

Wild Night 191

Chapter 191 - Two-faced Jerk

After his phone call with Harry, Tom had decided to give Lucy a call since that was the reasonable thing to do next as he was keeping up the front. What he hadn't expected was that she was going to play along in this manner, "It can't wait. I need to speak with you now," Tom responded, still gazing at her through the rearview mirror as she tried to keep her attention focused on the road.

"Well, I'm driving and I can't talk while driving. Besides, my boss is here," Lucy pointed out in a whisper, as she spared him another glance through the rearview mirror.

Tom looked outside the window and cleared his throat, "Miss Perry please park the car by the roadside I need to receive an important phone call," Tom ordered, making Lucy sigh. Now this was crazy. What was he trying to prove? That he had authority over her and could get whatever he wanted when he wanted it? What did he want to say that he couldn't keep until the next one hour? She wondered as she looked for the next available parking space by the road and drove over there.

"Excuse me," Lucy said as she unlocked the car and got out to give him privacy to receive his phone call, "What's so urgent that couldn't wait?" Lucy asked once she was away from him and stood behind the car with her back resting on the trunk of the car.

"Do you want me to stop being your driver? I just received a call from Mr. Harry asking me to quit my job," Tom said, even though he knew that wasn't what she wanted. He was gradually beginning to figure out what she was doing but he didn't want her to know it. Two could play the game.

"Well, you can call him back to say you're not quitting. I already made it clear that you're going to remain my driver," Lucy reminded him.

"So why then did you tell him you no longer wanted me to work for you?" Tom asked, pretending to be ignorant. Since she wanted to be crazy, he had to show her that he could do crazy too.

"You can always ask me this when we meet. If that's all you wanted to talk about I..."

"Hold on! That's not all," Tom quickly cut in before she could hang up the call.

"What else?" Lucy asked impatiently.

"Did you mean it when you said you were missing me earlier and wanted us to see a movie later? Or were you just messing with me?" Tom asked curiously, making Lucy glance towards the car.

She had to admit that the whole thing was impressed by the way he was playing along with her. Here they were, two grown-up adults behaving like kids and talking over the phone when they were right there together, "Uhm... I meant it. So let's talk later. I don't want to keep my boss waiting," Lucy said as she quickly hung up the call, but not without hearing the sound of his.

So she really did miss him? That meant she had forgiven him and was just playing, right? Well, as long as she had forgiven him and was willing to keep dating him, then he was okay with all the crazy stunts she was pulling. If she was into roleplays, then he was just going to try to make it fun for himself.

"I suppose that was your boyfriend on the phone with you just now?" Tom asked in amusement when Lucy returned to the car.

"Yes sir," Lucy said as she turned on the car's ignition and drove away from there.

"Do well to let him know that he should start looking for another girlfriend as you would soon become mine," Tom said, and Lucy's lips twitched in amusement, but she said nothing.

Neither of them said another word to each other during the rest of the drive to the office. Tom focused on his newspaper, while Lucy focused on the road while sparing him occasional glances.

Once they got to the company Lucy parked the car and handed the key to Tom. She watched him as he turned to leave, and then bit her lower lip before calling out to him reluctantly, "Excuse me, sir!" She called making Tom who had turned around and was about to leave stopped to glance at her with questioning eyes.

"Can I have a word with you?" She asked, making Tom look at her with a slightly raised brow as he watched her adjust the glasses on the bridge of her nose in an uncomfortable gesture. What did she want to say to him that she couldn't have said in all the time they were together in the car?

"Sure," Tom said with a nod.

"Earlier you said you wanted to make me yours?" Lucy asked curiously, making Tom wonder what she was up to this time.

"Yes? Why do you ask?"

"Well, you embarrassed me in front of everyone earlier," Lucy said grudgingly, and Tom's lips twitched in amusement.

"Did I?" Tom asked, looking at her with a blank expression.

"You did. I'm just saying this, in case you didn't know... You can't be asking a lady to go out with you, yet you treat her that way in front of strangers," Lucy added, and it was all Tom could do not to chuckle.

"I thought you were uncomfortable the last time because I was showing you preferential treatment?" Tom asked thoughtfully.

Lucy looked away from him guiltily, "I didn't exactly say that."

"You didn't have to," Tom said making her brows crease in a frown.

"Well..."

"I won't be showing you any preferential treatment anymore if that's what you're asking for. If you want me to treat you differently then quit being so difficult and agree to be my girlfriend," Tom said, and then walked away without waiting for her to say anything else, while Lucy glared at his back.

Forty-five minutes later Lucy walked out of the company building and smiled when she saw Tom standing by the parking lot beside her car waiting for her. Just as she approached him, the smile on her lips faltered when she saw a female staff waving at him as she walked towards him. Lucy raised a brow but said nothing as she approached them.

"Hey! So were you able to see the cab driver?" The lady who had spoken with the private investigator the last time, asked as she stopped in front of Tom.

"Yes, thanks for your help," Tom said with a small smile while he watched Lucy from the corners of his eyes as she headed for the car.

"I'm glad I could help. Can I buy you a drink one of these days? Maybe after work?" The lady asked, and Tom shook his head.

"I don't drink."

"Then what about food? Or better still, my birthday party is coming up soon, and I would like for you to be there," she said with a toothy smile.

"Ahem!" Lucy cleared her throat when she got to the car and then she flashed the lady a stiff smile, "Hello!" She greeted with a small wave.

"Hello!" The lady greeted back and then glanced at Tom, "Can I have your number so that we can talk later?" She asked, and Tom glanced at Lucy before giving her a nod.

"Sure," he said as he took her phone from her and input his number, while Lucy got into the back seat of the car and sat down.

"I should go now, she hates being kept waiting," Tom told the lady before getting into the driver's seat.

"You seem to have a lot of fans," Lucy muttered from the backseat as Tom turned on the car's ignition.

"Can't blame me, ma'am! Blame it on my good looks," Tom said, switching back to his usual voice and carefree character.

"Maybe you didn't need to go through all that stress to get a lady. All you needed was to change your personality and wardrobe," Lucy muttered under her breath making Tom chuckle when he heard her murmur something about distributing his number to every lady who asked like he was a customer care representative.

"I suppose you're right. How was work today?" Tom asked as he drove out of the parking lot, feeling very glad that he was out of the costume now. The contact lens and wig were pretty uncomfortable for him.

"Work was okay. Although the CEO was being an asshole, I survived," Lucy said, meeting his gaze in the mirror in a bid to let him know he was the asshole.

"Really? What did he do?" Tom asked with a very curious expression and she shook her head before going on to tell him all that had happened even though he was aware of it.

Tom chuckled by the time she finished, "Don't you think you were being too petty? Or perhaps did you do that because you know Anita is my ex-girlfriend?" Tom asked, and Lucy raised a brow.

"What has her being your ex-girlfriend got to do with anything?" Lucy asked as she took off her glasses to rub her eyes.

"Isn't that part of the reason you don't like her?" Tom asked, and Lucy rolled her eyes.

"It has nothing to do with you! I'm just pissed the CEO took her side though. One minute he is acting like he cares about me and the next he's taking the side of someone he claims he doesn't like. What a two-faced jerk," Lucy complained.

"Who said he took her side? You never can tell what happened after you left, you know? I think you know the CEO well enough to know he wouldn't do anything without good reason," Tom said, giving her a pointed look through the rearview mirror.

Before she could respond to that her phone started ringing and she rolled her eyes when she saw that it was a call from Anita. What did the bitch want this time? Lucy wondered, "Your ex-girlfriend is calling me," she informed Tom.

"Well, let's hear what she has to say," Tom said, urging her to receive the call.

Chapter 192 - Keeping Enemies Closer

Anita wasn't really pleased about making the call to Lucy, especially considering how Lucy had acted like a little bitch during the meeting, but she had long decided to set aside her pride in her bid to get the CEO. He clearly wanted a docile woman he could control, and she was going to be one for him. All that she was doing, was stooping to conquer.

"Hey, dearie! Can you talk right now?" Anita asked in a cheerful voice the moment the call connected.

"You mean like you talked to me during the meeting just now?" Lucy asked dryly as she placed the call on speaker for Tom to hear what Anita was going to say.

Since Anita was trying to pretend that they were cool, she was also going to act like the ignorant and naive one among them. Acting like she was setting all her cards on the table was the best way to deal with an over confident person like Anita.

Anita let out a soft giggle even though she was feeling anything but funny at that moment, "Come on, you shouldn't take that to heart. It's the way meetings like that work. Besides, it seems like the CEO doesn't really like us being friends, so I did what I did for him to know that our friendship wasn't going to get in the way of business. I'm very sorry if you felt betrayed by my actions. I really do care about you, and you should know that," Anita lied, and Lucy rolled her eyes.

"I suppose I understand. For a moment there I thought you were trying to get me to lose my job, and I couldn't understand why," Lucy lied, making Anita smile.

She felt grateful that Lucy had bought her lie and was back to seeing her as a trusted friend once again, "I can't possibly do something like that to you, darling. We are friends and I will always have your back," Anita promised.

"I feel so relieved hearing this right now. I'm sorry about what happened in my office earlier today. The CEO is just a bully and he doesn't like people receiving visitors during work hours," Lucy lied, while Tom raised a brow as he listened to both ladies.

"Oh! Are you sure that's just it? One would think there's something special going on between you and the CEO. He always seems to favor you," Anita said offhandedly like it wasn't a big deal, making Lucy meet Tom's gaze in the rearview mirror.

"Uhm... About that, I was actually wondering the same thing too, and I only just realized why a while ago. I will tell you about it when we meet," Lucy said, making Tom look at her with questioning eyes as he wondered what she was going to tell Anita.

"Really? Do you have something planned out for tonight? Or could you come over to my house and then we can have a sleepover, just the both of us girls bonding," Anita suggested, and Lucy shuddered at the thought of acting all prim and proper for an entire night.

No, thanks. She would rather be cuddled up with Tom on her bed doing and saying naughty things all through the night, "Uhm, sorry. I would have loved to, but I'm spending the night with my boyfriend," Lucy said meeting Tom's gaze, and he winked at her, making her smile.

On hearing that Lucy was spending the evening with her boyfriend, Anita's disposition brightened. For a moment she had thought that Lucy had behaved that way during the meeting because she was trying to impress the CEO, but now she felt relieved, "For someone who didn't want a man in her life, you seem to be really spending a lot of time with this new boyfriend. I hope I get to meet him someday," Anita said in a teasing tone.

You've met him already, bitch! Lucy thought in her head, but covered it up with her laughter.

"We can meet at a restaurant or bar," Lucy suggested changing the subject as she didn't want to tell more lies than were necessary, and neither did she want to go to Anita's house, or have Anita come over to hers. She didn't want Anita to find out about her relationship with Tom yet.

"Really? That's great then. Text me a location and I will meet you," Anita said excitedly. Glad that she was finally going to have time to get some information from Lucy.

"Okay then. See you later," Lucy called out in a cheerful voice before hanging up, "Phew! That was pretty exhausting," Lucy complained, massaging her neck as she rested her head on the headrest of her seat and shut her eyes.

"You handled it well. Although I'd rather you cut her off than hang out with her. If I remember correctly you said that you felt she was dangerous," Tom reminded her as he shifted his glance from the road to the rearview mirror.

"Ever heard of the saying, 'keep your friends close, and your enemies closer'?" Lucy asked without opening her eyes.

"Keeping your enemies closer is the fastest way to get backstabbed," Tom pointed out to her.

"Not in this case. I'm keeping my enemy in front of me, so she can't stab me in the back. Especially not when she thinks she is so smart and way ahead of me," Lucy explained.

"Still, I need you to be careful. Always keep me in the know of your movements with her. I'm not trying to control your life or monitor your movements, but you don't exactly know your way around the city, so I should know where you're going and with whom. That's the only way I can ensure that you're safe," Tom said in a slightly worried tone making Lucy smile.

"You're such a caring driver. You deserve a tip," Lucy murmured as she opened her eyes and picked up her handbag. She fished inside for a money note and handed it to him.

Tom chuckled as he received it from her, "Thanks ma'am, I promise to do my best," Tom said as they both laughed at the ridiculousness of what they were both doing.

"So you're going out with her? Are we still seeing a movie tonight?" Tom asked curiously.

"Sure. I do hope you remember that you promised to take me to see your friend's mansion this weekend?" Lucy reminded him as he parked the car in front of her apartment.

"I do remember. You can go there whenever you want. All you need to do is say the word," Tom assured her by giving her a small smile through the rearview mirror as he turned off the car's ignition.

Once they both got out of the car, they stood there staring at each other for a while, and before Lucy could leave Tom grabbed her hand, "I'm very sorry I lied to you and broke your trust, Lu. It was never my intention to hurt you or make you feel unsafe even though we both know it was worth it just to get to know you," Tom said, knowing that even though they had been acting like nothing happened the whole time, he was yet to really make her understand that he was sorry. He knew that she had probably forgiven him because of her feelings for him and because she understood him, not necessarily because he had shown her how sorry he was to have messed with her head that way.

Lucy looked at him without saying a word for a moment. Shit! She liked this man. She liked him really much, and it meant so much to her that he had chosen to apologize even when she had chosen to assume their argument the other day had never happened. Without saying another word Lucy stepped forward and embraced him, burying her face in his chest as she inhaled his scent.

Tom swallowed past the lump of emotion in his throat at her sudden gesture. He could feel his heart soaring with love for her, and he placed a hand behind her head, and the other on her back as he gently patted it. He was relieved to know that his heart had chosen such a sensible and sweet lady.

"So are you going to stop the roleplay thing now?" Tom asked hopefully after they remained in that position for a while, and Lucy giggled against his chest as she stepped away from him.

"No. I may understand you and have forgiven you, but you're still getting punished. Besides, it's fun, so don't ruin it," Lucy warned as she gazed into his eyes.

"I don't think you remembered the fun part of it earlier during the meeting," Tom pointed out, and Lucy hit his shoulder.

"You took your ex-girlfriend's side over mine," she said accusingly.

"I didn't. You know I won't do that. I was only trying to prove a point to you. You don't need to stoop to her level to impress me. The mere fact that you exist and you're a part of my life is all I need to be impressed," Tom said, looking into her eyes with a soft smile that made Lucy's heart flutter.

"I'm not falling for any of that," Lucy said even though her eyes told him otherwise as she snatched the car key from him, and headed for her apartment while he shook his head in amusement as he watched her.

"Don't forget to tell me where you're meeting her," Tom called out after Lucy.

"Don't forget we are having dinner together and seeing a movie. Dinner is on you," Lucy called back making Tom chuckle to himself as he turned around and headed for his apartment.

He paused when he noticed Alicia sitting outside her apartment looking at him. She smiled and waved at him when their eyes met, and Tom waved back even as he wondered why she was always looking at him.

As Alicia watched him walk away she couldn't help wondering what was going on between Lucy and Tom.. Their conversation a while ago had seemed pretty intense. Perhaps Lucy knew the truth about Tom now?

Chapter 193 - A Friend Of Mine

"So what's up with you?" Sonia asked Matt once the production crew had left and it was remaining just the three of them in the house.

"Huh?" Matt asked in confusion.

"What? Do you think I missed the fact that you were worried when you walked in here? I figured you needed the distraction hence I asked you to join us. What's wrong? You need to talk to Bryan alone, or is it something you can share?" Sonia asked as she handed him a glass of whiskey.

Matt looked at Sonia for a moment without saying anything and then his lips pulled up in a smile, "I will marry you if Bryan fails to do so," he promised, and Sonia giggled.

"I don't think Candy would like to hear that. What's up with you both by the way?" Sonia asked, making Bryan wonder if Matt was his best friend or hers, as he didn't understand how they were beginning to chat like old friends.

"I decided to let her go. She doesn't want to be involved with me," Matt lied with a sigh as he turned to Bryan, "I was hoping I could get Jade's contact number from you," He said hopefully since he knew that Jade was a very good criminal lawyer and could advise him on how best he could help Jade from the distance without getting involved in the mess that she had gotten involved in.

"Why? Did you murder someone?" Bryan asked, looking at him with eyes that were suspiciously narrowed.

"The only person I've gotten close to murdering is you," Matt said with a chuckle, and Bryan glared at him when he remembered the one time he had fought with Matt and had ended up with a bloodied nose.

"Why do I feel like there's a story there?" Sonia asked with a curious smile.

"There's no story," Bryan said dismissively.

"Sure, there's a story there," Matt countered with a grin and Bryan dared him with his eyes to share the story with Sonia.

Sonia giggled as she could guess that the story didn't seem to favor Bryan, "I'm certain I'll hear this story someday," Sonia said confidently.

"Seriously though, it's important that I speak to Jade. I need her legal opinion on an issue," Matt repeated to Bryan.

"You're not going to hit on her, are you?" Bryan asked with narrowed eyes.

"Ew! Why would I want to date someone that shares the same bloodline as you when I know how abnormal you are? I don't want my bloodline to be mixed with yours in any way. No, thanks!" Matt said with a shake of his head.

"Better," Bryan said as he picked up his phone and scrolled through his contact list. He stopped when he got to Jade's contact and handed the phone to Matt, "That's it," he said to Matt before turning to look at Sonia.

"So how did it go with Lucy? We are supposed to speak with Tom, remember?" He asked her, while Matt's attention was focused on his phone.

"I think we don't need to worry. She went to work today. You know what that means," Sonia pointed out.

"Here. Excuse me for a moment, I need to give her a call," Matt said as he returned Bryan's phone to him before standing up to excuse himself. The earlier he made the call and set in motion all he needed to do to help Candy, the sooner he could stop feeling guilty concerning leaving her that way after her confession.

Both Sonia and Bryan watched as Matt walked out of the living room, "What do you think is wrong with him?" Sonia asked Bryan with a concerned frown.

"It probably has something to do with Candy. Let him be, I'm sure he will talk about it when he wants to," Bryan said dismissively as Sonia snuggled up to him.

Inside the guestroom which Matt often used whenever he was around, he sat on the bed as he dialed Jade's line.

"Hello! This is Jade Hank," Jade responded immediately she received the call from the unknown number, hoping it was a call from the witness she was searching for.

"Hey, Jade! This is Matt. Bryan's best friend," Matt explained making Jade swallow past the lump of disappointment in her throat as she shook her head at Harry who was driving the car while glancing at her at intervals, to let him know that it wasn't who they had been expecting.

"Oh, Matt! It seems like I'm reuniting with my brothers' best friends this season. First, it was Harry, and now it is you. To what do I owe this unexpected pleasure?" Jade asked in a friendly tone.

"Are you busy at the moment? Or can you talk? I need to speak with you about something really important, and I need your legal advice," Matt explained.

"But you have a lawyer, don't you?" Jade asked thoughtfully since she knew that most celebrities often had their personal legal representative, or usually used the legal representatives of whichever entertainment company they worked with.

"It's not exactly a personal issue. What I mean is that it involves someone else. A friend of mine, not me," Matt quickly explained.

"I see. Alright then, go on and tell me about it," Jade said, urging him on.

"Well, I don't know if you remember the case which was all over the news two years ago? The one in which some young teenage boys overdosed on a hard substance?" Matt asked making Jade sit up immediately.

"Yes? What about it?" She asked, trying not to let her excitement show in her voice.

"The thing is, a friend of mine was involved in that case. Her boyfriend was sentenced..."

"You are not talking about Candace Roberts, are you?" Jade asked, hoping with all her heart that Candace was the person Matt was talking about.

Harry who was driving, turned to look at Jade with interest when he heard the excitement in her voice. He could almost hear her blood pumping with adrenaline judging by how restless she had suddenly become in her seat.

"How did you know that? You know Candace?" Matt asked both in surprise and concern since even though he was curious to know how Jade knew Candy, he also didn't want to get Candy in trouble with the law.

"I was in charge of that case two years ago. What's happening now? Are Candace and her son alright? I've been trying to find her for some time now," Jade asked, hoping that Matt knew where they were, as that would make things easier for her.

"They're living okay if that's what you want to know. So since you know about the case then I guess it's easier for me to ask you what I need to know. Is she safe? Are they safe?" He asked, not wanting to ask her if she knew that Candace had tampered with the drugs which the kids had overdosed on. He knew that could place Candace in a difficult position with the law, and he didn't want that.

"No, they're not safe. And I'm very sorry but I'm going to need to ask you for a very urgent and important favor," Jade pleaded making Matt's brows crease.

"What could that be?" Matt asked cautiously.

"Get her and her son out of there, and keep them hidden until I tell you it's safe," Jade pleaded.

Chapter 194 - Like Family

Somehow after the events of the past couple of days, Lucy was beginning to feel quite different about herself. She was beginning to feel more confident, and she wasn't as scared to step out of her house and face life as she had been a while ago.

She couldn't tell what it was that had caused the change. Perhaps it was the sex with Tom, or it was because she had finally been able to open up to Tom concerning some parts of her past, or maybe it was because of Tom's feelings towards her which she largely reciprocated.

She wasn't exactly sure which it was. But whichever it was, that feeling had her humming a tune to herself as she drove over to the roadside bar where she had arranged to meet with Anita. She ordinarily would have felt anxious about meeting with Anita this time last week, but now she felt like there was nothing she couldn't handle.

Her plan for the evening was pretty simple. She was going to spend a maximum of one hour chitchatting with Anita and evading unnecessary questions, and after that she would return home to have dinner with Tom, Lucy thought with a happy smile as she drove into the parking lot of the bar.

Once she stepped out of her car she looked around the parking lot and rolled her eyes when her gaze fell on Anita's car which was already parked there. If it had been someone else who had come quite early for such a casual meeting she would have been impressed by their knack for being punctual as she always loved to keep to time herself, but seeing as it was Anita it only seemed to grate on her

nerves. No matter what Anita does, it would always seem to her that Anita was only doing it to prove a point, Lucy thought as she walked into the bar.

She stopped by the entrance of the bar and looked around until her eyes settled on Anita who was seated on a barstool at the right end of the bar with a glass of wine in hand as she watched the local singer on the stage with a snooty expression on her face.

"You are early," Lucy commented as she approached her.

On hearing Lucy's voice Anita's lips pulled up in a small smile, "Yeah. Habit I guess. I like to be punctual to places I'm not very familiar with," Anita explained as she looked around the place with distaste.

And even though she sounded quite genuine, Lucy wasn't willing to buy anything she was selling that evening, "I see. It's my first time here too," Lucy said with a small smile as she glanced around the bar which didn't look anything like its name. How could you name a place 'Paradise' yet it looked so run-down?

"I see. Maybe you should let me be in charge of where we meet going forward, as I know my way around the city," Anita said, and Lucy smiled at her sweetly as she picked up her phone.

Although Lucy didn't also like the look of the place, she liked to know that Anita despised it more than her. Whatever Anita despised, she was going to like, "Whatever you say," Lucy said before glancing at a waiter who was standing beside her.

"Please can I have your least alcoholic drink? I can't hold my liquor and I will have to drive myself home," Lucy explained with an embarrassed smile which the waiter returned as he walked away to go find her something to drink.

"What about your driver? He works only during office hours?" Anita asked curiously.

"Tom? You seem very interested in my driver. Don't tell me you have a crush on him," Lucy asked with a teasing smile as she placed her phone on the table in front of them.

Anita's eyes widened in alarm at the thought that Lucy would think that someone like her would be interested in someone as lowly as Tom, "Of course not! Why would I have a crush on your driver?" Anita asked, wrinkling her nose in distaste.

"Why wouldn't you? Isn't he human?" Lucy countered in his defense.

"Sure, he is. But he's just not my type," Anita corrected with a stiff smile.

"You mean he isn't your spec? Not good-looking enough for you?" Lucy guessed playfully as the waiter set a glass of mocktail in front of her.

Although Anita wasn't exactly comfortable with the line of conversation, she knew she needed to play along with Lucy as that was the only way she could also get Lucy to be free with her, "Well, he looks decent quite alright, and he is undoubtedly good-looking. But let's face reality, what can someone like him do for me? We are not on the same level. I mean I know that other ladies may not mind getting involved with him, but I'm too ambitious to do that. I don't think someone like him can give me what I want," Anita said with a shrug.

"In other words, you're only interested in a man who has something to offer," Lucy concluded thoughtfully as she sipped from her glass of mocktail.

"Yeah."

"Someone like the CEO perhaps?" Lucy asked with a teasing smile, giving Anita the opening she needed.

Anita gave her a shy smile, "Well... Kind of. The CEO is good-looking, wealthy, ambitious, and powerful," Anita said with another shrug, glad that they were having such an easy conversation.

"Well, I don't think he's good-looking though. Not with those rough beards. He might look better without them. And I think he's pretty mean too," Lucy said, making Anita raise a brow.

"Mean? Even when everyone knows that he is always taking your side? Speaking of which, you said you were going to tell me something about your relationship with the CEO," Anita reminded Lucy.

"Oh! About that, yeah. Well, you won't believe what I found out," Lucy said in a conspiratorial whisper.

"Don't tell me he likes you," Anita said with wide eyes, making Lucy throw her head back to laugh.

"Why would you think that?" Lucy asked in amusement.

"Well, he acts that way so everyone thinks that," Anita explained.

"That's not true. Take for instance the way he embarrassed me today at the meeting. He wouldn't do something like that if he liked me, would he?" Lucy asked, making Anita realize that she wasn't aware that the CEO had scolded her after Lucy left the meeting hall.

"Maybe. So if that's not it, what did you discover then?" Anita asked curiously.

"You remember the CEO's brother recently got engaged? That's if you saw the news," Lucy said, and Anita gave her a nod.

"Of course, I saw the news."

"Well, his fiancée happens to be my best friend. Sonia Smith. So I guess the CEO is looking out for me because I'm like family to him. More like a sister-in-law," Lucy explained with a small smile, and Anita's lips rounded in surprise.

Now Anita wasn't sure which she hated most. The thought that the CEO liked Lucy, or the knowledge that she was like family to him. If she was like family to him already that meant that his parents and siblings already knew her.. And she didn't like it one bit.

Chapter 195 - The Hank Siblings

"Are you still mad at me?" Sonia asked Bryan after Matt left them saying he needed to check on someone.

"Would I be talking to you if I was mad?" Bryan asked as he poured some cereals into a bowl and added milk to it.

"Maybe not. I can't shake off the feeling that you're just talking to me but you're still upset with me," Sonia told Bryan who was now raising a spoonful of cereals into his mouth.

His hand stopped midway, "I'm sure it's just your conscience pricking you for treating me so unfairly," Bryan said dryly as he started eating.

"All this drama simply because I refused to share the shower with you?" Sonia asked with a shake of her head.

"Really? Why are you still bringing that up?" Bryan asked, trying not to sound irritated over the way Sonia was going on and on about it.

"I'm still bringing it up because of the way you're acting," Sonia pointed out and Bryan shook his head.

"Seriously, Sonia? I'm not going to continue having this discussion with you. Goodnight," he said as he placed his bowl of cereals on his thigh and held it with one hand, before using the other hand to turn his wheelchair around and move it away from the dining.

"Okay, wait! Don't leave," Sonia called back, not wanting them to escalate things more than was necessary. She didn't want them to quarrel over something as minor as this, "I'm sorry, okay? I'm sorry. I will drop the topic," Sonia promised as she followed him, and stood in front of his wheelchair blocking his path.

Bryan said nothing as he munched on the cereals he was eating while looking at her with a blank expression.

"Come on, I said I'm sorry," Sonia pleaded, going to sit on his thighs and taking the bowl of cereal from him.

"I've heard you."

"Why don't we give your brother a call right now," Sonia suggested, as she wanted them to talk about something that didn't relate to the both of them.

"Okay," Bryan said as he reached into the pocket of the combat short he was wearing and took out his phone so that they could give Tom a call.

Meanwhile, Tom sat outside his apartment as he waited for Lucy to return. He stood up when he sighted the flashlight of a car coming from the distance, and sighed when it moved closer and he realized it wasn't Lucy's car. The same thing happened about three more times before Lucy finally arrived.

"What took you so long? I was worried about you," Tom complained as he stood by the driver's door while she parked the car, and then he opened the door and held it out for her to get out of the car.

"You missed me, huh?" Lucy asked with a wide smile as she embraced him. She had to admit that it felt good to have someone waiting for her this way. She couldn't count the number of times Tom had called her, urging her to be on her way. She couldn't tell if it was just because he was missing her or maybe it was because she was hanging out with Anita and it made him uncomfortable. Whichever it was, it just felt good having him whine on the phone.

"Of course, I did. You said you were going to spend just an hour with her, but you spent over two hours with her," Tom complained as he hugged her back.

"Sorry. I lost track of time until your call came in, and then I couldn't leave immediately as there was a music performance I was enjoying," Lucy explained apologetically as she pulled away from him.

"It's fine as long as you are home now," Tom murmured as he looked into her face with a small smile that tugged at her heart.

"I should freshen up. I will meet you at your place in twenty minutes," Lucy said as she glanced at her wristwatch.

"How am I sure you won't lose track of time again?" Tom asked dryly, and she giggled.

"If I do you can just come over to remind me. I'm famished though, so don't worry I won't lose track of time. I've been chewing on antacids for the last couple of minutes because of a minor ulcer pain I'm feeling, so I really need to eat. I skipped breakfast and lunch," Lucy reminded him, making Tom suddenly feel guilty.

"I'm sorry, I will make an arrangement for breakfast and lunch to be delivered to the office whenever I'm unable to get it myself," he said apologetically.

"You had better," Lucy threatened with a happy smile, and before any of them could say anything else Tom's cellphone began to ring with a call from Bryan.

"It's Bryan," he informed Lucy.

"Don't let him know we made up already," Lucy rushed to say before Tom could receive the call.

"Why? What should I say then?" He asked with a slight frown.

"Well, you could just say I'm still being mean to you. I resumed work at the office but I'm not talking to you yet," Lucy said with a shrug as she took off her glasses to rub her eyes.

"And what about Sonia? Are you going to tell her the same thing?" Tom asked, looking at her curiously.

"Let me worry about that. Just don't let your brother know we made up yet," Lucy said as she walked away while giving him the privacy he needed to receive the call.

"Hey!" Tom greeted Bryan in a weary tone once he received the call.

"Are you okay?" Bryan asked in concern.

"I don't know. Maybe," Tom said, not knowing what he was supposed to say.

"You sound like you're tired or depressed. Is it Lucy? Is she giving you a hard time?" Bryan asked as he exchanged a glance with Sonia who was seated on the couch next to him with his bowl of cereal between them. Instead of one spoon, there were two spoons in the bowl as they ate together.

"Maybe I'm feeling both tired and depressed. Lucy really did a good job of frustrating me all through the day," Tom said, at least that wasn't a lie. Lucy had really frustrated him initially until he found a way to play along.

"She did? What did she do?" Bryan asked, echoing the question on Sonia's mind.

"She completely ignored me today. She acted like I don't exist," Tom explained.

"But she was at the office, right? That must mean she isn't very mad," Bryan thought rationally.

"I don't think so. It feels more like she decided to forget all about me and what we shared. You know indifference is the opposite of love, not hatred, right? She treated me like I was nothing other than her boss," Tom lied, and Sonia's brows furrowed together in a frown.

"Wow! I don't know what to say about that. No lady has ever treated me that way," Bryan murmured.

"Really, Bryan? That's really so helpful," Tom muttered.

"I'm sorry. Anyway, Sonia is here. Maybe it would help if you speak with her. I'm sure she can talk to Lucy on your behalf," Bryan suggested as he passed the phone to Sonia.

"Hello, Mr. Hank!" Sonia greeted politely.

"Tom is fine. Just Tom," he pleaded.

"Alright," Sonia said, and remained silent as she waited for him to say something else.

"How have you been? I hope you're both taking good care of each other?" Tom asked, not wanting to lie to Lucy's friend too.

"Sure, we have. I'm sorry about your situation with Lucy. I know it must not be easy on you, but I'm also sure you understand why she is acting that way," Sonia said, and Tom sighed.

"Yeah. I just wish she would also understand I didn't mean to hurt her or deceive her," Tom said sadly.

"She will eventually realize that. Just be patient with her. I will try my best to talk to her too," Sonia promised.

"I will really appreciate that. Thanks," Tom said and then Sonia returned the phone to Bryan.

"Everything will be alright bro. Don't worry, I'm sure if she's truly yours she will find her way back to you," Bryan said hopefully.

"Oh, no! Please don't ever say something like that to me. The last time you gave me that advice, we were kids. I let that bird go and it never came back," Tom said with a groan and Bryan laughed out loud at the memory.

Tom cleared his throat when something else occurred to him, "By the way, please do not tell Jade about what's going on between me and Lucy. I mean don't let her know Lucy knows the truth now," Tom pleaded, reasoning that if Jade hears about it, she was likely going to also tell Harry about it, and Lucy didn't want Harry to know about it yet.

"Why not?" Bryan asked curiously.

"Well, she has a lot of drama going on in her life at the moment and I really don't want to add mine to it," Tom said before going on to explain the threat Jade had received at her apartment and how he had sent Harry to watch over her.

"You mean she is living with Harry, right now?" Bryan asked with a scowl, not liking the idea that his little sister was living with a man who wasn't her boyfriend.

"Yes. Do you have a problem with it? Would you rather travel down there to protect her?" Tom asked when he heard the displeasure in Bryan's tone.

"Well, maybe not. But you do know that anything could happen between them, right?" Bryan asked thoughtfully.

"Do you have a problem with something happening between them? They are both responsible adults who are single. You should pray something happens between them, at least that way Jade would stop living such a solitary life thinking about that jerk," Tom said, and Bryan sighed.

"I will just give her a call now. Goodnight," Bryan said as he hung up.

"Who is Harry?" Sonia asked curiously.

"He is Tom's best friend and right-hand man," Bryan answered as he scrolled through his phone for Jade's number.

"Tom doesn't seem to have a problem with his best friend getting involved with your sister," Sonia observed.

"That's possibly because Harry is a good guy, exactly like Tom," Bryan explained.

"Perfect."

Sonia's lips curved in a smile as she got another idea for her story. At this rate, her novel was going to be a trilogy. The title was going to be something about the Hank siblings. They all seemed to be having a lot of interesting stuff going on with them at the same time.. All she was going to do was work towards a happy ending for her and Lucy, and then she would plan the perfect Christmas story for Harry and Jade.

Chapter 196 - I'm Ready

Tom rushed to the door the moment he heard the sound of his doorbell, and he swung the open without bothering to find out who it was since the only person he was expecting was Lucy.

"It's exactly ten minutes," Lucy said with a small smile as she raised her phone up for him to see her timer which just went off.

Instead of looking at her phone's screen, Tom blinked at her in surprise. She was no longer wearing her glasses as she had some minutes ago, and she was wearing her hair down, "Your glasses and hair..."

Lucy grinned at him, "Yeah. Well... I figured that since you like it better this way, I could make an exception just when I'm with you," Lucy said with a shrug, and then raised a brow, "Am I going to keep standing here?" She asked, reminding him that he was still standing in the doorway and blocking her path.

"Oh, sorry!" Tom said as he stepped aside for her to walk in, and then he shut the door behind her while she looked around the house

"Hm. I see you set the table up again," Lucy observed with a small smile when she noticed the candlelit table.

Tom cleared his throat, "Yeah. You seemed to really like it the last time," he explained while he just continued to watch her. Something about her always just seemed to leave him in awe of her.

She constantly surprised him by her actions and gestures which always left him feeling like he didn't know her well enough. There was just something about her that was more than ordinary.

"Yeah, I do like it. Unfortunately, I'm not exactly dressed for a candlelit dinner," Lucy said with a grin as she looked down at her outfit.

"I never knew there was a specific dress code for candlelit dinners. So what are you dressed for?" Tom asked as he admired her lovely legs in the shorts she was wearing. Unlike the sexy dress she had worn the last time, she was wearing black shorts that stopped mid-thigh, with a blue-colored halter top.

"I'm dressed to have dinner with you in front of the television," Lucy explained with a grin.

"We could place the table in front of the television then," Tom suggested in a practical tone making Lucy laugh out loud.

"It's no wonder you need me to teach you about relationships. Now that I think about it, the last time we sat there you tricked me into becoming your girlfriend," Lucy added the last part with a teasing smile as she took slow steps towards the table.

"An action which I don't exactly regret. And by the way, I was just joking about moving the table to the living room. We could just put off the candles and eat in the living room," Tom suggested instead.

Lucy's lips twitched with a smile as she turned to look at him, "Nah. Let's eat here," Lucy said, but just continued to stare at him without making any effort to sit down, "So... I'm still just your temporary girlfriend, right?" Lucy asked as she stared at Tom who was now approaching her.

"Is that what you want to be? My temporary girlfriend?" Tom asked without breaking eye contact as he stopped in front of her and then circled his arm around her waist to draw her closer to himself.

Lucy's tongue involuntarily peeked out of her mouth to wet her lips as she looked up at him, "You tell me," she said in a slightly cracked voice as her eyes moved to his lips and then back to his eyes.

They both stared deeply into each other's eyes for a moment, and then Tom lowered his head a little, and Lucy raised hers to meet him halfway. Her eyes fluttered shut as she puckered her lips in anticipation of a kiss. Tom's lips curved in a smile as he looked at her face, "Is it just my mind, or do you always think about doing things to me every time you are in this apartment?" Tom asked in amusement, and Lucy's eyes snapped open as she hit his arm in embarrassment making Tom chuckle deeply.

"You ruined the moment," Lucy cursed as she moved away from him making Tom chuckle even more.

"Really? There was a moment? I didn't even know it," Tom said with a chuckle as he pulled her back to himself while his eyes continued to gleam with amusement, "You're everything beautiful, Lu," Tom told her with a soft smile as he brushed his lips against hers, and then he chuckled when she refused to kiss him back and just kept staring at him.

"I mean it, Lu. You manage to make everything beautiful," Tom persisted with the kiss, licking and nibbling on her lips until her resolve weakened and she kissed him back.

Tom broke the kiss before things could get more intense, and then he pulled away to look into her face. They both just stared into each other's eyes without saying a word. Tom reached out and tucked her hair behind her ear while letting his fingers graze on the spot behind her ear, and Lucy's eyes fluttered at the contact.

Tom cleared his throat, "We should probably eat now," he said as he kissed her forehead once again, and then with a hand on her back, he led her to the table where pulled out a seat for her.

"Thank you," Lucy said as she sat down and dropped her phone on the table, "I suppose the last meal we ate here was prepared by the chef at your house?" Lucy asked as she looked down at the dishes which were covered in front of her.

"I promise you I was in the kitchen the whole time the meal was prepared. I received directions from the chef while we prepared the meal together," Tom assured her as he poured her a glass of cranberry juice which was on the table.

"It's such a relief to know that," Lucy said as she watched him pour the juice. She couldn't believe he was still bent on making her take cranberry juice.

"Since you complained of ulcer pains a while ago I figured we skip the wine tonight. Let's have cranberry juice instead," Tom told her as he poured himself a glass.

"You don't have an ulcer, do you?" Lucy asked, wondering why he was also taking the juice.

"I don't, but you don't seem to like it really much so it's only fair that I drink it with you since I'm making you take it," Tom said with a small smile.

Perhaps this was one of the reasons she had come to really like him and respect him. He was a very thoughtful and caring person, Lucy thought as she returned his smile, "Thanks."

"This was what I could get on such short notice. She said she was trying out a new recipe. It's Chinese-style lamb fried rice. I hope you like it," Tom said as he removed the covering over the dishes.

"Chinese style lamb fried rice," Lucy repeated with a curious smile as she looked down at the food and then picked up her cutlery, "At least I'm glad I'm not expected to use chopsticks to eat this," she said with a grin, and Tom chuckled as he picked up his cutlery too and dug into it.

"Hmm, not bad at all. Although it's my first time tasting this so I wouldn't exactly know what it's supposed to taste like," Lucy said with a small laugh, and Tom shook his head at her.

"You seem really different now," Tom observed as he watched her while she ate.

Lucy waited until she swallowed the food in her mouth before responding, "Do I?" She asked even though she knew what he was talking about.

"Yeah. In a good way though," he assured her before he returned his attention to his food so that he could let her eat without interruption as he could tell that she was really hungry.

They ate in silence for a while and then Lucy cleared her throat as she raised her head to meet his gaze, "So how did the phone call with your brother go?"

"It was fine. I also spoke with Sonia," Tom informed her.

"You did?" Lucy asked with a small smile.

"Yeah. Although she defended you, she promised to put in a good word for me with you," Tom informed her.

"Perhaps I should let her do that? I'd like to see how she goes about convincing me to forgive you," Lucy said with a wide smile.

"About the question, you asked earlier..." Tom said, and Lucy's brow arched questioningly.

"I know you have always insisted that you don't want a man in your life. And that was the only reason I had to ask you to be my temporary girlfriend when what I really wanted was to be in a committed relationship with you. So I want to know; do you still need time to make up your mind about being in a real relationship with me or do you think you are ready for it now?" Tom asked as he set down his cutlery.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" Lucy asked after some time as she also kept aside her cutlery.

"Trust me, Lu. I wouldn't be seated across from you right now if I didn't want this. I want you more than I've ever wanted anything in my life," Tom assured her as he reached across the table to touch her hand.

"We can't let anyone at the company know that we are in a relationship..."

"That's not the answer to my question, Lu. Do you still need time to make up your mind about this, or are you ready to be in a committed relationship with me? I want you to understand that there is no pressure, Lu. Being able to sit down with you this way is even more than I hoped for a couple of hours ago. I'm only asking you this just to be sure how you feel about us," Tom said, cutting her off.

Lucy looked into his eyes, and then at their hands which were joined. If she was going to do this relationship thing, then she would rather she tried it with someone as sweet, and caring, and thoughtful as Tom. She took in a deep breath before giving him a nod, "I think you've given me more than enough time. I'm ready," Lucy said with a small smile.

"Are you sure about this, Lu? You don't have to feel pressured. I'm not going anywhere even if you tell me you need a year," Tom promised, and this only made Lucy's heart flutter.

"I know that. And I don't feel pressured in any way.. I'm ready."

Chapter 197 - Super Rich

Hearing Lucy say that she was ready to be in a committed relationship with him caused a smile to light up Tom's eyes as he looked at her, "I will spend the rest of my life making sure you don't regret this decision," Tom promised as he raised her hand to his lips and kissed her palm, while Lucy watched him with eyes that beamed brightly with unshed tears.

"I don't doubt it," Lucy said in a slightly cracked voice and then cleared her throat, "Now let go of my hands, I need to finish my food," Lucy said making Tom chuckle as he released her hand. He could tell that she was feeling embarrassed by the emotions she was feeling.

"Let's be clear on one thing though. You don't plan on repeating today's episode at the office with me anymore, right? As funny as it was to you, it was pretty frustrating for me," Tom said as they both picked up their cutlery and resumed eating.

Lucy giggled at that but waited until she had swallowed the morsel of food in her mouth before responding, "You do realize that Anita would have found out about you today had I not acted the way I did, right? You should be thanking me," Lucy pointed out thoughtfully.

"And what makes you think I care about her or anyone else finding out about my identity?" Tom asked with a blank expression.

"What? You don't mind? What about all the stress you have gone through just to keep your identity a secret from everyone? You're going to blow it all away just like that?" Lucy asked with disbelief as she tucked her hair behind her ear.

"Now that I have you, I really don't care about anyone else. So please cut out the drama, okay?" Tom pleaded, and Lucy's brows pulled together with a slight frown.

"How else can I punish you if I cut it out so soon?" She asked making Tom shake his head.

"You don't have to punish me to prove any point. I already apologized, and I learned my lesson. Punishing me won't make me feel any more sorry than I already am. One thing I can assure you is that I won't lie to you about anything going forward," Tom promised.

"You had better not, else I really won't forgive you," Lucy warned, "Anyway, we still can't let others know about our relationship. At least not yet," Lucy suggested.

"And why is that?" Tom asked, watching her thoughtfully as he took a sip from his glass of juice.

"Even though I want to be in a relationship with you, I don't want the pressure that comes from being in a relationship yet. Everyone is going to have an opinion on our relationship if we make it public now, especially if you reveal your identity anytime soon. So I'd rather we work on our relationship first. Let's take our time to build what we have before involving the likes of Anita," Lucy said, trying not to let her concern show in her voice.

"You do realize that Anita or any other lady doesn't stand a chance where you are, right?" Tom asked just to be sure.

"Hm," Lucy grunted noncommittally.

"You don't sound very confident," Tom observed with a sigh, "Don't worry, you will be with time," he promised.

"Still, we can't let them know yet. Please," Lucy insisted.

"Okay, let's reach a compromise. Why don't you treat me normally when we are alone, and then when anyone else is around we can pretend like nothing is going on between us," Tom suggested instead.

"Hm. Sounds like a fair deal," Lucy said after a while.

"Now that we've settled that, how was your meeting with Anita? What did she want?" Tom asked curiously as they both set down their cutlery.

"Gossip as usual. At least now I know for a fact that she is interested in you."

"Why? Did she say something?" Tom asked curiously, and Lucy's gaze moved away from him guiltily as though she was contemplating whether or not to tell him something.

"Not directly. Just that the CEO is her ideal man," Lucy said, choosing not to say everything else Anita had said.

"And what did you tell her was the reason I was close to you?" Tom asked, remembering what she had said in the car earlier.

"Oh, that! I told her my best friend is your brother's fiancée," Lucy said with a shrug.

"I don't think she's going to like that in any way," Tom said with a grin.

"At least it's better than telling her you favor me because I'm in a relationship with you, right?"

"Are you scared of her? You know you don't have to be, right? I can handle her," Tom assured Lucy.

"I was scared of her, but not anymore. I can handle her myself. But first, I need to do the dishes," Lucy said as she stood up to clear the table.

"Let's do it together," Tom suggested as he stood up and joined her in clearing the tables.

They both moved to the kitchen and while Lucy washed the dishes, Tom rinsed and dried them.

Once they finished and dried their hands, Tom turned to Lucy, "Are you in a hurry to return to your apartment, or do you have time for dessert and a movie?"

"Uhm... I'm sleeping over, so I guess I have all the time," Lucy said with a shy smile.

"For someone who wasn't interested in being in a relationship, you're doing quite well for a first-timer," Tom said with an encouraging smile as he took her hand and led her to the living room.

"Considering how quickly you dozed off the last time, let's talk for a while before we see the movie," Tom suggested once she was seated, and then he excused himself to go get the dessert.

He soon returned with a tray of apple pie which he set on his thigh as he sat down beside her on the couch.

"This was what you brought to my apartment the first time you came pretending to be my neighbor," Lucy said with a smile when she remembered looking through her window to see her one night stand standing in front of her door.

"And you pretended not to recognize me," Tom reminded her with a chuckle.

"How could I not? Did you really expect me to open the door and be like 'Hey! Weren't you the guy I met at the club last night? Wow! What are you doing here?' Was that what you were expecting?" Lucy asked with a roll of her eyes as she picked up a slice of apple pie and bit into it.

Tom guffawed at that, "Not exactly. But pretending not to know me was a little extra," Tom said as he picked up a piece of the pie and also bit into it before turning on the television.

They ate in silence for a while until Tom broke the silence, "So did you really mean it when you said you wanted me to remain your driver? Even when we are dating now?"

"Yeah. Why? Do you have a problem with it?" Lucy asked, cocking her head to the side to look at him.

"No. As long as it allows me to spend more time with you, I'm cool with it," Tom assured her.

"Me too," Lucy said as she snuggled closer to him and rested her head on his shoulder while her eyes remained on the television screen.

"Can you see the television clearly without your glasses?" Tom asked curiously as he ate with his left hand while his right hand rested lightly on her back.

"Yeah," Lucy said with a nod as continued to nibble on the apple pie.

"Uhm... Lu?" Tom called cautiously, making Lucy sit up and look at him as she could guess he wanted to talk about something serious.

"Yeah?"

"I don't know if this is a good time to suggest this, but I'd love you to start receiving therapy. I spoke with the doctor..." Tom let the rest of his words trail off as he looked into her smoky gray eyes.

"Hm. I was going to give him a call. It escaped my mind," Lucy assured him.

"Really? Are you saying you're willing to receive psychotherapy now?" Tom asked, wanting to be sure they were talking about the same thing.

Lucy bobbed her head, "Yeah."

"Great! I will make sure you get the best," Tom said as he leaned forward and kissed her forehead.

Lucy smiled, "You are not curious to hear the rest of the story?" She asked, gazing into his hazel eyes searchingly.

"I am. But I'm not in a hurry to hear it. Let's make sure you're fine before traveling down that path again," Tom suggested as he gathered her close to himself.

They returned their attention to the television once again as they focused on the reality show they were watching. Lucy was quiet for a long while and just when Tom was about to conclude that she had dozed off, she spoke.

"Tom?"

"Hm-hm?" He asked curiously, wanting to know what was in her head.

"So you are rich? Like very very wealthy, right?" Lucy asked, making his lips twitch in amusement.

"Sort of, I suppose. Why do you ask?"

"Apart from that building, do you have other residential properties?" Lucy asked thoughtfully.

"Yeah."

"And those cars at your private parking lot and the ones at that mansion all belong to you?" Lucy asked again.

"Every one of them."

She pulled away from him so that she was looking at his face now, "Do you own a private jet?" She asked thoughtfully, her smoky gray eyes twinkling with something he couldn't tell.

"About three. Yes."

Lucy's eyes widened in excitement, "Three? Wow! I've never been in one," she said in awe.

Tom's lips curved in a smile, "Really? You want to go on a date in one this weekend?"

Lucy bobbed her head eagerly while he was still asking, "Yes! I would love to."

"It's settled then. We would spend the weekend at my house, and then go on a date in one of the Jets," Tom concluded with a grin and then returned his attention to the television.

"What about a yacht?" Lucy asked now, making Tom chuckle.

"Why does it feel like you made up with me because of my wealth?" He asked with a teasing smile.

"Of course, I did. I would never have forgiven you if you were a broke guy pretending to be wealthy," Lucy said with a serious expression that made him howl with laughter, "So? Do you own a yacht or not?" Lucy prodded, poking his side.

"I'm not really a fan of that. But if you want one, we could get one," Tom offered.

"You can do that? Really?" She asked doubtfully.

"Really."

"Wow! My boyfriend is super rich!" Lucy exclaimed to herself as she stood up and spread both hands happily.

"That means you can take me shopping, right? And buy me lots of expensive stuff?" She asked, blinking at him excitedly as she sat down next to him.

Tom shook his head as he watched her in amusement. This wasn't what he had expected from her, but then again she was yet to do anything he had expected thus far.

"I can do all of that and more if that's what you want."

Chapter 198 - Maybe

"I had a really nice time today," Jade said with a contented sigh as she patted her bulging abdomen, and rested her head against the headrest of her seat with her eyes closed.

Harry who was driving them back to the hotel after their dinner turned to spare her a glance, "I'm glad you did. You also look much better now," Harry said when he observed the color which was on her face now, unlike earlier when she had looked really pale.

"I feel better too. Thank you," Jade said with a smile as she opened her eyes to look at him.

"You're welcome," Harry said without looking at her.

Jade watched him in silence for a while as he drove, and then a mischievous gleam crept into her eyes, "So... Aura is cute, right?" Jade asked in a conversational tone.

"Aura?" Harry asked, trying to remember who that was.

"Come on! Don't tell me you've forgotten her already! The owner of the spa!" Jade hissed at him.

"Oh, Aurora! Yeah, she's cute," Harry said indifferently.

"So you're going to give her a call, right? I think she likes you," Jade said, wiggling her brows playfully.

"Maybe," Harry said in the same indifferent tone.

"Maybe? Maybe what? Is it maybe you're going to give her a call or maybe she likes you?" Jade asked in confusion.

"Maybe both."

"Well, I know she likes you. She is beautiful, intelligent, and even rich. What else could you possibly want in a lady?" Jade asked matter of factly.

"So what did you both conclude on? Are you going to advise them to go into hiding or are you going to use them as a trap to get Jero?" Harry asked, changing the subject as he wasn't feeling very comfortable about discussing his private business with his best friend's kid sister.

"You said no work talk until tomorrow. I'm supposed to be resting today. So? What else do you want in a woman?" Jade asked, taking him back to the subject he was trying to escape from.

Harry sighed as he turned to spare her a glance, "In as much as I appreciate your help, Jade, I think you should let me do my thing. I'm here to help you with your case, not to find a girlfriend. So let's not get sidetracked," Harry said, making Jade huff in annoyance.

"You're unbelievable," Jade muttered under her breath and then reached into her handbag when her phone started ringing. She smiled when she noticed it was a call from Bryan, and she received the call immediately.

"How are you doing? What's going on there?" Bryan asked in concern the moment the call connected.

"Tom must have spoken to you," Jade said dryly.

"Why didn't you tell me that you were having a difficult time with this case?" Bryan asked in a slightly disappointed tone.

"Because I can't run to my big brothers every time something comes up at work. It's one of those things that comes with my profession so I have to face it," Jade said dismissively.

"How is the reality show coming? I haven't had the time to see it. And how is Sonia?" Jade asked changing the subject.

"Don't change the subject. Tom told me Harry is with you. What is your living arrangement like? He isn't hitting on you, is he?" Bryan asked, making Jade grin as she turned to look at Harry whose gaze was fixed on the road ahead of them.

"Why do you ask? You don't want him to?" Jade asked playfully.

"I don't exactly have a problem with it, but..."

"It's fine as long as you don't have a problem with it," Jade cut in before he could finish.

"Why? Don't tell me you like him already?" Bryan asked with a slight frown.

"What's there not to like? He's super-rich, he is very handsome, he is witty, has connections, from good family background, he is honest to a fault..." She broke off with a giggle when Harry turned to look at her with a questioning gaze as if he just realized she was talking about him.

"I see you are having a good time," Bryan said with a sigh of resignation. Hearing Jade laugh in such a carefree manner was something he hadn't heard in a long time. Maybe Tom was right. Maybe this arrangement was going to work out well in the end.

"I am. So don't worry your head about any nonsense. I doubt he even sees me as a girl," Jade said with a shake of her head as she looked at Harry.

"But you do see him as a guy?" Bryan asked thoughtfully.

"Do you really want me to answer that question? He is right here in the car with me, so think carefully and be sure you want me to answer that question in front of him," Jade said, making Harry glance at her once again as he wondered what the conversation was about.

"Nevermind. Sonia is here. You want to say hello to her?" Bryan asked, changing the subject as he knew that Sonia was dying to speak with his sister.

"Sure! But before that, I spoke with your best friend, Matt, earlier today," Jade informed him.

"Yeah, I'm aware. He asked for your number. Is he in trouble?" Bryan asked in concern.

"Not at all. Do you know anyone called Candy? Or how he happens to know her?" Jade asked curiously.

"Candy? Yeah. She is someone he is interested in. Why? Is she in trouble with the law?" Bryan asked, trying to understand what was happening.

"Why do you keep asking if everyone is in trouble? I just wanted to know about their relationship. I know her from way back," Jade assured Bryan, not wanting to let him in on what was going on.

"Way back? C'mon, Jade. The only people you know who aren't your friends or colleagues, are criminals."

"She isn't a criminal. She was only a key witness in a case I handled two years ago. Now hand Sonia the phone," Jade said, letting Bryan know that they were done with that subject.

"Hey, Jade! I've been longing to talk to you," Sonia greeted excitedly.

"I still can't believe he left just like that," Brandy said with a thoughtful frown after Candy finished telling her how Matt had left.

"What were you expecting? That he would stay after hearing that I was involved with a drug cartel? He is wiser than that," Candy said dismissively.

"You are sure you didn't say something to make him leave?" Brandy asked suspiciously.

"It doesn't matter. He is out of our lives now, so let's focus on what we have before us," Candy said, reminding Brandy that they had agreed to tell Jamal the truth about their occupation that night.

It was their night off work, so they were both spending the evening with Jamal who was busy with his assignment inside his bedroom.

Brandy looked at Candy as though she had more to say, but decided not to say anything, "Okay. So do you want me to do the talking? Maybe we can start by saying I'm a stripper, and if he takes it well we can tell him you are too. If he doesn't, we can just stick to just me being the stripper," Brandy suggested.

"No. Let's just..." The rest of Candy's words trailed off when they heard the sound of the doorbell.

"Are you expecting someone?" Brandy asked as she stood up to see who was at the door.

"None that I know of," Candy said with a shake of her head.

Brandy looked through the peephole, and then smiled when she saw Matt standing there. Of course, she knew that Matt wasn't the type to bail so easily.

"Hey!" She greeted with a wide smile as she pulled the door open.

"Hello, Andy!" Matt greeted, returning her smile as he looked behind her to see Candy standing there and looking at him in confusion, "I stopped by the club and was told you had the night off. Sorry to barge in on you," Matt said apologetically.

"You are always welcome here. You don't have to apologize," Brandy said dismissively as she stepped aside for him to get in.

Once Matt walked in he looked around the house, "Jamal isn't home?" He asked curiously.

Candy cleared her throat, "He is in his bedroom busy with his assignment. What do you want?" Candy asked without offering him a seat. She thought she had managed to get rid of him earlier, so what was he doing again?

"Uhm... Let's talk," Matt said, scratching the back of his head awkwardly.

"I will just excuse you both..."

"No. You have to be present too. This concerns you as well," Matt cut in before Brandy could leave, making her exchange a look with Candy.

"What's it about?" Candy asked with a slightly raised brow, hoping he wasn't going to start asking questions again.

"We should probably sit down," Matt suggested as he walked into the living room and sat down, leaving both ladies to follow suit.

"After our conversation earlier, I was very worried about you so I spoke to a lawyer friend..."

"You did what?" Candy asked with rounded eyes.

Matt cleared his throat, "I didn't exactly give her the details you gave me. I just wanted to help."

"I don't remember asking you for your damn help or asking you to discuss me with anybody!" Candy snapped at him angrily.

"Calm down. We should at least hear him out," Brandy told Candy with a slight frown, wondering why she was overreacting.

"Yeah. I know you didn't ask for my help. I'm sorry," Matt said apologetically.

"You shouldn't be sorry for trying to help," Brandy said encouragingly.

"Thanks, Andy."

"You can go on," Brandy urged him.

"Coincidentally the friend I spoke with happens to be the lawyer that handled your case two years ago. Jade Hank," Matt said, making both Brandy's and Candy's lips round in surprise.

"Did you tell her where we are? Tell me you didn't!" Candy asked desperately as her eyes flew to the door like a trapped animal.

"That is why I'm here. She informed me that she has been trying to find you. Jero escaped from the correctional facility where he was being kept..."

"What?" Candy exclaimed in panic as she abruptly stood up from her seat, "How is that even possible?"

Brandy who had been calm this whole time suddenly looked very worried now, "And?" She asked, wanting to know what the lawyer wanted.

"And the Legions have hired a private investigator to find you. It's only a matter of time before they know where you are," Matt said, making Candy's heart skip a beat.

"Oh, my God! Oh, God!" Candy cried as she collapsed on her seat and ran both hands through her hair.

Matt's brow furrowed in concern as he watched both sisters, "I could help you hide if that's what you want. Or we could set up people around your house, the club, and Jamal's school. The moment Jero or any member of the legion shows up, they will be apprehended," Matt suggested quietly.

"And then what?" Brandy asked with a worried frown as she looked from Candy to Matt, and he simply shrugged.

"It's your choice.. Either way, I'm here to help, unless you don't want me to."

Chapter 199 - Perfect Place

Candy paced around her bedroom while Brandy tried to reason with her, "You could leave with Jamal. I will stay back as the bait so that the cops can catch them all," Brandy offered, making Candy stop in her track to look at her.

"I'm not letting you do something as dangerous as that," she said with a shake of her head, and the tone in her voice brooked no argument as she resumed pacing again.

"Well, we have to make a decision. They are going to find out where we are sooner or later, and we can either choose to run away with Matt's help or stay back to fight them once and for all. I don't know about you, but I'm tired of running," Brandy said as she came to stand in front of Candy.

"I'm tired, Candy. I'm only just beginning to get used to this life here. I can't just leave it and runoff. This here is our home, and I don't want to leave it," Brandy pleaded.

"Can you leave with Jamal for some time? I will take care of things and then you can both come back. Please?" Candy asked hopefully.

"No. If you're going to stay, I'm staying too. I've told you where I stand on this issue. You should hurry up and make up your mind, Matt won't wait forever," Brandy urged her, reminding her that Matt was still in the living room waiting for them to make up their mind.

Candy closed her eyes and took in a deep breath as she tried to make up her mind on what to do. After contemplating for only a moment she opened her eyes, "Let's join him in the living room," Candy suggested and she walked out of the bedroom without waiting for Brandy.

Matt who was looking outside the house through the window turned around when he heard their approaching footsteps, "Have you made up your mind?" Matt asked, looking at them curiously.

Candy cleared her throat. It was awkward asking or receiving help from him considering they had cut ties earlier that day, "Yes. I don't want Jamal here with me when any of them show up. Can you keep him safe instead? Brandy and I will stay back," Candy said, looking at him hopefully.

"Sis!" Brandy called in a surprised voice.

"Are you sure that is what you want?" Matt asked, not sure he liked the idea of separating the kid from his mother.

"Yes. I don't know how far Jero would go this time. And I want to make sure that Jamal is safe regardless of whatever happens to us," Candy said, and Matt exchanged a look with Brandy who gave him a nod, indicating that she supported her sister's decision.

"Nothing is going to happen to you," he promised before turning to Candy, "Would you like to speak with Jade?" He asked, and Candy swallowed hard before giving him a nod. She had thought the last time she would have any reason to talk to Jade was two years ago.

Matt took out his phone and dialed Jade's line since she had asked him to let her know whatever Candace decides on.

Jade who was now watching the television with Harry, glanced at her phone when it started ringing and quickly reached for it when she saw that it was Matt, "Hey, Matt!" She said, snapping her fingers at Harry, and jerking her head towards the television for him to reduce the volume.

"Hi, Jade! I'm here with her. You can speak with her now," Matt said before extending the phone to Candace who hesitantly moved closer to him and took the phone from him.

She cleared her throat, "Hi!"

"I'm genuinely sorry you are hearing from me again like this. I know this must not be easy on you, I'm sorry," Jade apologized.

"It's not your fault. There is nothing to be sorry for," Jade said with a sigh, "What happened? How did he escape? Why are the members of the Legion searching for me?" Candy asked in a weary tone. She listened patiently as Jade narrated all that had happened and how her witness had suddenly gone missing too.

"That's very sad to hear. Bill was such a good guy. He had always been different from the others. He couldn't really stand the sight of blood. He only joined the gang to make ends meet for his family," Candy said sadly when she realized that she knew the witness who was missing.

"Family? He didn't mention anything about having a family. Not that he mentioned much of anything apart from his name. He only called to say he had evidence against the gang and asked that we meet. And ever since then I've been unable to reach him," Jade explained.

"If the only thing you know about him is his name and what little he told you, then how have you been searching for him?" Candace asked with a scoff.

Jade cleared her throat as she turned to look at Harry who was looking at her with rapt attention, "I may not have much information on him, but I have my source who is working on finding him," Jade said defensively.

"And you trust your source?" Candy asked cautiously.

"Yes, I do," Jade said with confidence.

"Well, since they are out to find me, I can as well make it easier for everyone. Keep Jamal safe until all of this is over. In return, I will help you with the information you need to find your witness... That is if he is still alive. If he is dead, then I guess we will all have to wait for Jero to find me," Candy said thoughtfully.

"Do you trust Matt to take care of your son?" Jade asked since there was no way she could keep the little boy with her. She wasn't safe herself, and as such, she was in no position to keep the little boy safe.

"I do. But I'd rather Jamal stays with someone that has never been seen with me before. That way Jero won't be able to find him," Candace explained.

"Hm." Jade thought about it for a moment, and then she smiled, "Okay. I think I know the perfect place."

Tom looked down at Lucy who was sleeping soundly on his arms in his bed, and his lips curved in a smile as he watched her. He had an immense feeling of contentment and satisfaction upon seeing her this way in his arms and knowing that she was now his.

It was almost six in the morning and he had been unable to sleep for most of the night. One would have thought that he would sleep soundly considering that he had been unable to get a night of proper sleep the previous night because he was worried that Lucy wasn't going to forgive him, but he had been too overwhelmed by the fact that she had forgiven him and his search for love was over.

He had expected her to make things more difficult for him since he understood that most people often had the mentality that if they gave forgiveness too easily they would be taken for granted. Honestly, he would have been more than willing to put up with anything she dished out to him in her anger, but seeing how easily she had understood and forgiven him, his respect for her increased even more.

Tom leaned forward and placed a light kiss on her forehead as he silently promised her and himself that he was going to do everything within his means to keep her safe, spoil her, and shower her with lots of love.

Tom moved gently so that he wouldn't wake her up as he got out of the bed. He moved around as quietly as he could and walked into the bathroom to brush his teeth. Once he was done he went to the kitchen to fix himself a cup of coffee, before going to sit in the living room to check for news updates on his phone's News app.

After going through most of the news for the day, Tom stood up with his now empty cup of coffee and returned to the kitchen where he rinsed it out before going to the bedroom to check on Lucy.

Lucy who had just woken up from sleep and was about to get off the bed quickly ducked and pretended to be asleep when she heard Tom's approaching footsteps.

"I take it you are not going to work today?" Tom asked as he approached her bedside since he suspected that she was awake.

"How did you know that I was awake?" Lucy asked as she sat up to look at him with a small smile.

"I didn't. You just told me," Tom said with a grin as he stopped beside her, "Good morning, Princess. I hope you slept well?" Tom asked as he leaned forward to kiss her cheeks.

"I tried," Lucy said with a yawn, "Good morning. I should go and get ready for work. You should too," Lucy said with her eyes on his bedside clock as she got off the bed.

"You don't have to hurry, you know?" Tom said, reminding her that he was the boss and she could get to the office whenever she wanted.

"You have to hurry. You are driving me to the office, remember?" Lucy asked as she started to walk past him, but Tom quickly grabbed her arm.

"Why are you so devoted to your job anyway? Do I have to fire you?" Tom asked with a scowl.

"You can try," Lucy dared with a giggle as she embraced him.

"I'm so glad it's almost weekend. I can't wait to have you all to myself," Tom said as he ran his hands down her back.

"You already have me all to yourself. Let's have lunch together in your office when no one is looking," Lucy suggested as she kissed his lips, "Now I'm going to get ready for work. You should do the same," she said as she moved away from him.

"Let's not go to work today," Tom complained as he watched her leave.

Lucy paused by the door and turned to look at him, making him look back at her with hopeful eyes, "Going forward I hope you won't be distributing your number to anyone who cares to have it," Lucy said with a hiss of annoyance before walking away, making Tom chuckle.

An hour later Lucy who was sitting in the backseat of her car raised a brow when she noticed that Tom was driving in a different direction from the office, "Where are you going to?" She asked Tom curiously, meeting his gaze in the rearview mirror.

"Oh, sorry! The CEO didn't tell you? He called earlier, and asked me to take you somewhere else," Tom said with a grin.

Chapter 200 - Jealous

Lucy looked at Tom with disapproval, "If you continue this way we are going to get caught before we even get anywhere. Reverse the car and let's go to the office right now. You can't change everything on your schedule just to satisfy your whim!" Lucy chided.

"Wanting to hang out with you isn't just a whim," Tom said as a scowl replaced the grin which had been on his face a moment ago, "I just want to hang out with you, is that too much to ask for?"

"It is. I'm not going anywhere else with you when it is still work hours. We have to distinguish between business and pleasure. Mr. Harry sent me your schedule for the day, and you have several meetings that you need to attend this morning. So reverse the car right now," Lucy said in a tone that brooked no argument.

"Do you really mean that?" Tom asked, not pleased with the fact that she wasn't as eager to spend some time with him as he was to spend his time with her.

Lucy took in a deep breath as she met his gaze in the rearview mirror, "We already made plans for the weekend, right? I'm sure you didn't build such a successful company by canceling meetings and going on dates during work hours. Let's focus on work during work hours, and date off work hours, please?" Lucy said with a placatory smile.

"How did I forget that you're a workaholic?" Tom muttered under his breath in displeasure as he reversed the car.

"You are not mad at me, are you?" Lucy asked a moment later when the silence in the car became deafening.

"I'm sure it won't make a difference to you even if I'm mad, so don't worry about it," Tom said as he kept his gaze on the road.

"How can you say that?" Lucy asked, feeling hurt by what he had just said, but Tom said nothing as he drove into the company's parking lot.

"Are we still having lunch together?" Lucy asked as she reached for her door.

"I don't know. I might be too busy with work," Tom muttered under his breath as they both got out of the car.

Before Lucy could respond they both heard a familiar feminine voice, "Hey, Tom! Good morning!" The lady to whom Tom had given his number the previous day called with a wide smile as she waved at him.

"Have a pleasant day," Lucy muttered with displeasure as she walked past him, leaving him to deal with the lady.

"Hi! Good morning!" Tom greeted the lady who was now approaching him while his gaze remained fixed on Lucy's retreating figure.

Wasn't it too early in their relationship for them to be having a fight? All he had wanted was to spend a couple of hours with her having breakfast at his home. Was that too much to ask for? Why was she acting like she cared about his company more than he did?

"Do you have a minute?" She asked with a smile.

"Do you want something?" Tom asked, trying not to let his annoyance sound in his tone as he looked at her with a polite smile even though he didn't really like that she was delaying him.

"Yeah. The number you gave me yesterday was missing a digit," the lady said with an awkward smile as she waved her phone at him.

Tom looked at her for a moment without saying a word, and then he sighed, "Do you like me?" He asked with a slightly raised brow.

On hearing his question a blush crept up her cheeks, "Yes. I do," she said looking into his eyes directly, surprising Tom who had been expecting a sharp denial.

"Wow! Thank you. Although I feel very flattered right now, I'm in a relationship," Tom explained mildly so he wouldn't hurt her feelings.

"Oh, I'm so sorry! I didn't think of that," she said with a smile that managed to look both apologetic and disappointed at the same time.

"Why didn't you think of that? Because I'm a mere driver and you think no one would want me?" Tom asked with a slight frown.

"No! Not that. I just meant that it just didn't occur to me to first find out if you were in a relationship before making a fool of myself," she quickly corrected.

"So you wouldn't have been bothered about being in a relationship with a mere driver who works in the same company as you?" Tom asked curiously.

"I don't know why you keep referring to yourself as a mere driver, but at least you just said he works in the same company with me, right? I don't think the job description should matter, should it?"

"I suppose not," Tom said with a nod.

"Why did you ask though? Does it bother your girlfriend that you're a driver?" She asked thoughtfully, but before Tom could respond his phone started ringing.

He reached into his pocket to take out the phone and looked towards the entrance of the company when he saw that it was a call from Lucy. When he didn't see any sign of her at the entrance, he looked up to his office window and noticed that she was standing by his window.

"Excuse me for a moment," he told the lady in front of him before stepping away from her to receive the call, "Hey, what's up?" He asked Lucy curiously.

"You must be seriously enjoying your conversation with her," Lucy observed irritably, making Tom chuckle.

"As a matter of fact, I am. Why? Are you jealous?"

"Have fun then," Lucy hissed at him before hanging up.

Tom looked up and shook his head when he noticed that she had left the window. It seemed like they were bound to fight no matter what he said or did, Tom thought to himself with a deep sigh as he returned to face the lady.

"It's been nice chatting with you. I need to run now," Tom said with a polite smile.

"Uhm, I know you said you are in a relationship, but can we be friends? I just really like your personality and would love to talk to you from time to time if you don't mind," she said with a small smile.

Tom paused for a moment when he remembered Lucy's warning about giving his number out randomly. If she didn't like him giving out his number or talking to other ladies, she would definitely not like the idea of him being friends with her.

"Uhm... I'm sorry, I know you mentioned your name the other day, but I have forgotten it..."

"It's fine. People hardly remember my name as it's not a very common name. My name is Cora. Cora Anderson," she said with a friendly smile.

"I will try not to forget it this time, Miss Anderson..."

"Please call me Cora," she cut in before he could finish.

"Sure. About being friends, I can't really say. My girlfriend is pretty possessive of me and she doesn't like other ladies hanging around me," Tom said with an apologetic smile since he also liked her personality.

Cora let out a disappointed sigh, "I suppose I understand. I would be jealous too if you were mine," she said with a good-natured smile.

"Thanks for your understanding. I guess I will see you around," Tom said with a polite wave as he automatically locked the car and headed in the direction of the company.

Meanwhile, seated in her office, Anita tapped her pen against her desk distractedly as she thought about her conversation with Lucy the previous evening, as she tried to come up with a plan. It seemed to her that Lucy was way ahead of her already, and she needed to step up her game.

Lucy could claim that the CEO was just seeing her as a part of his family, but she wasn't naive or gullible enough to believe that was all there was between them, and even if that was the case, she knew how easy it would be for Lucy's best friend to want to start playing matchmaker between her best friend and her brother-in-law. She needed to do something before that happens.

Picking up her phone she scrolled through her contact list for a number she hasn't called in a while and dialed it.. She waited patiently for the person at the other end of the line to take the call, and once it connected, she took in a deep breath, "I have a job for you."