

## Wild Night 371

### Chapter 371 Flatmates

"It's good to see you again," Jeff said with a wide smile immediately the car stopped in front of the house, and he opened the door for Bryan to get out of the car

Because Bryan didn't want too many people to know that he was back, he had instructed them not to pick him up at the airport but to wait for him at home and order an Uber to pick him up instead. So while his parents took a cab from the airport, he and Sonia had taken an Uber.

The smile on Jeff's face faltered when instead of Bryan, Evelyn and Desmond got out of the car, "Pardon my manners. I didn't realize you were coming with him," Jeff said apologetically, and Evelyn waved it off dismissively.

"I'm sure it's been longer than that, but I'm glad you are happy to see us," Desmond said with a grin, and Evelyn giggled.

"Hello, Jeff! It's been a while!" Evelyn said as she embraced him, and Jeff smiled at her awkwardly. Even though he had met the woman just twice, she always treated him the same, making him feel like a little boy.

"Hello, Mrs. Hank, Mr. Hank," Jeff greeted politely as he shook hands with Desmond, and Mia, who was standing beside him, did the same.

"We are not strangers, Jeff. How many times do we have to remind you to stop addressing us so formally?" Desmond asked in mild disapproval before moving to the trunk of the car.

"I'm sure Bryan already told you both about Simon's role in all this mess. We are here to take care of Simon," Evelyn said, and Jeff gave her a nod as he moved away to join Desmond at the trunk of the car where he was taking out their luggage.

"I still can't believe Simon has been the one exposing all of Bryan's scandals," Mia said with a shake of her head, "By the way, what about Bryan and Sonia? Did they change their mind about coming?" Mia asked curiously.

"No. They will be here shortly. Sonia is feeling under the weather, so they had to stop by the pharmacy to get her some medicine for her cold. I need to fix her something hot and spicy to drink before they get here. Can you grab that bag from the men and come assist me in the kitchen, dear?" Evelyn asked, referring to the bag containing the items she had purchased for the soup on their way, and Mia quickly did as she was told and followed Evelyn inside.

"So, how has it been over here? I heard you quit working for Golden Star too," Evelyn said conversationally.

"I never really liked him, plus I know he was likely going to fire me since I'm Bryan's assistant anyway. If my boss is quitting, there is no space for me there," Mia said with a shrug.

"True. How come you didn't tell me about Bryan and Sonia's relationship being faux?" Evelyn asked, turning to look at Mia once they were alone in the kitchen.

"Because it wasn't in my place to give out that information. There is a limit to what I can report to you. I can tell you about his schedule and work locations because I believe as a mother, you are concerned about his wellbeing. But his private business is his business, and I can't give you such details of his life. I'm sorry," Mia said politely, and Evelyn sighed.

"I guess that is why you have remained his longest-lasting assistant," Evelyn said with a nod as she started moving around the kitchen to get everything she needed ready to make the soup.

"I think they are here," Mia said a moment later when she heard Bryan's voice, and she quickly excused herself from the kitchen.

"Oh, dear! You look really ill," Mia exclaimed softly when she saw Sonia's pale face as Bryan gently lowered her to the couch.

"It's good to see you too, Mia. And you look beautiful as always," Sonia said dryly as Mia went to sit beside her on the couch and embraced her.

"This wasn't the sort of reunion I imagined, considering how we parted ways," Mia said with concerned eyes and then frowned when she noticed that Bryan was glaring at her, "What?"

"You are sitting on my spot. Move over," Bryan growled at her, and Sonia smiled weakly.

"That isn't any way to talk to a loyal assistant like me. I'm going to stab you in the back like Simon did if you keep being this rude," Mia threatened as she stood, making both Jeff and Desmond, who was on his way to join his wife in the kitchen, laugh out loud.

"Why don't you try?" Bryan dared with a smirk as he sat beside Sonia who was smiling at him.

Sonia leaned closer to him, "You shouldn't talk to your girlfriend in that manner," she whispered in a teasing voice, and Bryan glared at her as he struggled between annoyance that she was still referring to Mia as his girlfriend and amusement that despite her illness she was teasing him with something that annoyed him.

"Sit up, Sonia. The soup is ready," Evelyn announced as she joined them in the living room carrying a tray that contained a bowl of soup, while Desmond carried a tray containing a glass of water.

Mia carried a stool to where Bryan was seated with Sonia and placed it in front of them for Evelyn to drop the tray on it before returning to sit beside Jeff.

"I will feed her," Bryan assured his mother.

"I can feed myself," Sonia assured him with a yawn, feeling silly now because of the attention she was receiving from everyone.

"You can, but you don't have to. Not when I'm here. That's what being in a relationship means. Letting someone do things for you that you can do for yourself," Bryan said, and Evelyn exchanged a look with her husband, who winked at her.

"He is completely smitten," Jeff whispered to Mia, who was also watching as Bryan fussed over Sonia. It seemed to them like both Bryan and Sonia had forgotten they were not alone.

"As it should be. She is obviously smitten too," Mia said with a pleased smile.

"I have to freshen up now and rest for some time. Bryan, do not forget to give Simon a call as planned. Try to sound as natural as possible when you ask him to resume work, okay?" Evelyn said to Bryan, who was already spoon-feeding Sonia, and Desmond shook his head.

"Eve, Bryan is an actor. I'm sure he won't screw it up," Desmond said dryly as he extended his hand to her.

"I'm just saying..."

"I know. Let's go in and freshen up. I'm dead on my feet," Desmond said as he pulled her along with him.

"Can we go to the bedroom? I feel drowsy. I think I might sleep off before I'm done eating," Sonia said with a yawn, and Bryan nodded before turning to Jeff and Mia, "I will join you both shortly," he said as he stood and leaned over to carry Sonia.

"Bryan, I can walk..."

"I know you can. I don't want you to," he said as he carried her bridal style and took her to the bedroom.

"I missed this place. I will miss it when you move," Sonia said with a sigh.

"We can always visit here often," he assured her as he stylishly opened the door and walked into the bedroom before gently placing her on the bed.

"I'll be right back," he called as he returned to the living room to take the soup and water, which he carried back into the bedroom.

By the time he returned to the bedroom, Sonia was holding her phone, "I need to give Lucy a call."

"Not now. Eat and get some rest. I will call her myself and let her know you are not feeling fine and will give her a call later," Bryan said as he sat beside her and took a spoonful of soup which he extended to her.

"She will be worried," Sonia complained before opening her mouth.

"Fine. Call her after eating," Bryan said as he fed her the soup.

In the living room, Jeff watched Mia, who was smiling as she chatted with someone on her phone, "Are you still going on that dating app?" Jeff asked casually as he gazed at her.

"Yes. Why? Want me to set up an account for you?" Mia asked with a teasing smile as she looked up at him.

Jeff shook his head, "Nah. Blind dates are not my thing. What are you going to do about your dates when you move to Ludus?"

"I will continue until I meet my special one, of course. I'm sure there are lots of eligible bachelors over there too," Mia said with a shrug as though he should have known that already.

"You should be careful though. There are lots of creepy people hiding behind their phones these days," Jeff advised.

"Maybe you are too careful, and that is why you are still single," Mia said as she continued to chat while talking with him.

"What do you mean too careful?" Jeff asked, and Mia shrugged as she looked up at him.

"You always hide behind work, claiming you are busy and can't date, but I don't really think that's just it..."

"What are you both whispering about?" Bryan asked as he carried the tray to the kitchen after feeding Sonia and excusing her to give Lucy a call.

"We were not whispering. Have you been able to figure out the accommodation stuff for me?" Mia asked hopefully.

Bryan cleared his throat, "About that, I hope you both don't mind being flatmates until either of you finds your own place?" Bryan asked, and both Jeff and Mia exchanged a look.

"How many bedrooms are there in the apartment?" Mia asked curiously.

"Two bedrooms," Bryan said as he returned to the living room and sat down opposite them.

"That's cool. As long as I have my own space, I don't mind," Mia said with a confident nod, "What about you?" She asked Jeff.

"I'm fine with it too. What do you guys plan to do with Simon?" Jeff asked Bryan curiously, and he and Mia listened attentively as Bryan explained all that happened, including Anita's role in it, before telling their plan to them.

"She sounds evil," Jeff said with disapproval.

"She is a bitch. I'm glad she will be dealt with accordingly!" Mia said with disgust.

"By the way, I'm still receiving a lot of calls from all the companies that canceled their endorsement deals with you over the scandal. They want you back. What should I do?"

"I told you already. Let them go, Jeff. I would rather work with their competitors than go back to them. I hate companies that stand by celebrities only in their rosy times," Bryan said with a scowl, and Mia gave Jeff an I told you so look.

"I hope you both will be ready to move by the end of the week as discussed? After we wrap up here with Simon and I tie up loose ends at Golden Star, I will be ready to move..." The rest of his words trailed off when they heard the doorbell.

"Are you expecting anyone?" Jeff asked as he rose to see who was at the door, but Bryan shook his head.

"Hey, Matt!" Jeff greeted cheerfully.

"That bastard is in, I guess?" Mat asked as he shook hands with Jeff, who gave him a nod.

"Matt?" Bryan called in surprise when he heard Matt's voice.

"Hello, Mia!" Matt greeted Mia, who returned his greeting, before facing Bryan.

"Why am I the last to find out that my best friend canceled his contract with Golden Star?" Matt asked with a scowl.

"Maybe because you were too busy nursing your broken heart to care about the rest of us in the world," Bryan said with a grin and quickly moved away when Matt tried to hit him.

"At least I wasn't dumped in the middle of a reality show," Matt said with a smirk.

"It was the end of the show. You crawled out from under your rock too late. That ship has sailed, landed, and reloaded," Bryan said with a smirk of his own.

"Whatever. Where is my beautiful Sonia?" Matt asked, looking around.

"She is inside sleeping. She's not feeling well," Bryan said before looking at Jeff and Mia, who seemed like they were ready to leave.

"You can both wrap up things at your end between now and the weekend. By Monday, you have to meet with Harry," Bryan said, and Matt looked at him curiously.

"Harry? Your brother's best friend? What are they meeting him for? And why are they here when you are no longer with Golden Star?" Matt asked, and Bryan sighed as he was already tired of repeating the story.

"I will fill you in on all you have missed after seeing them off," Bryan promised.

#### Chapter 372 Best Friends Forever

Alone in the bedroom, Sonia smiled as she watched the clip which Lucy had forwarded to her of Tom and Harry talking to Anita. She was sure glad that Lucy had such capable men in her life who had her back.

No. Not just Lucy. She also had them in her life too. Tom was Bryan's brother, after all, and she knew he wouldn't hesitate to come through for her if she needed him, and Harry was not just Tom's best friend. He was most likely to be Jade's partner too, so he was family as well, and the beautiful thing about the Hank family was that they had each other's back, even if it didn't look so when watching them from afar. She was glad that she and Lucy were a part of them, even if not officially.

With a sigh, Sonia dialed Lucy's line.

Lucy, who was seated beside Tom as he dialed Jade's line, quickly picked up her phone when it started ringing and she saw that it was Sonia.

"I will step out to speak with Jade while you talk to Sonia," Tom offered, and Lucy gave him a nod and watched him walk away as she received Sonia's call.

"Thank goodness you finally called! I was just about to dial your line one more time before concluding that you have either been kidnapped or you abandoned me," Lucy joked, and Sonia laughed softly.

"I'm sorry about that. I wasn't feeling too well, so I wasn't really..."

Lucy's brows pulled together in a deep frown the moment she heard Sonia's weak voice, "What is wrong? Are you ill?" She asked in alarm.

"Yeah. I got the Flu. I've taken some medicine for it, and I'm resting now."

"Flu? You shouldn't have traveled if you were ill," Lucy said, very worried.

"Don't worry..."

"How can I not worry? You rarely fall ill. Are you sure it's just flu? You should go to the hospital. I will call Bryan..."

"Don't, Lu! He is worried enough already. I'm fine," Sonia assured her.

"I'm serious, Lu. Don't worry about me. They are all taking good care of me over here," Sonia said when Lucy remained silent after some time.

"How come you are always the one taking care of me and worrying about me, but you never let me worry about you. Why?" Lucy asked, and Sonia sighed.

"Because you are my baby, and I don't like to see you worried. Besides, I'm sure you have enough on your mind right now. That reminds me, I saw the clip you sent. Tom sure knows how to shut the door in people's faces," Sonia said, skillfully changing the subject.

"Yeah. Let's hope she got the message and stops being such a bother," Lucy said, and Sonia sighed.

"I doubt that. People that suffer from her kind of delusion do not react to such direct insults and rejection too well. She is going to try to do something silly," Sonia predicted with a yawn.

"You think so?"

"Yeah. I've written about a character like her before, and I had to do a lot of research on their mental state. Don't worry, though. I'm sure Tom and Harry will take care of her before things get out of control," Sonia assured Lucy with another yawn.

"You won't believe what Tom found out about Anita's family," Lucy said and went on to tell Sonia all that Tom had told her.

"Why am I not surprised? I hope we will be back early enough to witness their disgrace. I'd love to sit in the front row," Sonia said, and Lucy smiled.

"Me too. I want to watch it with you. By the way, I've accepted that job offer," Lucy said and started by telling Sonia about Tom's meeting with Priscilla, and all the lady had told Tom.

"It seems like Tom had a fun day," Sonia said with another yawn.

"You are yawning a lot. You must be very tired," Lucy observed.

"I feel very tired. And the medication is making me feel drowsy too."

"I should let you rest then. I will give Bryan a call to check on you later," Lucy said when she heard Sonia yawn again.

"Sure. Just don't nag him when you do."

"Yes, mommy," Lucy said with a roll of her eyes before remembering why she had wanted to call Sonia earlier, "Remind me later to tell you about the mini showdown I had with some female colleagues who were badmouthing me today," Lucy said, and Sonia who had been settling into a comfortable position to sleep, sat up.

"Showdown? Tell me about it," she said excitedly.

"I will tell you after you wake up. You should rest," Lucy said, but Sonia wasn't having none of that.

"Rest? I'm not tired. I want to hear it," Sonia said as she clicked on the recording icon on her phone.

Lucy giggled, "You gossipmonger. You said you were tired and feeling sleepy a few seconds ago," Lucy reminded her.

"So why did you bring it up if you weren't going to tell me about it now?" Sonia hissed at her as she got off the bed and went to the bathroom to splash running water on her face.

"I said you should remind me, so I don't forget to mention it. Also, remind me to tell you how I kissed Tom in the lobby in the presence of everyone," Lucy said, and Sonia's mouth dropped open in disbelief.

"You didn't!"



"Trust me, I did! I grabbed his butt yesterday, and today I kissed him in public," Lucy said with a giggle, unable to believe the kind of out-of-character stunts she was pulling now because of Tom.

"Why am I surprised? If you could make out with him in the presence of both your parents and his, I'm sure you can do anything now," Sonia said in amusement, and Lucy's face colored in embarrassment.

"Please, don't remind me of that," she said, and Sonia laughed softly, already feeling better merely by talking to Lucy.

"So, are you going to tell me about the showdown now? I'm not feeling so sleepy anymore," Sonia said as she returned to the bed.

Lucy giggled, "Nah. Let's save that for later. Remind me also to tell you what your friend Candace did."

"C'mon, Lu! Why are there so many things to remind you of? What did Candace do? And why can't you tell me about it now?" Sonia protested.

"I can't tell you now because I have to start getting ready to go out with Tom. We are having dinner with Harry and his dad by 7 PM. I promise to give you the details tomorrow. So make sure you remind me of it."

"You are having dinner with Harry's dad?" Sonia asked curiously.

"Yeah. Why? You want to write about him too?" Lucy asked jocularly, and Sonia giggled.

"Well, since the story is a trilogy, I should at least know the background of my third male lead, shouldn't I?" Sonia said reasonably.

"Yes, you should. But I also think you should talk to Harry before writing about him. I'm not sure he would like to be written about without his knowledge. Plus, he really doesn't like being lied to, and I don't want him to feel I kept this from him deliberately," Lucy said, and Sonia narrowed her eyes.

"You sound like you are very close to him. Are you friends with him now?" Sonia asked curiously.

"Yeah. I told you he recorded and sent that clip to me without Tom's knowledge, remember?" Lucy said, and Sonia smiled.

"True. But I'm not that close to him, so how do you expect me to tell him that I want to write about him? Besides, it's not like I'm going to be using his real name or anything. He won't even know he's the one if you don't tell him."

"Focus on the first two stories and leave Harry and Jade's story until you are close to him enough to tell him what you want to do. Besides, you need to be sure beyond reasonable doubt that he would get romantically involved with Jade for you to write about them," Lucy reminded her.

Sonia sighed, "True. By the way, I want to discuss something with you too. Maybe we can talk about it later since you have to prepare for your dinner date now," Sonia said, making Lucy pause.

"Is it urgent? We can talk about it now if it's very important," Lucy offered.

"Nah. It can wait. It's just related to my career, and I need your advice. So let's talk about it when we talk later," Sonia said.

"Alright. Make sure to get more than enough rest and eat very well."

"I will. Have fun. And if possible, record the dinner conversation..."

"I won't!" Lucy said, and Sonia rolled her eyes.

"Yeah, I wasn't expecting you to agree anyway," Sonia said, and a yawn escaped from her lips before she could stifle it.

"I love you, Sony. You know that, right?" Lucy asked, sounding serious all of a sudden.

"I... I love you too," Sonia said, wondering where it was coming from since Lucy wasn't usually very expressive.

"That isn't the answer to my question, Sony. You realize that I love you, and I can't imagine my life without you, right?" Lucy asked, and Sonia's smile wobbled as tears gathered in her eyes.

"Of course. What can you do without me?" Sonia asked jokingly as she used Bryan's shirt, which was on the bed beside her, to wipe the tears from her eyes.

"You are the most beautiful, brave, bold, and brilliant girl I know. I would never have survived all that happened had you not been beside me. I know I've never said this to you before, but thank you for not taking sides with your family and for not leaving me. And thank you for being strong for us both," Lucy said with a sniffle as she wiped her tears. Perhaps it was because of her conversation with Amy earlier. She was feeling very emotional.

"You are going to make me cry, Lu," Sonia said, her lips quavering as more tears dropped from her eyes. Why was Lucy saying this? Why was everyone making her feel so emotional today?

"I want you to always be healthy, Sony. I want us to grow old together. I want to always have you by my side and be by your side too..."

"You are my best friend forever," Sonia assured her.

"And even though I don't tell you enough, I love you to the moon, sun, stars, satellite, space, and back," Lucy said, and Sonia laughed soppily.

"Stop it, Lu!"

Lucy wiped the tears from her eyes just as Tom returned to the bedroom, and she cleared her throat, "Alright. This is awkward. I have to go now. Make sure you take your meds and get enough rest."

"You've said that more than once already. Bye!" Sonia said with a giggle before hanging up.

#### Chapter 373 Crush

One look at Lucy's face, and Tom could tell that she had shed some tears. "Is Sonia okay?" He asked, and Lucy nodded.

"She is down with the flu, but she sounds fine," Lucy said with a small smile as she stood from the couch, ready to shower.

"I take it you shed some tears because you were still feeling emotional about Amy's situation with her best friend?" Tom said as she headed for the closet, and Lucy stopped and turned to look at him.

"Am I that easy to read?"

"I don't think so. I like to believe that reading you is my superpower," Tom said with a grin as he held out his arms to her.

Lucy smiled as she went to meet him, "I guess I should believe that too," she said, and Tom nodded as he embraced her.

"I know you love her, and you are scared of losing her. But don't worry too much. She will be fine. I'm sure Bryan and my parents will look after her well," he assured her as he kissed her forehead, and she gave him a nod.

"How did your conversation with Jade go?" Lucy asked when she remembered that he had left to speak with Jade earlier.

"She didn't know about the letter. She was surprised and asked that I give her some time to speak with Candace and get back to me," Tom said, and Lucy nodded as she glanced at the clock.

"It's past 6 PM already. We should get ready if we don't want to be late," Lucy pointed out.

"You can use the bathroom first. I will go down and check on the kid before getting ready," Tom said, knowing that Lucy needed space to clean up comfortably.

"Alright," Lucy said as she pulled away from him and turned to leave, but Tom pulled her back and kissed her lips.

"I love you," Tom said, gazing into her eyes as he brushed his knuckles along her jawline.

She smiled at him, "I know. And I love you too," she said, and Tom gave her a nod before walking away.

Once he got to the kitchen, he saw Jamal seated on the kitchen island, munching on a piece of chocolate cookie while watching Samantha and the other maids prepare dinner, "Hey!" Tom greeted from the doorway, and everyone looked at him, including Jamal, who looked back at him with dull eyes.

"Hi!" Jamal responded since he was the one Tom was staring at.

"Do you mind having a word with me?" Tom asked, and Jamal shrugged indifferently as he plopped the remaining piece of cookie into his mouth.

Tom went to where the kid was seated and lifted him off the island to the floor, "Let's go to the Den," he said as he led the kid out of the kitchen while Samantha and the others tried to mind their business.

Once they got to the Den, Tom sat on one of the couches, and Jamal did the same, "Do you like staying here?" Tom asked curiously.

Jamal looked at him for a moment, "It used to be fun," he said in a quiet voice.

"It is no longer fun?"

He shook his head, "Everyone else has left. It's quiet and boring now," Jamal said, and Tom nodded.

"I'm not bored," Tom pointed out, and Jamal looked at him for a moment.

"Only because you have Lucy," Jamal pointed out sullenly.

"That's right," Tom said, amused by the kid's perspective, "But you also have Samantha and everyone else."

"It's not the same. They are always busy," Jamal said, and Tom nodded.

"Lucy is always busy too."

"I don't mind," Jamal said, and this time Tom chuckled. Okay. It seemed like the kid had a crush on Lucy.

"Would you like me to get you a home teacher? That way, you wouldn't miss out on your school work too much while you are here, and it might help you stay busy," Tom suggested, and Jamal gave him an indifferent shrug.

"Maybe we can play games in the evening when I'm back from work and hang out over the weekend," Tom suggested, and Jamal's dull eyes lit up, letting Tom know he liked the idea.

"Will we go bowling too?"

"If you promise to be a good boy and not cry, then we will go to any fun place you want. And you can also talk to your mother over the phone," Tom promised, and Jamal's face brightened.

"I won't cry. I will be good," he promised excitedly.

"Good. Lucy and I are going out for dinner soon. I will ask Samantha and the others to stay up and watch a cartoon with you. We will try to come back early. If you are still up by the time we get back, I will tuck you in and read you a bedtime story. Deal?" Tom asked, and Jamal looked at him like he was contemplating something.

"Will Lucy be there to tuck me in too?" Jamal asked with hopeful eyes, and Tom smiled knowingly. Definitely a crush.

"You want her to?" Tom asked, and Jamal bobbed his head.

"We will have to ask her about it," Tom said as he rose, and Jamal did the same.

By the time Tom returned to the bedroom, Lucy was out of the bathroom, dressed in a bathing robe as she searched the closet for something to wear.

"You didn't think that you'd need to dress up for dinner," Tom said, knowing that she hadn't packed any clothes.

"I'm sure my work clothes will suffice. After all, you guys will be wearing suits..." Tom watched in amusement as she spoke since he could tell that she didn't exactly like the idea of wearing formal clothes to dinner with friends.

"It's not the same thing. Go to the closet in Jade's bedroom and see if you can find something you like. If you don't, we can stop on our way to get you something," Tom suggested, cutting her off.

Lucy opened her mouth, ready to argue, but when she saw the way he was staring at her like he was anticipating an argument, she flashed him a smile instead.

"Thanks," she said as she walked out of the bedroom, leaving Tom, whose chuckle escorted her out.

Away from there, as Sonia lay back on the bed, ready to respond to the beckoning call of sleep, a knock sounded on the door, and she opened her eyes to see who it was.

"Come in," she called, guessing it was probably Evelyn.

"Are you sleeping already?" Desmond asked as he peered into the bedroom from the doorway.

Sonia yawned, "Not yet. But I was about to. Did you want something?" she asked, trying to sit up as Desmond walked in.

"Other than keeping you company? Nah. You don't have to sit up. I will just sit beside you and watch over you while you sleep. Bryan is busy with Matt, and Eve needs to rest for a bit," Desmond said as he pulled the single couch in the bedroom closer to Sonia's side of the bed before reaching over with his hand to feel her temperature.

"The fever has gone down. How are you feeling now?" He asked with concerned eyes.

"I'm fine. You realize I can't sleep if you are here watching me, right?" Sonia asked as she sat up, and Desmond grinned.

"Why? Because I'm too handsome?"

Sonia threw back her head and laughed, "You spent too much time in Andrew's company. He has ruined you," Sonia said with a shake of her head, and Desmond laughed.

"As long as it makes you laugh, I don't mind being ruined," Desmond said as he helped her adjust the pillows behind her so that she would be seated in a comfortable position.

"You are so sweet. Your family is sweet too," Sonia said as she watched him lower himself to the couch beside her.

"Am I? Sweeter than Andrew?" Desmond asked, and once again, Sonia laughed.

"Why? You want to steal his spot in my heart?" Sonia asked, cocking her head to the side.

"Nah. I don't have to steal anything. I'm sure you'll carve my own spot soon enough," Desmond said confidently, and Sonia grinned.

"Who says you don't have your own spot already?" Sonia teased.

"Do I?" Desmond asked playfully, and Sonia smiled at him.

"What do you want?" Sonia asked curiously.

From the look in his intelligent blue eyes that reminded her of Bryan's eyes, she could tell he was not there to just make small talk with her.

He had old eyes. Eyes that looked like they could see through you and knew every secret you were trying to hide. She liked to describe his eyes as sage eyes.

"I told you already. To keep you company," Desmond said as he held Sonia's guarded gaze.

"What do you want to know?" Sonia asked, and this time Desmond chuckled.

"Are you always this suspicious?"

"No. I'm not."

"So why can't you just believe that I'm here to watch over you?" Desmond asked, and Sonia smiled.

"I believe you are here to watch over me, but I also believe that is not the only reason you are here. I noticed the way you were staring at me on the plane earlier. I'm a writer. Things hardly get past me," Sonia said, and Desmond nodded.

"I want to know how you are doing," Desmond said, and Sonia smiled.

"I told you already. I'm fine. I think the medication is working. All I need is to rest and..."

"I'm not talking about the medicine, and I know you know it," Desmond cut in, and Sonia sighed.

"How are you?" Desmond repeated.

"Were you a shrink or something?" Sonia asked curiously.

"A priest. I was going to become a priest before I met Eve, and like Adam, I let her lead me astray," Desmond said with a straight face, and Sonia's mouth dropped open in surprise before he burst into a peal of laughter.

"I was just kidding," he said amidst his laughter, and this time Sonia laughed too.

"I can't believe I bought that," Sonia said in amusement.

"To answer your question, I'm not a shrink, but I did take a couple of courses in psychology some years ago. Needed to for Eve's sake," Desmond said, and Sonia raised a brow.

"Why? Did she have psychological problems?" Sonia asked curiously.

"You could say that. She grew up with an alcoholic mother and an abusive father. Her father used to molest her kid sister," Desmond said flatly, and Sonia's brows pulled together.

"Evelyn?" She asked, unable to believe that someone as tough as Evelyn could have experienced something like that.

"Yeah. Eve. She always felt guilty about it, wishing he had molested her instead of her little sister. She was too young and couldn't stop him from molesting her, and their mother was too drunk half the time to do anything about it. She finally snapped when her sister died of sepsis, and she stabbed him in his sleep," Desmond said, and Sonia's eyes widened in surprise.

"She killed her father?"

"Unfortunately for him, he didn't die. But he was hurt badly enough for her mother to call an ambulance, and then the police were involved," Desmond said, and Sonia frowned.

"How old was she?"

"She was twelve. Her sister was nine. Eve lived with the guilt for years. And even though she was taken away from them and placed in foster care, she didn't move on from it. She blamed herself for living after her sister died," Desmond said, and Sonia sighed.

"That's terrible."

"Do you blame yourself for what happened to Lucy? Is that why you took her side against your family's?" Desmond asked curiously, and Sonia blinked at him, surprised by how quickly he had turned the discussion to her.

"I took her side because my parents were wrong," Sonia said after a while.

"Good. So do you blame yourself for what happened to Lucy?" Desmond asked again.



"Jamie was my brother. My half-brother," Sonia said quietly, as though that answered the question and explained her position.

"So you blame yourself for something your half-brother did, just like Evelyn blamed herself for something her father did," Desmond said, and Sonia frowned.

"It's different."

"Is it?"

"Evelyn was a helpless kid. I wasn't. I could have done something."

"Like what?" Desmond asked curiously.

"She wouldn't have met Jamie had I not been her friend."

"Do you regret your friendship with Lucy?" Desmond asked curiously.

"Of course not! I don't," Sonia said passionately.

"So, what do you think you could have done to stop what happened from happening apart from not being friends with her?" Desmond asked again.

"Better put, if you had the powers to change something in the past, what would you have changed?" Desmond asked.

Sonia frowned as she considered the question, "I could have convinced Lucy to tell her parents about it. I could have told my mom about it or confronted Jamie."

"Lucy could have done so if she wanted to. Her not doing so had nothing to do with you. Telling your mother or confronting Jamie would also not have changed anything. It wasn't your fault that your half-brother did what he did. And it wasn't your fault that Lucy handled it the way she did either. You were an innocent bystander," Desmond said, and tears filled Sonia's eyes.

"Did you attend your parents' funeral?" He asked, and Sonia shook her head.

"Why? Hold on, Let me guess. You didn't want to leave Lucy's side? You felt it would be betrayal on your part if you attended the funeral of the people who tried to pin their son's death on her?" Desmond asked as he handed Sonia his handkerchief.

"Why are you saying all this?" Sonia asked as she wiped her tears.

"Because I think you have been carrying an unnecessary burden for years. I bet you haven't had a good argument with Lucy since after that incident, have you?" Desmond asked, and Sonia frowned.

"There is nothing to fight about. We love each other, and we understand each other."

"I know you love each other, but I also know you are not as completely open with her as you would love to be. Don't you want to visit your mother's graveside? Don't you miss your mother? When last did you talk to Lucy about your mother or family? Have you even mourned your mother's death?" Desmond asked, and this time Sonia broke into a sob.

Desmond stood from his seat and went to sit beside her as he gathered her close, "Stop being lonely in the midst of people who deeply care about you, and stop being a stranger when you are with family. Lucy and her family love you, and I know they don't blame you for what happened, so stop blaming yourself," Desmond murmured as he patted her back while she wept.

#### Chapter 374 Don't Leave

Lucas laughed as he and Miley walked out of the Cinema while she complained about the movie they had just finished seeing.

"It was crazy, seriously. I think Elena should have ended up with Trevor, not Con."

"Why? Because Trevor is cuter?" Lucas asked curiously.

"Well, there is that. He's more my spec than Con is," Miley said, flashing him a grin.

"Or maybe you just feel sorry for Trevor because he's not as rich as Con," Lucas said, and Miley frowned as they both stopped by her car.

"You think so? You don't think Con was too cunning with his corny lines?" She asked, and Lucas chuckled at her deliberate wordplay.

"I think it was an interesting movie, and Sonia won't appreciate you referring to Bryan that way," Lucas said, since Bryan had played the roll of Con in the movie, and Miley rolled her eyes.

"Do you know I forgot for a moment that you personally know Bryan Hank?" She asked, and Lucas smiled.

"I won't exactly say I know him personally yet. We really didn't talk much when we met," Lucas said, and Miley nodded as she unlocked the car.

"It has been a nice day. Thanks for getting my mind off my problems," Lucas said with serious eyes as he watched her because he had actually not thought of anything serious all day, thanks to her.

"I'm better for you than the alcohol, am I not?" She asked playfully as she opened the driver's door.

"Yes, you are. I have to leave you now," Lucas said, and the smile left her face.

"Where are you going from here? Home? Why don't you get in, so I drop you off?" Miley offered as she got into the car, feeling reluctant to let Lucas go despite the fact that he had spent most of the day with her.

"As long as you don't try to convince me to stay an extra hour with you," Lucas said with a knowing smile, and Miley grinned at him unashamed.

"You were supposed to be my drinking buddy and be my audience while I wallow in self-pity. I haven't even had any drink yet," she reminded him as she glanced at her wristwatch. It was almost 7 PM already. Still too early for her to go to bed.

"You shouldn't drink either or wallow in self-pity. Instead, it would be best if you went home to your family so that they can comfort you and you can do the same," Lucas said, and she eyed him with mild annoyance.

"I already told you why I can't do that yet," she said as she distractedly tossed her hair back with lazy feminine grace.

"Because you don't want them to force you into receiving treatments, and you want to go home with a man and tell them you want to get married and live happily ever after with him before you die, am I right?" Lucas asked, summarizing everything he had learned from her thus far.

"Why are you making it sound like you think it's a stupid idea?" Miley asked, and Lucas scoffed.

"Because I think it is ridiculous."

"But you didn't say so earlier when I first said it," Miley pointed out.

"Only because I thought you were kidding the first time about the marriage and having a child," Lucas said incredulously.

When she had mentioned that one of the things on her bucket list was getting married and having a child before her death, he had dismissed it with a laugh and had brought up another conversation. But in the course of the day, she had mentioned it a couple of times again and was beginning to realize that she actually meant it.

"Why will I be kidding about something as important as that?" Miley asked, slightly pissed that he wasn't taking her seriously.

"For starters, it takes an average of nine months to carry a pregnancy, and you already stated more than once that you have less than six months. When are you going to find the man? When are you going to get married and then get pregnant? Do you plan on having the child within five months? I know this is important to you, but it is not realistic. I'm sorry," Lucas said reasonably as he watched her.

"And you think I haven't thought of all that already?" Miley asked with a slight frown, wondering if he thought she was an airhead.

"You have?" Lucas asked curiously.

"Of course. I'm sure I would be able to find someone decent to love me and marry me at the right price. I will make the man give me his sperm, and then with my eggs, we could get a surrogate. Even if I die, she can have my baby, and my parents will raise the kid," Miley said with a proud smile, and Lucas looked at her sadly.

"You want to pay someone to love you?"

She shrugged, "I'm sure none of those guys who claimed to love me in the past would be keen on being with me now if they find out I'm dying. Besides, I would only attract goldiggers anyway. So it's best I choose a man of my choice and pay him. That way, I can get all the love and attention I want before I die."

"What about you? Don't you want to fall in love? Do you think you would be satisfied with just having anyone in your life? Especially when you know you are paying them to love you?" Lucas asked curiously.

"No offense, but you were in love too. How did it work out for you? Love is beautiful and all, but I don't have the luxury of time to fall in love. I just want to be happy and..." The rest of her words trailed off when her vision suddenly blurred, and she winced when pain shot through her head.

"Are you with your med?" Lucas asked in concern when she raised both hands to her temple, and he quickly picked up her handbag and handed it to her so she would take the pills.

"I think so," she said in a very small voice as she reached for the prescription bottle she usually left in her handbag, but it was empty.

"Oh, no! Oh, God! Not now!" She cried as she poured out all the content of her bag as though she would miraculously find a pill inside.

"You don't have any stashed somewhere in your car?" Lucas asked with a frown, and she shook her head slowly as tears dropped from her eyes.

"I don't," she cried.

Lucas frowned as he looked around. There weren't any pharmacies around them, and even if there were, he couldn't just walk into any pharmacy to get it since it was a prescription medication and she wasn't his patient.

Without wasting another moment thinking about it, he got out of the car and went to open the driver's door, "I will take you back to the hotel as quickly as I can, and then you can take your pill," Lucas said as he placed an arm around her shoulder and helped her get out of the car.

Miley held him tightly as he escorted her around the car to the passenger seat, and once she was seated, he helped her buckle her seatbelt before getting into the car and driving off.

True to his word, he drove as quickly as possible while glancing at her at intervals and squeezing her hand supportively as she cried softly.

The moment he drove into the hotel premise and parked in front of her apartment, he picked up the key card, which had fallen out of her handbag, before getting out of the car.

Once he unlocked the door, he returned to her side of the car, and without waiting for her to get out, he unbuckled her seatbelt and carried her bridal style inside the apartment.

He headed straight to the bedroom and picked up the prescription bottle quickly alongside a bottle of water, and handed it to her. He sat on the edge of the table as he watched her swallow three pills hurriedly before breaking into another sob.

Watching her cry, Lucas felt his heart contract painfully, and he sat beside her and gathered her close to himself.

"This is not fair. I didn't do anything to deserve this pain. I didn't," she murmured as she cried.

"I've done my best to be a good person. Why do I get to die while someone as despicable as Rachel is alive and healthy? Why? Why me?" She cried bitterly, but Lucas said nothing as he held her and let her cry.

He didn't know what to say. He didn't have an answer to her question. The best he could do was to hold her and let her cry.

Lucas didn't know how long he sat there consoling her, but it was when he didn't hear any word from her again that he looked down at her and realized that she had fallen asleep.

Lucas sighed as he held her away from himself, but before he could stand up, she grabbed the front of his shirt, "Please, don't leave me," she said drowsily without opening her eyes.

"I have to take you to your bed," Lucas said as he gently detached her hand from his shirt and stood up before carrying her to the bedroom.

He lay her on the bed gently, but before he could straighten up, she grabbed his hand once again, "Don't leave."

Lucas sat down beside her with a sigh and covered her elegant hand with his other hand as he watched her sleep. Her face was pale, and her long lashes were still wet with tears.

He didn't like that he was becoming more worried about her or that he was feeling attached to her in a way. Watching her sleep now, she seemed so fragile and nothing like the lady who had been laughing beside him a while ago at the cinema.

He slowly let go of her hand, "I'm not leaving tonight," he assured her quietly as he stood up and pulled the duvet over her.

He was going to make sure to leave the next day and go as far away from her as possible. She was making him worry, and he didn't want to.

Once he made sure she was well covered, he returned outside to the car, which he had left, and shut the door. He gathered back the items she had poured out of her bag, as well as both their phones, before returning to the house.

Seated on the couch, he contemplated his options. Perhaps he should find a way to reach her family and inform them of her situation? She would be mad at him. He reasoned with a sigh. It wasn't his place to do that.

He thought about Lucy's secretary, who was her friend and who already knew about the situation, and decided to give Lucy a call. Maybe he could get the secretary's number from Lucy and give her a call.

Just as he dialed Lucy's line, he heard the door open from the outside, and he stood up to see who it was.

Amy, who had just opened the door and was dragging in her luggage bag, stopped when she sighted the man who she recognized to be her boss' twin brother, and they both stood still staring at each other.

Chapter 375 Dinner

"What do you think?" Lucy asked as she walked into the bedroom to join Tom, but she stopped to admire his outfit when she noticed that he was dressed and looked almost ready to leave.

He was dressed in a white long-sleeved shirt, but the sleeves were rolled over to his elbow, and the shirt was tucked into a pair of grey plaid pants. The top three buttons of his shirt were left open, revealing the gold neck chain he was wearing.

"Why do you have to always look so handsome?" she asked with a silly smile, and Tom grinned as he looked her over.

"Just so you can keep falling for me," Tom said as he continued to look at the dress she was wearing with thoughtful eyes.

"What? You don't like the dress?" Lucy asked with a slight frown as she looked down at the simple blue halter knee-length dress she was wearing.

"I don't think there is a thing you would wear that I wouldn't love. My eyes are biased when it comes to you," Tom said, and Lucy blushed slightly.

"But what?" She asked, knowing he wasn't satisfied.

"It's nothing serious. I wasn't planning on wearing a blazer but seeing how exposed your dress is, I was trying to figure out what blazer to take along with me in case you get cold. I don't want to ruin your outfit," Tom said, and Lucy smiled as she walked up to him and embraced him.

"You are too sweet," Lucy said as she ran her hands up his back.

"And we are going to be very late if you keep that up," Tom said as he kissed her forehead and pulled away from her.

"We have less than thirty minutes left. It's past 7 PM already," Tom said as he walked into the closet to find a blazer, while Lucy went to the dressing table to add some finishing touches to her face and hair.

By the time Tom stepped out of the closet ten minutes later, wearing a black blazer over his shirt, she was dabbing some perfume on her wrist, and he smiled as he went to stand behind her.

She had let her hair down and was wearing her green-colored contact lens instead of her glasses, "You are beautiful," he said as he brushed her hair to the side and kissed her neck.

"Thank you," she said with a smile directed at his reflection in the mirror, "And don't think I have not noticed how you are extra pleased whenever I let my hair down or leave my glasses," Lucy said, and Tom grinned.

"Feel free to tell me something you would like me to do in return each time you do it," Tom said, and Lucy smirked.

"I will keep that in mind," she promised as she walked away from him and went to sit on the couch so she could put on her pair of high-heeled nude sandals.

Tom followed her and crouched down in front of her as he took the sandals from her, "Let me help you with that," he said as he helped her buckle her sandals.

Lucy giggled suddenly, and Tom looked up at her, "What's funny?"

"I just remembered that I was supposed to teach you how to be an ideal boyfriend," she said with amidst her laughter, and Tom chuckled as he straightened up.

"You are doing a good job, don't you think?" Tom asked as he held out his hand to help her up, and Lucy shook her head as he pulled her up.

"You are such a crook. You tricked me into being your girlfriend with that lame excuse," Lucy said with mock indignation.

"I'm so ashamed of myself," Tom said, facepalming himself, and she smiled.

"You should be. Let's leave now," Lucy said as she took his hand and pulled him towards the door.

Once they got downstairs, they met Samantha in the dining eating with Jamal, and Tom watched in amusement as the kid stood up once he saw Lucy and approached them.

"You look different," Jamal observed, and Lucy smiled at him.

"I do? Good different or bad different?"

He shrugged, "It's your hair. I like you better with your hair up and your glasses," Jamal said, and Tom glared at the kid while Lucy smiled at him.

"So you don't think I look good right now?" She asked curiously.



"You look good. But I like your glasses," Jamal said, and Lucy bent forward and kissed his cheek.

"You are such a little gentleman. Thank you," she said with a pleased smile as she stepped back and turned to Tom.

"Will you tuck me in and read me bedtime stories if I'm still awake when you get back?" Jamal asked, causing her to turn to him again.

"Bedtime stories?" Lucy asked, not because she didn't know what it meant but because she was surprised that he was asking that of her.

"Yes. Please?" Jamal asked, and Lucy looked at Tom, who just looked back at her without saying a word.

She cleared her throat as she flashed Jamal a smile, "Sure. I will," she promised, and Jamal smiled at them both before returning to the table, while Tom gave instructions to Samantha before leading Lucy away.

"If you are not comfortable with the kid's request, you don't have to do it," Tom assured her once they were seated in the car.

"I was taken aback, not necessarily uncomfortable. Reading him a bedtime story isn't a big deal," Lucy said confidently, and Tom nodded as he turned on the car's ignition and drove off.

Thirty minutes later, they arrived at the restaurant, and both Harry and his father stood up when they saw Tom and Lucy approaching their table, "I'm sorry we kept you waiting. It was my..."

"Don't bother with the apology. A lovely lady like you is worth waiting for," Aaron cut in smoothly with a broad smile, making Lucy smile back.

"I'm Aaron Jonas, the proud father to this shamelessly single young man standing beside me. Call me Aaron," Aaron said as he extended a hand to Lucy, and Lucy giggled as she placed her hand in his, and he bowed as he lifted it to his lips.

"Your dad has dangerous moves. You should take some lessons from him," Tom whispered to Harry as he eyed Aaron.

"I'm Lucinda Perry, the proud girlfriend to this dashing man standing beside me. It's nice to meet you, Aaron," Lucy said with a bright smile as she lowered herself to the seat, which Tom held out for her while Harry rolled his eyes. Tom and Lucy were both a very annoying pair.

Once Lucy was seated, Harry sat down while Tom shook hands with Aaron, "You don't look like you aged a day since we last met."

"I wish that were true," Aaron said with a chuckle as he slapped Tom's back fondly, and they both sat down.

"I should officially introduce you to my..."

"Relax, Tom. I know she is your Jewel already," Aaron said, much to the amusement of Tom and Lucy.

It was obvious that Harry had been gossiping about them to his father, and Lucy was curious to know what he had said to his father.

"I heard you did a lot of silly things to get her," Aaron said with a grin.

"Please do not remind me," Tom said, and Aaron laughed.

"It's good to see you again, Tom. I only wish you had gotten your friend a girlfriend while getting yourself one," he whispered to Tom loud enough for everyone to hear, and they all laughed apart from Harry, who had a scowl on his face.

"I'm very well capable of getting myself a girlfriend! Besides, I already told you I have a date," Harry reminded his father as he signaled a waiter over.

"Oh, yeah! You did say so. Why did I forget? I must have become too used to you being single to remember that," Aaron said with a sigh.

"With the girl Jade hooked you up with? I thought you said you weren't interested?" Tom asked, and Aaron raised a brow.

"Your sister hooked him up with a lady?" He asked curiously.

Harry shot his dad a look, but thankfully before any of them could speak, the waiter came, and they all had to give their orders. Once they were done, Harry turned his attention to Lucy, wanting to shift the discussion away from himself.

"Did you enjoy the short movie I sent you, Lulu?" Harry asked, and Lucy smiled at him.

"Yes, I did. Thank you. I owe you one..."

"You don't owe him anything," Tom cut in, and Harry chuckled.

"Yeah, you don't owe me anything. We are friends after all," Harry said as he winked at Lucy, who giggled while Tom eyed him unpleasantly.

"I wonder how you both manage to run such a successful company," Aaron said with a tsk.

"So tell me, Tom's Jewel. What did you see in this punk?" He asked, jerking his head towards Tom, and Lucy smiled.

"He is good-looking," Lucy said with a shrug, and Tom looked at her with a bewildered look on his face.

"That's what you saw?" Tom asked, and she bobbed her head, making both Harry and Aaron laugh.

"I agree with you, Lulu. He is just a pretty face," Harry said with a chuckle.

"He's not just a pretty face. There's a lot more to him than that. But his pretty face was what first attracted me to him physically," Lucy explained, and Tom sighed in relief, making Aaron smile.

"I'm curious about something, though. How did you not know that Tom was your driver regardless of the disguise?"

"I can see Harry already bared his soul to you. He can't just keep secrets," Tom said dryly as he scowled at Harry.

"He bitterly complained about how you keep flaunting your relationship. And he said the word you said most today was 'My Jewel'. He also said even if he wasn't interested in getting into a relationship, just to get back at you, he was going to get a girlfriend," Aaron said with a chuckle, and both Tom and Lucy laughed as two waiters arrived with drinks for them.

"At least it's not hard to see why I can't keep your secrets. Don't blame me. It's a hereditary condition," Harry said dryly, and Lucy laughed.

Once the waiters had left, Aaron looked at Lucy, "So tell me. How couldn't you have known that it was the same person? I mean the height, the body build, gait, something should have given him away," Aaron said, and Lucy grinned.

"Are you honestly asking why I didn't suspect that the supposed very busy CEO of a successful company as I-Global enterprise had enough time and energy to disguise himself and double as my driver? Of all things to be, my driver?" Lucy asked incredulously, and both Harry and Aaron laughed heartily.

"Perfect response. You have a point," Aaron said with a nod of approval.

"The things we do for love," Tom said pathetically.

"Yeah, the foolish things you did," Harry said with a shake of his head.

"At least I have a girlfriend. You don't," Tom said, and Harry smirked.

"I'm going to surprise you soon. Don't worry, and just wait for it."

#### Chapter 376 Unacceptable!

"You are Amy, I suppose?" Lucas asked, thinking that she looked familiar.

"Yes. Your sister's secretary. We met at her apartment last weekend," Amy explained as she shut the door behind her.

"Where is Miley?" She asked, looking around the living room, and without waiting for him to respond, she dumped her handbag on the couch and walked past him with her luggage bag, and headed for the bedroom, making it clear that it wasn't her first time there.

Seeing how she walked past him without waiting for a response, Lucas decided there was no need to respond to her question, so he sat on the couch, waiting for her to return after checking on her friend.

Once Amy walked into the bedroom and saw Miley on the bed, she left her bag beside the door and hurried to sit beside her.

"Miley?" She called softly as she patted Miley's hair, and Miley's lids flickered open slowly when she heard the familiar voice.

"Amy? Is that you?" She asked drowsily.

"Yes, Miley!" Amy cried as she lay beside her and embraced her.

"Please don't cry. I don't need another headache," Miley pleaded, her speech slurred as she struggled to keep her eyes open.

For a moment, Amy assumed she was drunk, but since her breath didn't smell of alcohol, Amy concluded that she was either exhausted or had taken sleeping pills.

"I won't, I promise. I won't," Amy said with a sniffle.

"Where is Lucas? Did he leave already?" Miley asked, and from the sound of her voice, Amy could tell she was battling with sleep.

"Not yet. Why?"

"I don't want him to leave. Don't let him leave, okay?" Miley said, and Amy nodded as she patted Miley's hair.

"Don't worry. I will keep him here," Amy promised and held her close until she dozed off again.

Amy stood and adjusted the duvet over her body before returning to the living room to join Lucas. Once she got there, Lucas raised his gaze from his phone to look at her.

"What is wrong with her? Did she take sleeping pills?" Amy asked as she sat on the couch adjacent to where Lucas was seated.

"It's a side effect of her pain medication. The pain was severe, so she took more than she should ordinarily take," Lucas explained, and Amy nodded even though her eyes were clouded with worry.

"Now that you are here, I would like to take my leave," Lucas said as he pocketed his phone and stood up.

"No. She doesn't want you to leave. Can you please stay?" Amy asked as she also stood to face him.

"No. I don't want to. You should convince her to inform her parents and receive treatment," Lucas said as he started to head for the door.

"Please, don't leave," Amy said as she rushed to stand in front of him.

Lucas raised a brow, "Why not?"

"I don't know what your relationship is, but she doesn't want you to leave. At least wait until she wakes up before leaving," Amy pleaded.

"There is no relationship..." Lucas started to say but was interrupted by Amy.

"If I weren't here, you would have stayed with her, wouldn't you? So why not assume I'm not here and spend the night?" Amy asked, and Lucas scoffed.

"How can I assume you are not here when you are here?" He asked with a slightly raised brow.

"Fine. I'm not here then," Amy said as she quickly grabbed her handbag from the couch and headed for the door.

"Where are you going?" Lucas asked in disbelief.

"Somewhere away from here. I will return in the morning when she wakes up," Amy said, and before he could argue, she opened the door and stepped outside.

"Don't leave," Lucas said as he followed her out.

"Then will you please stay? If it weren't something she wanted, I wouldn't be stopping you from leaving. Please stay," Amy pleaded, and Lucas ran his fingers through his hair impatiently before giving her a nod.

"Fine. Let's go back inside," he said, and they both returned to the apartment.

"Thank you," Amy said softly, and Lucas gave her a curt nod as he returned to his seat and took out his phone once again.

"How is she doing?" Amy asked curiously.

"She is in pain, and she is sad. It's a good thing you are here to be with her. No one deserves to be alone at a time like this," Lucas said, and Amy bit her lower lip as she listened to him.

"Thanks for staying with her," Amy said, and Lucas shrugged.

"It's not like I had a choice. She is pretty persistent," Lucas said on a light note, and Amy smiled.

"Yes, she is," Amy said with a sigh, and they both lapsed into a round of silence.

After the silence had dragged on for a while, Amy glanced at him, "How did you meet her?"

"I met her right here," Lucas said in amusement, and then his brows pulled together when he realized that it had only been that morning when he woke up in her apartment, yet it felt like he had known her for a long time already.

"As embarrassing as it is, and as much as I hate to admit it, I have to since I'm sure she will tell you about it eventually. I'm hoping it remains between us. By that, I mean my sister must not hear of it. I woke up here this morning. And according to her, she brought me here because I was drunk and passed out in a bar," Lucas said, and he watched as Amy's brows pulled together in a frown.

"I'm not an alcoholic. I don't have drinking problems. It was a one-time thing," Lucas said defensively when he noticed how she was staring at him.

"I didn't think you were an alcoholic," Amy said, and Lucas raised a brow.

"So what's with the look on your face?"

"I was wondering why she would pick up a random stranger because he was drunk and passed out and bring him back to her place," Amy said, and Lucas nodded.

"You will have to ask her that yourself. I don't suppose you told Lucy anything about me being with your friend, did you?" Lucas asked, and Amy shook her head.

"It skipped my mind," Amy said, and Lucas nodded.

"I hope it continues to skip your mind," Lucas said, and Amy's lips twitched in amusement as she stood up.

"Excuse me, I need to unpack and freshen up," Amy said, and Lucas gave her a nod.

"Take all the time you need."

"You are not going to try to leave when I'm away, are you?" Amy asked doubtfully, and Lucas raised a brow.

"If I were going to leave, I would have done so regardless of whether you're here or not," Lucas said, and she gave him a nod before walking away.

Once she left, Lucas sighed and relaxed against his seat as his thoughts drifted to Miley.

Why did he have to be so weak-willed? Why couldn't he just say no and walk away from here now that Amy was here to watch over her? He mused as he wiped his face with his palm.

He didn't need anyone to tell him that he had stayed back because he was worried about her and not necessarily because Amy had stopped him. He was gradually becoming entangled in her business, and he didn't want any of it.

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After freshening up, Jade went to knock on the door to Candace's bedroom, and a moment later, Candace opened the door, dressed in a bathing robe with a towel in her hand, which she was using to dry her hair.

"Can I come in? Let's talk while we wait for dinner to arrive," Jade said, and Candace nodded as she moved away from the door to let Jade into the bedroom.

Candace sat on the padded stool by the dressing table, while Jade sat on the single couch in the room and stretched out her legs and crossed them at the ankle, "I received a call from Tom a short while ago," Jade started, and Candace sighed.

"I guess you want to talk to me about the message I left him," Candace said, and Jade's brow shot up.

"Is there something I should know?" Jade asked as her intelligent blue eyes watched Candace piercingly.

Candace dropped the towel on her lap and folded both hands in front of her, "Like I already told you before, I'm a mother, and I'm looking out for my son even if it means I have to be selfish..."

Anger flashed in Jade's eyes, but she tried to keep her cool as she cut in, "I have no problem with you being a selfish mother. However, I have a problem with you pulling a stunt like that behind me..." Jade said and raised a finger to stop Candace before she could say another word.

"I am not done yet. You might think you are doing me a favor by following me here to meet with Jero, but trust me, you are not. I am the one doing you a favor by trying to make sure I lock your dangerous baby daddy and his cohorts behind bars for life. You can decide to opt-out of this now, and that will be completely fine by me. Do you know why? I'm unaffected by it. Apart from the personal itch I will get over not closing the case, I can easily decide to take my hands off this case, resign from the law firm and move on with my life, and no one, I repeat, NO ONE would dare come after me. But I can't say the same for you, can I?" Jade asked, cocking her head to the side as she sat up and uncrossed her legs.

"You had no right to do what you did. That is my elder brother and his girlfriend we are talking about! You have no relationship whatsoever with them to dump such responsibility on them. He did us a favor by agreeing to accommodate you and Jamal, and he went an extra step by agreeing to watch over Jamal in your absence. What you did is UNACCEPTABLE!" Jade said, her voice rising as she spoke.

Candace nodded, "You are right. I'm sorry. I wasn't thinking straight. I really needed to ensure that Jamal would be well taken care of if something happened to me. And since he is fond of Lucy's parents and your parents, I thought he would be happier with Tom and Lucy. I should have talked to you first before doing that. I'm sorry," Candace said in a weary voice, then Jade took a deep breath to calm herself.

"Let me get something straight. Is there something you plan to do that I don't know about? Do you plan to run away from here after meeting Jero?" Jade asked, and Candace shook her head.

"Of course not. I love my son and would not abandon him for anything. I just don't trust Jero. I don't have a good feeling about this meeting, so I'm trying to be sure that Jamal will be fine if anything goes wrong," Candace explained, and Jade frowned slightly.



"I won't let Jero hurt you."

"That is not a promise you can keep, Jade. I know Jero. Do you really think someone as spiteful as Jero will let me be after I testified against him? The only reason I agreed to see him now is so that we don't have to keep running from him in the future. I want to end everything between us even if it means I have to kill him with my own hands," Candace said, and Jade shook her head.

"We've been through this already..."

"I haven't changed my mind, Jade. Even while he was locked up in prison, we continued to live in fear. That is not the kind of life I want for myself or Jamal and Andy. I don't mind going to jail for his murder if it would mean that Jamal would grow up safe and not have to worry about such a father showing up in the future."

"I'm sorry, but like I told you already, I won't let you do something like that. I won't let you waste your life," Jade said with a shake of her head.

"I'm not asking your permission, Jade. Just make sure Jero leads you to the Lords. Once he has fulfilled his end of the agreement, I will meet with him. Our meeting will determine whether I live or he dies," Candace said with determination.

"You should think about your son. If you do anything to Jero and you get arrested, you could spend the rest of your life in jail. Who is going to look after him if something happens to you? Leave Jero to me. He is likely going to get a death sentence after all the people he has killed since he escaped from jail. And who knows? The lords might even kill him before he gets a chance to meet you," Jade said reasonably.

"Jade, if you were in my shoes, would you leave Jero to chance or the law? Even when you know how corrupt the law is?" Candace asked, and Jade frowned.

"You should think about Jamal..."

"I am thinking about Jamal. I'm thinking about his future. If anything happens to me and your brother doesn't want to care for Jamal, can I trust you to make sure Jamal is well taken care of? At least until you hear from Andy. You can release him to Andy when she shows up," Candace said, and Jade's frown deepened.

"Candace..."

"Can I trust you to do that?" Candace asked once again, and Jade sighed.

"Yes."

"Thank you."

"Mr. Hank? Mr. Jonas?" A man in his early sixties called out to them as he walked past the private section they were seated with his wife and daughter, and both friends, who had been laughing at something Lucy had said, looked up.

"Mr. Reynolds," They both greeted as they stood and excused themselves from the table to go greet the elderly man, while Harry tried to hide his displeasure when he sighted Tanya standing beside her parents and eyeing him.

He didn't feel the least bit sorry for speaking to her in the manner he had done, and he didn't like that he was running into her again either.

"I'm sure you have both met my lovely wife and beautiful daughter," Mr. Reynolds said as he led them to his table, and Tom smiled as he gave him a nod.

"Yes, we have," Tom said as he gave both ladies a polite bow of acknowledgment, and Harry did the same.

"I was going to give you a call, Mr. Jonas. I learned you had a misunderstanding with my daughter publicly," Mr. Reynolds said after all four of them were seated, his disapproval ringing clearly in his voice as he looked at Harry with a cool smile.

"I was going to ignore it, but I learned your daughter embarrassed both Harry and my sister publicly. She is lucky Harry stepped in. Else it would have been a lot more than a misunderstanding," Tom said coldly before Harry could speak, and Tanya's eyes widened slightly in surprise when she realized who Jade was.

"Your sister?"

"Yes. Harry was out with her, and your daughter embarrassed them. Jade is a lawyer, and she wouldn't have hesitated to handle the issue both physically and legally had Harry not stepped in the way he did. You should thank Harry," Tom said, and Mr. Reynolds turned to glare at his daughter with disapproval for causing trouble without knowing who she was dealing with, and she looked down.

"I'm very sorry about that. I didn't get the full details of what transpired between you both. Why don't I pay for whatever you are having to make up for it?" He offered, and Tom shook his head.

"Maybe you can buy him a drink some other time. We are here to celebrate Harry's appointment as my Co-CEO, so it is only fair to me that I waste as much of his money as I can tonight," Tom said with a grin, and both Harry and Mr. Reynolds chuckled.

"Congratulations, Mr. Jonas," Mr. Reynolds and his wife said while Tanya kept her head down in embarrassment.

"Thank you," Harry said with a polite nod.

"Are we to assume that you both plan to be in-laws? I mean, are you in a relationship with Mr. Hank's sister?" Mrs. Reynolds asked Harry curiously, hoping that he wasn't so that she could set him up on a date with Tanya once again.

Tom said nothing but looked at Harry as he waited to hear his response to the question since he too was curious.

"We haven't made up our mind yet. When we do, you will know. If you don't mind, we have to return to our table. We don't want to keep my dad and Tom's Jewel waiting," Harry said with a polite smile as he stood, wanting to escape from there before they started another matchmaking exercise.

"Oh, sure," Mr. Reynolds said and shook hands with them.

"We haven't made up our mind whether she's our sister or not?" Tom asked with a chuckle as they walked away.

"Shut up!" Harry warned, making Tom laugh even more.

A few tables away from there, Aaron was engrossed in a similar discussion with Lucy, "I suppose you are well acquainted with Tom's sister, Jade?" He asked, and Lucy smiled.

"I am."

"What do you think about her and Harry? Do you think she might be interested in Harry?" Aaron asked, and Lucy narrowed her eyes at the older man she had observed to be sly in the last couple of minutes.

It seemed like many more people were interested in this ship than she thought. Sonia would find it very interesting. "Why do you ask? Are you interested in Jade?" She asked with a grin, and Aaron chuckled.

"C'mon! Don't get smart with me. I thought we were getting along as friends already," Aaron said, and Lucy grinned.

"I'm friends with Jade and Harry too," Lucy pointed out.

"Yeah, Harry mentioned that hence I'm asking. Since you are friends with them, why not help them get things moving already?" Aaron asked, and Lucy shrugged.

"Maybe some of us enjoy watching the process more than interfering. If you are certain they like each other, why not relax and enjoy how they navigate towards each other eventually?" Lucy asked, and Aaron scowled.

"They're being too slow. Besides, I won't be here to see it. You will be the only one getting all the fun."

"I could fill you in on it if you want," Lucy offered with a grin, and Aaron chuckled.

"I knew Tom made the right choice when I set my eyes on you," Aaron said, making Lucy giggle.

"But what if they mess it up?" Aaron asked, slightly concerned.

"I don't see either of them messing anything up. They are both straightforward people. But if they do, I can assure you that Sonia and I will step in," Lucy said, knowing that Sonia wouldn't let them ruin her perfectly planned love story. She would also have to step in since she was interested in Sonia's story as well as Harry's and Jade's happiness.

"Sonia? Your best friend? Bryan's fiancée?"

"You are so up to date," Lucy observed with a grin, and Aaron chuckled.

"I have to be. Is she close to Harry too?"

"She is closer to Jade, and Jade confides in her about stuff," Lucy said, and Aaron grinned.

"Should I just move down to Ludus? I think all the fun is here," he said and cleared his throat when he sighted Harry and Tom returning to the table.

"You boys returned too soon. I was enjoying my date alone with the beautiful lady, right darling?" Aaron asked, and Lucy batted her lashes at him, making them laugh as they sat down.

"I was just asking if I should relocate to Ludus so I can be closer to her," Aaron said, and Harry shook his head.

"Please don't. I can't stand having you pester me every day," Harry said just as the waiters arrived with their special order.

"Ungrateful brat. I never complained when you pestered me every day while growing up," Aaron hissed, and at the same time, his eyes fell on his phone which was on the table when it started vibrating. His brows pulled together when he saw

the caller's identity, and he glanced at Harry before picking up the phone and rejecting the call.

"Whose phone calls do you keep rejecting? Is it the same person that kept calling last night? Don't tell me you have a woman in your life now, and you are hiding her from me," Harry teased his father, and Aaron chuckled as he dipped the phone into his pocket.

"Yes, I am. I don't want her to see you and decide she prefers the younger Mr. Jonas," Aaron joked, and Harry laughed while Tom reached under the table and took Lucy's hand, making her look at him with questioning eyes.

"I'm missing you," Tom mouthed, and she smiled at him.

Aaron's phone started to vibrate again, but he ignored the call. Once the waiters left, they began to eat and continued with minor discussions about different subjects until Aaron got tired of the phone, which kept vibrating in his pocket, and he set down his cutlery.

"Excuse me for a moment. I need to use the restroom," Aaron said, and Harry gave him directions to the restroom closest to them before he walked away.

"Why do you keep calling?" He asked impatiently once he walked into one of the restroom stalls and received the call.

"Because you keep ignoring my call."

"I have nothing to say to you, so there is no reason to receive your calls, Sara."

"I went to your apartment, and I was told you traveled. I suppose you went to see him. Have you told him yet?" The lady on the other end of the line asked.

"Told who what?" Aaron asked, pretending not to understand her question.

"Aaron, have you told Harry about me?" She asked, unaffected by his coldness.

"No," Aaron said, annoyed that his dinner was being interrupted.

"Why not? Why are you delaying?"

"Because there is nothing to tell him. And if you don't mind..."

"Aaron. He is my son too," the lady cut in, her voice annoyingly calm in a way that made Aaron's blood boil.

She was always so calm. She had been that calm too twenty-seven years ago when she decided to abandon her newly born child in her quest to pursue stardom.

"Your son? A child you abandoned barely a week after his birth? You have no right to call him your son. He doesn't know about your existence, and I prefer it remains that way." Aaron hissed in annoyance, angry with himself for still letting her words annoy him so much.

"He is an adult, Aaron. Why not let him know I want to see him, and allow him to decide if he wants to see me or not?" The lady asked reasonably.

"As always, you are still very selfish. You do not care about him or how this revelation is going to make him feel. You just want to have your way as always, don't you? I'm not going to let you do that. I won't let you hurt him!" Aaron said, trying hard to keep his calm.

"I didn't call to fight with you, Aaron. I told you. I'm dying, and I..."

"And you think I'm going to feel sorry because you say you are dying? Would you have wanted to be associated with him were he not successful? Would you have remembered him or given him a second thought were you not dying? You died to us over twenty-seven years ago, and I hope it remains that way."

"Aaron, please. I need to meet him at least once before..."

"You wanted fame. You chose wealth and fame over us. Those should be your companions on your deathbed. And please stop trying to contact me," Aaron warned, angry that not once in a couple of weeks since she first contacted him had she apologized for walking out of their lives the way she did. He couldn't let someone like her near Harry.

"If you keep being adamant, I will have to approach him myself..."

"You wouldn't dare! I will not forgive you if you go anywhere close to him. I will expose you for what you are if you so much as show your face anywhere around my son. Try me," Aaron threatened angrily before hanging up the call.

He wasn't sure if he was doing the right thing, but knowing how much Harry had taken all his stories about his mother to heart, he knew that the truth would devastate him, and that was what he was terrified of.

If he had a choice, he would rather die and take the secret to his grave with him than watch Harry break down when he finds out the truth. But he knew that wasn't up to him alone. Sara seemed desperate, and he couldn't trust what she would do in her desperation.

He really hated that she chose a time like this to return to Harry's life. He needed to figure out a way to talk to Harry about it before Sara would do anything.

That was even more reason why he wanted Harry to get involved and be in a committed relationship with Jade, as he feared that Harry might not want to do that anymore if he found out the truth first. He didn't want Harry to live a lonely life because of his poor choices, and knowing how much Harry hated being lied to, he knew that Harry might have a hard time forgiving him for lying to him all these years, and as such, he wouldn't be able to offer him much comfort.

He closed his eyes and took a deep breath to calm himself. Once he was sure he was calm, he returned his phone to his pocket and washed and dried his hands before returning to join them.

"So, where did we stop?" He asked with a bright smile as he returned to his seat, and once again, they resumed their conversations as they ate.

#### Chapter 378 Crazy Duo

"Wow! It must have been tough for you all," Matt said when Bryan finished giving him a detailed summary of all that had happened in his absence after they saw off Mia and Jeff.

"It was," Bryan agreed.

"If you hadn't shown me that clip, I really would never have believed that Simon was behind that shit. I'm still shocked! I feel so disappointed," Matt said as he walked over to the bar to pour himself a glass of wine.

"You should be thankful he didn't release any stories of you," Bryan said as he did the same, and they both carried their glasses to the living room.

"There was nothing for him to release. It's not like he has a camera planted in my apartment."

"Don't be so sure. He could have released news of you and your stripper girlfriend when you brought her here," Bryan pointed out.

"Oh, that's true! Perhaps the camera wasn't on when I came in with her that night. Or maybe he knew if he released such, we would have suspected something," Matt said thoughtfully and raised a brow when Bryan suddenly chuckled.

"What's funny?" Matt asked when he noticed the mirth dancing in his eyes.

"Listen. Don't insult me, okay? I think I just figured out why he didn't sell your story to the media," Bryan said, and Matt sighed, knowing that Bryan was about to say something stupid.

"It's either Simon doesn't think you are a celebrity worthy of note, or maybe nobody wants to buy your story because they think your life is boring," Bryan said with a grin, and Matt pressed his lips together as he thought of a befitting comeback.

"Yet instead of being flattered that he considered you a celebrity worthy of note, you're pissed. What an ingrate! You had better be nice to him. You never can tell how many nude photos of you he has. We don't want the world to see your tiny pee-pee now, do we?" Matt asked, and Bryan chuckled.

"Is that the best comeback you have? This heartbreak must have affected you more than I imagined—poor guy. Even with the monstrous size of your pee-pee, you can't keep a lady," Bryan said with a tsk, and Matt swore under his breath.

"You are a bastard. You know that, right?" Matt asked, and Bryan howled with laughter.

"Yeah, I do. By the way, did I mention that your dumper left her son with Tom?" He asked, and Matt raised a brow as he picked up his glass of wine.

"Why did she leave Jamal behind? Isn't your brother always busy? Who is going to look after him?" Matt asked as he sipped from his glass, unable to stop himself from being concerned about the kid even if he no longer wanted to be involved in Candace's business.

"You will have to ask her yourself. What's the deal with her though?" Bryan asked as he also sipped from his glass of wine.

"Why didn't you ask your sister about it? Why are you asking me?" Matt asked with a scowl.

"You dragged Jade into this..."

"No, I didn't. Your sister was her lawyer. It was a coincidence that I just happened to reconnect them," Matt said, and Bryan cocked his head to the side.

"Lately, I don't believe in coincidence anymore. Not after all that has happened between me, Tom, Sonia, and Lucy. You both were probably fated to meet and..."

"Oh, please! Stop sounding like a romantic fool. It doesn't suit your bad boy image," Matt said, and Bryan grinned.

"Bad boy? Nah. I've given up that lifestyle, my friend. I'm now a changed man. A one-woman kind of man," Bryan said with a proud smile, and Matt raised a brow.



"So this thing you have with Sonia... I take it you are in it for the long run, huh?" Matt asked, and Bryan similarly raised a brow.

"Why do you ask? Are you interested in her now that your relationship didn't work out with your stripper girl?" Bryan asked, and Matt scowled at him.

"Idiot. Don't call her that," Matt hissed.

"Too soon? Oh, my bad! I actually thought this was the point in our friendship where I get to play the best friend role and get you ice cream to cry over your heartbreak, and then we badmouth her together and call her names," Bryan said with a straight face, and Matt chuckled.

"You're such a fool. Hold on. I need to get something," Matt said as he excused himself and walked over to the kitchen.

Bryan waited patiently as he heard Matt rummage through the kitchen cabinets, and soon he returned holding a butcher's knife.

"What's that for? Don't tell me you want to take your life because of her! For Christ's sake, man!" Bryan exclaimed dramatically as he eyed both Matt and the knife.

"It's for you. Remember what you said? I'd rather cut off my dick than fuck that witch. I'm sure you've been doing a lot of fucking. So you should just cut off your minute pee-pee. Be a man of your word," Matt said, and Bryan grinned at him sheepishly.

"We don't fuck. We make love," Bryan said as he quickly got off the couch and moved away when Matt drew closer to him with the knife.

"Don't come any closer. Else I'm going to call my mom," Bryan warned.

"You're such a mummy's boy," Matt said with a tsk as he threw the knife on the table, "I told you she was going to be good for you, didn't I?"

"Yeah. First time I don't mind hearing an I told you so. I'm crazy about her, Matt. Like head over heels crazy. For the first time in my life, I can't imagine my life without someone. And it's even crazier that I've barely known her for long, and I feel this way about her," Bryan confessed, looking serious all of a sudden, and Matt smiled.

"Crazy enough to wife her?" Matt asked, and Bryan grinned.

"Crazy enough to mother her," Bryan said, and Matt didn't need an explanation to know what he meant. Being married to someone didn't exactly mean they couldn't divorce or go their separate ways later. But having a child with her would mean something would always tie them to each other.

"Good. I love Sonia, and I'm happy for you," Matt said, and Bryan smiled.

"Thanks, man."

"Just make sure you don't mess it up. And be sure to properly cut off ties with all your flings," Matt warned.

"I haven't spoken with any of them since Sonia came into my life. Besides, I'm sure they all saw the news of my engagement and the interview..."

"I said properly, Bryan. End things officially. And tell Sonia about them too, just in case any of them is crazy enough to want to act up like your brother's insane ex. You have been occupied since you met Sonia, and as a result, you haven't even had time to meet with them or do anything. Soon you will return to your celebrity lifestyle and start running into all the temptations that come with being Bryan Hank. If you really don't want to ruin what you have with Sonia, make it clear to them that you have given up that lifestyle. Else there will be lots of misunderstanding, trust me. And I'm not going to plead with Sonia on your behalf if you screw this up," Matt warned before taking a sip of his wine.

"Fine. I've heard you. Thanks," Bryan said, and Matt gave him a thumb up.

"So what have you been up to lately aside from getting dumped? What project are you working on?" Bryan asked curiously.

Matt sighed, knowing that Bryan wouldn't let him hear the end of being dumped. If he didn't already know that it was Bryan's usual way of rubbing your problem in your face until you faced it and got over it, he would have sucker-punched him by now.

"Apart from learning to mind my business, I've been busy on set. We started shooting 'Forever Your Boyfriend' today, and you won't believe Trevor showed up as usual to give me the talk about not getting too close to Lena," Matt said, and Bryan chuckled.

"Poor guy. Every time he gave me that talk, I made sure to be extra close to Lena," Bryan said, making Matt chuckle.

"You've always been a jerk."

"That's why I'm glad that Sonia is not an actress. I know many of them would want to get back at me," Bryan said with a grin.

"By the way, what's your career plan now? And what were you talking about with Jeff and Mia earlier about meeting with your brother's best friend?" Matt asked

curiously, and Bryan explained Tom's plan to him as they both reached for their gamepads more out of habit than because they wanted to play.

"It's not difficult to understand why Tom is so successful. Imagine starting an entertainment agency with an A-list actor like you? That's going to be huge," Matt said, and Bryan grinned.

"And having someone like Jeff in charge? I have nothing to worry about. You should join me," Bryan offered.

"Unlike you, I have many pending assignments, and my contracts are still very valid. Making a move like that would have too many consequences and attract penalties I have no desire to pay," Matt said, and Bryan nodded in understanding.

"True. I will be moving to Ludus by the end of the week after I have wrapped up things at the agency. I will only come down here when I need a break," Bryan said, and Matt nodded as he turned on the PlayStation.

"Let's play."

"Give me a minute, I need to check on Sonia, and then we can play," Bryan said as he dropped his pad and went to Sonia's bedroom to check on her.

Once he got to the bedroom, he saw his father seated on the couch beside Sonia while she laughed at something he was saying, "I thought you were feeling drowsy?" Bryan asked, and they both glanced at him.

"I thought so too until Desmond came to keep me company," Sonia said, smiling at the old man who, after consoling her, had told her funny stories to cheer her up.

"Go and keep your wife company. Leave my girlfriend alone," Bryan complained.

"Now that you are here, I will. Eve finds it difficult to sleep when I'm not holding her. We will continue later, dear," Desmond said with a smile at Sonia as he stood and pecked her cheek.

"Thank you," Sonia said, looking into those blue sage eyes she had fallen in love with in the last hour. True to his words, he had carved himself a permanent spot in her heart that had little to do with him being the father of the man she loved.

She suspected that he had also spoken to Lucy the previous night. That explained why Lucy, who had been in a foul mood after her fight with her mother, had been laughing lightheartedly when she saw them both walking into the house. The man was a gem.

"Don't mention it," Desmond said as he walked away, and Sonia followed him with her eyes.

"Why do you look like you're in love with my dad?" Bryan asked, and Sonia giggled.

"Because I am. Now you not only have to be jealous of Andrew, but you also have to be jealous of your dad too," Sonia said as she got off the bed.

"Your heart must be so large to accommodate three men," Bryan observed jealously, and Sonia grinned.

"You have no idea how large it is. It can accommodate even more," Sonia said as she walked over to the mirror to check her reflection.

"Matt is still around, right? I should say hello to him," Sonia said, feeling a bit better than she had been feeling earlier.

"Are you sure you don't need to rest? How are you feeling now?" Bryan asked as he went to stand beside her and feel her temperature.

"I don't know if it's the medicine or your father, but I feel better. I will come back inside to rest if I need to," Sonia said, and Bryan looked at her skeptically.

"Let's just make sure you are well covered first," he said as he led her back to the bed and made her sit before going inside the closet to take a hoodie and socks.

Sonia's heart was filled with love for him as she let him dress him up, and once he was done, he looked at her, "Can you walk? Or should I carry you?" He asked, and her eyes lit up at the thought of being carried.

"Is your ankle strong enough for that?"

"It has healed already. Hop on," Bryan said as he crouched down in front of her, and she climbed on his back.

"The last time I was carried this way was when my dad was alive," Sonia said as she rested her head on the crook of his neck.

"I will carry you every day then," Bryan said, and she giggled.

Once Matt saw Bryan walking in with Sonia on his back, he grinned at her as he stood, "The queen decided to grace me with her presence. I feel so honored," he greeted, and Sonia laughed as she tapped Bryan to let her down.

She embraced Matt once Bryan let her down, and he kissed her cheek, "I heard you're ill. You must be sick of this fool," Matt said, and Sonia giggled.

"It's good to see you. How have you been?" Sonia asked as she sat beside him.

"Not good. Candace dumped his sorry ass," Bryan said, and Matt sighed.

"What happened?" Sonia asked, looking at him with concern.

"She doesn't trust me to be able to handle her complicated life. I can't force myself on her," Matt said, and Sonia nodded.

"It must be tough on you both. Liking each other but unable to do anything about your feelings," she said with a sigh.

"I'm not sure she likes me that much if she can make such a decision so easily," Matt said as he picked up his glass of wine.

"Sonia decided to break up with me on the spot too. Was it tough on you?" Bryan asked Sonia, and she nodded.

"Very tough. Don't give up on her, Matt."

"She did say she likes you, but she's not ready for a relationship yet..."

"When did she tell you that?" Matt cut in.

"The night I called. You weren't in the mood to talk about her, so I didn't mention it. Listen, if you really love her, you should be patient with her. You can't expect her to be ready now just because you are ready," Bryan advised, and Matt glared at him.

"And you just decided to bless me with your wisdom now after taunting me all evening about being dumped?" He asked, and Bryan grinned.

"What fun would it be if I don't make you feel bad before making you feel good?"

"You're dating a jerk," Matt informed Sonia, making her sigh dramatically.

"I know. But what can I do? The heart wants what it wants," she said, making both guys laugh.

"What's this knife doing here, by the way?" Sonia asked as she stood and picked up the knife.

"It's there because of something Bryan said the first time he told me about you," Matt said, and Bryan glared at him.

"Shut up!"

"Tell me," Sonia urged him.

"He said he'd rather cut off his dick than fuck you," Matt said and waited to see Sonia's reaction.

"But we don't fuck. We only make love. So there's no need for it. You didn't tell him that, babe?" Sonia asked, making Bryan hoot with laughter as he stood up to kiss her.

"Damn! I love you!"

"Don't! You're going to get the flu," she warned as she pushed him away while Matt eyed the both of them.

"You are both a crazy duo. You deserve each other," he said, more amused than disappointed.

Chapter 379 Surrogate

Lucas had a barely noticeable smile on his face as he glanced through Miley's Instagram page. He noticed that true to her words she had followed him the previous night and had liked most of his posts apart from the ones Rachel had featured in.

She seemed like a very lively lady. Someone who had deeply loved her life and had been happy. She always wore a smile on her face, and her videos were always fun to watch. She even had thousands of followers.

The more he looked through her page the more he realized that she had been telling the truth about not having friends, as Amy was the only other person in most of her pictures apart from those she snapped with her parents, business partners and the staff of the hotel where she worked.

He stopped when he saw a photo of her and Amy. They were both standing on a yacht dressed in matching white bikinis with a white transparent flowing skirt that had a slit up to their thighs.

Miley had a hand around Amy's waist, and the Amy did the same, and with their other hand they both held a glass of wine raised above their head like they were toasting to something, while their eyes laughed at the camera.

His heart broke when he saw the simple caption. "It should be a crime to look this hot at twenty-five. Happy sexy silver jubilee to me. Cheers to life and all the good things of life."

He checked the date, and noticed she had posted it four months earlier, before she knew she was dying. He had a lump in his throat as he looked at her smiling face.

"That was during our weekend getaway for her birthday. We had a lot of plans for her next birthday. We planned on both taking a leave from work and traveling to different countries," Amy said when she caught sight of the picture he was staring at as she walked past him.

Lucas raised his head when he heard her voice. He hadn't realized that she was back. She was now dressed in a red silk pajamas, but her eyes looked like she had spent more time crying in the bathroom than having a shower.

"It's not too late. You can still do all you planned to do with her, but in advance," Lucas advised.

"It's not the same. It can't be the same," Amy said, her lips quivering and tears gathered in her eyes.

"Miley doesn't deserve any of this. She doesn't. It's just not right! I can't believe that this is happening to her. Is there nothing that can be done? You are a medical doctor, right? Can't something else be done for her? I tried browsing about her condition but my knowledge on that field is limited. You should know something. Anything that will keep her from... From leaving." Amy covered her face with her hands as she broke into a sob. She couldn't bring herself to say the word dying.

Lucas watched her, feeling very sorry. Although he was a doctor, but meeting Miley, and seeing Amy this way made him realize that there were more serious problems in life than being betrayed by one's girlfriend.

He felt embarrassed for wishing he would die because of the heart ache he had felt after Lucy told him about Rachel's betrayal of his trust. He felt ashamed of himself that he didn't value his life enough. While people like Miley were battling with terminal diseases and desperately wanting to live, he had wanted to die all because of someone like Rachel.

"Her condition is not curable at this stage. She could receive treatment. That would at least improve her quality of life and give her some weeks or months. You have to convince her to receive treatment," Lucas advised, and Amy looked at him through her wet lashes.

"Convince? Did she say she doesn't want to receive treatment?" Amy asked tearily, and Lucas nodded.

"If she says she doesn't want to receive treatment, then she most likely will not do so. Miley doesn't decide to do anything without giving it a lot of thought, and once

her mind is made up there is no telling her otherwise," Amy said as fresh tears gathered in her eyes.

"You won't do anything to change her mind? Then why are you here?" Lucas asked, slightly irritated that she was just crying and was willing to let Miley do as she pleased even if it wasn't the best thing for her.

"I'm here to comfort her and be with her. What else can I do?" Amy asked as tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Then you should stop crying so much if you are really here to comfort her. Your presence here won't do her any good if you are going to just keep crying this way," Lucas said, and Amy wiped her tears with the back of her hands as she gave him a nod.

"I know. I won't cry in front of her. But right now I can't help it. I'm just so sad. I'm sad for her, I'm sad for her family, and I'm sad for myself. Just yesterday I was thinking about what to get her for Christmas, and now this. I don't know what else to do. What can I do for her?" Amy cried helplessly.

"I will tell you what you can do. Start by convincing her to receive treatment and advise her not go ahead with her crazy plan of getting married and having a child," Lucas said when he noticed that she was at the verge of breaking into another bout of tears, and as he expected, her head snapped up and she blinked at him

"Marriage? But she isn't in a relationship, or is she? Did she say anything about being engaged?" Amy asked in confusion, and Lucas looked at her wondering why she was asking him, a stranger that, when she was Miley's best friend and should know the answers to that.

"No. She is not engaged."

"Then who is she getting married to? Did she ask you to marry her?" Amy asked, thinking that was the reason Miley had picked Lucas from the bar and had taken him home with her.

Lucas looked at her in incredulously, "No. Not me. Why would she ask me to marry her? She said it's on her bucket list. She wants to get married and have a kid."

Amy paused as she thought of it, "Hmm. She wants to adopt a kid? Adoption might work, but I'm not sure about marriage..."

"She doesn't want to adopt a kid. She wants a child with her genes."



Amy's brows pulled together as she tried to make sense of what Lucas was saying, "How will that be possible? I mean her doctor said she has barely six months and from all you've said, she doesn't want to receive treatment..."

"She wants a child through surrogacy. She plans to pay someone to marry her and pay someone else to carry the baby for her. I was trying to talk her out of it before she broke down," Lucas explained, and Amy looked at him.

"Why were you trying to talk her out of it?" Amy asked in confusion, and Lucas raised a brow.

"Are you really asking me that? It's not a logical decision. Although I understand that it is difficult to be logical at a time like this, I think this is a very wrong decision. Let's assume she does find a man who is willing to be paid to spend the last months of her life with her doting on her, will she be happy? And how soon before she finds a suitable surrogate? What are the chances of it really working? Let's assume it works, she is not going to live long enough to even see the child be born. She is going to spend what little time she has left worrying about a child she doesn't even know and wishing she could see the child's face at least once instead of enjoying her last moments. And what if complications arise with the pregnancy? All her efforts will be wasted..."

"Are you just being pessimistic, or is this your way of voicing your concerns for her wellbeing?" Amy cut in before he could finish when she noticed how passionate he was in dishing out his thoughts on Miley's decision. He seemed to care a lot about her.

"You seem to have given this a lot of thought. Are you sure you only just met her today? If I didn't know better I would have thought you've known her for a long time," Amy said, but Lucas just stared at her without saying a word.

"Are you going to just let her have her way?" Lucas asked in resignation, without answering her question, as he too was wondering why he was feeling so affected by Miley's decision.

"That is what you don't know about Miley. It's not about whether you let her have her way or not. She is going to do what she plans to do and leave you to decide whether or not you want to be a part of it," Amy said softly.

"What do you think about her plan? Do you honestly think it makes sense? Do you want to be a part of this craziness?" Lucas asked, and Amy smiled.

"To you it might not make sense, but it makes sense to me. If this is something she wants to do, I will make it happen for her even if it means I have to set up interview with thousands of men to get her the right husband. As for a surrogate, she won't be needing to find one," Amy said, and Lucas raised a brow, and then looked at her with a slight frown, hoping it wasn't what he was thinking.

"You are not thinking of being her surrogate, are you?" He asked incredulously, and Amy smiled

"I am. Carrying her child would be a way of having a part of her with me. It would be like giving birth to her," Amy said, and Lucas looked at her like she had gone crazy.

"You are okay with her not receiving treatment and dying?" Lucas asked, unable to understand the logic.

"I don't want to be selfish. As much as I want her to remain with me, I should also think about what she wants. I know you probably won't understand this, but Miley means too much to me. All I want is to make her half as happy as she has made me in all the years we've been together. I want to help her achieve all she wants in what little time she has left."

Chapter 380 Exhausted

Lucy had a broad smile as she waved goodbye to Aaron and Harry as Tom drove out of the restaurant's parking lot.

"Harry's dad is charming. I get where Harry got his charms from," Lucy told Tom when she turned in her seat to face him.

"I take it you enjoyed yourself, yeah?" Tom asked, and she nodded.

"A lot more than I expected, considering that I didn't even notice how much time we had spent with them until you said it was time to leave," Lucy said, thinking about how she ordinarily hated to meet new people or interact with people, but how easily she was getting along with everyone who was close to Tom.

"I usually don't like to go out, and I find it tiring interacting with people I'm not directly related to. I don't know if it's because I love you, or it's just the kind of people you have around you, but talking to your family and friends is fun," Lucy said, and Tom smiled.

"Do you remember what I told you the first day I drove you home as your driver after you kept me waiting?" Tom asked, turning to look at her.

"You said a lot of things. Which of them?"

"About breaking every wall you set up and being in your space until you want to spend every moment with me?" Tom asked, and Lucy smiled at the memory.

"Why are you bringing that up now?" She asked curiously.

"Because I think we are gradually getting there, don't you think so?" Tom asked, and Lucy bit her lower lips as she thought of it.

She didn't think they were gradually getting there. She thought she was there already. Why else had she chosen to go out with him to have dinner with Harry and his dad when she could have stayed back at home to see a movie or read a book? Or why was she at his place when she could be alone in the solitude of her apartment?

"I don't mind losing to you on that. I never planned to fall in love with you or date you after all, but here we are," Lucy said after some time, and Tom smiled.

"I like that. Let's keep going with the flow. One day at a time," Tom said, and she nodded.

"Yeah. One day at a time. By the way, Aaron wants me to push Harry and Jade into acting on their feelings," Lucy said, and Tom turned to spare her a surprised glance.

"He told you that?"

"Yeah."

Although Tom knew that Harry had a thing for Jade, he didn't realize that it was serious enough for him to have mentioned it to his father. He could understand Aaron knowing about Jade's feelings for Harry since Jade had said they ran into each other at Harry's place, and Jade wasn't exactly the type to hide her emotions. Was it possible that Jade had told Aaron that she thought Harry was into her? He highly doubted that.

"Did he say Harry told him anything about Jade?"

"I didn't ask."

"So, what did you tell him?" Tom asked curiously.

"I told him I'd rather enjoy the show than interfere with it," Lucy said with a shrug, "Besides, I'm sure a lot of you want to interfere already," Lucy said, making Tom chuckle.

She pursed her lips when she remembered that she was yet to tell Tom about Sonia's novel, "Sonia is writing a novel about us," Lucy said before Tom could respond to what she had said earlier.

"A novel about us? Not her and Bryan?" Tom asked in confusion since he remembered Sonia and Bryan talking about a novel during the interview, but he had thought it was just about her and Bryan's relationship.

"More like a novel about your family, since the book is also going to comprise of her relationship with Bryan and Jade's possible romance with Harry," Lucy explained, and Tom's lips twitched in amusement.

"That sounds interesting."

"You don't have a problem with it?" Lucy asked curiously.

"Just tell her not to use my name or say anything about me that might make people think I'm the one. The last thing I want is for people to start looking at me like a creepy stalker," Tom said with a wince, and Lucy giggled.

"Do you think Harry will mind? I mean, will he be okay with being written about?" Lucy asked, and Tom shrugged.

"As long as we are the only ones that know the story is about him, I don't think he would mind. That reminds me, are you aware that next week is the company's anniversary celebration?" Tom asked, and Lucy gave him a nod.

"Harry told me about it earlier."

"I never knew Harry to be a talkative or a snitch, but he's telling you a lot of things lately," Tom complained with a scowl, and Lucy giggled.

"Let him be."

"Anyway, I hope you realize you will be there as my partner and not as a staff, right?" Tom asked as he turned to spare her a glance when the traffic light blinked red.

"Is there a reason I can't be there as both?" She asked, her brows drawn together.

"I'm just trying to say, I hope you won't try to stay away from me during the events. Please don't bring up that talk about keeping our relationship separate from work or stuff like that. I want you there, sitting beside me as my partner and not just one of the directors," Tom said, and Lucy smiled.

"After the stunt I pulled earlier at the company, do you think I have any intention of staying away from you at work anymore? You might end up being the one pleading with me to take things easy," Lucy said, making Tom chuckle.

"Good. I just wanted to be sure we were on the same page," Tom said as he resumed driving again when the traffic light blinked green.

"Anita will be attending the anniversary events too?" Lucy asked after a moment, and Tom nodded.

"Yes. Why?"

"Well, I thought the live interview would have taken place before then, so she wouldn't have to come," Lucy said, and Tom turned to spare her a glance.

"Are you worried about running into her? You don't have to worry about her or anybody else."

"No. That's not it. I don't know if it's because I know so much about her and her family now, or maybe it's because I have a lot of confidence in you, but I'm not worried about her anymore," Lucy said, and Tom smiled.

"Good. If I had my way, I would have preferred the interview takes place this weekend. But if Eric sends her an impromptu invite, it would look suspicious as I'm sure a lady like her would be aware that Eric usually issues an invite to his guests at least two weeks before the show day to give them time to prepare themselves. Besides, I'm sure he already has plans with other celebrities for the coming weeks. It's best he follows his usual routine, so it doesn't appear suspicious. And asking him to alter his previous arrangements to do this for me would mean I have to owe him a huge favor, and I don't want to be indebted to him more than I already am. Do you understand?" Tom asked, and Lucy gave him a nod.

"Yes, I do. Do you think Jamal would still be awake?" Lucy asked, changing the subject when her eye fell on the time displayed on the car's dashboard, and she saw that it was past eleven already.

Tom considered the question for a moment, "Hmm. He would most likely have fallen asleep in the Den, still waiting for you to return and take him to bed," Tom said, and Lucy raised a brow.

"Waiting for me?"

"Yes. That's what I would do if I were him. The kid has a crush on you. Didn't you notice?" Tom asked, and Lucy giggled.

"Really? What makes you think so?" She asked in amusement.

"I don't think so. I know so. Besides, why do you think he was commenting on your appearance that way?" Tom asked with a scowl, and Lucy giggled.

"Don't tell me you are jealous of a seven-year-old boy," she said, poking his side playfully.

"Jealous? Nah! I get to do all the adult stuff with you, so there's nothing to be jealous of," Tom said with a grin, and a blush stained Lucy's cheeks.

"What do you mean by adult stuff?" She asked, using both palms to cover her face, and Tom chuckled when he turned to spare her a glance and saw her spying at him through the spaces between her fingers.

"Are you sure you want me to tell you what I mean? Or maybe I should show you instead?" He asked, sending her a naughty wink, and he blindly extended a hand towards her boobs as he returned his attention to the road, but Lucy playfully pushed his hand away while laughing gaily.

"I can't believe I'm out here laughing like a lunatic at this time of the night on a work day," Lucy said with a shake of her head.

"Your boss is here laughing with you, so it's not such a bad thing," Tom said, and Lucy eyed him with disapproval.

"Since I started dating you, I go to bed late at night. I'm not getting enough sleep," Lucy complained.

"But I stay up late with you. You don't hear me complaining or blaming you," Tom pointed out.

"You have no right to complain, not when it's your usual lifestyle. Did you forget that you were my neighbor before you became my boyfriend, and I can count the number of times you went out late in the evening?" She asked, and Tom wriggled his brows at her.

"So you were keeping tabs on me?" He asked with a naughty smile, and she laughed.

"I wasn't. That reminds me, who did you go out to meet that night I asked you to drive me to the pharmacy, and you were in a hurry to meet with someone? Was it Anita?" She asked curiously.

"No. I was with Harry both times I was out," Tom said, and she scowled.

"I'm sure you both met up after work to laugh at my expense after making a fool of me during work hours."

"Nah. Harry never really supported this. He only made fun of you because you lied to him, not because he wanted to mess with you," Tom assured her.

"By the way, what does Harry have against lies?" She asked, recalling the disapproval on Harry's face when she lied to him earlier that day and what he had said.

"Hmm. I don't know the exact details, but I know it has something to do with his high school best friend. Harry's best friend did something awful, and because Harry trusted him and believed his words, he supported him until the truth was revealed. Then Harry tried to explain that he knew nothing about his best friend's deceit, but no one was willing to listen to him because of how he had supported his friend so confidently, and his best friend made things worse for Harry by insisting that Harry was in on it with him. They were both sent to juvenile court, and luckily for Harry, he was found innocent," Tom explained as he drove through the gate.

"Oh! I can see how that must have affected him. It's a wonder he still trusts people," Lucy said, and Tom nodded as he parked the car.

"Yeah. That's why I try my best to always be straight with him," Tom said as he reached over to her side to open the door before opening his own door and getting out of the car.

"Let's see if the kid is still up," Tom said as they both headed for the door.

They could hear the sound of the television before they got to the Den, and they both exchanged a look before Tom pushed the door open, and they saw the kid sound asleep on the couch as Tom had predicted, with his head on Samantha's thighs, and his legs on Adolf's thighs.

Samantha, Adolf, as well as two other female staff who were in the Den were all fast asleep.

"I will take him upstairs. You can turn off the television and send them to their rooms," Tom suggested as he walked over to the couch and lifted Jamal.

"Where is he going to sleep? The guest room is farther down the hall from us and the staff quarter. He shouldn't sleep alone there," Lucy pointed out, and Tom looked at her.

"So, what do you suggest we do?"

"Maybe he can have the bedroom closest to yours. That way, it's easier to keep an eye on him over the night," Lucy suggested, and Tom gave her a nod while wondering if she knew how motherly she sounded as he walked away with Jamal's sleeping form.

Lucy quickly turned off the television after she had roused the others from sleep and made sure they had all returned to their quarters, and then she went upstairs to find Tom.

She stopped by the half-open doorway when she saw him tucking the blanket around Jamal, and her heart skipped a beat at that homely image of him. Tom seemed very much at home doing that, and it looked like the most natural picture in the world.

Could someone like him really want to be with her knowing she didn't want kids? She mused and flashed him a smile when he straightened and noticed her presence.

"What do you want to do now?" He asked in a whisper as he gently led her out of the bedroom and shut the door behind them.

"I just want to freshen up and then go to bed. I'm exhausted," Lucy said with a yawn. She was yet to have a proper night's sleep since she arrived at Tom's house.

Tom gave her a nod as he led her into their bedroom, "It's been a long day. Why don't you freshen up while I straighten out the bed?" Tom suggested, and Lucy nodded as she dropped her handbag on the couch.

Remembering that she had not checked her phone for the past couple of hours, she pulled it out of her handbag and unlocked it when she noticed her phone's notification light was on. She clicked on it to see a missed call from Lucas.

"I missed Lucas' call earlier," she said as she contemplated whether or not she should return his call since it was very late already, and she didn't want to disturb his sleep.

"How many?" Tom asked as he undressed.

"It's just one."

"It's late. You can return his call tomorrow or send him a text. I believe if it were very important, he would have called more than once or even called me to reach you," Tom said as though he could read her mind, and Lucy nodded.

"I should send a text," Lucy said and went on to do so before preparing for bed.



As she lay beside Tom on the bed, some moment later, the last thought on her mind as she slowly drifted off to sleep was how she had been confronted with different kinds of drama every day since Tom made their relationship public. She wasn't sure whether or not she was looking forward to the drama that would come the next day, but for Tom, she was willing to face it all head on.

"I love you, Ace," she said sleepily as she snuggled closer to him.

"Sweet dreams, Jewel. And I love you more."