

Wild Night 631

Chapter 631 My Safe Place

Standing in the middle of his bedroom, Tom sighed as he looked around the room. Although the bedroom was organized and the bedsheets had been changed, Lucy's scent was still in the room mixed with his.

His gaze moved to the dressing table. Lucy's cosmetic products, perfumes, hair brush, jewelry box, and a couple of other personal effects were arranged on one end while his were on the other end.

He walked into the closet and smiled wryly when he noticed that the housekeeper had arranged the closet, and Lucy's clothes were now hanging beside his.

Was she going to want to take her stuff with her? He didn't want any of the items to be moved. He loved having her stuff mixed with his this way.

Moving into her apartment didn't mean she couldn't sleep over at his from time to time, right? Or was that what she was thinking? Perhaps he would have to discuss it with her.

He frowned when he remembered that she wasn't in the room yet because she was having a discussion with his mother. What was she saying to Lucy? He really hoped she wasn't going to say anything that would cause any problems for him.

He walked to the entrance of the closet when he heard the bedroom door open, and watched Lucy as she walked in and shut the door behind her.

Distracted by her thoughts, Lucy didn't see him as she threw her handbag on the couch and sat on the bed with both palms spread out on it.

Instead of making his presence known, Tom just watched her silently instead so he could gauge her state and know if his mother had upset her.

Lucy, on the other hand, sat there staring into space as she thought about her conversation with Evelyn. A lot of things about their conversation bothered her, but what she was thinking about at the moment was Evelyn's last statement about it being a good sign that she didn't know the reason she did not want to get married.

Did she really not have a cogent reason for not wanting to get married? At what point in her life did she decide that she didn't want to get married? What influenced that decision?

Her thoughts drifted to the questions Evelyn had said her roommate asked her, and she reached for her handbag and took out her journal to write down the questions.

Perhaps she would also try to answer these questions along with the other questions plaguing her at the moment.

She opened her journal and smiled as she read through what was written on the left side of it. It was her thoughts based on her conversation with her therapist the previous day, she sighed when she looked at the right side. She had written down random stuff she had learnt about Kimberly on it.

She was going to have to tell Tom about her conversation with Kimberly. Now was not the time to keep unnecessary secrets from each other. She thought as she picked up her pen and turned the page over.

Tom watched as she penned down her thoughts with a crease between her brows.

"I'm curious to read what you're writing," Tom said, startling her.

"When did you get here? I didn't hear the door open," Lucy said as she closed the journal and watched him approach her.

"I've been here all along. I'm surprised you didn't notice my presence," Tom said as he watched her.

"Sorry. I guess I was distracted," Lucy said with an apologetic smile as she pushed every other thought away and rose from the bed.

"What did she say to you?" Tom asked, and Lucy shrugged.

"Nothing much. She explained how she saw the pregnancy kit and apologized."

"Is that all she said?" Tom asked, and Lucy gave him a nod since she had promised Evelyn that the other conversation would remain between them and she wouldn't say anything to Tom.

"Are you sure? If she said anything to upset you...."

Lucy laughed softly, "Relax, Tom. She really was sweet. I wasn't the least bit offended by anything she said. That I can assure you," Lucy said, and Tom watched her to see if she was lying, but she kept the smile on her face.

"If that's the case why were you so distracted? What were you writing in there?" Tom asked, and Lucy sighed as she clasped her hands together.

"Well, I did something I shouldn't have done. I was wondering if I should tell you or not. I really don't want to offend or upset you?" Lucy explained, and Tom sat down beside her with a concerned frown.

"What did you do?" He asked as he took her hand, while gazing at her with interest.

"Earlier I got very curious. I wanted to know what they looked like..."

"What who looked like?" Tom asked, lost for a moment.

"Dawn and her mother," Lucy said without meeting his gaze.

"I see. So what did you do? Check them out online?" Tom asked, and Lucy met his gaze.

"How did you know?" She asked, and Tom looked at her in amusement.

"Because it's the natural thing to do. I mean after she spoke to me that night, I did the same thing. I wanted to know more about them," Tom explained and Lucy sighed.

"Dawn looks like you," Lucy said, and Tom nodded.

"I thought so too. Harry said the same thing. I don't think there's anything wrong in checking them out. It's normal so don't feel bad or apologetic...."

"Well, that wasn't all that happened," Lucy cut in, and Tom raised a brow.

"What happened?"

"Dawn's instagram account was private and I wanted to see more of her pictures so I sent a request," Lucy said with a wince.

"It was private? When I checked it two days ago it wasn't," Tom said, and Lucy shook her head.

"I suppose it was a bait for me or something. The moment I sent a request I received a message from her. Kimberly I mean," Lucy said, and this time Tom scowled.

"I'm sorry. I know I messed up," Lucy said quickly the moment she saw the annoyance on his face.

"I'm not mad at you. I'm mad at her. Why would she contact you? She has no business whatsoever with you! We haven't even gotten the DNA results yet and she wants to mess with you? What did she say to you?" Tom asked angrily.

"Oh!" Lucy said softly as she relaxed.

"You don't have to be mad. She wasn't rude or anything. If anything I think I might have been the rude one. She was sort of friendly," Lucy said, and Tom shook his head.

"Anita was friendly too. I don't trust any of them," Tom said, and Lucy touched his shoulder.

"She really didn't sound like she wanted to make trouble," Lucy insisted.

"Can I see your chat?" Tom asked, and Lucy took out her phone from her handbag and showed him the conversation between her and Kimberly.

Tom said nothing as he read through the chat and when he was done he shook his head, "I still don't trust her. They always start out nice. Can you not talk to her again?" Tom asked, and Lucy shook her head.

"If Dawn happens to be your daughter, there is no way I can ignore her as your girlfriend. She will be a part of your life, as will I. I'd rather she communicates with me than ignore me," Lucy said, and Tom looked at her for a moment.

"Are you sure? What if she bothers you?" Tom asked, and Lucy smiled.

"I will bother her right back. I won't sit back and do nothing," Lucy assured him, and after a moment he sighed.

"I'm sorry you have to go through this because of me," Tom said apologetically.

"It's fine. Let's just not worry about any of this until you get the result from the lab," Lucy suggested.

"Are you sure that's what you want? We could talk about it some more..."

"What's there to talk about? Let's just have a normal weekend. By Monday we can face it. I think you need to rest. Try to relax this weekend," Lucy said, and Tom raised a brow.

"Why do you sound like I'm not going to see you?"

"Well, I don't know what plans you might have for the weekend, but I'm hanging out with Sonia, Jade, and Candace tomorrow. And I plan to spend Sunday with Jamal," Lucy said, and Tom scowled.

"All Saturday and Sunday? You didn't make any plans with me in mind?" He asked, and she shrugged.

"You said we needed space...."

"Come on. I thought we resolved that already? Wasn't the distance I covered on air away from you space enough?" Tom protested.

"You asked for it, not me. I can't make any assumptions about what you want or don't want right now. So I'm just going to pick up my stuff and leave so you can freshen up and get some rest," Lucy said as she started to rise, but Tom held her back.

"Why are you in a hurry to leave? What are you going to do at home? Is there something urgent you need to take care of?" Tom asked, and she shook her head.

"Not really," Lucy said, and Tom nodded.

"Good. So, let's talk some more and take a nap together. I really missed sleeping and waking up beside you. You can get dressed here and we will leave together for the party. That way I don't have to come pick you up from your apartment," Tom said, and Lucy eyed him hesitantly.

Although a part of her had wanted to go back to her apartment now that her parents were here so she could be alone to think. But at the same time another part of her had been hoping he would ask her to stay with him because she really wanted to be with him right now. Being with him helped her to focus more on him than the challenges, and she preferred it to going home where she would only end up overthinking and worrying as usual.

"I missed sleeping beside you too," Lucy admitted, and Tom smiled as he rose to take off his jacket and tie so he could be more comfortable.

"That's good. By the way, you were only going to pick up the outfit for tonight, right?" Tom asked with a concerned frown.

"Why?" Lucy asked as she watched him unbutton his shirt.

"I don't think you should move everything. I don't really want you to move completely. Especially not right now. I love having you and your stuff here," Tom said, and Lucy shook her head.

"You can't just ask me to go and come as you please, Tom," Lucy said even though she understood what he was trying to say.

"I know. I'm sorry. I was wrong for asking you to leave the way I did. It's not like we were breaking up. I was going to make sure you spend some nights here from time to time, and I do the same over at your apartment. I thought living separately would help us understand and appreciate each other better..."

"If that was what you thought, you could have discussed it with me properly," Lucy cut in, feeling hurt all over again as she recalled the manner with which he had talked about her moving back to her apartment

"I'm deeply sorry," Tom said, and Lucy looked at him for a moment without saying a word.

"Well, as much as I love and miss you too, I think we should stick to that. I will spend some time here with you, and you can spend some time with me in my apartment," Lucy offered, thinking about Dawn.

Although, she had said they shouldn't talk about the kid right now, she knew they would have to feature her into their future plans if the result came back positive.

"That works. You can start by spending tonight with me. I missed you too damn much, Jewel," Tom said as he pulled her to himself and kissed her neck, making her laugh out loud.

"I can't. My parents. I made them move out of here. I can't leave them alone at my apartment..."

"I'm sure they won't mind. They might even need the space. On second thoughts, you are right. Since they're leaving tomorrow..."

"They told you they are leaving tomorrow?" Lucy asked, taken aback by the information.

"Yes. Were you not aware? That's why they came over. They are getting ready to visit Aaron so they can say goodbye to Jamal before leaving," Tom explained.

"I must have made them feel unwelcome," Lucy said with a wince.

"Or maybe they just miss the comfort of their home and want to go back. My parents are leaving as well. So, how about you come over tomorrow?" Tom asked, and Lucy shook her head.

"You should come over to mine instead. It's been a while since you were there," Lucy suggested, and Tom grinned.

"Do you want me to bring some extra clothes to mark my territory?" He asked, and she laughed.

"I will empty a drawer for you, and make room for your stuff around the bedroom," Lucy said, and Tom kissed her.

"That sounds like a good arrangement."

"Speaking about good arrangements, I was going to wash my hair before the dinner party. So, how about we take a shower together, and maybe you can assist me in washing my hair?" Lucy asked with a coy smile as she tugged her hairband off, letting her hair fall over her shoulder and back.

Tom paused and watched her with twinkling eyes, "You really did miss me, didn't you?" he asked, and she nodded.

"Of course I did. So, do you want to shower together or not?" Lucy asked, and he grinned.

"You never have to ask twice," he said, and watched as she took off her glasses and replaced it inside its case.

"Will you assist me in washing my hair?" Lucy asked as rose to strip off her clothes.

"Sure. I could wash your entire body if you let me," Tom said, and Lucy giggled as they walked into the bathroom.

Inside the bathroom, Lucy turned on the shower and made sure it was warm before stepping under it, while Tom picked the shampoo from the bathroom cabinet and brought it to her.

Lucy turned off the shower after her hair was wet, and Tom helped her pour some shampoo on her hair, "Should I scrub?" He asked, and she shook her head.

"Hold on. I will let you know when I need your help," Lucy said with her eyes closed as she massaged the shampoo into her hair and washed.

She giggled when Tom's hand came around her and grabbed her boobs, "Tom!"

"I can't just stand here doing nothing. Besides, you should have known this would happen when you suggested we shower together," Tom said defensively.

"Turn on the shower. Not on full blast. Make sure it's warm," Lucy instructed in order to keep his hands busy as she quickly washed the soap from her face.

"You are done washing your hair already?" Tom asked with a scowl and Lucy giggled.

"I made a mistake thinking you would be of help...."

"Well, I did want to help, but there was nothing for me to do yet so I decided to get busy with other rounder things," Tom reminded her and Lucy shook her head as she laughed.

"Never mind. I think my hair is alright. Let's shower so you can get some rest," Lucy offered and Tom shook his head.

"I don't feel so tired anymore," he said looking at her with sincere eyes.

It greatly surprised him that they could both be here laughing this way right now. He had been so worried and scared all through his flight, and now he couldn't even remember any of the things that had been troubling his mind.

"Of course, you don't," Lucy said with a knowing smile dancing around her lips as she looked down at his erection.

Ignoring his erection, Tom drew Lucy into his arms and embraced her, "Thank you, Lucy."

"What for?" Lucy asked with a confused frown.

"For being my home and my safe place. I was so worried and scared that I was going to lose you because of a silly mistake I made unknowingly in the past. Thanks for not running away. Thanks for being here right now," Tom said, and Lucy felt tears gather in her eyes as she patted his back.

Chapter 632 Honesty

"I never knew you could drive," Jade said as she watched Candace handle the wheels.

"That was probably the only useful thing Jero had me learn," Candace said with a shake of her head to ward off any memories of that period of her life.

"Sorry I made you think about him," Jade said apologetically, and then her eyes widened when her phone started ringing and she remembered she was yet to give Harry a call.

"Oh, shoot! He's calling," Jade murmured as she looked at the phone, contemplating whether to receive the call and lie to him, or wait it out and then call back.

"Who is calling?" Candace asked as she turned to look at Jade, concerned by her discomfort.

"It's Harry. He asked me to call him before leaving the house and I totally forgot to do that," Jade said, and Candace rolled her eyes.

"It's not a big deal. You make Harry sound like he's Jero or some scary controlling guy," Candace said with a shake of her head as she returned her attention to the road.

"This almost caused a misunderstanding between us yesterday," Jade explained.

"Then lie to him if it makes you feel better. Tell him you're just leaving the house now and was about to dial his number," Candace suggested, and Jade glanced at her side mirror.

"Not when I can see his men behind us. They probably told him we are on the move already. Shit!"

"It's just Harry. If really his men are behind us, he will know you're ignoring his call," Candace pointed out.

"You're right. It's just Harry," Jade said and quickly received the call before it disconnected.

"Hey, Jonas! I can assure you it wasn't intentional. I was going to call you, I swear. I'm sorry. I just got distracted and..."

"Calm down, esquire," Harry said, when he noticed she sounded sort of tense.

"It's not a stringent rule. It's normal if you forgot, and I figured you might. I asked Candace to take the car and asked my men to follow her just to be sure you don't leave without her," Harry assured her, and Jade let out a deep sigh as she relaxed.

"Really? Do you always think so far ahead?" Jade asked with interest.

"I don't leave important stuff to chance. Are you feeling better now?" Harry asked, and she frowned.

"I'm alright. Why?" Jade asked, wondering why he was asking.

"I figured you must have been very bothered by the events of yesterday seeing as you had nightmares," Harry explained.

"No worries. I'm alright. Very pissed, but I'm fine," Jade said, and then moved her phone away from her ear to check her phone's screen when she noticed she had an incoming call.

"Oh, shoot! I forgot I was supposed to meet with the Chief Judge," Jade said as she glanced at her wristwatch.

"The chief judge? I'm not coming with you for that, am I? I told you I have an appointment," Candace reminded her.

"I can take a cab," Jade assured her before returning her attention to the phone call.

"Why didn't you take your car? Don't take a cab. My men will drive you there and take your home afterwards," Harry offered.

"Alright," Jade said, surprising Harry who had expected her to argue with him.

"No argument?" Harry asked and Jade rolled her eyes.

"How can I argue with you after yesterday?" She asked, and he smiled.

"Alright then. Do you have a dress for tonight?" Harry asked, changing the subject.

"Yes. I got something for myself during my shopping with Aurora," Jade said, remembering that she was yet to hear from Aurora since then. She wondered how her date with Philip had gone.

"Alright, then. Please let me have a word with Candace," Harry said.

"She is driving. Can I place the call on speaker instead?" Jade asked, and Candace turned to her.

"He wants to talk to me?" Candace asked as she reached for Jade's phone, "I want to talk to him too," she said without waiting for Jade to place the call on speaker.

"You figured going to lunch alone with one of the enemy was too dangerous for your girlfriend, so you decided I go as well so we can both be poisoned together?" Candace asked dryly, and Harry chuckled.

"I sent a package home for you. I hope you don't mind coming to the dinner party with me?" Harry asked, ignoring what she had said.

"I thought it was meant for only your staff?" She asked, surprised by his invitation.

"Not exactly. The members of the staff are allowed to come in with their plus one, and they gain entry using their office cards. Non-staffs on the other hand are issued special invitation cards with which they gain entry," Harry explained.

"Oh, I see," Candace said, wondering what she would do in such a place. The crowd was going to be completely different from what she was used to. Not in a bad way though. She just wondered if she would feel out of place in such a place. She had no social graces.

"Besides, you might end up working in I-Global so it's not too soon to know how the company operates, you know? Unless of course you choose to work with dad," Harry added and Candace felt her lips curve at the thought of having a real job in a real company.

"What about Jamal? Are we going to leave him alone with..."

"Don't worry. Janet and Andrew already offered to stay with them until we get back. I think Evelyn and Desmond will be there too. So there's nothing to worry about," Harry said, and waited to get a response from Candace.

"Are you sure you want me there? What if I end up embarrassing you or something?" Candace asked hesitantly.

"I wouldn't ask or make all these plans if I didn't want you there, would I? And I doubt you would deliberately want to embarrass yourself or me. So, if anything happens, it won't be your fault. What other excuse do you have?" Harry asked patiently, and she sighed.

"Just say you will come for Christ's sake!" Jade, who had deduced what the conversation was about from Candace's end of the conversation, cut in impatiently, making Candace scowl at her while Harry stifled a chuckle.

"I'm not sure I have the right outfit..."

"I sent an outfit already. Two actually. You can choose to wear whichever of both you prefer. I take it you are coming. See you when I get back. Please return the phone to Jade," Harry said, and Candace sighed as she did.

"Don't worry, she will definitely be there. I will pull her by the hair if I have to," Jade assured Harry immediately she took the phone from Candace.

Harry chuckled, "You won't have to do that. We will pick you up by 7 P.M. Will you be ready by then?" Harry asked and Jade nodded.

"Sure."

"Alright then. Take care of yourself. I love you."

"I love you too," Jade said before hanging up and turning to look at Candace whose brow was furrowed.

Candace was wondering how long they would spend at Lisa's and how long she would spend with Matt before getting home in time to get ready for the dinner party. If she had known the day was going to be filled with so many activities, she wouldn't have agreed to meet with Matt.

"What's wrong?" Jade asked, and Candace turned to her.

"What will the party be like? I've never been to such a formal party before," Candace said, and Jade smiled.

"Don't worry about it. You're going to be fine. You won't be in the midst of strangers. I will be there, Sonia and Lucy will be there too. You will be comfortable," Jade assured her, and Candace sighed again.

"So, what time is your appointment with Matt?" Jade asked casually.

"I'll see him after...." Candace stopped abruptly when she realize she had fallen into a trap, and turned to look at Jade who was grinning from ear to ear.

"I'm not seeing Matt," Candace corrected, but it was too late already.

"Yes, you are. The moment you said you had an appointment, I figured it was Matt. It must not have been easy running into each other for two days in a row," Jade said with an amused smile.

"I said I'm not seeing Matt!" Candace said through gritted teeth.

"Okay. That's fine too. And you don't have to worry. I won't tell anyone if that's what you're worried about," Jade said with an agreeable smile that set Candace's teeth on edge.

While Candace was seething, Jade hummed a happy tune as she looked outside the window, and soon they arrived at Lisa's house.

Less than thirty seconds after they rung the doorbell, the door opened, and Jade was surprised to see Tiffany and Bernice standing there.

"I was not informed I was having lunch with you all. I thought I was meeting with Mrs Steel?" Jade asked Tiffany, not taking a step into the house.

"Hello, I'm Bernice. Bernice Washington. The eldest amongst my siblings. I'm sorry Lisa didn't give you the details, but we all wanted to meet with you. We will explain the details over lunch," Bernice said as she stepped back from the door to give them room to go in.

Jade turned to Candace who gave her a shrug, and then they both walked in.

"Hello! You must be Jade Hank? I've heard so much about you," Lisa said with a bright smile as she descended the stairs.

"Congratulations on the birth of your baby," Jade said politely and Lisa beamed with pleasure.

"Thanks. I just put her to sleep now so we can talk without any distraction," Lisa said before glancing at Candace who was standing behind Jade.

"Oh! I'm sorry for not introducing my colleague. This is Candace Jonas, my colleague," Jade said without thinking, and Candace looked at her.

Candace Jonas? They had not discussed that. Her name was Candace Robert and the thought of changing her last name had not even occurred to her yet.

"It's nice to meet you," Lisa said and then turned to her sisters.

"I believe you've met my sister, Tiffany. I wish I was there to witness your encounter at the spa," Lisa said with an amused smile that earned her a glare from Tiffany, but drew a smile from Jade.

"Is your last sister not joining us?" Jade asked curiously, wondering why Anita wasn't there since these three were here.

"No, she won't. She left. Too many family drama. She couldn't stand it," Lisa explained, and then looked at Jade with hopeful eyes.

"I hope your brother and his girlfriend can find it in their heart to forgive her. Anita isn't really a bad person. She made wrong decisions, and for that we are sorry," Lisa said, and Jade decided that she liked Lisa.

"You should at least offer them a seat first," Tiffany pointed out.

"Oh, my apologies. Please sit down, and make yourselves comfortable," Lisa said as she pointed to a seat, and then she and her sisters took a seat.

"Thanks," Jade and Candace said as they sat down.

Without wasting a moment Jade leaned forward in her seat, "I've been very curious as to the reason for this invitation," Jade started, and the sisters exchanged a look.

"Well, it's about our mother. Before we go further, may we ask how your meeting with her went? We were together when she received your call," Bernice said, and Jade looked at each other them for a moment.

"Not too well, I think. Why don't you tell me the reason you asked to meet with me? And after that I can decide whether or not to say anything to you?" Jade asked, and once again the sisters exchanged a look before Tiffany leaned forward.

"The other day, I told you I had reasons to believe my mother is involved in whatever happened to my sister's late husband, right?" Tiffany asked, and Jade gave her a nod.

"So you said. Did you change your mind on that?" Jade asked, and Tiffany shook her head.

"We find it suspicious that Bernice here hasn't been allowed to see her husband's corpse. Have you seen it? I mean, you are the lawyer, so you should be allowed to take a look, right?" Tiffany asked,

and Jade's eyes narrowed, while Candace busied with scribbling down what they were saying despite the fact that the conversation was being recorded by Jade.

"I think something is off. I don't feel like my husband is dead. The fact that my father-in-law is stopping me from seeing his corpse makes me all the more suspicious. Could you look into it? I know we are in no position to ask for favors from you, but since you offered to be Jackson's lawyer, we believe looking into this might help you get the answers you need to prove his innocence," Bernice added.

"We all believe that our mother might be involved. Tiffany told you our mother was having an affair with Adam, right? Jack might have his flaws but I don't believe he would go as far as murdering Adam to cover his affair with Ben..."

"Lisa!" Tiffany called to stop her from exposing Bernice's affair.

"I thought we agreed to be honest with her?" Lisa asked with a frown.

"It's fine, Tiff. I really don't mind us telling the whole truth," Bernice said to Tiffany before turning to Jade.

"As shameful as it sounds, I had an affair with my sister's husband. That was what led to the fight between them at the hospital. The point is, we believe our mother has a hand in all of this, and just maybe the chief judge is aware and is trying to cover it up..."

"Why would he want to do something like that?" Jade cut in.

"It's possible he is willing to let Jack take the fall for it so he wouldn't have to expose his son's affair with our mother. Jack had an affair with his son's wife after all, and was at the supposed crime scene. Who best to take the fall?" Tiffany asked, and Jade's lips twitched in amusement.

Although the sisters had a very wild imagination, there was no denying that they were smart. She admired them for that.

"If I remember correctly, you said our meeting was about your late father's death," Jade said as she turned to Lisa.

Once again the sisters exchanged a look and Lisa gave her a nod, "Well, it's unrelated to the case. But we were hoping you'd have the resources to help us look into it. We have reasons to believe that he didn't take his life. We think he was murdered and our mother might have a hand in it," Lisa said, surprising both Jade and Candace who exchanged a look.

"What led you all to believe such a thing?" Jade asked curiously.

"I know you must think we are crazy for thinking so ill of our mother," Bernice said with a sigh.

Lisa explained what their uncle had told Anita and also the fact that she knew her father had been planning to divorce their mother before his demise.

"Are you certain you want to look into that?" Jade asked, and all three of them nodded their heads.

"We need to know. And if she was responsible for his death, then he deserves justice," Lisa said, and Jade sighed inwardly, wondering how Lisa would feel to know he wasn't her biological father.

"Lunch has been served. Please let's go to the dining," Lisa announced when she saw her chef standing by the doorway.

"So, will you help us look into this?" Tiffany asked after they were all seated on the dining and eating.

"Well, because you've been honest with me thus far, I will return the favor with equal honesty," Jade said, and they all looked at her with interest, including Candace who was curious to hear what Jade planned to say.

Chapter 633 Andy's Text

Jade paused for a moment to captivate her audience, "I was already looking into it. Your father did not take his life. He was murdered. And your mother was involved," Jade said, and Lisa's cutlery slipped from her fingers as it crashed on the floor, while Tiffany and Bernice looked at her, their faces mirroring stunned surprise.

Although they had been suspicious that their mother had a hand in it, hearing it this way was very shocking. Hearing that their father had not taken his life as they had thought this whole time but had actually been murdered, was heartbreaking.

"What?" Lisa asked as tears gathered in her eyes, ready to fall.

"You heard me. And I think you need to know that your mother made an attempt on my life yesterday because she suspected I was looking into your father's death," Jade said, and their eyes rounded in horror and disbelief.

By now, nobody was eating, and Candace was too busy watching the reactions of the sisters to look at her food.

"What happened? How? Why?" Lisa asked, and Jade wasn't sure if Lisa was asking about their father's case or about the attempt on her life.

"Why were you looking into our father's death?" Tiffany asked after she recovered from her initial shock.

"Because I was digging up dirt on her and it came up," Jade said, and Tiffany's frown deepened.

"Why were you digging up dirt on her?" Tiffany asked, and Jade had to admit that Tiffany was very smart.

"Tiffany, that should be the least of our concerns right now. We should find out what she knows about dad's death," Bernice said once she recovered from the shock.

"We also need to know why she was looking into mother for dirt. What if she was looking into us too, and we gave her all these information?" Tiffany asked her sisters.

"You are right. But you should know that you didn't tell me anything that I didn't already know about you before today. I know you are a lesbian involved with your housekeepers. I know about your sister's affair with your husband. I know about your mother and Adam and her many other lovers. Lisa is the only person who seems to be clean. And perhaps Anita whose flaw was causing problems for my brother and his partner. Why do you think I offered to represent your husband? Do you think I don't have better things to do with my time?" Jade asked, and all three sisters looked at her in stunned silence.

"Why? What do you want with us?" Tiffany asked in a shaky voice now.

"You don't mess with a member of the Hank family and expect us not to react. Your mother and Anita got our attention. It's a good thing for Anita that she had a change of heart when she did. And the same goes for you both. But your mother? After what she did yesterday? I'm going to put in all I have to see her behind bars," Jade promised.

"What did she do to you?" Bernice asked curiously, and Jade explained how Rebekah had sent her hitman after her.

She only tweaked the story by telling them the hit man had died in the process. That way if they planned to report back to their mother after now, they still wouldn't have the complete information.

"I don't mind. You can do whatever you want with her. But can you tell me what happened to my father?" Lisa asked, and Jade told them all she believed they needed to know about their mother, her numerous affairs, and how she and Mr Bateman had duped their father of all he had and killed him.

By the time she was done with her story, all three sisters were sobbing quietly, "Please let us know how we can help. We want Justice for our father," Lisa said, and her sisters nodded in agreement.

Now more than ever before, they were determined to teach their mother a lesson. For ruining their father's life and eventually murdering him, she was going to pay.

Candace looked at Jade in admiration, not missing the fact that in all Jade had told them, she had left out the important information such as how she got to know all she knew about them, the phone in her possession given to her by Mr. Bateman, or the fact that she had evidence to prove that Jack was innocent, and Adam was still alive.

As Candace drove away from there a moment later, Jade turned to her, "How did I do?" Jade asked, and Candace smiled.

"Great! You won their total trust and confidence by giving them honest but incomplete information," Candace said, and Jade grinned.

"Stop the car. I will get off here so you can go see Matt now," Jade said, and Candace pulled over.

"I'm not going to see Matt!" Candace snarled at her as she got out of the car.

"My regards to him. See you later," Jade said with a pleasant smile as she walked away, and approached the car where Harry's men were waiting for her, leaving behind a scowling Candace.

Candace picked up her phone to dial Matt's line so she could inform him that she was on her way, and then paused when she saw a text from a strange number.

[Hey, Candacey! Missing me? I miss you more. I'm alive. I'm safe. I hope you are too? How is my sweetest Jam? I dream of you both every night. Hopefully I can speak to you soon, or so the bastard says. Don't worry about me. I'm fine. I love you too much. Your favorite Brandy.]

Her lips curved in a smile of relief because she was overwhelmed with gratitude and relief that Andy was alive and well.

She tried to dial the number but the call didn't go through. It said the number did not exist. She tried to text back too but it bounced back.

Candace felt a sob rise within her and before she could stop herself her, the dam gate behind her eyes shattered and tears started pouring from her eyes as she cried uncontrollably.

Without thinking she dialed Matt's line, and almost immediately he received the call as though he had been waiting by his phone all day to hear from her.

"Are you on your way now?" Matt asked with a wide grin, and then paused to pay attention to the background sound.

"Are you okay?" He asked with a worried frown when he realized the sound he was hearing was sniffing.

"She texted, Matt. Andy. I just received a text from her," Candace said tearfully and Matt struggled to get what she was saying.

"Oh, that's great! Have you been able to speak with her? How is she doing?" Matt asked, glad that she had heard from her sister and that was the reason for her tears.

"No. The line is not connecting," Candace said with a sniffle.

"Alright. Calm, down sweet. It's a relieve that you heard from her. Now we know that she is fine. I believe she will reach out to you when she can," Matt said, trying to reassure her but she continued to cry.

"Where are you?" He asked when he heard the blast of a horn in the background.

"I'm by the roadside. I was driving down when I..."

"Where exactly are you? I will come over now," Matt said as he rose from the bed.

"You don't have to..."

"I want to. Tell me where you are," Matt insisted as he tugged on a tshirt.

"Alright. Stay there. Don't leave. I'm coming right now," Matt said after Candace had told him where she was, and then he hung up and instead of taking his car he ordered an Uber ride since she had said she was driving.

But the time he got to her fifteen minutes later, Candace had managed to dry her tears and was already feeling embarrassed that she had called him.

"You really didn't have to come," Candace murmured as she wind down her window to talk to him.

He was wearing a baseball hat and sunglasses which Candace knew was more for disguise than fashion.

"Too bad for you that I'm here now. Get into the passenger seat, I will drive?" Matt offered, but she shook her head.

"I'm fine now. I can drive myself," she said with a stubborn lift of her chin.

Amused by her attitude, Matt went around the car and got into the passenger seat, "So, we are going to my place?"

"Your place?" Candace asked with a frown.

"You forgot I have a house here in Ludus?" Matt asked with a raised brow.

"I thought we agreed to meet in a neutral place? I mean we had an agreement..."

"No. I said I'd figure out somewhere we can spend time without prying eyes, and I did. My house. I hardly have visitors there. I haven't even been there since I got into Ludus until this morning. It's discreet," Matt said matter of factly.

"This is not a relationship..."

"We are friends, aren't we? Shouldn't you know where your friend lives? I know your apartment. I've been there. You should at least visit one of my residence. Does it bother you to go to house? Perhaps you fear that you might develop some emotional attachment..."

"I just thought we were going to a hotel," Candace cut in irritably.

"You'd rather we go to a hotel where we can be spotted by anyone than we go to my place which is secluded and private?" Matt asked reasonably.

"Whatever," Candace muttered and Matt grinned triumphantly, knowing he had won this round of argument.

He intended to keep winning every little round until he secured a permanent spot in her heart and life.

Chapter 634 Sexual Satisfaction

Once Candace and Matt arrived at the estate where Matt's house was located, he took off his baseball hat and sunglasses.

The environment was quiet, the security men stationed at the gate did not look at her twice as they drove in after they saw Matt in the car with her. Candace understood now what Matt had said about it being a discreet and safe location.

Matt had to draw the attention of the security guards back to her, "Please prepare a card for her so that she can easily get in whenever she comes over. She would be visiting often," Matt explained, making Candace turn to look at him with a raised brow but he merely shrugged.

"Please come with us, ma'am," one of the men said to Candace and she pulled the car to the side before getting out with Matt.

They walked into the security house which looked like a large office itself, and Candace was surprised to see more people inside and CCTV monitors which were being observed by a couple of people.

It both amused and intrigued her that the place was run like a high security company.

"Lots of celebrities and influential people live here, so they can't be too careful," Matt explained as he walked beside her.

Soon they were led into a room and the guard who escorted them in, returned to his position at the gate, while the people in the room attended to them by recording Candace's information on their database, such as her name, age, fingerprint and a picture of her, and then recorded Matt's detail since he was the person she would be coming over to visit.

Once they were done activating it, they handed a black card to her which had a little chip at the back, "You won't have to answer any questions if you present this at the gate and it's checked," the lady who attended to her informed her with a polite smile, and Candace thanked her before letting Matt lead her out.

"All this for a little visit?" Candace muttered when they got back into the car.

"It's not little. You can use this place as your getaway home if you need to be alone whether I'm around or not," Matt said, and before Candace could remind him they were just friends he smiled.

"You're my friend, are you not?" He asked, shutting her up.

Candace busied herself with looking around the place as she slowly drove down following Matt's direction. Every building around had its own private gate so it was like everyone was minding their business.

She highly doubted that members of the press or paparazzi would gain entrance into such a place easily.

"I see you like it," Matt observed when he noticed she looked impressed.

"It looks like a secret nest," she said, and he nodded.

"That's what it is. An expensive secret nest where I can safe from public eye. There," Matt said, pointing to his gate, "In my hurry to get to you, I forgot to take the remote," he said as he got out of the car and walked to the gate.

Candace watched his back and let herself smile as she admired the shape of his butt.

Matt turned to look at her after the gate had automatically opened and noticed she wasn't driving in because she was smiling at something, and almost immediately she realized he had turned and was staring at her, the smile slid off her face and she drove in without meeting his gaze.

Although, Matt had no idea what she had been looking at or what she had been thinking, he was glad to see she had been smiling. He didn't care what was amusing to her.

"Have I told you how beautiful you look in that outfit?" Matt asked as she got out of the car, and she rolled her eyes even though her cheeks flushed with pleasure at his compliment.

"I didn't dress up for you. I told you I had to go somewhere with Jade.... What?" She asked when Matt started grinning.

"You still don't seem to know how to accept a honest compliment, Candace," Matt said, and she scowled making him chuckle.

"Thanks," she muttered under her breath.

"Too late. I've taken it back. Let's go in," Matt said as he led her to the door and opened it to let her in.

Candace's heart beat doubled as she walked into the living room. The house looked exactly like what it was. Expensive. It was all so masculinely tastefully furnished.

Unfortunately she wasn't much interested in the decor right now or in colors. Anticipation caused her blood to drum in her ears.

She was partially expecting Matt to pounce on her and take her right there in the living room. She was hoping he would. After their make out session in the car yesterday and the way he had told her he missed her, she expected nothing less.

Matt threw down his baseball hat and glasses on the couch and faced her.

"Welcome to my house. You haven't had something to eat yet, have you?" He asked, making her look at him with a slight frown.

"I've had breakfast," she said, and he nodded.

"Breakfast not lunch. You can take off your blazers and shoes. Relax your feet and find something to watch on TV while I prepare something for us to eat," Matt said, but before he could turn to leave Candace stopped him.

"What are you doing?" Candace asked, not hiding her disappointment.

"What do you mean?" Matt asked looking at her with an innocent expression.

"You want to cook? I should relax? Do we have the time for any of that?" Candace asked, and Matt grinned when he realized what she meant.

"I like that you can't wait to have my hands on you," Matt said as he moved closer to her, and she forced herself to glare at him but it didn't work.

"Says who? I'm only saying this because..." she stopped talking when Matt stopped in front of her and one hand went around her waist as he pulled her to himself and gave her a long and hard kiss.

"I guess it's a good thing you don't want me enough yet. I will be in the kitchen. Try to relax," Matt said as he kissed her ear which he knew was one of her erogenous zones before walking away, leaving her horny and annoyed.

Did he really think she was here to be wooed by him? All she wanted was to have a nice time with him in bed. Not to relax or be cooked for.

Well, she was going to just have to teach him that Candace gets what she wants and what she wanted right now was to have him on top of her. Or perhaps under her. She was going to show him that no one, not even the lady he had been with the other day was better than her.

Without thinking about anything else, Candace stripped off her clothes and laid them neatly across the couch.

She left her undies on, and didn't bother to take off the stiletto she was wearing. Because she knew she was meeting with Matt she had worn the sexiest pair of lingerie, she brought with her to Ludus, under her clothes.

It was a red lace fish net teddy. She wanted to see how he would be able to keep his mind on cooking if she chose to assist him dressed this way.

Her mind made up, Candace slowly made her way in the direction she had seen him go, and Matt who was busy frying the vegetables he had chopped down before her call, looked up when he heard the click of her heels.

He grinned when he she sexy pose at the door. Her right elbow leaned on one end of the door with her fingers in her hair, and the other hand was on her waist with legs apart.

"You look like you just stepped out of the covers of a playboy magazine," Matt said, and to her surprise he returned his attention to stirring the contents in the pan.

Perhaps she needed to move closer, Candace decided as she took slow steps into the kitchen and towards the kitchen island, "Can I help?" She asked, and Matt hid a smile as he turned to look at her.

"No, thanks. I've got it all covered," he said, and almost swallowed his tongue when she sat on the granite Island and spread her legs.

"Are you sure whatever you're playing with can't wait?" Candace asked as she looked at him with a sultry smile.

"You're not playing a fair game, Candy," Matt protested weakly.

"I'm not playing at all, Matt. Come here," she ordered, and Matt spared one glance at the vegetables simmering in the pan and decided it could wait a couple of minutes.

As he walked towards her, Candace kicked off her shoes slowly, one after the other while maintaining eye contact with him.

Matt was certain he had never met anyone half as beautiful or hot as she was, and he desperately wanted to bury himself deep inside her moist warmth.

As he stopped in front of her, she wrapped both legs around him, and as though they were both possessed, they attacked each other.

Matt peeled off the teddy from her body as he hungrily kissed her, while Candace reached out to unfasten the buckle of his belt.

In less than a minute, Matt was pants down and was buried cock deep inside her as he thrust in and out of while she moaned uncontrollably as he feasted on every part of her body his lips could touch while teasing her nipples.

Candace felt like her whole body was on fire. She felt like a volcano that was about to erupt and she cried out his name loudly as she felt the first waves of orgasm hit her.

As she clamped around him, Matt let himself give in to his climax too, and he quickly pulled out of her and used his hands to cup his cock as he released.

"Fuck! The vegetables are burning," he said when he suddenly perceived the smell, but Candace flashed him a triumphant smile as she slid off the Island.

She looked too pleased with herself, Matt thought, amused as he went to wash his hands, and pointed her down to the hallway where she could use the bathroom.

Once he returned to the kitchen, he put on his pants and tried to salvage what he could of Lunch.

He had not planned to have sex with her. At least not yet. Not today. He had wanted to woo her and treat her right. Cook for her and watch tv with her. That had been his plan. He had not thought of the possibility of her seducing him this way.

How could he possibly have resisted her when both his heart and body wanted her and craved her desperately? He mused as he set the table.

He hoped he had not ruined his plans by falling for her seduction, Matt thought, and looked up when he heard her soft footsteps.

Candace was a lot of things, but shy was not among them. All she was wearing was a smug smile. She seemed very comfortable in her body as she joined him at the dining still naked.

"Let's eat," Matt suggested weakly.

"I'm leaving after lunch. I have to get home in time. Harry asked me to go with him to a dinner party, and I need to try out my clothes and get ready," Candace informed him.

Although Matt had received the invitation from Harry with no intention of honoring it, hearing that Candace would be there made him glad he had gotten the invitation. He made up his mind to be there.

There was no reason to tell her that he would be there. He would love to surprise her, and see how she would react to his presence in public.

"Alright. Dress up and let's eat," Matt said, and Candace raised a brow, wondering if that was all the sex they were getting today.

That was only a quickie not really sex, right?

"I'd hate to dress up and have to take it all off again," Candace said, and Matt met her gaze.

"Don't worry, you won't have to take it all off again," he said, and watched as her brows furrowed.

"That's all for today?" She asked unabashedly and Matt chuckled.

"For someone I had to practically seduce into agreeing to this arrangement, you seem to be more into it than I am," he said with a teasing smile and she eyed him irritably.

"Sex has never been an issue between us," she reminded him, "And if we are doing this, I expect to be sexually satisfied at the very least," Candace said, and Matt smiled.

"I see. My efforts in the kitchen can't go to waste. Let's eat, and then we will see how it goes from there," Matt suggested, and much to his amusement, Candace joined him on the table stark naked.

He knew without a doubt that he was really going to enjoy this arrangement. But more than that he was going to enjoy making her want more than sex from him.

Chapter 635 Everyone Will See

Jade and the chief judge walked into the warehouse where Rebekah's hitman was being held, and they both looked down at the man whose hands and legs were tied to a chair.

"I don't think the ropes are necessary. I have no intention of running away," he told Jade, displeased by the illtreatment.

"You say he's the one who did that to my son?" The chief judge asked, and Jade gave him a nod.

"I believe so. If he isn't the one, then he must know who did that to him," Jade assured him, and Rebekah's hitman shook his head immediately.

"It wasn't me. I didn't hurt him. I only moved his body as she asked me to," he rushed to defend himself.

He didn't need to ask who the Chief Judge was, since he had been following the case since he moved Adam's body and called the police.

"Who asked you to do that?" The chief judge asked, his anger blazing angrily.

Rebekah's hit man turned to Jade, and she gave him a nod for him to go ahead, "Rebekah Miller," he confessed, and the chief judge turned to look at Jade in disbelief.

"Rebekah Miller? You mean to tell me that woman did that to my son?" He asked in a loud voice.

"You heard him. He moved the body on her instruction," Jade said, and the chief judge returned his attention to Rebekah's hitman.

"Can you tell me exactly what happened?" He asked, and Rebekah's hitman shook his head.

"I have no idea how it happened. I received a call from her to come take care of something. When I got there I saw your son's body under the staircase," the hitman explained and went on to explain how Rebekah had come up with the plan to set Jackson up and how he had executed it.

"My God! That Horrible woman! How could she? How could she do that to my son? My only child?" The chief judge asked in angry disbelief.

"You will have to ask her that yourself after we lock her up," Jade said and the chief judge looked at her.

"What are you waiting for? An arrest warrant? I'll issue it right away," he said, and Jade shook her head.

"Let's speak privately," she said, and he glared at Rebekah's hitman once before walking away with Jade.

"You do realize that there is every possibility that the issue of her affair with your son could come up after she is arrested, don't you?" Jade asked, and the chief judge looked at her in disbelief.

"What are you driving at? That I subvert justice because of that? I should allow her walk away after doing something like this to my son? I'm sorry but that won't happen! I will find a way to ensure that the issue of their affair does not come up in court, but if there's no way around it, then I will find a way to live with the scandal. Whatever the case is, she must be prosecuted," he said vehemently.

Jade gave him a nod, glad that he was bent on punishing Rebekah, "I'm glad to hear that. For a moment I was worried you would want to hide the truth."

"Can you tell me how you caught him?" The chief judge asked, and Jade shrugged.

"I met with Rebekah yesterday to ask her some questions. She sent him after me to get rid of me, but my men overpowered him," Jade summarized.

"Why would she want to do that?" He asked in confusion.

"Because she suspected that I know about her involvement in her husband's murder," Jade said, and the Chief Judge looked at her in confusion.

"What do you mean? Richard took his life," he said with a frown, and from his tone Jade deduced that he must have been close to Richard Miller.

"Were you very close to him?" Jade asked, and he nodded.

"We used to be best of friends. What do you mean he was murdered? Why would anyone want to murder him?" The chief judge asked curiously.

"I'm sorry to ask, but can you explain further? I mean, when I spoke with your daughter-in-law, she didn't sound like you had a good relationship with her. If she was your best friend's daughter shouldn't you treat her better?" Jade asked, and he sighed.

"I've never been fond of Rebekah. I guess that was one of the things that drove a wedge in my friendship with Richard. It was sad that things went downhill for him. I wasn't happy about that, but there was nothing I could do because he turned down all my offers of help. You see, Richard was a very proud and stubborn man. Rebekah moved out with their daughters and left him alone. When Adam told me he wanted to settle down with Bernice I refused. Not because I had anything against her, but because I did not like Rebekah and I knew she had too much influence over her girls. When Adam insisted on marrying her claiming she was pregnant, I had no choice," the chief judge explained, and Jade got a clearer picture of things.

If they were family friends, that explained how Rebekah must have met Adam and started her affair with him.

"Can you tell me now what you meant about Rebekah being involved in Richard's murder?" He asked again, and Jade nodded and explained her findings to him.

"You mean she was having an affair with Bateman and together they duped Richard and murdered him?" He asked in disbelief, and Jade nodded.

"How evil can she be? Do you have evidence of this?" He asked, and Jade nodded.

"I spoke with Mr Bateman. He confirmed it was all Rebekah's idea. He also gave me Rebekah's old phone which she lost on the day Richard died. It contains the texts she exchanged with her husband before his death. I believe her hitman was also involved. The call she made between the time she received the last text from her husband and the time she called him, was to her hitman. I believe he can also tell us what happened to your friend," Jade explained.

"If that is the case, then I must get justice both for Richard and my son. If I may ask, how did you know all this? And why did Bateman reveal something like that to you when he is involved in it?" The chief judge asked in confusion.

"Because like you, he is a father and he's doing his best to save his son," Jade explained.

"What do you want from all this? Why did you choose to look into Richard's death?" He asked, and Jade shrugged.

"Because I was asked to. Your daughter-in-law and her sisters asked me to look into their father's death. They wanted me to help prove their mother's involvement his death," Jade said, preferring to claim she was doing this because of them rather than for personal reasons.

"Why did they choose to look into it after all this time?" He asked, still feeling very confused.

"They believe their mother is responsible for what happened to Adam. And they received a message from their maternal uncle claiming their mother murdered their father," Jade explained giving him the details she had.

"If you know all this, why haven't you asked for the release of your client and asked for an arrest warrant for Rebekah Miller?" He asked curiously.

"You are in a better position to do that. But for the time being Jackson Bateman should remain in police custody. And the case of Mr Miller's death should be reopened next week and the arrest warrant for Rebekah Miller issued at the same time. I will let you know the exact time," Jade said thoughtfully knowing she had the upper hand between them and he would do as she demanded.

"Why next week?"

"You will see when the time comes. Everyone will see," Jade said with smirk.

She was getting closer to her goal. She couldn't wait to witness Rebekah's downfall. She would make sure Rebekah got nothing less than a life sentence in prison.

Away from there, in Tom's bedroom, long after he had slept off, Lucy remained snuggled in his arms in a spoon position as she listened to the sound of his even breath and tried to think about everything that was weighing heavily on her mind.

She wished she could move from the bed to get her journal and pen, but she didn't want to move and disturb Tom's sleep. He seemed really exhausted.

She wished she could talk to either Lucas or Sonia about this new development and hear what they had to say. She knew that like Harry they would encourage her to stand by Tom, which was what she intended to do, but still, she needed to talk to someone else about it. Her own person.

Even though she had selfishly suggested he adopts and takes care of the kid alone, she realized that it would be difficult for Tom to raise a kid without a woman by his side.

Kimberly wasn't even an option, Lucy thought with a scowl. She might not be sure about a lot of things, but one thing she was certain about was that as long as Tom wanted her in his life and not Kimberly, she wasn't going to give him up either. She loved him too much to give up.

She focused on the possibility of Dawn being Tom's daughter. If Dawn was Tom's daughter, and Tom had no desire to be in a relationship with Kimberly, then it was almost the same as though Dawn was being adopted, but the only difference would be that Kimberly would be a part of their lives and Tom wouldn't have exclusive right to Dawn as she would have to keep going between both Tom and Kimberly.

As nice as that sounded to Lucy on a personal level, because it would give her and Tom time to be alone, she wasn't sure it was such a good thing for the kid.

Although she didn't have any experience with divorced parents, but from the little she had read and seen in a couple of movies, she knew that moving to and fro between one's father and mother wasn't something any kid would want to be faced with. Kids needed a stable and loving home and environment.

And for Dawn's case it would even be more complex since Tom was practically a stranger to her. She had no doubt that Tom would love the kid and be a great father, but she wondered how the first

couple of weeks or months would be for them. It would probably be best if Kimberly would be there with her daughter to help smoothen the bonding between father and daughter.

Lucy heaved a sigh. She knew she was thinking too far ahead, but she couldn't help it. This was exactly who she was, and now that this new development had come along and it was clear to her that she wasn't going to end things with Tom over it, she needed to start preparing herself for the future changes that would happen so she wouldn't be caught unaware.

If Dawn was Tom's daughter, she knew deep down that she would love and accept the kid on default just as she believed she already did.

She loved Tom, and if the kid was a part of him, then nothing else had to matter. He did not have an affair or cheat on her. This happened in his past after all.

Maybe if she knew he had a kid before she fell so hopelessly in love with him, she could have walked away, but she couldn't see herself walking away from him because of this.

She had not merely decided to visit the kid's Instagram page on a whim. She knew she had been drawn to it like moth to light. And the reason was because from the moment she saw the child's picture a part of her already believed she was Tom's little girl and she wanted to know her and do her best to love her as she should.

She didn't consider herself maternal or anything close to it, but she could treat the kid the way she treated Jamal. She hadn't considered herself the relationship type until she met Tom either, yet here she was. She would do her best to take it all one day at a time and see where it leads them.

She smiled when Tom's hand caressed her back sleepily, "You're not sleeping, are you?" Tom asked and she adjusted so she could look into his face.

"I'm not, but you should keep sleeping," Lucy said as she patted his face.

"If you're not sleeping, I should stay up..."

"No. You still need to rest. There's still time before the party. I will rather pick up a book from my handbag to read while you sleep," Lucy said as she used that opportunity to get out of the bed to get her handbag.

Tom yawned, "You must have been bored," Tom said as he tried to sit up, but she shook her head.

"I wasn't. I enjoyed listening to your breath," Lucy said as she returned to the bed, and Tom chuckled.

"That's something a bored person would say," he pointed out as his gaze moved to the book she was holding.

"What book is that?" He asked curiously.

"I borrowed it from Harry," she said as she passed it to him.

"Opposites Attract," he read the title with a smile as he looked up at her.

"Are we opposites?" He asked, and she nodded.

"You mean outside the fact that you're male and I'm female? You're my employer and I'm your employee?" She asked with a teasing smile and Tom chuckled.

"I believe that's not what the book is talking about, is it?" Tom asked as he returned it to her.

He preferred to read motivational books centered on business and money and making than books about relationships. He believed that every relationship was different and the same things didn't work for everyone, so as far as he was concerned, the only rule that applied was doing what you believed worked for your relationship.

"It's talking about differences in temperaments, and how to handle those differences," Lucy explained and Tom nodded as he yawned.

"What do you think is my dominant temperament?" Tom asked even though he knew what it was.

"I believe you are Choleric," she said, and Tom chuckled.

"Yeah. You're right. I'm a Choleric-Melancholy," Tom said, and Lucy nodded thoughtfully, making a mental note to look more into it as she read.

"So, what do you think I am?" She asked, and Tom grinned.

"Your dominant trait is definitely Melancholy," Tom said, and Lucy sighed.

"So, what did the book say? Are our temperaments compatible?" Tom asked, and Lucy nodded.

"Yeah," she said as she flipped the pages to her last read page.

"Why don't you tell me what you've read thus far?" Tom asked as he adjusted to a more comfortable position and lay down facing her with his hand on her thighs.

Seeing his new position, and sleep laden eyes, Lucy could tell he was still feeling very sleepy and was trying hard to stay awake for her sake, so she decided to indulge him, knowing he would sleep off before she was done.

Five minutes later, Tom was snoring softly, and she grinned as she watched him sleep.

"This is not always the case, though," Tom said sleepily in response to a nonexistent statement that Lucy made, and she giggled quietly as she dropped the book and picked up her journal.

Chapter 636 Getting Dressed

After getting dressed for the party, Tom left to join Bryan in the living room as they waited for the ladies who were together in Jade's bedroom to join them.

Sonia had invited Lucy into her and Bryan's bedroom so they could have a moment together alone before leaving for the party, but Jade had insisted that they all converge in her bedroom instead to help each other dress up and get their makeup done.

"So, how did your house hunting go?" Jade asked Sonia as she applied her mascara.

"It was fun. The realtor was capable and understood his assignment. We checked out a couple of houses, but one in particular stood out for us both. You're going to love it when you see it," Sonia said with a wide smile.

"How many bedrooms are there?" Lucy asked curiously as she put on her contact lens.

"Oh, don't worry. There are five bedrooms. And one of the bedrooms is specially reserved for you. You do realize you are going to be sleeping over a lot and babysitting, right?" Sonia asked, and Lucy giggled when Jade stopped what she was doing to look at Sonia with a raised brow.

"And what about me? Don't I get a room?"

"Sure. There is a room reserved for anyone of the Hanks. So, you can use it when you come visiting or Evelyn and Desmond can use it. We gave it a lot of thought. Lucy's bedroom is exclusively hers! She is going to be my chief babysitter," Sonia said, and Lucy eyed her uncertainly.

"You do realize that unlike you who babysat for your neighbors in high school, I don't have any such experience with kids, right? How am I supposed to care for your baby in your absence?" Lucy asked, and Sonia rolled her eyes.

"Our baby, Lu. Ours. What makes you think I have any experience either? I babysat kids around Jamal's age not babies. So, we are both going to learn all about it. You realize this baby is ours, right? We are both pregnant and you're going to be with me every step of the way. You will be going with me to my prenatal classes in Bryan's absence too," Sonia chattered excitedly as she rubbed her abdomen dreamily while Lucy turned away from her without saying another word.

If she was alone with Sonia, she would have used this opportunity to bring up the issue about Tom's supposed daughter, but she couldn't do that in front of Jade.

"Jade, how did your meeting with Anita's sister go?" Lucy asked, changing the subject.

"Oh, that! It went better than I expected, and I can assure you that by this time next week, Rebekah will be where she deserves to be. Locked behind bars," Jade said, and Sonia looked at her with interest as she applied her red lipstick to her lips.

"Speaking of Rebekah, I heard she sent someone after you yesterday," Sonia said, and Lucy turned to look at Jade immediately.

"She did? Why?" Lucy asked, and Jade rolled her eyes.

"It wasn't a big deal. Don't worry about it," Jade told Lucy, but Sonia wasn't having that.

"That wasn't what I heard. I heard you looked pretty shaken. And I heard it was thanks to Harry who drove in like your knight in shining armor, that you're in one piece," Sonia said, and this time Jade scowled.

"Bryan and his big mouth. I told him to keep it to himself. He obviously can't keep a secret," Jade said with a shake of her head.

"You could have been hurt," Lucy said, and Jade sighed when she saw the worried expression on Lucy's face.

"But I wasn't. Besides, it was probably for the best that she sent him after me. Now we have him in our custody and he will testify against Rebekah," Jade assured Lucy.

"We should hurry up. Harry will be here soon," Jade said as she glanced at the wall clock in her bedroom, wanting to change the subject.

They all turned to the door when a knock sounded on it before it was pushed open.

"Hello, ladies! Are you ready?!" Candace greeted as she walked into the room.

Candace giggled when she saw the stunned expression on their faces, "Well, I wish I could capture the look on your faces right now. It goes without saying that I look good, huh?" Candace asked with a grin as she swirled around to show them her dress.

Her dress was simple, classy, and beautiful. It was a red long-sleeved, high-slit maxi long velvet bodycon dress, with a deep V-neckline both in front and behind.

She had a pair of gold earrings on her ears, and a necklace with a matching pendant. And strapped on her feet were a pair of high-heeled gold sandals.

Sonia was the first to find her voice, "You look radiant!" Sonia exclaimed excitedly.

Candace laughed softly, "Harry got the outfit," Candace said with a grin.

"Harry sure has a good taste in women and clothes. But I don't think the clothes could have looked better on anyone else," Lucy said, earning her a sweet smile from Jade and Candace.

"That's such a lovely compliment," Sonia said with a grin.

"I think every male in that hall is going to be drooling over you. Thankfully, Harry is your twin brother so I don't have to worry," Jade said, and Candace giggled.

"Well, Bryan would be drooling over me, as I'm sure Tom would be drooling over Lucy. You can have any of the other guys," Sonia said making all four of them giggle.

"By the way, I received a text from Andy earlier," Candace told Jade as she helped Sonia zip up her dress.

Jade who was helping Lucy add a finishing touch to her makeup turned to her, "You did? When? What did she say? Did she tell you where they are?" Jade asked excitedly.

"After you left. She didn't give me any details. She just wanted me to know she was alright," Candace said, and Sonia raised a brow.

"Are you sure she sent the text?"

"Yeah. She spelt my name as Candacey. That was what she used to call me when we were little," Candace said, and Jade frowned.

"How about you give the number to Harry? Maybe he can trace...."

"I already did. He already tried doing that too. But it seems Cassidy knew we would do that. It line can't be traced," Candace said, and Jade nodded.

"That makes sense. He used to own a tech company after all," Jade said, and Candace nodded.

"That was the same thing Harry said. I'm relieved to know she is alright," Candace said, and Jade smiled.

"Me too. Hopefully you will hear from her again very soon," Jade murmured as she held Candace's gaze.

"Since we are all here together right now, why don't we talk about tomorrow's hangout? When are we meeting and where?" Candace asked, wanting to change the subject.

"Why don't we go clubbing?" Jade suggested, but Sonia shook her head.

"What am I supposed to do in a club if I can't have alcohol?" Sonia asked with disapproval making them laugh.

"You could have nonalcoholic wine and dance. And it wouldn't be a bad idea to have someone sober with us in case the rest of us get drunk," Jade said, and Candace nodded in agreement.

"That's right."

"I thought our hangout was meant to be during the day?" Lucy asked, and Jade shrugged.

"We can go to a daytime club. It's all the same to me. And it would be less rowdy too. I don't care whether it's night or day, all I want is to dance to loud music and try out new cocktails," Jade said, making Lucy and Candace giggle while Sonia scowled.

"And I'm supposed to just watch?" Sonia asked.

"No. You're supposed to be sober as you watch over us, and then call the men to come take us home when we are done," Lucy said, earning her a high-five from both Jade and Candace.

Before Sonia could respond to that, a knock sounded on the door and they all turned to the door to respond to the housekeeper who had been sent to remind them to hurry up.

"Tell them we will be down in a minute," Jade said as they all looked at each other to be sure everything was in place.

"Why don't we give them a show?" Sonia suggested and Jade grinned.

"I like that idea. Candace can go down ahead of us since they've all seen her," Sonia said, and Candace rolled her eyes.

"I think what you mean to say is that I should go ahead of you because I don't have a man waiting for me downstairs," she hissed as she walked away, making the rest of them giggle.

"Lucy, you can go first," Sonia said, knowing that Lucy was itching to go down already.

"Lucy, you go ahead. I don't mind going last," Jade said with twinkling eyes.

As Candace walked down the stairs, Tom, Harry, and Bryan went to stand by the foot of the stairs to meet their girlfriends.

"Where are they?" Bryan asked with a frown when she came down alone.

Candace shook her head, "You want my advise? I think you all should break up with your girlfriends. They don't know how to keep to time," she said as she went to join them at the foot of the stairs while the guys cast her amused expressions while wondering what their girlfriends had done to her.

Their gaze reverted to the staircase when they heard the clink of heels, and even though Tom had seen Lucy in the dress before that day, when she tried it out during their indoor shopping, he was still stunned by her overall appearance.

Her dress was a beautiful long-sleeved black sequin mermaid evening gown with a deep V neckline and an open back.

She had let her hair fall in loose waves just the way he loved it, and she had replaced her glasses with her contact lens.

A diamond necklace adorned her neck, and on her feet were a pair of limited edition black sandals.

She smiled as her eyes met with Tom's and took the hand he offered, "You look exquisite," Tom said, and she grinned as he kissed the back of her hand.

"I feel expensive. I've never worn outfits that cost so much," Lucy said and Tom chuckled.

"Get used to it," he said as he turned to lead her away.

"You guys can join us outside," Tom called to them as they left.

Bryan grinned when Sonia appeared, dressed as he knew she would be in a black strapless dress that clung to her body like a second skin and stopped on her mid thigh, and attached to the side was a flowing train.

"You're going to catch a cold in that," Bryan said with a shake of his head.

"Good thing my human heater is my escort," Sonia said with a suggestive smile as she slowly descended the stairs, and Candace rolled her eyes.

"Can you girls hurry up? We don't have all night," Candace yelled so that Jade would hear her, and Sonia giggled.

"You're just jealous," Sonia said to Candace as she stopped in front of Bryan and kissed him.

"You look like mine," Bryan said as she pulled away.

"Of course I'm yours," Sonia said as she took the hand Bryan extended and let him lead her outside.

"Should I go and drag her down?" Candace offered Harry, and he chuckled.

"Let her be," he said as he waited patiently for Jade to make her entrance.

Jade held Harry's gaze as she slowly descended the stairs, dressed in a flowing plum-colored spaghetti strap satin dress with a thigh high slit.

"Did I keep you waiting?" She asked, and Candace rolled her eyes.

"Of course, you did!" Candace said, while Harry smiled.

"I could wait an hour longer if I get to be rewarded with such an enchanting sight," Harry said, and Candace shook her head.

"Lies! You are all a bunch of liars," she declared, making both Harry and Jade laugh.

"I will wait in the car," Candace said as she walked away leaving them, while Harry smiled at Jade.

"I didn't come empty-handed. I brought you flowers but your brothers hid it because they didn't want their girlfriends to see it and get mad at them for not getting them any," Harry said, and Jade laughed.

"That sounds like something you would do, and something they would do," Jade said as she took Harry's hand.

"Are you ready to leave?" He asked, and she nodded.

"Yes, I am."

"Make sure you stick to me all night long. I don't want anyone making advances at you," Harry said, and Jade giggled they walked out of the house together.

"Candace seems very excited tonight," Jade observed.

"I guess she had a nice day," Harry said, and Jade grinned when it occurred to her that Candace had been with Matt earlier.

It seemed like things had worked out fine between them. She hoped to find time to quiz Candace about it before the night was over.

Chapter 637 Playing The Part

Candace had been in high spirits from the moment she left Matt's house after two amazing rounds of very satisfying sex.

Even though she had doubted the wisdom of her decision to engage in such an affair with him, she couldn't deny that she had enjoyed herself even in such a short duration.

And Matt had turned out to be a better cook than she had expected. Despite the fact that the sauce had gotten burnt, the meal had tasted really nice.

Although she knew it was silly, but she was looking forward to her next visit to him which was going to be the next day.

They had both agreed that they make the best use of this period since they were both available right now and didn't know how their schedules would turn out after she returned to Sogal and he resumed work.

Getting home and finding the lovely package Harry had sent her to choose from, she had felt like she had walked into a fairytale movie and was a princess. She had enjoyed the admiration of her father, Jamal, Desmond, Evelyn, Andrew, Janet and of course Harry after she dressed up.

They had all taken pictures of her and with her on their phones, and then Aaron had taken out his camera which he brought with him and set it up so they could take a group photo together in that moment.

Then she had told Harry about the text from Andy, and Harry had offered to have his men track the number but they got nothing.

Still, that hadn't dampened her mood since she was still grateful to have heard from Andy, and was thankful for Jamal and her newfound family, and her friendship with Matt.

And then both her and Harry had driven to Tom's house, and she had wallowed in the pleasure of having so many lovely people in her life now who she could tell genuinely cared about her.

Sitting in the backseat of the car, she and Jade filled Harry in on the details of their meeting with the Miller sisters, and Jade told them about her discussion with the chief judge.

Once the car stopped and they all got out, and joined Tom and the others, while the valets took their cars away as all seven of them walked down the red carpet to the hall where the event was to be held.

"Is this your girlfriend?" Several of the reporters called out to Harry when they noticed he was holding on to both Candace on his left and Jade on his right.

"Who is she?"

"May I know you ma'am?" Some called out to Candace since she was the only person they knew nothing about amongst the others.

Candace stiffened heads and cameras turned in their direction. She had not imagined that the event would be so grand or that the place would be crawling with journalists and paparazzi.

"You're beautiful. Relax and smile," Harry whispered to her as he patted her hand, and she smiled at him in gratitude.

Some of her reporters focused on taking pictures of Tom and Lucy, since it was Tom's first time of attending the anniversary party openly as CEO, and it was the first time they were seeing him and Lucy together in public this way.

Some others focused on Bryan and Sonia who were more of a celebrity couple because of Bryan was considered a screen god.

Unlike the others, Bryan smiled and waved at the reporters who called out to him, and he pulled Sonia closer so they could pose for a few shots.

"You're enjoying this aren't you?" Sonia asked with a giggle as they posed for the camera.

"Such is the life of a star," Bryan said as he pressed his lips to the tip of her nose making her giggle as they continued moving to give room to others who were coming behind them.

They all continued down the red carpet to where the decorated photo backdrop stood. Once they got there they all stood together so they could be snapped as a group and after that they headed for the event hall.

Immediately they walked into the event hall, they were surrounded by people who came to say hello to Tom and Harry and to congratulate them.

Tom made sure Lucy remained right there beside him the whole time as he said hello to everyone who came to him and introduced her to them.

"Jade!" Aurora who has just walked into the hall screeched happily when she spotted her, and immediately Jade let go of Harry and went to say hello to Aurora who was with Philip.

"Well, this place is packed full. We should find somewhere to sit," Sonia whispered to Bryan, and then turned to Candace who seemed a bit uncomfortable.

"Want to come with us?" She asked, and Candace let go of Harry and left with Bryan and Sonia to find somewhere to sit while Lucy remained with Tom and Harry as all three of them socialized with the guests.

Immediately the ushers spotted Bryan and Sonia, they led them to one of the tables at the forefront which had been reserved for them.

"How did they do this? Everything is just so organized," Sonia said when they got to their table of twelve and realized there was a name tag in front of each seat.

Candace looked around, "And the hall is so large," she observed as she took her seat, and a waiter came with a tray of champagne glasses.

Bryan and Candace picked a glass each, but Bryan instructed the waiter to get something nonalcoholic for Sonia who was busy going around their table to check the name tags so she would see who was joining them on the table.

"I guess Tom and Harry wanted us to all be together," she said when she observed that most of the names were familiar.

Lucy, Tom, Harry, Jade, Aurora, Philip, Mia, Jeff, and then then there was Matt, "Is Matt coming?" Sonia asked Bryan, causing Candace's heart to skip a beat.

"I don't think so," Bryan said, certain that Matt wouldn't show up at such an event. Especially if he suspected that Candace might be present.

"Why not? His name is here," Sonia asked as she took her seat, and Candace tried not to look too obvious as she strained her ear to hear what Bryan was saying to Sonia from where she sat away from them.

Because of the name tags on the seats, she was meant to sit between Harry and Lucy which was about two seats away from Sonia and Bryan.

As the waiter brought Sonia's nonalcoholic drink, an usher led Jade, Philip and Aurora , who were with their wine glasses already, to the table, and Jade did the introductions as they sat down.

"So, you're the couple who loves to fish," Sonia said with a grin, making both Aurora and Philip laugh.

"Hello! We meet again. I'm sorry about getting on your nerves the last time," Aurora greeted Candace with a wide smile.

Candace smiled, "All is well that ends well. I guess the fishing is going well," Candace said, nodding towards Aurora's hand which was joined with Philip's, and Aurora giggled.

"Phil loves to hold hands," she told them with a wide smile.

"I love to hold her hands not just any hands. Her hands are so tiny and cute," Philip told them making Aurora blush.

"Don't say that! It's embarrassing," Aurora said, and Philip chuckled as he raised her hand to his lips to kiss it.

"You look so beautiful when you blush," Philip said, and Candace shook her head.

"I can't believe I have to be subjected to an evening on the same table with you all. You're all annoying," Candace hissed, making Aurora and Philip look at her slightly taken aback by her outburst but one look at Jade and Sonia who were laughing out loud, they realized she was kidding and relaxed.

Next Jeff arrived, saying Mia wouldn't be joining them because she wasn't feeling too well and her drugs made her drowsy.

They all chatted and discussed like old time friends, and soon Candace felt herself relaxing. She was even more surprised to realize that she was enjoying herself and the company of everyone around the table.

Soon an announcement was made asking everyone to settle down as the event was about to kickoff, and Tom, Lucy, and Harry returned to the table to join them.

"I love the sitting arrangement. Whose idea was it?" Jade asked after they were all seated.

"We all agreed on it. Tom, Lucy and I," Harry said and then glanced at the empty seats.

"Is Mia not joining us?" Harry asked when he noticed that Jeff was present but Mia wasn't.

Jeff explained to Harry that Mia was ill, but Harry gave him a nod but said nothing even though he doubted that was the reason she was upset.

He had a feeling she was avoiding him. He had noticed that she had made up an excuse not to be at every meeting he had with Jeff since the day he said she looked familiar. Perhaps it was time for him to look into her and find out what she was hiding.

"I guess Matt is really not coming," Sonia said to no one in particular.

"Matt is supposed to be here too?" Jade asked curiously, wondering if that was the reason Candace had been excited all evening.

"I invited him since he's a part of I-Global. I don't know if he's coming or not," Harry explained for the benefit of everyone.

"Why would I miss such a fun gathering?" Matt asked as an usher showed him to his seat.

Candace felt her heart lurch and her spirit plummet when she saw the model from the cafe standing beside Matt.

Her gaze shifted to the model, as she wondered why Matt had not told her he was also attending the party and why he brought her along with him when he knew fully well that she would be there.

They had an agreement, didn't they? They agreed he was not going to see anyone else for as long as they were together, so why was he with another lady just hours after having sex with her? Why was he with this particular lady who she knew without a doubt was the lady he had told her he had sex with the other day?

"Are you alright?" Harry whispered as he looked at her, when he noticed she was too busy eyeing the model to pay attention to the introductions being made.

"Yeah. Sure. I'm alright. I'm just wondering why you didn't deem it fit to tell me you were inviting him?" Candace asked in a whisper.

"Was I supposed to? If I remember correctly you have no business with him. Or do you? Should I give you a list of everyone I sent an invite to?" Harry asked sweetly, and she scowled but quickly replaced it with a stiff smile when her gaze met with Matt's who was now seated beside Matt, while Gemima occupied Mia's seat beside him.

"Hi! You look lovely," Matt said with a polite smile as he had said to every other lady around the table.

Lovely? Candace mused as her blood boiled over, but she managed to control her emotions as she smiled at him, "Thanks. You look good yourself," she said as her gaze shifted from him to Gemima and then back again, demanding an explanation with her eyes.

Lucy, Sonia, and Jade all glanced at Candace and exchanged an understanding look, each thinking about how uncomfortable she must be to be on the same table with Matt and his model.

They all directed their attention to the podium when Harry was called upon to give the opening speech, and as they all rose to give him a clapping ovation, Gemima leaned closer to Matt.

"She is the one, isn't she?" She whispered, and Matt smiled.

"Yeah," Matt said as his gaze met with Candace's, who had caught Gemima's movement from the corners of her eyes and was now watching them.

Matt's gaze traveled over the length of her body which he could see but his eyes remained blank as it met with hers again.

To her surprise his expression was ordinary. He didn't look as stunned as the others had been to see her dressed that way. He just looked at her with casual interest as though they had not spent the afternoon making out on his kitchen Island or fucking their brains out on his dining table and couch in the living room.

As they all sat down once again, Candace couldn't help but notice that Gemima's hand was resting on Matt's thighs, and as she looked up she caught Matt's amused gaze before he looked away from her.

He was amused? He thought any of this was amusing? He was sitting there beside another woman and smiling at whatever nonsense she was whispering in his ears and he had the nerves to be amused? No! She was not going to tolerate any of that.

Grateful that everyone else seemed engrossed by whatever it was Harry was saying, she took out her phone from her handbag and texted Matt.

[We had an agreement, and seeing as you can't honor it, I take it our arrangement won't work.]

Matt glanced at his phone when it vibrated, and he waited a minute before checking the text.

He considered whether or not he should respond to it, and decided not to. They could talk about it later.

"That was from her, wasn't it?" Gemima asked and Matt turned to her.

"Yeah," Matt said, and Gemima giggled softly.

"She looks really pissed. You might not have to do too much to win her heart after all," Gemima said making Matt grin, while Candace seethed as she watched them.

She couldn't believe that Matt had put his phone away without responding to her text. He did not even spare her a glance. He was ignoring her.

Seeing how Candace kept sending a glare in Matt's direction, Jade leaned into Harry's empty seat so she could whisper to Candace, "You're being too obvious," Jade said, and Candace turned to glare at her.

"I shouldn't have come here," Candace muttered under her breath.

"Are you alright?" Lucy asked Candace softly, and she turned to her.

"Yeah. Sure. Thanks," Candace said, and even though Lucy wasn't convinced, she decided not to push.

Sonia being the busybody she was, didn't miss anything going on around the table. And as far as she was concerned, Matt and Candace were an item. She did not care about the model who had accompanied Matt.

"Why did Matt come with her?" Sonia whispered to Bryan with a frown.

"I have no idea. He didn't tell me he was attending the party either," Bryan said, and Sonia scowled.

"Can we swap seats?" She pleaded with Bryan.

"No," Bryan said, and then turned to Matt who was seated next to him.

"Why did you bring her with you? I thought you said the sex was terrible and you were done?" Bryan whispered to Matt.

"We are not having sex right now, are we?" Matt asked, and Bryan frowned.

"Her presence is making everyone is uncomfortable," Bryan said before returning his attention to the stage.

They all gave Harry a standing ovation once he was done giving his speech, and one of the pioneer shareholders of the company was called to read the history of the company and it was established.

"Are we going to sit this way all night?" Candace asked Harry when he returned to his seat.

"No. This is the official part of the night. After Tom presents the special awards to the employees of the year, dinner will be served, and then move to a different hall for partying and socializing," Harry explained.

"Great! I can't wait!" Candace said as she raised her glass to her lips and gulped down the entire content while Matt watched her from the corners of his eyes.

She had wanted them to keep their affair a secret and for him to not treat her like a lover in public, so why did she seem so upset when he was only doing exactly what she asked for? Did she forget he was an actor?

Chapter 638 Restroom Meeting

After Tom presented the awards to the most exceptional employees of the year, and the formal dinner was over, they all rose to proceed to the next hall for socializing and partying.

Sonia looked at Lucy, Candace, and Jade, "Powder time, girls. Why don't we go to the ladies?" she suggested with a sweet smile.

Lucy turned to Tom, "I think we are about to have a meeting," she whispered into his ears, and he chuckled.

"Have fun," he said as he kissed her and she rose to leave with Sonia.

"Yeah. I was going to suggest that myself, let's go," Jade said before turning to Harry.

"I'll be right back," she said, gave her a pointed look.

"Don't cause any trouble," he said, and she scowled.

"What do you mean by that?"

"It means I know you have a penchant of causing trouble. Don't stir any," Harry repeated before turning to Candace.

"Don't let her influence you," he advised, and Candace smiled.

"I can take care of myself," Candace assured him as she let Jade take her hand.

"I will come with you ladies," Aurora said before looking at Philip who seemed to not want her out of his sight for a moment since she told him she was leaving on Sunday.

"I will be right back," she said with a grin, and he kissed her hand as he let her to hurry after them.

"Don't you want to go with them?" Matt asked Gemima as the ladies walked away while they rose to head for the party hall with the others.

Gemima giggled, "Are you kidding me? They're obviously going there because they want to plot against me, the bitch who is stealing their friend's man. I won't be surprised if one or more of them tries to get me away from you so that she would have some time alone with you to give you a piece of her mind," Gemima said with an amused smile and Matt raised a brow.

"You think so?" Matt asked and she grinned.

"I know so. I would do that too if she were my friend and you showed up with someone else. I like them. I could use friends like them if I were not too busy playing the role of bad bitch tonight," Gemima said with a giggle but Matt was beginning to worry now.

"On second thought, I should probably join them. I will like to see what they plan to do," Gemima said as she excused herself from Matt and headed in the direction of the restroom.

"Are you avoiding me?" Matt asked as he tried to catch up with Bryan who was walking ahead of him.

"Yes. I don't want to be guilty by association. Why will I talk to you and risk getting on their bad books? In case you didn't notice, they are all pissed. I can't risk Sonia seeing me chatting with you and thinking I'm okay with the fact that you brought Gemima here with you," Bryan said with displeasure.

"Why not? I have the right to bring someone else along with me to a social gathering," Matt said matter of factly.

"Someone you have a history with?" Bryan asked with a scowl.

"So it would have been best if I brought someone new? I thought you were supposed to have my back as my best friend?" Matt asked, and Bryan raised a brow.

"Well, it's time for you to have my back. In case you have forgotten, Sonia is crazy, and she is pretty scary when she's mad. I can't have her mad at me right now," Bryan said before walking away from Matt.

He could never forget the time Sonia had opened her door to him brandishing a knife at him because she thought he was Derek.

"Hi!" Harry greeted with a grin, and Matt turned to him.

"You are not about to bite my head off for bringing someone else with me too, are you?" Matt asked, and Harry chuckled.

"Why should I? You are allowed to bring your plus one to the party. Last time I checked, you were not dating Candace, or are you?" Harry asked, and Matt did not know how to respond to that so he said nothing.

"I heard you were at my apartment yesterday," Harry said, and Matt nodded.

"Yes. To see Jamal.

"I see," Harry drawled, and something about the way he looked at Matt, made Matt uncomfortable.

"That I don't get along with Candace doesn't mean I don't get along with the kid," Matt said defensively and Harry smiled.

"You don't get along with her? That wasn't what I heard," Harry said, and Matt raised a brow.

"What then did you hear?" Matt asked, and Harry shrugged.

"Nothing that should concern you. I just stopped by to say hello to you. As long as you're not involved with my sister, you're free to do whatever you want with whenever you want. I plan to introduce her to a couple of nice guys anyway," Harry said, and walked away without waiting for Matt to respond.

Why was everyone overreacting? It wasn't like he had kissed Gemima or introduced her to them as his girlfriend.

They all knew Candace had been the one who rejected him, so why was everyone acting like he was the jerk here? Perhaps it was time to speak with Candace privately.

Away from there, once the ladies walked into the ladies room, Sonia shut the door while Lucy and Aurora walked over to Vanity mirror to powder their faces as Jade turned to Candace.

"What do you plan to do about that?" Jade asked, and Candace raised a brow.

"About what?" She asked nonchalantly as she went to join Lucy and Aurora.

"About Matt and that girl. You have been glaring at them all evening," Lucy said without looking away from the mirror.

"See that? Even Lucy who usually does not take note of such things noticed it! It doesn't take a genius to know you're very much interested in Matt. So why not cut out the drama and get him?!" Sonia exclaimed, and Aurora turned to them in amusement.

"I thought you were with him earlier today. What happened?" Jade asked, and Candace glared at her, while the others looked at Candace with interest.

Someone knocked on the door and Sonia turned impatiently, "It's currently undergoing maintenance," Sonia called out to the person and faced Candace.

"So, you were with Matt today? What happened?" Sonia asked, and Candace let out an exasperated sigh.

"No, I wasn't! Can you all just focus on powdering your faces and let me handle my business myself?" Candace asked but Jade and Sonia were having none of it.

"I could barely enjoy my dinner because of you. You want us to let you handle your business yourself? Fine. But you have to tell us how you intend to do so. Is it by looking like a wounded puppy all night?" Jade asked, and Candace glared at her.

"You didn't enjoy your dinner because you don't know how to mind your business! That's not my fault. And if that's how I choose to handle my business, then leave it be!" Candace snapped at her.

Seeing that everyone was becoming upset, Lucy set aside her powder and faced Candace. She placed a hand on Candace's shoulder to calm her.

"I understand you don't like having anyone in your business, but we all really care about you. If you insist that we should back off, we will. But if there's something you think we can do to help, then tell us," Lucy said, and then gave Sonia a pointed look to keep shut when she started opening her mouth to speak again.

Aurora smiled as she watched them. They were an interesting group, and she hoped they wouldn't mind including her in their cycle.

"Can I say something?" Aurora asked politely, and they all turned to her.

"Candace you don't have to be pissed. I think it's a sweet thing that they all care about you and want to help. Although, I don't know anything about your history with Matt, but everyone on that table noticed you were visibly upset by the presence of Gemima on the table. It's the same way I noticed you were pissed when I kept going on and on about Harry despite Jade's visible distress that day. It's what friends do. So, like Lucy said, if there's something you think we can do, maybe distract her so you can have a moment alone with him, or wreck her dress so she has to leave, you can say it," Aurora said with a mischievous gleam in her eyes.

"Maybe distracting her would work, but no one is ruining anyone's dress tonight," Lucy said before the others could buy into the idea.

"Gee! Thanks for saving my dress," Gemima who had been standing outside the door and listening to them, called back to Lucy.

They all turned to the door, and Sonia walked over to yank it open. She scowled when she saw Gemima, "Apart from stealing other people's men, you eavesdrop as well?" Sonia asked, and Candace rolled her eyes.

"Can you cut it out, Sony?" Lucy asked, and flashed Gemima an apologetic smile.

"Please pardon us..."

"Are you dating Matt?" Aurora asked Gemima curiously before Lucy could finish her apology.

"He introduced me as his friend, didn't he?" Gemima asked in amusement as she walked passed them to the vanity mirror to powder her face.

Candace scoffed, "What sort of friends screws each other?" Candace asked under her breath, but everyone heard her.

"How about, friends with benefit?" Gemima asked, and Candace's heart skipped a beat at that.

Was she also Matt's friend with Benefit? Or did she say that only because Matt had told her about their agreement? Candace mused.

"So, you admit that you're sleeping with him?" Jade asked with a scowl.

"I don't understand why you're all upset. It's not like Matt is taken or anything," Gemima said, turning to look at Candace incredulously.

"That something is not taken doesn't mean it is available for just anyone," Sonia hissed at her, and Gemima giggled without looking at them.

"I see. I will keep that in mind. But if you ask me, you can't expect someone like Matt to stay unattached forever. I think if she really wants to be with him, she would do what it takes to get him instead of glaring and glowering at me like I'm the enemy. It might be me today, and another girl by his side tomorrow. How many girls are you going to glare at?" Gemima asked as she applied her lipstick, and once she was done she walked away leaving them.

Neither of them said a word for a while after she left, and then Candace took out her phone from her bag when it vibrated with a text notification.

Her heart skipped a beat as she clicked on it when she saw it was a text from Matt, [Meet me at the underground parking lot.]

Candace sighed, "I appreciate your concern. But I will handle my business myself. Please, excuse me," Candace said before walking away.

"Well, if you ask me I think Gemima has a point. If Candace wants him, she would do what she has to do," Aurora said quietly.

"Maybe she needs a little push to do what she has to do," Jade pointed out.

"Maybe she doesn't. Maybe what she needs is to be left alone to handle things her own way. Candace looks capable to me. Can we get back to the party now that the meeting is over?" Lucy asked hopefully.

"Did she really meet with Matt today?" Sonia asked the most important question on her mind.

"Although she didn't admit it, I think so," Jade said as they all walked out of the ladies room.

It took Candace a couple of minutes to find the underground parking lot and once she got there, she looked around trying to find Matt because lots of cars were parked there.

Matt who was hidden behind some of the cars, waved to her the moment he saw her and she approached him, looking every bit as pissed as she had been earlier in the hall.

The moment she opened her mouth to speak, Matt pulled her into his arms and kissed her. The kiss was slow and intense at the same time, bringing to mind all the memories of that afternoon, and causing lust to surge within her.

"I've been wanting to do that all night. Now can you tell me why you have been glaring at me all night? And what was that text about," Matt asked with an innocent smile that had her blinking at him in confusion as he pulled back.

Candace tried to clear her head to remember what she had been going to say, and once she did she glared at him, and Matt tried not to chuckle when she swiped her hand over her lips as though to wipe off his lips.

"Our arrangement won't work. We had an agreement and you defaulted..."

"What was our agreement?" Matt asked calmly.

"You agreed not to see anyone else while our arrangement stands," Candace reminded him in annoyance.

"So, how did I default?" Matt asked reasonably.

"Are you asking me that? How can you ask me that when you're the one who brought a lady here with you?"

"That a lady came here with me doesn't mean I'm romantically involved with her. I couldn't possibly come here alone. She's just a friend."

"With benefit! Do I look stupid to you? Wasn't she the same lady who kissed you at the cafe? Was she not the one you fucked?" Candace asked angrily, and Matt sighed.

"I should never have told you that. Now I'm going to regret it forever," Matt said, and Candace slapped his arm.

"Is that the point right now? Do I look like someone you can two-time? You come in here with one lady and sneak another into the parking lot to make out with you after ignoring her all night...."

"First of all, I'm not two-timing anyone. Gemima knows I have no interest in her. She wanted to come here tonight and begged I take her along with me. Secondly, I didn't sneak you here. I called you out here because you made it clear you didn't want anyone else to know what was going on between us. And in order to speak with you privately, I asked we meet here. And finally, I only kissed you, I didn't make out with you even if I'd love to," Matt corrected as he swept a glance over her dress.

"Are you going to deny ignoring me too?" Candace asked irritably.

"Need I remind you that I'm an actor, Candace? You asked us to keep things between us a secret, didn't you? Do you want this affair to be a secret or not? I could ask Gemima to go home right now and spend the rest of the evening by your side," Matt said, and Candace huffed.

"That doesn't explain why you ignored my text or kept laughing and smiling at everything she said," Candace hissed, and Matt resisted the urge to laugh.

"For someone who wants a secret affair, don't you think you're being too obvious? If I had responded to your text everyone would have noticed the exchange of texts between us and known something was going on. I'm trying to keep my end of the deal but you're not being helpful. Because of you everyone thinks I'm a jerk," Matt complained.

"I'm being too obvious? I'm not being helpful? Alright. If you think it's okay for you to bring someone else to a party you knew I'd be attending, then I hope you don't mind watching me socialize with other men as well, because that's what I intend to do when I return in there," Candace warned, and Matt raised a brow.

"You can't do that, Candace. That's different...."

"Really? How so? Please tell me," Candace said as she crossed both arms in front of her and waited for his explanation.

"I'm a man. I can control myself and turn down sexual advances...."

"And because I'm a woman, I'm weak and can not do that?" She cut in sarcastically.

"No. I mean that's not the case for the other men you might socialize with," Matt said, and she rolled her eyes.

"How do I know you're not going to take her back to your place and have sex with her after the party?" Candace asked and Matt sighed with exaggerated patience.

"I'm not interested in her. You're the one I'm interested in," Matt said and Candace gave him a pointed look.

"I don't care what your past relationship with her is. I don't want to see you with her anymore, Matt. If I can go to a party alone, then so can you. The moment I get back in there, I'm going to dance and flirt with every single available man in the room. That's what you get for pissing me off and making me look stupid on that table. I'm not going to share you with anyone. It's either you're in or not. If this happens again, we are done," Candace said, and brushed her lips against his before cat-walking away.

Chapter 639 You Look Familiar

Instead of returning directly to the hall, Candace headed back to the ladies room to touch up her makeup, while Matt called Gemima to join him outside so they could walk back into the hall together and no one would notice anything was amiss.

"I suppose you came out to meet with her?" Gemima asked with a grin as he walked up to Matt.

"What happened in the ladies room? Did you speak with them?" Matt asked without responding to her question, and Gemima shrugged.

"I did. As I suspected, they were plotting against me so I told her if she wanted you, she should make her move instead of glaring at me," Gemima said as she glanced at her wristwatch.

"I think I've enjoyed this party enough for tonight. You don't mind if I leave now, right? It's Friday night and I need to hit the club," Gemima said, and Matt shrugged.

"It's fine by me, but I'm not leaving yet, so I can't drop you off," Matt pointed out.

"Oh, don't worry! I will ask someone to pick me up," Gemima assured him, and Matt gave her a nod.

"Alright let's first get back to the hall first, and then you can leave," Matt said and Gemima linked arms with him as they returned inside.

Inside the party hall music played in the background and some of the guests danced, while Lucy, Sonia, Jade, and Aurora sat together at one end chatting as their men socialized with other men talking about various topics ranging from sports to finance, and entertainment.

"So, things are going well between you both, huh?" Jade asked Aurora and she smiled.

"Yeah. I'm actually surprised by how fast everything is moving," Aurora confessed as she raised her wineglass to her lips and took a sip.

"And how fast is it moving?" Sonia asked, her eyes twinkling with interest.

"You're so nosy, So," Lucy said, shaking her head in amusement as she nursed her drink.

"Don't worry. I don't mind. I'm just as nosy as she is," Aurora assured Lucy, and Sonia laughed gleefully.

"I knew we would get along just fine from the moment I saw you," Sonia said, making Aurora laugh while Lucy rolled her eyes despite the smile on her face.

"So, about Philip?" Jade reminded Aurora.

"Yeah. Well, he's really into me, as I am into him. It's almost like love at first sight, I don't know. I know it's been only a couple of days since we met but we've spent almost all the time together. I barely have time to attend to the reason I came to Ludus in the first place, and you won't believe he's talking about flying back to Varis with me," Aurora said, but she her eyes were gleaming with excitement even as she spoke.

"Doesn't he have a job to attend to?" Lucy asked, making the rest of them laugh.

"He owns a restaurant," Jade explained to Lucy since she didn't know much about Philip.

"He owns a chain of restaurants. He says he will use the trip as an opportunity to check in on the branch in Varis," Aurora explained some more.

"So, I suppose you both are dating now?" Jade asked, and Aurora shook her head, surprising them all.

"We haven't actually talked about that even though we know we are headed there. We are just going with the flow," Aurora said, and Lucy shook her head in confusion.

"Is that a good idea? I mean, shouldn't it be defined so you can know for sure what you're doing?" Lucy asked, and both Sonia and Jade nodded in agreement.

"Are you okay with not knowing? Shouldn't you ask him?" Jade asked, and Aurora smiled as she shook her head.

"No. There is really no hurry. We just met. And no matter the level of attraction between us, we are good friends right now and are still getting to know each other. When it's time for us to define our relationship, we would do that. But wanting to define that right now reeks of desperation, and that's not really how I roll," Aurora said, and giggled as she waved at Philip who winked at her from across the room.

Lucy nodded in understanding, "You do have a point. You are right. I'm sorry for questioning..."

"C'mon! Loosen up! There's no need to be sorry. We were only having a conversation," Aurora assured Lucy.

"That's how Lucy is. She's always too polite and rigid. Makes it hard to have fun conversations with her. I do hope you'd loosen up tomorrow, Lucy," Jade said, and Lucy smiled while Sonia laughed.

"Lucy is fun when she's drunk. We will have to make sure she gets drunk," Sonia said and Jade laughed.

"Yeah. That's right. I remember the way she acted last time she came back him drunk," Jade said, and Lucy laughed despite her embarrassment.

"Thanks for the heads up. I'll try not to get drunk," Lucy said, while Aurora smile she she listened to them.

"What's happening tomorrow? Another party?" Aurora asked curiously.

"A girls party. Just us girls hanging out to gossip and have fun. You are invited to come if you can get away from Philip," Sonia said jerking her head towards the men, and they all laughed as they looked at Philip who was staring in their direction.

"He's love struck," Sonia said with a shake of her head.

"Completely smitten," Jade said in agreement, while Lucy smiled as her eyes met with Tom's.

"Thanks for the invitation. I believe hanging out with your girls would do me a world of good," Aurora said, pleased to be included.

"By the way, Lu. Which of the ladies here is the silly colleague you told me about?" Sonia asked, and Lucy looked away from Tom to focus on Sonia.

"What silly colleague?" Jade asked curiously.

"One of her colleagues seems to have her eyes set on Tom," Sonia explained and Jade rolled her eyes.

"Another Anita Miller?" Jade asked Lucy, and she smiled.

"She's not as calculating as Anita. She's more direct. Likes to get on my nerves. We handled it. I told Tom about it, and we both stopped by her office for a chit chat," Lucy said, and Sonia raised a brow.

"Really? You asked him about the picture too?" Sonia asked, and Lucy wished she wouldn't bring that up right here, right now.

"What picture?" Jade asked curiously.

Seeing the look that Lucy gave her, Sonia could tell that Lucy did not appreciate the fact that she had brought up the subject in the presence of others.

"Yes, I asked him. Tom was at a club to meet with a client and someone took a photo of him with a lady by his side and sent it to Cora, which she showed me. The lady happened to be the niece of the client Tom was meeting," Lucy explained, and they all nodded.

"Oh! I hope Tom disciplined her for getting involved in his private business?" Jade asked when Sonia said nothing.

"Yeah, he did. I'm sure she learned her lesson seeing as she has not crossed over to my side of the hall all evening," Lucy said, and Jade nodded in approval.

"Why is Candace taking so long? Do you girls think that perhaps she is with Matt? He's sort of absent too," Sonia said as she looked around the hall.

"That would be only if they're having a threesome or fighting somewhere. Gemima is not here too," Jade pointed out.

"Well, at least Candace is here now," Lucy said, and they all turned towards the entrance door as Candace walked in.

Candace was feeling more in control of herself and her emotions now as she walked in, and as she looked around the hall trying to find where the other girls were seated, a young man approached her.

"Hello, beautiful!"

Although she had threatened to flirt with every guy in the room, she had planned to do so just yet, especially since Matt didn't seem to be in the hall at the moment.

"Hi!" Candace said with an hesitant smile.

"I was trying to find you. For a moment I thought you left, but Harry assured me you were somewhere around," He said, and Candace raised a brow.

"Harry did?" She asked, wondering who he was and what he must have discussed with Harry.

"Yeah. I'm Sam. Samson Sullivan," he said as he extended his hand for a handshake and Candace reluctantly shook him.

"You can call me Candace. And before you think about hitting on me or anything, I should like you to know I'm not interested. I'd hate for you to waste your time or mine," Candace said, and Sam laughed out loud.

"You are quite straightforward," he said, and Candace gave him a nod.

"Yes, I am. But before you leave, I'm curious to know what you asked Harry and what he said to you," Candace said, and he shrugged.

"I didn't say I was leaving simply because you made your disinterest know," Sam pointed out.

"As long as you don't hit on me and expect me to smile or laugh at everything you say, I don't care whether you go or stay," Candace said, and he grinned.

"Why don't I get you something to drink?" Sam suggested, and Candace shrugged as she took the hand he extended and they walked over to corner where the champagne tower and snacks were on display.

Once they had gotten two glasses of drinks, Candace turned to him, "So? You haven't answered my question," she said, and he smiled.

"I figured if I answered immediately you might not have any reason to want to talk to me again, and might leave. So, why not drag it out a little?" He asked, and she raised a brow.

"I'm not that curious. I could as well ask Harry myself," she assured him.

"But it would be more fun to hear it from me, wouldn't it? I mean, he doesn't even know why I enquired about you," he said, and Candace nodded.

"So? Why did you?" Candace asked with interest as her eyes moved around the hall in search of Matt but instead her gaze met with Sonia's and then Jade's who seemed to be watching them intently as though they were trying to figure out what they were discussing.

Candace rolled her eyes at the busybodies and returned her attention to Sam who was watching her with some sort of interest.

"At first when I saw you walk in with Harry, I thought you looked familiar," he said, and instinctively she froze.

He didn't miss her reaction, but he chose not to comment on it.

"I'm not someone who loves to be bugged about such a thing. I don't like not being certain of stuff. So I kept watching you during the whole formal part of the ceremony and I noticed you didn't seem like you were fine. I was hoping to catch a moment with you alone, but when we moved here and I didn't see you, I had to ask Harry about the beautiful lady with him earlier. He said you went to the ladies room," Sam explained, and Candace met his gaze.

"So?" She asked, wanting to know if she still looked familiar or if he had figured out something.

"So, what?" He asked with an innocent expression.

"So what do you want now that you have gotten a moment with me? Has your uncertainty been resolved?" She asked, and Sam looked at her, wondering why she seemed so nervous.

"I don't mean to be rude or anything, but you really do look like someone I know," Sam said, and Candace couldn't help feeling nervous.

Did he really know her? If he did, then she was certain it was from the club since that was the only place a person like him could possibly know her from.

Coming here was a bad idea. She shouldn't have come here. She was going to end up embarrassing Harry and everyone of them who had come with her.

Chapter 640 Dance Floor Conversations

Four pairs of eyes looked in Candace's direction with interest as they tried to figure out who the man was and what he was saying to Candace.

"I wonder what he is saying to her. Can anyone of you read lips?" Sonia asked hopefully even though she knew the answer to that.

"I can read body languages, and Candace's body language right now says she is uncomfortable," Jade said, and Lucy frowned.

"Perhaps one of us should go and bail her?" Lucy suggested.

"Harry should go," Jade said as she picked up her phone and dialed Harry's line.

Harry took out his phone when it vibrated in his pocket and turned to look at Jade, wondering why she was calling him.

"Pick up," Jade mouthed to him as she pointed at her phone, and Harry received the call.

"We think Candace is distressed. Can you find out if she is alright?" Jade asked as she jerked her head in Candace's direction and immediately Harry turned to look. He gave Jade a nod before hanging up.

Oblivious to everything else going on around her, Candace forced a smile as she looked at Sam and waited for him to say what he wanted to say.

"Can you please relax? You look really nervous," Sam pleaded when he noticed the beads of sweat on her forehead despite the air conditioner.

"I'm relaxed," Candace lied as she quickly drank from her champagne nearly choking on it.

"Is everything alright?" Harry asked as he appeared at her side, placing a hand on her shoulder.

"Yes," Candace rushed to assure him, the last thing she wanted was for him to hear any of this here even if he knew about her past. It would be too embarrassing.

Harry looked at her for a moment and held her gaze to be sure if she wanted him to stay or to leave, and when she gave him a nod, pleading with her eyes that he should leave, he turned to Sam and gave him a warning look.

"It would be in your best interest not to offend her, Sam," Harry warned before returning to join the other guys.

"You seem pretty close," Sam said as he watched Harry leave.

"Why is Harry leaving without taking her with him?" Sonia asked with a frown.

"Perhaps she said she didn't want his help," Jade said as her gaze met with Harry's and he shook his head.

"Hey, friends!" Gemima greeted, drawing their attention as her and Matt stopped by their table.

Lucy couldn't help giggling at Gemima's attitude and Sonia's sour expression as she eyes her, "We are not your friends," Sonia stated.

"I told you she was the worst of them all, didn't I? Perhaps Bryan must have told her something unpleasant about me," Gemima told Matt whose gaze was directed across the hall in Candace's direction as was Jade's and Aurora's.

"Anyway, I was about leaving so I decided to stop by and say hello. I didn't want you thinking I left because I was threatened by you," Gemima said, and Sonia rolled her eyes.

"Good riddance. Matt, you're not leaving with her, are you? I think Candace might need your help," Sonia said, and this time Gemima looked in Candace's direction as well.

"What did you want to say?" Candace asked, feeling a bit more confident now after Harry had shown up.

"You are a law student, aren't you?" He asked, and Candace looked at him, taken aback by that.

Was that what he meant when he said she looked familiar? He had seen her in school?

"Yes. Have we met before?" She asked, and he smiled.

"I've seen you a couple of times during your lectures but I've never approached you. My mom is one of your professors and some times when I visit her I like to sit behind the class and watch her lecture. I'm a lawyer myself. I am part of the legal team here in I-Global," he explained, and watched as she visibly relaxed.

"Oh! I see. I guess your mother is Professor Ann Sullivan?" Candace asked and he nodded.

"Yeah," he said, and continued to watch her like he wanted to say something else.

"I'm curious though. Do you take note of all the students in the classroom or is it just me?" Candace asked, and he winced.

"What else?" Candace asked suspiciously, and he sighed.

"I hope this doesn't make you uncomfortable, I mean no harm. I actually took note of you because I've seen you before then. Twice. At the club once. And then another time during my friend's bachelor party," He confessed, and watched as she stiffened.

"No. Please don't panic. I'm not going to breathe a word of this to anyone. Not even Harry. I promise!" He said and Candace didn't know how to respond to that.

"If you recognized me every time you saw me in the past, that means you recognized me the moment I walked in, didn't you? You did not approach me because you were trying to figure out why I look familiar," Candace stated, and he pinched the bridge of his nose.

"Yeah. You're right."

"Why then did you approach me? What do you want?" Candace asked as she straightened her back, and he shook his head.

"I suppose I'm just very curious about you. Seeing you here in the company of Harry and the others. You all seemed to be very close. I know it's not my business but I was just really curious to know you," Sam said helplessly, not knowing how to phrase his question.

"You mean you want to know why a law student like me who is close to someone like Harry works as a stripper?" Candace asked, and he shook his head as he looked at her apologetically.

"No. I'm sorry...."

"Well, if you must know, I'm no longer a stripper. I did that to get by during a tough time. They're my friends and family so they know all about it. I believe that's all you need to know. Now if your curiosity has been satisfied, I'd like to be excused," Candace cut in coolly and as she turned to leave, she bumped into someone, spilling her drink on him.

"Oh, shit! I'm sorry," she said as she looked up to see who she had bumped into, and almost laughed when she realized it was Matt.

"Candace, I'm really sorry. I did not mean to be rude," Sam said, and Candace shrugged.

"I'm not offended, just done talking with you," Candace said dismissively before looking at Matt.

"I'm sorry. What were you doing behind me anyway?" She asked in amusement as she reached into her purse for her hankie to dab off the stain while Sam walked away, feeling embarrassed by her dismissal.

"Rescuing you. Sonia and the other ladies. I can see why Bryan is terrified of them. They all insisted you looked like you were uncomfortable and asked that I come save you by asking you to dance with me," Matt said as he took the hankie from her.

"And what did you tell them?" Candace asked as she looked in Sonia's direction, and noticed they were no longer seated. She looked around and saw them dancing with their men.

"Well, even though I wanted nothing more than to interrupt whatever you were both discussing, I refused as I was supposed to. And Sonia kept talking about how I was being a jerk and how she would never talk to me again, and the others joined her and when I couldn't take it anymore I decided to come to you," Matt said, and Candace shook her head.

"Well, as you can see, I didn't need help. You shouldn't have budged. They're never going to stop trying to matchmake now," Candace said.

"Who was that guy? What was he saying to you?" Matt asked curiously.

"Why? Did it upset you?" Candace asked sweetly.

"No, it didn't. You didn't seem to be enjoying the conversation so I had no reason to be upset. But it had me concerned," Matt said, and she shrugged.

"He recognized me. He said he has seen me at the club before," she explained, and Matt looked at her with concern.

"Did he say anything improper? Do I need to break his nose?" Matt asked, and Candace surprised him when she laughed out loud.

"No, thanks. He wasn't rude," Candace assured him.

She had no idea where the courage to respond to Sam in that manner had come from. Perhaps it was just the part of her that hated having nosy people in her business, or perhaps it was because she knew deep down that she had family and friends in the hall with her who would stand by her regardless of her past. And Matt had proved just that.

"Where is she, anyway?" Candace asked, referring to Gemima.

"She left already. So you don't have to flirt with anyone. So? Will you dance with me?" Matt asked as he took her wineglass from her and led her back to the table to drop it.

"Are you sure it's a good idea?" Candace asked, and Matt shrugged.

"I don't think they would think much of it considering they believe they forced me into asking you to dance," Matt said.

"Maybe. As long as you don't enjoy yourself too much. We have to try to look uncomfortable and uninterested else they're going to think their plan is working," Candace said as she let him lead him to the dance floor.

"That might be difficult. I want to move my hands over your body," Matt whispered to her as he took her into his arms, and butterflies fluttered in her belly.

"You're an actor, Matt. Act like it," she said, reminding him of what he had said earlier as she pressed her boobs against his chest.

Well, maybe she might not really flirt with anyone else as she had threatened, but she could torment him with her body and remind him of what he was going to lose out on if he fucked up one more time by showing up around her with any girl.

"You said try to look uncomfortable and uninterested yet you grind your body against mine in this manner and expect me not to have a reaction," Matt muttered under his breath.

"You do sound uncomfortable," Candace said in amusement.

"We are still on tomorrow, right?" Matt asked hopefully.

"You bet," Candace said with a smile which she quickly covered up with a scowl when her eyes met with Jade's who was dancing with Harry some steps away from them.

Jade smiled, "I wonder when they're both going to stop deceiving themselves. Anyone with eyes can tell they're very much into each other," Jade whispered to Harry.

"When they're ready they will. Until then, can you focus on me?" Harry asked, and Jade rolled her eyes.

"Why should I when you abandoned me all night long and chose to go have those boring discussions with the guys?" Jade asked, and Harry looked down at her.

"You ditched me from the moment we walked into the hall, remember?" Harry asked, and Jade flashed him a smile when she remembered she had walked away from him the moment she saw Aurora.

"Let's talk about something else," Jade said, and Harry chuckled at her tactics to change the subject because she was guilty.

"What do you want to talk about?" Harry asked and Jade shrugged.

"What's your plan for the weekend?" She asked, and Harry raised a brow.

"I heard you girls were spending Saturday together."

"That's our plan. What's yours? Am I seeing you?" Jade asked, and Harry shrugged.

"I'd love to see you. Besides, you're my girlfriend. So, it's also your call to make. If you ask me to cancel all my plans to spend time with you, I will," Harry said, and Jade grinned.

"You always know the right things to say. A man after my heart," she said as she rested her head on his chest and they both swayed to the rhythm of the music.

Few feet from them, Sonia's gaze swept across the dance floor as she danced with Bryan. She couldn't help noticing that everyone seemed to be doing more of talking than dancing.

She smiled in satisfaction as her gaze settled on Candace and Matt. She had nothing personal against Gemima, but as far as she was concerned, Gemima was an unwanted distraction in this romance. Perhaps it was the writer in her that made her believe those two were meant to be together.

"Candace and Matt look so good together, don't they?" Sonia asked, and Bryan nodded agreeably.

"Yeah. They do."

"I suppose the next time we would all be gathered together this way will be at Jade's wedding," Sonia murmured. She had enjoyed being with everyone this way tonight even though Gemima's presence had put a damper on the pleasant mood.

"Why do you think so?" Bryan asked, and she shrugged.

"Because it's the next social gathering after now. Remember, she said Harry would be proposing in six months," Sonia said reasonably.

"What if Tom and Lucy decides to get married before then?" Bryan asked, and Sonia shook her head.

"I don't see that happening... anytime soon," she added so that Bryan wouldn't ask her what she meant about not seeing it happening.

"And what if we get married before then?" Bryan asked jokingly and Sonia giggled.

"The both of us? That's highly unlikely," Sonia said with a shake of her head.

"Why do you think so?" Bryan asked with a slight frown.

"Why? You suddenly want to get married?" Sonia asked with a teasing smile.

"Don't you want to?" Bryan asked as he stopped dancing while looking at her seriously.

"Why wouldn't I want to? I'd marry you any day and time. I'm just saying I don't see it happening anytime soon," Sonia said, and Bryan relaxed.

"So, if we were to get married, when do you think would be the best time?" Bryan asked, and Sonia grinned.

"I just told you I'd marry you any day and time. If you asked me to marry you right now, I will," Sonia assured him, and Bryan chuckled.

"Not so soon," he said, and she grinned.

"See? I told you," Sonia said, and giggled when Bryan kissed her.

He would love to see her reaction when he popped the question to her on Sunday.

A couple of feet away from them, Lucy and Tom gazed at each other as they danced, "Are you enjoying the party?" Tom asked, and she laughed softly.

"I don't think there is a right response to that question. You have no idea the number of people who have said hello to me tonight. I've spoken with more people tonight than I have done in years. And I don't even remember ninety percent of the names of those you introduced me to earlier," Lucy confessed and Tom chuckled.

"There is no hurry. You will eventually get to know the very important ones," Tom assured her and she sighed softly.

"What about you? Are you enjoying the party? I know it's your first time being here like this," Lucy said, and Tom shrugged.

"I think I'm okay. I know most of the people in the hall even though they didn't know me until recently. I've received a lot of invitations to various events. I have a feeling I'm not going to be able to keep a low profile for much longer," Tom said, and Lucy nodded in understanding.

"Don't worry. I will try to always accompany you to such events so you don't feel too uncomfortable," Lucy assured him, reminding herself that he had exposed his identity for her sake and this was all part of the consequence.

"Really?" He asked as he watched her with a curious smile.

"Of course. Why should my man attend such social functions without me by his side?" She asked with a raised brow and he grinned.

"I love the sound of that," he said, and she smiled.

"You should. By the way, how much space would you like me to create for you? I plan to clean out a drawer for you when I get home tonight," Lucy said, and Tom's grin widened even more.

"So soon? Why not wait until tomorrow? You would need to rest," Tom said and she shook her head.

"Tomorrow is going to be a busy day. I have to clean the house and do my laundry after my parents leave. And there's the hangout with the girls. I want everything go to be organized before you come," Lucy said and he smiled at her as the music stopped.

"I think I'm ready to call it a night. Ready to leave?" Tom asked, and Lucy beamed a smile at him.

"I've been waiting to hear that since the moment we arrived," Lucy said happily, and Tom chuckled as he led her away from the dance floor.