back to them and returned to the living room, leaving them to follow him.

"Good. So we can talk comfortably," the CEO said, without making any move to sit down. He stood in front of Bryan with a serious expression in his eyes.

"You do realize that this show is a perfect opportunity for you to break up with her, right? I understand that you messed up by proposing to a stranger, but you can fix it now. All you need to do is subtly make her act up during the show, and push her until she does something to you that your fans will consider unacceptable, and then you can break up with her. That would reduce the backlash you are likely to receive," the CEO suggested, while Jeff took his seat on one of the sofas in the living room.

"Why do I have to make her act up and then break up with her on the show?" Bryan asked with an annoyed expression, not liking what the CEO was suggesting.

"You no longer want to end things with her?" The CEO asked with a slightly confused frown.

"I know I want to end things with her, but that doesn't mean I want it to be at her detriment..." His words trailed off when he recalled that he had been planning to do exactly that when he invited Matt over initially. He had wanted to set her up with Matt and make it seem like she was trying to ruin their friendship by seducing Matt, so why was the idea sounding so annoying to him now?

Perhaps it was because he was a man of integrity and he was only trying to uphold his standing agreement with Sonia. She had promised to end things between them herself, so he was going to let her do it. It was better for them both that way.

"If you don't do it when you have the chance, how else do you intend to end things between you both? Perhaps you have changed your mind and you want to continue with the relationship?" The CEO asked suspiciously.

"Of course, not! Just let her be. We will end it when we end it," Bryan said, not willing to give out the details of his agreement with Sonia.

"You do know that she is using you, right? I did some background work and confirmed that the sales of her books have more than tripled since she met you," the CEO said, making Bryan raise a brow.

"Have you read any of her books?" Bryan asked, making Jeff who was watching the exchange between them, look at him curiously.

"Am I supposed to?" The CEO asked with an incredulous snort.

"I'm just asking, cause maybe if you did you would understand why the sales tripled. People must have bought one of her books because they were curious about her, I did too. But trust me when I say I don't think they kept buying her books just because of me. She is a talented writer," Bryan said, making Jeff's lips twitch with an amused smile. He wondered if Bryan realised that he was defending Sonia.

"Still the sales of her books would never have tripled had she not met you. I think you should break up with her before she causes you any trouble. What if she starts blackmailing you or something?" The CEO asked.

"Listen, I understand your concern, but nobody is using anybody. I approached her first after all, so don't worry about it. Plus Sonia isn't the type to blackmail anyone," Bryan said confidently, making the CEO sigh wearily as he walked over to one of the sofas and lowered himself on it in defeat. Bryan was stubborn, so he was going to allow him to do as he pleased, but if he so much as noticed any suspicious move from Sonia, he was going to have to step in and take care of things.

Jeff who had been quietly following the conversation grinned to himself. It seemed like Mia had been right after all. Sonia was gradually getting under Bryan's skin, and he doubted that Bryan was aware of it. It was amusing to watch Bryan talking about a lady this way.

"When is the production team coming over for us to discuss the details of the show?" Bryan asked, wanting to change the subject. He looked at Jeff with a slightly raised brow when he noticed that Jeff was staring at him with an amused expression on his face as if he knew a secret Bryan wasn't aware of.

"They are already on their way. When will Sonia be back? Have you both sorted out your love story?" The manager asked curiously.

"Yes, we have. I don't know when she's coming back," Bryan said and glanced at his phone when it beeped with a message notification from the green-eyed witch once again.

"Then perhaps I should make you miss me?" The text read, and the next thing he knew several photos came in at the same time, causing his eyes to widen in surprise when he noticed the different sexy gowns she was wearing in each of the photos. In each of the photos, she struck different provocative poses like she was a model, showcasing her ass and boobs in most of the photos.

The accompanying text read, "I'm having a difficult time picking my dress, and since you said I can't ask Mia, you are all I've got. Which do you prefer?" She asked, and then flooded his inbox with more provocative photos making Bryan groan inwardly when he felt his member twitch between his legs.

Whether she was with him or not, she was trouble to his body and mind.

He quickly typed a response, "None. I don't like any of them."

He wasn't going to be able to think straight or control himself around her if she walked around his house dressed in such provocative clothes. He was bound to make a fool of himself, and then there would be cameras around to capture his madness. So no! He didn't want any of those clothes.

"What did he say?" Mia asked when Sonia giggled.

"As expected, he doesn't like any of them," Sonia said with a grin.

"So you are not taking them?" The sales clerk asked with a worried frown, since she had been excited that Sonia had picked so much clothes.

Bryan was so done for.

"Pack them all. I want all of it," Sonia said with a wink at Mia, who giggled excitedly, while the sales clerk happily did as she was told.

"Now that we are done with shopping, let's go get the makeover!" Mia announced.

Chapter 116 - Jamal

Matt adjusted the collar of his shirt and looked into the rearview mirror to be sure he looked okay before stepping out of his car. He knew that Candace was probably going to be upset when she sees him, but there was little else he could do. He wanted to see her, and he wanted to talk to her.

The following evening after the private performance she had given him, he had waited at the back area of the club where he knew she would leave through, until he saw her walking out, looking completely different from the lady who had just given him the best lap dance of his life. The wig was gone now, and she was dressed in a faded jeans trouser and white turtleneck top.

He discreetly tailed her to find out where she lives. He had watched as she picked up her little blonde boy who looked like he was seven years old from the nanny's place, and had then followed them down a couple of blocks to their apartment while watching them talk and laugh.

Seeing the neighborhood she lived in, he could tell that she was earning well from her stripping job to afford it. He watched as they walked over to a white-painted building with a picket fence surrounding the little garden in front of the house. The place looked so homely and one would never guess that the occupant of the house was a sensational stripper.

He had kept asking himself all through the previous evening why he liked her or wanted so desperately to be with her.. He had come to the conclusion that it could be infatuation, or maybe because of his bruised ego at her rejection, or maybe it was because she was very interesting and aroused his senses. Whatever it was, he wanted to get to know her and find out himself without being judged simply because he was a celebrity.

Standing in front of the white oak door, Matt took in a deep breath before raising a hand to rap the knocker on the door. What was the worse that could happen? He was either going to be welcomed or thrown out and even if he was thrown out, he intended to keep visiting her until she gives in to him.

"Mom? There is someone at the door. I think aunt Andy is here," Matt heard a little boy's voice from behind the door followed by the patter of his little feet running towards the door before it was pulled open.

He watched as the happy smile on his face transformed to disappointment, "Oh!" He exclaimed when he realized it wasn't his aunt Andy as he had expected, "Who are you?" He asked cautiously, looking at Matt warily before glancing behind him.

Matt looked at the cute little boy and noticed that the only resemblance between the kid and Candace was the brown eyes and bow-shaped lips. Apart from those the kid looked nothing like his mother.

Matt flashed him a friendly smile when he noticed the distrust in the kid's eyes, "Hi! I'm Matt, your mom's friend. What is your name?" Matt asked as he squatted in front of the kid so that they were both at the same eye level, before extending a hand to him for a handshake.

"Jamal..."

Candace who was dressed in a bathing robe, coming towards the door with a towel in one hand and a hairdryer in another hand, stopped halfway when she caught a glimpse of the man talking to her son, "Jam!" She called out sternly.

"Mom," Jamal said, turning to look at his mother before taking some steps away from the door.

"What did I tell you about answering the door and speaking to strangers?" She asked in a scolding tone, while Matt looked at her as he straightened up.

She looked pretty as usual with her rough wet hair looking like it needed his fingers to comb through them. She looked fresh out of the shower and he wanted to bury his neck in the crook of her neck and drown himself in her scent.

"I'm sorry mom. You were in the shower and I opened the door because I thought it was aunty Andy and I didn't want to keep her waiting for too long. Besides, he says he's your friend, so he isn't really a stranger, is he?" Jamal asked, looking back at Matt, and then to his mom again.

What was he doing here? She thought she had made it clear that she didn't want anything to do with him, so why did he keep showing up around her? "Go to your room," Candace ordered in a sharp voice.

"But mom..."

"NOW!" Candace snapped at him, making Jamal run off immediately in what Matt suspected to be the direction of his bedroom.

"How did you know where I live? And what are you doing here?" Candace asked as she hung the towel around her neck and adjusted her bathrobe self-consciously as she tried not to remember the previous evening.

"What do you think?" Matt asked without bothering to step inside the house. He couldn't do that without her invitation. Although he wanted to talk to her, he also wanted her to invite him first.

"Did you follow me last night? Are you stalking me? Why are you doing all of this? I really don't understand why you are being so stubborn," Candace said irritably.

"Me neither. But I would like to find out why if you give me the chance, don't you want us to?" Matt asked, making confusion flicker in her eyes as she wondered what he was talking about.

"Don't I want us to what?"

"Don't you want us to find out why I'm being so adamant about seeing you and talking to you?" Matt explained as he dipped his right hand into the pocket of his trousers while staring at her curiously.

Candace swallowed, "Look, I'm not ready for any of this, so maybe you should leave," Candace said impatiently as she walked towards the door, wanting to shut it in his face.

"How can you judge me simply because of my career?" Matt asked before she could shut the door in his face, making her scoff.

"Are you really asking me that? We both know the reverse is the case here. No one is judging you, so stay away from me and my son. Don't ruin the life I have worked so hard to build here," she warned as she reached out to shut the door again.

"I know who you are!" Jamal exclaimed excitedly as he ran out of his room before his mom could shut the door, making both Candace and Matt glance at the kid curiously.

"You are the bad man in the movie mom watched last night. I thought you died?" Jamal asked, making Matt's lips twitch in amusement as he knew the movie the kid was referring to

He then glanced at Candace who was no longer meeting his gaze. So she had watched a movie of him before going to bed?

"I thought I asked you to stay in your room?" Candace asked her son through gritted teeth, making the smile on his young face fall.

"Sorry. I got excited when I remembered him," Jamal said sadly before waving at Matt and turning to return to his bedroom.

"Do you like playing games?" Matt called out to the little boy before he could disappear. He read that the quickest way to the heart of a single mother was being nice to their kids. So maybe if Jamal liked him, he would stand a better chance with Candace.

Jamal turned around, glancing at his mother who was glaring at Matt, before looking at Matt, "I suppose I do," he said with a small shrug.

"Why are you still standing there talking to him?" Candace asked her son impatiently.

"Thought you said not to be rude to adults? He asked a question so I had to respond, right?" Jamal asked his mother innocently, making Matt's lips twitch with a smile. The kid was smart. He liked him.

"Anybody care to tell me who this fine man is? And why is he still standing out here?" A feminine voice asked from behind Matt.

"Aunt Andy!" Jamal squealed as he ran past his mother to embrace Brandy who automatically squatted down to lift him.

Looking at the ease with which she squatted down and picked him up, Matt could tell that this was something she did often. Aunt? Was she Candace's sister? Matt wondered as he stared at Brandy who was dressed in a black leather jumpsuit, zipped open at the front to reveal her cleavage and boobs. She was pretty stunning.

"How is my Jamjam doing today? Missed me?" Brandy asked with a grin as she patted his blonde hair which looked like hers, before pecking his cheek while balancing him on her waist.

Brandy straightened herself to look at Matt. Thanks to the high-heeled boots she was wearing, she was almost as tall as he was, "Oh! It's you," she said with an amused smile as she turned to look at Candace, making Matt wonder just what Candace must have told her friend about him.

"It's me? I'm Ma..."

"You're Matt. I'm Candace's sister. My name is Andrea but you can call me Andy," she said, extending her hand to him for a handshake.

"Blood sister?" He asked curiously as he shook her hand.

"Take Jamal inside while I see him off," Candace instructed, cutting off their conversation.

"He is leaving already?" Brandy asked, looking at Matt in disappointment, "Are you in a hurry to go somewhere? Why don't you come in?" She asked Matt hopefully.

"Andy!" Candace called in a warning tone.

"Since you are done talking to him, don't you think I should talk to him as well? I should at least know who is visiting my sister, right Jamjam? Don't you want to know mummy's friend?" Brandy asked Jamal who looked at all the adults curiously, as he wondered what was going on between them before nodding his head.

"The man of the house has spoken. Let's go in," Brandy suggested as she grabbed Matt's hand with her other hand and led him inside, leaving Candace who was glaring at them all to shut the door.

Chapter 117 - Stick Around

"So, what can I offer you?" Brandy asked as she set Jamal on the couch and turned to look at Matt who was looking around the living room curiously.

"I don't mind a glass of water," Matt said with a smile of gratitude, grateful that he had been invited in, even though it wasn't by Candace.

"Order coming up shortly," Brandy announced as she walked away leaving Matt alone with Jamal.

"So, how did you become my mom's friend?" Jamal asked, narrowing his eyes suspiciously once they were alone.

Matt looked at the little boy, slightly taken aback by the unexpected and bold question, "We have come a long way," Matt said, unable to shake off the feeling that he was about to be interrogated by this kid.

"How long have you both been friends?" Jamal asked, crossing his hands over his chest, with a facial expression that told Matt that he was unwilling to buy any false story.

"Some months?" Matt asked uncertainly making the kid's brow arch.

Jamal snorted, "That isn't a long way," he said before asking him the next question, "Why doesn't she want to be friends with you anymore? Did you hurt her?"

.

Thankfully before Matt could say a word Brandy returned with his glass of water and sat down on the couch beside Jamal who was watching Matt with his hawk-like gaze.

"Did you?" Jamal asked again when it seemed like Matt was avoiding his question.

Matt had thought the kid would stop questioning him once his aunt returned to join them, but it seemed not. He glanced at Brandy who had an amused smile on her face as she tilted her head to one angle as though she was also waiting for his response.

Matt sighed inwardly, "I didn't."

"So why doesn't she want to talk to you?" Jamal pushed on, making it clear that his mother was dear to him and he wasn't going to allow just anyone to mess with her.

"I'm afraid I can't answer that question. Only your mom can do that," Matt said with a sigh.

"But..."

"To your room, Jamal. Now!" Candace called out sternly from the bedroom passage, making the kid get off the couch. He narrowed his eyes at Matt in warning before walking away.

Once he left Brandy giggled, "Jamal is fiercely protective of us. He considers himself the man of the house," she explained with an amused smile.

"I understand," Matt said, returning her smile as he raised the glass of water to his lips to take a sip. He was curious about a lot of things, but he couldn't ask any questions now.

"You must like Candace a lot," Brandy said, looking at him curiously.

The only reason she had invited him in was that she knew for a fact that even though Candace was pushing him away, Candace had been crazy about him when she didn't know his true identity. She had always been eager to chat with him and had laughed out crazily every time they were chatting online or speaking over the phone.

She had been excited on Candace's behalf that she had finally met someone she really liked after such a long time, and as such, she had felt sad when Candace returned after their first date looking so heartbroken as she broke the news to her that she couldn't be with him because he was a celebrity.

"What is there not to like? Have you met your sister? She is a really brilliant and interesting lady," Matt said, making Brandy giggle. Candace did prefer to be referred to as intelligent instead of beautiful.

"I know, right?" Brandy said with a proud smile. Between them, Candace was the brain.

"Andy, can I have a word with you in the bedroom before I leave?" Candace asked from the passageway.

"Excuse me," Brandy said with a small smile as she stood up and walked away.

"You know I don't like this. I really don't want any of it and you know why!" Candace hissed at Brandy the moment she walked through the door and shut the door.

"Why? Because you don't want Jamal to know about our night job? Jamal is a smart kid..."

"There is that, but it's more than that! I can't believe I need to spell it out to you," Candace said, cutting her off.

"Are you going to lie to me that you don't like him? I watched how you transformed into a very happy person when you first met him on the site. Do you have any idea how flustered you looked after meeting him at the club last night? You know I will always have your back, and I'm only out to do what makes you happy," Brandy said in a soft voice as she took Candace hands in her own and rubbed them gently.

"If my happiness means anything to you, then you will send him away. I won't be happy if my relationship with him exposes us all to danger. You know what it took us to be able to live like this," Candace said with a sigh making Brandy pause with a frown on her face.

"Are you talking about J..." She stopped, remembering that they agreed not to mention the name of the person.

Candace gave her a nod as tears gathered in her eyes, "Yes,"

"I don't think he will be able to find us. He's still locked up in..."

"Andy, please. Just listen to me and ask him to leave," Candace pleaded desperately.

Brandy looked like she was going to argue, but seeing how Candace was trying to not to breakdown in tears, she heaved a deep sigh, "Just for the record, I think you are making a mistake by letting him go without even trying, but I will do as you have said," Brandy said before turning around to leave the room.

Matt who was seated in the living room could guess that the conversation was about him leaving, so he stood up immediately Brandy returned to the living room, "Thanks for your hospitality. I should be leaving now," he said with a small smile not wanting to put Brandy in the difficult position of asking him to leave.

"I'm sorry to see you leave when we haven't even talked yet. Thank you for stopping by," Brandy said with a serious expression on her face since she was feeling really sad for both Candace and Matt. She didn't know much about Matt, but she knew only a great guy could have made Candace as happy as she had been before they met.

She walked him to the door and just as he walked through the door she placed a hand on his shoulder, making him turn to look at her with questioning eyes.

"Maybe if you hang around a little you could drop her off since she is going for her Sunday tutorials," Brandy offered in a whisper so that Candace wouldn't hear her.

"Tutorial?" Matt asked curiously, before recalling that Candace had once mentioned that she was studying for law school.

"Yes. So stick around, okay?" Brandy said with an encouraging smile and patted his shoulder, giving Matt the impression that she was asking him not to give up so easily on her sister.

"I will try," Matt said as he returned to his car

He waited in his car for about thirty minutes until he saw the door open again and all three of them stepped out. Candace was now dressed in a simple purple-colored knee-length gown and low flat shoes. He watched as Jamal embraced her and Brandy waved at her before returning inside.

He thought about doing as Brandy had suggested by offering Candace a ride to her tutorial, but he didn't want to be turned down again. There was only so much that a man's ego could take, and he had taken enough for the last three days. Perhaps he was being selfish by asking her to give their friendship a chance when even he knew that by associating with him, she would be thrown into the spotlight which she was desperately trying to avoid. Maybe it was best he gave her some time to rethink her decisions. Now that he had come to that conclusion he couldn't help but wonder why he had been out here waiting for her for the past thirty minutes only to change his mind now..

Candace looked in the direction of the car parked away from her apartment and narrowed her eyes when she noticed that Matt was the person inside. She drew in a deep breath, ready to march over to where he was to ask him to leave her alone, but before she could take the first step he turned on the car's ignition and drove away.

Matt watched her from his rearview mirror as she watched him drive off, and he let out a sigh. He wasn't giving up on her, he just needed to give her time to sort out her feelings while he did the same.

Chapter 118 - Do You Like Him?

Bryan had a scowl on his face when he checked the time again on his wristwatch for what seemed to be the one-thousandth time. He was mad that Sonia was yet to return after almost seven hours, and he was even madder that he was mad that she was yet to return. What was taking her so long? How difficult could it be to shop for simple clothes? And how come after he rejected the clothes she had shown him earlier she was yet to show him any other clothes?

The production team had come to the house to look around it so they would decide on where to set up the camera, and they said the next day going to be the first interview shoot.

Bryan who was seated on his wheelchair directly opposite the door glared at the door when he heard it opening.

The glare in his eyes was replaced by surprise and his jaw almost dropped when he saw the person that walked in through the door. Although they were two ladies, his eyes were glued to the stubborn sexy green-eyed witch that was like a torn in his flesh. He had asked her NOT to get those clothes, so what was that on her body?

She was wearing a red bodycon dress that was impossibly short. It was a halter dress with a deep V-neckline that revealed her cleavages. Seeing how he could see almost the entire length of her thighs, he could tell that the gown stopped slightly below her butt cheek.

His eyes returned to those beautiful long legs again, and he noticed that she was wearing a pair of black knee-high boots.. How had he missed the boots the first time when he had looked her over? His eyes moved from her thighs to the rest of her body and he noticed that her skin looked more tanned than when she had left, and her face... Something about it looked different. He blinked when he realized what it was. Not only was she fully made up, but her long curly blonde hair was now a mass of braided hair, which made her face appear slimmer and even finer.

Had she been walking around wearing this? Other people had seen her? Bryan wondered in displeasure.

Mia who had followed Sonia inside the house because she wanted to see Bryan's reaction, grinned in satisfaction because the mission for the day was accomplished already, "I should go now. See you tomorrow," Mia whispered to Sonia as she quickly walked out.

"I suppose you are done assessing me?" Sonia asked in amusement since it seemed like he hadn't even noticed Mia's presence or her departure.

Bryan snapped his mouth shut when he realized that he was almost drooling, and blinked as he looked at her lips which were moving. He knew she had said something, but he was lost in his admiration of her body that he hadn't heard what she said. He shook his head before quickly replacing the fascination on his face with a scowl.

"I thought I asked you not to get those clothes," he growled at her, making her giggle.

"And since when have I ever listened to you?" She asked dryly as she spun around so that he could see the backside of her gown.

"So why then did you ask me if I liked them?" Bryan asked with a scowl.

"Just to confirm that they were the perfect choice," Sonia said with a wink as she moved closer to him.

"Maybe you should stop tempting me and start listening to me," Bryan said in a warning tone, but Sonia only grinned as she stopped directly in front of him.

"And if I don't, what will you do? Kiss me like you kissed me earlier?" Sonia asked with a daring smile as she sat on his thighs, making Bryan's heart skip a beat.

Sonia giggled when she saw the surprise on his face, "Don't think for a moment that you can predict me. I'm nothing like the other ladies you have been with, trust me," Sonia said as she rested her head on his chest and embraced him.

Bryan's heart fluttered in his chest, and he blinked several times. Why did it feel like their roles have been reversed? He was the playboy here. He was supposed to be the one making her feel flustered not the other way round. Was he losing his abilities?

"I missed you. I kept thinking of you while we were shopping," Sonia said with a sigh as she snuggled closer to him, making Bryan hold his breath.

"You..." He looked up when he suddenly remembered that Mia had come in with her earlier, "Where is Mia?" Bryan asked in confusion.

"She left while you were busy eating me up with your eyes. I love a man whose eyes are so fixed on me that they don't see anyone else," Sonia said with a sweet smile as she pulled her head away from his chest to look into his face.

Why did her words and action seem so natural? The situation was worse than he had thought if he had actually forgotten all about Mia's presence just because he was looking at Sonia. He needed some time alone.

"You..." He stopped and cleared his throat, "You should go and change into something else. Let's talk after you have freshened up," Bryan said, wanting her to leave so that he could be alone.

"Why? Are you uncomfortable because you want me?" Sonia asked, with a knowing smile.

He chose to ignore her question as he glanced at his wristwatch. "It's getting late already. Freshen up while I get your writing materials," Bryan said, and Sonia flashed him a smile as she pulled away from him and stood up.

"Try not to struggle too much with your emotions," she said with a wink and bent down to drop a smacking kiss on his lips before walking away.

"So, have you heard from your best friend? You haven't seen what the boss looks like yet, have you?" Tom asked as they drove around the city while he pointed out major landmarks to her.

Lucy who was looking out the window so she would take note of every important area, turned to spare him a glance before returning her attention to the window again, "Not yet. But I think I might

soon," she said with pursed lips. The CEO was likely going to want to see her when he hears about her relationship with his prospective sister-in-law, right?

"Really? Your friend is going to meet him soon?" Tom asked, pretending not to understand what she was saying.

"No. I'm planning to meet him. I asked her to mention to her fiancé that her best friend is his brother's personal assistant," Lucy confided in him, even though she planned to use the relationship with the CEO to stop him from being her driver.

Tom's left brow shot up curiously since he hadn't been expecting her to give him such information, "You did?" Tom asked, his surprise was evident in both his tone as he turned to spare her a glance.

"Yeah. Why do you sound so surprised?" Lucy asked as she turned to look at him.

"I thought you didn't like the CEO and you didn't want to get close to him, especially as you didn't want people to assume you got promoted because of your best friend's relationship with the CEO's brother. I'm just surprised you now want to meet him. May I ask why?" Tom asked, seeing this as the perfect opportunity to clear his doubts about her.

Why? Lucy stifled the urge to laugh. How could she tell him that she had come up with the plan because she didn't want him working for her anymore, yet she had further complicated things by being his temporary girlfriend?

"No. I don't want to have to lie to you, so please don't ask me why," Lucy said with a shake of her head.

Tom's heart skipped a beat at her response. Was she really trying to get into a relationship with the CEO? "Do you like him? Perhaps you want to date him?" Tom asked again, making Lucy laugh out loud.

"Are you seriously asking me that because you don't know I don't want any relationship with men, or because you feel you might have changed my mind about being in a relationship in the last couple of hours?" Lucy asked dryly, making Tom relax a bit.

Why hadn't he thought of that? Of course, Lucy wasn't interested in men, so it wasn't an issue of her being a golddigger like the others. This meant that if she wasn't trying to meet him because she was interested in him, then that left only one explanation. She wanted to be friends with the CEO so that she could get rid of her driver. That made more sense since he couldn't assume she was doing this just to be promoted.

"I'm going to quit being your driver after our relationship ends, so if you are trying to get close to the CEO just to get rid of me, you don't have to bother yourself," Tom blurted out making Lucy look at him in surprise.

How did he know what she was thinking? "What? You can't quit! I told you I'm going to lose my job if you quit," Lucy said with a frown.

Wasn't this the irony of life? Wasn't this what selfishness meant? She didn't want him to be her driver, yet she couldn't let him quit on his own. Whoever the CEO was, he was a very mean person and she ought to deal with him, Lucy thought with an inward sigh.

"Don't worry, you won't lose your job. I will let Mr. Harry know that I'm relocating, and I'm not leaving because you were mean," Tom assured her while taking note that she did not deny what he said. She really wanted to meet him just so she could get rid of him, how funny.

"But why do you want to quit?" Lucy asked with a concerned frown.

"Once I get the lady I want, there would be no need for me to remain your driver since she is the reason I took on this job just to be close to her. And if I don't get her, there would also be no need for me to remain your driver," Tom said, making Lucy feel something funny in her chest.

He had said she shouldn't focus on finding who the lady was, but rather she should focus on helping him be the perfect boyfriend by being his temporary girlfriend. She was going to do just that for him.

"Don't worry, I'm going to make sure you get her!" Lucy promised with a determined expression on her face.

"So are you still going to see the CEO if he asks to meet you?" Tom asked, wanting to see if she was going to change her mind now.

"I guess I have to. But you don't have to worry about losing your job. You can remain my driver until you get her," Lucy said, giving him a reassuring smile.

Chapter 119 - Naive And Gullible

Now that Lucy was relaxed on her couch, in the privacy of her home, she took a moment to reflect on all that had happened at the Cinema earlier that day.

How had she not realized that Tom's change of attitude after Anita's arrival was that of annoyance and irritation and not embarrassment? Was she really that naive and clueless? And how come Anita didn't give her any hint that she had been in a relationship with Tom? Especially considering the fact that they were both 'friends'? Why was she hiding it? Perhaps she was ashamed to tell anyone that she had once been in a relationship with a mere handyman?

If Anita was truly Tom's ex-girlfriend as he had said, and she wasn't interested in Tom as she had thought, why then was Anita so receptive of her friendship? Perhaps Anita wanted him back? No, Lucy thought with a shake of her head. That couldn't be the reason since if Anita was interested in Tom, she would have spent more time talking about him.

Her eyes narrowed as she tried to think about all her conversations with Anita thus far to see what Anita could possibly want from her since Anita didn't seem to her like the type to just form friendships with just anyone without a plan.

Her eyes widened slightly in surprise when realization struck her. Anita had asked more questions about the CEO and her position as the CEO's assistant during all their conversations. Why hadn't she thought of it? It made more sense that someone like Anita would be interested in the CEO.

Her brows furrowed in a frown again as she wondered why Anita had then suggested that all three of them hang out together if her target was the CEO. And why was Anita trying to matchmake her with Tom even after she had told her she wasn't interested in men? Was there something she was missing? Lucy asked herself with a weary sigh as she sunk further into her couch.

She sat up almost immediately once again when she remembered what Tom had said about lying to her. What could he possibly have lied to her about? Or perhaps the lie was that their meeting wasn't a coincidence? He had planned it all? How was it possible for him to get a job at the company overnight and be her driver overnight when he was a mere handyman? Lucy mused, and she sighed when she couldn't seem to come up with anything meaningful.

Perhaps she was being too relaxed and trusting around everyone and wasn't paying enough attention to what was going on around her. She would have to do better going forward.

Picking up her phone, she dialed Sonia's line since she needed to tell Sonia about her latest discovery, and maybe Sonia would be able to see whatever it was that she was missing.

Sonia who was had just finished freshening up and was on her way to the kitchen to fix dinner, glanced at her phone when it started ringing, and she grinned when she saw that the call was from Lucy.

"The original love of my life," Sonia said in a teasing tone, making Lucy smile.

Sonia always had a way of making smile. She was definitely her favorite person in the world, no offense to her family. She loved them, but she loved Sonia just as much.

"Why does it sound like things are going really well between you and Bryan?" Lucy asked with an amused smile.

"That is because... things are actually going very well," Sonia said and stopped by the dining table when she noticed that Bryan had left her laptop and journal on the table.

Her lips curved in a smile as she sat down and turned on the laptop. She could guess that he must have been very flustered by her appearance and action to have voluntarily returned her writing materials to her so soon.

"So how did your day go?" Sonia asked as she sat on one of the dining chairs since she could guess that it was going to be a long conversation since Lucy only called when she had something important to say or ask.

"Would you believe me if I told you that Anita is Tom's ex-girlfriend?" Lucy asked, making Sonia blink in surprise since she hadn't been expecting that.

"What? Anita?" Sonia asked in disbelief "I thought you mentioned that she was the one he liked?" Sonia asked in confusion.

"I thought so too, but apparently I was wrong," Lucy said and went on to explain all that had transpired between them at the Cinema earlier.

Sonia sighed when Lucy finished giving her the details, "I honestly don't know if it's because you have never been in a relationship with a guy before now, but you are the most naive and gullible lady I know. I can't even imagine how you can be this naive when you are the best friend of such an experienced person like me. I should..." Sonia let the rest of her words trail off when she caught a glimpse of Bryan from the corners of her eyes. She couldn't scold Lucy when someone else was listening.

Hearing Sonia call her naive and gullible, she winced. It was one thing to say that to yourself, but an entirely different thing to hear someone else call you that, "But it isn't my fault. How was I supposed to know that he lied about Anita being the lady he liked?" Lucy asked with a sigh.

Sonia turned to look at Bryan and blew him a kiss when she caught him staring at her with a blank expression. She smiled when he looked away from her, "Well, I think you need to toughen up and keep your wits about you, especially whenever you are around that Anita girl. Something tells me that she is trouble, and she might be keeping you close only because she sees you as some sort of threat

Try not to let down your guard at any time, and be watchful of what you say whenever she is around you," Sonia said, not bothering to excuse herself from Bryan since this conversation had nothing to do with his brother.

"Yeah, I already plan on doing that. Besides, I think she might be interested in the CEO," Lucy said and went on to give Sonia the reason she felt that way.

"That explains everything then. I believe she must have become friends with you because you are currently the closest female to the CEO in your office, and as such you are her first major opponent. I guess she is trying to size you up and make sure you are not going to stand in her way."

Bryan listened attentively to the discussion as he moved closer to the dining. Were they talking about Tom's ex-girlfriend? Did that mean that Tom's ex-girlfriend was interested in him? Bryan thought in amusement. This whole thing was just very funny and entertaining to watch.

"Hmm. I really hope you are wrong, cause that lady doesn't seem like a very normal person. I will have to keep making it clear to her that I'm not interested in the CEO and as such I'm in no way a threat to her relationship," Lucy said with a concerned frown.

"You don't owe her any explanation. But just to be safe you shouldn't let her know about your relationship with your boss's soon-to-be sister-in-law," Sonia said, turning to give Bryan a wink.

Bryan's heart skipped a beat and he hurriedly turned away from her again. He shook his head at himself. Why was he acting like a lady? He had thought the little pep talk he had given himself a while ago in his bedroom had returned him to his default setting, so why was he acting like a sissy again? Of all the ladies on earth, why was he feeling this way because of this crazy one?

Bryan cleared his throat since he didn't want to continue with this line of thought, "I suppose that's Lucy? Can I say hi to her when you are done?" Bryan asked, making Sonia turn to look at him curiously.

"You want to?" She asked in surprise, and Bryan gave her a nod.

"Yeah. You have met Matt, but I am yet to see your best friend or speak with her. I should do better," Bryan pointed out.

Lucy strained her ear to hear what Bryan was saying, "I guess Bryan is there now. Let's talk later..."

"Hold on, Lu. My fiance wants to say hello to you. I hope you don't mind?" Sonia asked, and handed the phone to Bryan before Lucy could protest since she knew Lucy was likely going to decline.

"No-no-no. I'm not ready to speak with him yet. What am I going to say?" Lucy asked nervously, making Bryan's lips twitch with a smile as he listened to the voice of the lady his elder brother was interested in.

"I wonder the same thing," Bryan responded in amusement making Lucy blink in surprise. How could Sonia have handed the phone to him without her consent?

"Hi!" Lucy greeted with an awkward smile.

"I'm Bryan. It's nice to finally speak with you. I've heard so much about you," Bryan said, referring to all he had heard about her from both Sonia and Tom.

"I've heard a lot about you too," Lucy lied since Sonia hardly ever talked about Bryan, so the only thing she knew about him was that he was her boss's brother, and Sonia's fake fiancée.

Bryan was almost tempted to ask what she had heard, and how much she had heard about him from Sonia, but he stifled the urge to do so, "I'm sure I've heard more about you than you have heard about me. By the way, Sonia told me that you are my brother's personal assistant?"

She hadn't expected him to bring that up so soon, "Yeah," Lucy said since she had no idea of what else he wanted to hear.

She wasn't the type to talk much, Bryan observed, "That's cool. We already discussed you, so I'm sure he would be meeting with you very soon," He said, wanting to see if he could find out what she wanted from his brother.

Lucy's heart skipped a beat. "Soon?"

"Yeah. Very soon. Is there a problem?" Bryan asked innocently, wondering why she sounded nervous.

"Not a all. I look forward to meeting with him," Lucy said before deciding to change the subject, "So how are you coping with Sonia? I hope she isn't frustrating you?" Lucy asked making Bryan glance at Sonia.

She batted her lashes at him and gave him a sultry smile which made him turn away from her almost immediately. What was her problem? Why did she always have to do weird stuff like that? Bryan thought.

"She is a handful, but I think I'm adjusting. I'd like to know more about her from you if you don't mind," Bryan said without looking in Sonia's direction.

Lucy giggled at that because she knew he was right about Sonia being a handful, "Sure. You can ask me whatever you want to know about her, and when you get fed up and are tempted to throw her out of your house, call me and I will come to get her," Lucy promised.

"I will hold you to that," Bryan said with a crooked smile.

"Sure," Lucy said confidently.

"I will hand the phone to her now. I hope to hear from you more often going forward" Bryan said politely before returning the phone to Sonia.

Chapter 120 - Family Black Sheep

"Did I hear you say someone is interested in my brother?" Bryan asked Sonia after she hung up the call with Lucy and dropped the phone on the table.

"It's mere speculation. But then again, a lot of ladies are interested in your brother so it shouldn't be a big deal, should it?" Sonia asked as she stood up from the dining to head into the kitchen.

"Is the lady bothering your friend?" Bryan asked curiously as he followed behind her in his wheelchair which he was quickly beginning to get used to.

"Not exactly," Sonia said, not wanting to discuss Lucy's private business with Bryan. As far as she was concerned, Lucy's relationship with Tom and Anita was none of his business.

"So, how did the meeting with the production team go?" She asked, changing the subject to a more comfortable subject.

Bryan could tell that she was trying to avoid his question by changing the subject so he decided not to push it. At least not yet.

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"Although, the producer wasn't pleased about your absence, Jeff was quick to remind him that I was the one working with them, and not you, and as such, there was no need for them to meet with you," Bryan explained, and Sonia nodded her head.

"True. Anything else that I need to know about the meeting?" She asked as she opened the refrigerator and looked into it, trying to find something to fix for dinner.

"We have to wear matching outfits for our interview tomorrow... Jeff and Mia will get the clothes on their way here in the morning," he said, answering the question he knew she was likely to ask next, which was how they were going to get matching clothes.

"Cool," Sonia said as she continued rummaging through the refrigerator. After searching for some time, she sighed, "I know I asked before, but you didn't answer my question then. Aren't you supposed to have a cook or something?" Sonia asked wearily.

"I have a male home keeper, recommended by my mom. He makes sure the home is okay in my absence, and he takes care of my feeding and laundry," Bryan said, making Sonia nod.

"So why don't I see him anywhere around?"

"That is because I asked him not to resume yet," Bryan explained.

"You did? Why would you do that?" Sonia asked with a confused frown etched on her brow. Was he deliberately trying to wear her out with taking care of his home so that she would leave quickly?

"He reports everything to my mom. If he resumes and has to live here with us, he will eventually find out that we are not truly engaged as we claim, and the news would get to my mom. That would break her heart and I don't want it. Besides, I don't know who else he might reveal the truth to," Bryan pointed out.

"Hm. I see. But I think if your mom recommended him, then he should be someone you can trust. She won't recommend someone with questionable traits to you," Sonia said thoughtfully.

"Although I understand where you are coming from, I don't fully agree with you. I adore my mom, but I also know that she is human and can easily misjudge people's character, so I can't fully trust a person because they come highly recommended by her," Bryan said, thinking of how his mother had said Sonia was a nice girl. Talk about being a terrible judge of character.

"Hm," Sonia murmured with a nod as she took out the remnant of the salad they ate the previous evening and a pack of sausage since she couldn't find anything else of interest, "I guess this will have to do until we get groceries," Sonia said as she dropped the items on the kitchen counter and turned to look at him.

"May I ask why you don't want to tell your family the truth? I don't think it is a big deal for you to tell them that you proposed to a random stranger," Sonia said, looking at him curiously. She had been wondering why he was keeping the truth away from his family.

Bryan considered her question for a moment, "Let's just say I am kind of tired of being the family black sheep. It is almost like they are always expecting me to do something crazy. So when both To... My brother and mom called to congratulate me after hearing of the engagement, and I heard the pride in their voice, I did not want to disappoint them by telling them the truth," Bryan said with a sigh.

Sonia pursed her lips as she looked at him quizzically. Contrary to what most people thought about him, she was coming to learn that he cared a lot about what people thought of him, especially his family. That left her to wonder why he got involved in all sorts of scandals in the first place.

"You don't think you will disappoint them even more when they find out that you have been lying to them this whole time?" Sonia asked as she got busy with dicing the sausage.

That question was one he has been avoiding himself. He knew his mom would be disappointed if she finds out he had deceived her along with the world. He didn't want to think of it yet.

"What can I do?" Bryan asked as he moved closer, wanting to help her out with dinner while also changing the subject.

"I don't know. You will have to figure it out yourself..."

"I mean, what can I help you to do?" Bryan corrected.

"Oh! You don't have to do anything other than answer my questions and keep me company," Sonia said, flashing him a quick smile before returning her attention to the sausage she was dicing.

"Alright. Do you think she might like my brother?" Bryan asked, making Sonia blink at him rapidly.

Who was he talking about? His mother? Was he asking if she thought his mother might like his brother? Sonia wondered with a frown.

"Who?" She asked, turning to look at him in confusion, wondering where the question was coming from.

"I mean your best friend, Lucy. Do you think she might like my brother?" Bryan asked since he really wanted to find out what Sonia and Lucy were up to, especially now that he had spoken with Lucy. He felt closer to her now. She was no longer like a distant stranger to him.

Why was he suddenly asking about Lucy and his brother? "Nah, she doesn't. Why do you ask? You want to matchmake them?" Sonia asked with a teasing smile as she moved to the air fryer and poured the sausage into it.

Was that really what they wanted? For him to matchmake her to Tom? Bryan wondered, "Would she like it if I did?" Bryan asked, dodging her question, so he could get his own answer.

Sonia turned her attention to him, "I told you already that she isn't interested in guys. Besides, she is in a relationship with someone else at the moment," Sonia said before she could stop herself.

"She isn't interested in guys, yet she is in a relationship?" Bryan asked dryly, not wanting to let go of this opportunity.

"It's just a temporary arrangement she has with the guy. She really isn't interested in guys," Sonia said defensively.

"Hold on, is it the same guy you were advising her to make her haaandy man?" Bryan asked in a suggestive tone, referring to her phone conversation with Lucy the first night they had met.

Sonia's eyes widened slightly in surprise at the realization that he still remembered everything she had said to Lucy over the phone that night, "Why are you so interested in my friend?" Sonia asked, trying to change the subject, while also trying to remember all that she and Lucy had discussed that night.

"Is it such a bad thing to want to know more about your best friend? Besides, I feel like I could give her better advice than you do, considering the kind of advice I heard you give her that night," Bryan said with a shrug.

Sonia narrowed her eyes thoughtfully. Perhaps he was right. Maybe he could help them see things from a guy's perspective? She would need Lucy's permission to do that since she couldn't confide in Bryan about Lucy's personal business without her say so.

"Don't forget that I let you stop me when you insisted I don't tell Matt about his girlfriend being a stripper," Bryan reminded her.

"That is a different issue," Sonia said with a roll of her eyes.

"Is it now?"

"I don't remember asking you to tell me about Matt's private business," Sonia pointed out.

Why did she have to be so stubborn and smart? Bryan wondered with an inward sigh, "Fine then, you can keep it all to yourself. I'm not curious about anything concerning you anymore. Just make sure you don't ask me about my family or friends either," Bryan said as he turned to leave, expecting Sonia to call him back and apologize.

"Hold on," Sonia called out before he could cross the kitchen door, making his lips curve in a smirk, but he turned to look at her with a questioning expression on his face.

"Drop this on the dining," Sonia said, handing him the bowl of salad, and earning herself a glare from him.