

## Wild Night 791

### Chapter 791 Leave It Alone

The moment Mia walked into the apartment she shared with Jeff, she paced around the living room with a worried frown etched between her brows as she tried to figure out who Tyler was and where she knew him from.

Was she at a risk of being discovered now? Was she going to have to disappear from here before her family finds her? She mused as she bit her nails.

Although choosing to work as an assistant for such a high profile celebrity as Bryan Hank had been risky, she had taken the job because it was something she had always wanted to do— to work closely with celebrities, and she had figured that there was no point of leaving home if she left and still couldn't do what she wanted to do with her life.

She had accepted it with the mindset that she could do her job without necessarily getting in the middle. All she had to do was disguise herself well enough when stepping out with Bryan, and to keep herself at a reasonable distance from Bryan in public so she would never have to be in the pictures any crazy fan decides to capture from a distance.

So, far it had worked perfectly well until lately. First, Harry had recognized her in spite of her horrendous makeup and clothes, or maybe he hadn't really recognized her seeing as he couldn't place where he knew her even though he thought she was familiar.

But this person. This guy, Tyler had seen her face without makeup or any of those crazy clothes and she was very certain that if he knew her from home, then it wouldn't take long for him to place her face and know exactly who she was.

She loved her life here, and she loved being with these people. She didn't want to have to run away from here too and start afresh somewhere else——

"Are you okay?" Jeff asked, breaking into her thoughts when he stepped out of his bedroom to see her pacing around the living room.

"You're still here?" She asked with a frown, since she had thought he had gone out.

"Did I say anything about leaving the house today? Bryan is hanging out with Matt so I get the day off. Why were you pacing around?" Jeff asked, returning to the subject.

"It's nothing. I was just trying to figure out something," Mia said dismissively.

"Let's have breakfast, and then we can discuss Bryan's schedule and all we have to do in his absence while he is away on his honeymoon," Jeff suggested as he headed for the kitchen.

"Thanks. I'm not hungry," Mia said, and Jeff turned to look at her.

"I'm hungry. Let's talk while I fix myself something to eat," Jeff said in a tone that told her he didn't want them to argue over it, so she reluctantly followed him into the kitchen.

"I noticed you haven't gone on any blind dates in a while now. Is everything okay?" Jeff asked, and Mia raised a brow.

"I thought we were going to talk about work not my private life? And why do you keep asking me personal questions but you never say anything about yourself?" Mia asked with a frown.

"I ask because I want to know. If you wanted to know about me, you would have asked. That's how it works. I can't just tell you anything about myself if you don't ask," Jeff said easily.

"Really? How old are you then?" Mia asked, and Jeff's lips twitched in amusement.

"I'm thirty-four," Jeff said without looking at her as he took out some eggs from the refrigerator.

"Really? Thirty-four? I thought you were older," Mia said and Jeff turned to glare at her.

"Why would you think that?" He asked with a frown and she grinned when she saw the annoyance on his face.

"Maybe it's because you act like you're old or probably all those beards all over your face," she said with a shrug and Jeff raised a hand to touch his beards.

"What's wrong with my beards? In most cultures beards are seen as a symbol of virility and masculinity, you know?" He asked and she raised a brow.

"Really? Is that why you keep them? To be seen as a masculine and virile man?" She asked in amusement.

"You know what? Let's just talk about work," Jeff said, wanting to change the subject, and this made Mia grin.

"I was just teasing you. You don't look too old," Mia assured him, "maybe only a little," she added with a wink and this time Jeff chuckled.

"Here, help me whisk this," Jeff said as he handed her the bowl containing the eggs.

"Whisk?" Mia asked, not understanding what he meant.

Jeff looked at her for a moment before taking the bowl from her to show her what he meant, "Do it this way," he said, and she nodded as she took the bowl from him to do as he had requested.

"So?" Jeff asked as he went to slice some tomatoes, and Mia's brows pulled together in confusion.

"So, what?" She asked, wondering what he was asking her.

"The CEO actually told him, so I couldn't...."

"The CEO? Tom?" Lucy cut her off with a frown.

"That was what Lucas said," Amy said and Lucy frowned.

Why would Tom tell Lucas something she told him in confidence? She mused.

"I'm very sorry about that. I didn't think Lucas would ask him, and I didn't ask him not to tell Lucas either," Lucy explained apologetically.

"It's alright. Now I don't have to worry about him finding out anymore," Amy said and Lucy raised a brow.

"If I may ask, why didn't you want to let Lucas know about it?" Lucy asked and Amy shrugged.

"I was feeling very embarrassed by the turn of things. All of this would have been avoided had I listened to him. So, I didn't want him to know I went on with my plan and things got so messed up," she explained and Lucy smiled.

"Lucas is not the type to gloat over one's misfortune," Lucy assured her.

"Yeah, I figured that out today. Thanks. And help me extend my gratitude to him once again," Amy said and Lucy nodded.

"Sure. I suppose you're at the office now. I should let you get back to work. By the way, Lucas said it's best you stay at my apartment for some time, so feel free to go over there after work. I hope to see you at the party tonight," Lucy said before hanging up the call.

"It's so funny that last night you were worried about having strangers in your space, not knowing it was your own twin brother," Andy said in amusement after they had left Lucas and Tyler.

"I know, right?" Lucy responded and Sonia glanced at her.

"Do you think Lucas might have a thing for Amy? He sounded very concerned about her earlier. I mean, taking her to her apartment, the station and dropping her off at work?" Sonia asked and Lucy shook her head.

"Nah. I don't think so. You know Lucas. That is just the sort of person he is. He goes the extra mile for anyone and everyone. Besides, I don't think he is ready for a relationship yet. And if he was, I doubt he would want to get involved with Amy," Lucy said with a shrug.

"Why not?" Candace, who was driving, asked with a slightly raised brow.

"He doesn't seem to want any more dramas in his life, and Amy seems to have a bit of drama," she said and Sonia shook her head.

"People like Lucas are drawn to people like Amy. Lucas likes to help people, and Amy seems like she in need of help. What do you think happens when knight in shining armor meets damsel in distress?" Sonia asked and Andy grinned as she turned to look at Sonia who was in the back seat with Lucy and Jade.

"Love happens," she said and Sonia gave her a high-five.

"Exactly. I won't be surprised if those two fall in love," Sonia said and Lucy shrugged.

"Whatever happens between them is their business. All I want is for Lucas to be happy," Lucy said with a sigh.

"Did anyone else notice that Mia was weird earlier?" Jade asked after being silent for a long time.

"Weird? What do you mean weird? She wasn't weird at all," Sonia said in Mia's defense.

"Yes, she was when she was talking to Tyler. Didn't you see the way she ran away? It's not the first time she is acting that way. The first time Harry said she looked familiar, she avoided Harry. And you all saw how Harry excused her to speak with her in private yesterday. The same thing happened at Sony's engagement party. I think Mia is hiding something and Harry knows about it," Jade said thoughtfully.

"Or maybe you're just jealous because Harry spoke with her in private yesterday, so you're looking for trouble where there is none," Candace said and Jade scowled at her.

"How are you even in law school when you can't read a person's body language? Trust me, Mia is hiding something. Where is Tyler based?" Jade asked Lucy curiously.

"Husla," Lucy said and Jade nodded thoughtfully.

"How much do you know about Mia?" Jade asked Sonia.

"Enough to know that whatever she is hiding is not your business. Leave it alone, Jade. Stay out of Mia's business. Whether or not she is hiding something is not your business. She hasn't caused any trouble for Bryan or you, so stay out of her business. I can assure you she isn't interested in Harry. So, leave her alone," Sonia said sternly and Lucy nodded with approval.

"This isn't about her being interested in Harry...."

"I agree with Sony. Whether or not she is hiding something shouldn't be your problem. And if Harry knows it as you claim, and is not doing anything about it, it must mean she doesn't mean any harm. So let it go," Candace said, giving Jade a pointed look through the rearview mirror and she sighed.

"Fine. Whatever," Jade muttered under her breath.

## Chapter 792 Friends

After he was done making breakfast, Jeff took a tray with him to Mia's bedroom and knocked on the door.

Mia, who was inside thinking about what to do and whether or not she should quit her job and leave immediately, looked at the door and went to answer it.

"You want to have breakfast in my room?" She asked with a teasing smile.

"This is for you. We made the meal together so you should have a taste of it," Jeff said as he thrust the tray at her.

"I didn't do anything. I only helped you mix the egg...."

"Whisk," Jeff corrected.

"Yeah. That. Whatever."

"This is yours," Jeff said and Mia hesitantly took it from him.

"Thanks," she said and turned to return inside.

"Did I say something earlier? You seemed peeved by something," Jeff said and she turned to flash him a smile.

"Nah, you didn't. I sort of remembered I needed to do something," Mia said, since it was true that his statement about marriage and kids had reminded her that she had more important things to worry about than standing in the kitchen and watching him cook.

"If that's the case, how about you join me at the dining?" He asked and she grinned.

"Are you asking me to have breakfast with you?" She asked with a teasing smile.

"Yes. Why?" Jeff asked in confusion and Mia laughed softly.

"You are so clueless and it's cute," she said as she stepped out of the bedroom and followed him to the dining.

Once they were seated at the dining, Jeff looked at her, "Do you think I should get a hair cut? I mean, take down my beards?" He asked, and she raised a brow.

"Why are you asking me that? It's your call to make. If you like it there is no reason you should take it down," Mia said nonchalantly.

"Hm. This is good," she said with a nod of appreciation.

"You've really never cooked before?" Jeff asked, and she shrugged indifferently.

"Before working for Bryan what did you do to earn a living?" Jeff asked and Mia raised a brow.

"You seem awfully curious about me. If I didn't know better I would think you were interested in me," she said without looking at him.

When Jeff didn't say anything or deny it quickly as she had expected him to do, she raised her head to look at him, "What? Don't tell me you are interested in me," she asked in disbelief.

"What if I am?" Jeff asked, holding her gaze.

Mia laughed awkwardly, suddenly feeling uncomfortable, "Don't be, Jeff. Really, don't be. You are a sweet guy and all, but just not for me," Mia said and Jeff smiled.

"How do you know something is not for you until you give it a try?" Jeff asked, and Mia frowned.

"You're making me uncomfortable, Jeff. We work together, we share the same living space. It is awkward to be having such a conversation, don't think you think?" She asked and he nodded.

"Sure. But I never said I was interested in you romantically. I don't need to want to have a romantic relationship with you to be interested in you. Besides, you brought up the subject. I was only trying to pick your brain," he said with a shrug and she scowled.

"I already told you I want to go alone," Janet insisted.

"I promise to stay back in the cab," Andrew said and Desmond and Evelyn looked at Janet.

"You should let him go with you," Evelyn said and Janet sighed.

"We will all feel better if he goes with you. Don't worry. We will have the helps leave your luggage in your bedroom," Desmond assured her as Adolf parked the car by the roadside.

"Let's go then," Janet said and they both got out of the car and flagged down a cab.

A short while later, the cab pulled to a stop in front of the correctional facility where Sara was being held.

Janet took a deep breath as she went in, while Andrew stayed back in the cab, waiting for her.

A couple of minutes after filling in the visitation details, Janet sat still as she waited for Sara to be brought to her.

Sara, who had been surprised to hear that she had a visitor, frowned when she saw Janet, "I guess you came to gloat," Sara said as she took the seat opposite Janet.

"Gloat? What am I supposed to gloat over? That my younger sister is a criminal?" Janet asked and Sara snorted.

"Sister? I thought you disowned me a long time ago," Sara said and Janet nodded.

"My sister is you, the criminal locked behind bars and paying for her crimes, not the hypocritical model you were. I came to see how you are doing, and to find out if you are feeling remorseful yet, but apparently you are not...."

"I was set up," Sara cut in.

"Indeed! What were you thinking? How can you be so evil to the point that you wanted to harvest your own daughter's liver illegally?" Janet asked and Sara glared at her.

"Didn't you hear me? I was set up! That bitch isn't my daughter! And...."

"Good thing she wasn't! I can't imagine what would have happened had it been Candace and you found her first...."

"Candace?" Sara asked with a frown.

"Yes. Candace. Your biological daughter...."

"You know my biological daughter? You know where she is?" Sara asked in disbelief.

"Yes, I do. She is with her father, where she belongs. Why aren't you ashamed of yourself? Why don't you feel sorry that you almost ruined that poor girl's life? Do you know what she has been through? Do you have any idea how much she suffered because of you? Was it not enough that you sold her off at birth? How could you be planning to murder her?" Janet asked angrily.

"So, you all planned this together? You all decided to frame me?" Sara asked and Janet shook her head.

"No, we didn't. Your kids did. Your kids did what Aaron and I couldn't do, because we cared too much about you to expose you. I'm glad that you gave birth to kids who outsmarts you in every way, and they were able to put you where a criminal like you belongs. Now you will rot here in jail paying for your crimes. All your money and fame is nothing now. Now you will have nothing and no one by your side," Janet said and Sara smiled stiffly.

"I knew it. I knew you came to gloat. But guess what? This changes nothing. I lived my best life. I got to heights you could never dream to climb, and if I had to go back in time, I would do it all over again, but this time I would make sure I sell them both. That was my shortcoming—— leaving Harry with Aaron. That was my undoing," Sara said and Janet nodded.

"Sure. Good thing you will have enough memories of your good days to keep you company here. You will need those memories with you when your health fails and you have no family to stay by your side. When you feel lonely on your deathbed, you should remind yourself that you traded everyone for fame which is fleeting. You won't have your husband or kids, or grandson or even your fans beside you. It's your loss. Your grandson, Jamal, is such a pleasant boy...."

"Grandson?" Sara asked in surprise, and Janet smiled as she took her phone and opened the pictures of Jamal and Candace which Lucy had sent her some weeks ago to show Sara.

"Yes. That is your daughter and grandson. Take a good look at them," Janet said and Sara blinked as she looked at Janet's phone screen.

"You are a grandmother, Sara. You know what irks me the most? You probably could have gotten everything. Both family and fame, had you followed the right path. But you gave up all that was most important. Your life is a series of bad decisions and choices, and I'm glad you will be spending what is left of it in jail, reflecting on your choices," Janet said as she rose.

"I won't be coming to see you ever again. I thought seeing you here would make me feel sorry for you, but seeing how unrepentant you are, I feel even more grateful to your kids for pulling this off. You're a vile animal that should only live behind bars and in chains," Janet said before walking away.

## Chapter 793 I'm A Mess

As the time drew closer to closing hour, Amy became more and more anxious about going home.

If she was going to move to Lucy's place for the time being, she was going to have to go back home to pack some stuff, but she dreaded going back there alone.

Even though she had acted all cool that morning wanting to sneak out of Lucy's apartment to avoid Lucas, the truth was that she had been confident enough to go into her apartment only because Lucas was there.

Although, she had reported to the police already, she very much doubted that she would be able to shake Malone off so easily. What if he was waiting in her apartment? Amy mused.

As she sat there thinking about what to do, her phone rang.

Amy stared at her phone, her heart pounding as the familiar ringtone echoed through the office.

The caller ID displayed "Mom," but her mother rarely called during work hours. She hesitated, then answered with a cautious "Hello, mo...."

"I just received a call from the chef. Miley is dead," her mother said in a trembling voice.

Amy froze, transfixed by the announcement. A rush of disbelief and grief enveloped her, causing her to drop the phone.

She had known that Miley was very close to the end, but she had been hoping that she would at least get to hear Miley's voice one last time, or see her face, or hug her or argue over unnecessary stuff just one final time.

Dead? How could she be dead just like that? How could she leave just like that without another word? Not even goodbye.

A part of her had hoped that Miley would recover and then explain things to her parents so that all the misunderstandings would be resolved, but now she was no more.

"Amy? Are you there?" Her mom asked but Amy wasn't listening. She picked up her handbag and rose.

Colleagues turned with concerned glances, "Amy? Are you alright?" One of her female colleagues asked, but the world seemed to blur as she stumbled out of her cubicle, desperate for solitude.

The news had hit her like a tidal wave, sweeping away the stability of her emotions. She needed to be alone, to process the enormity of the loss in solitude.

Amy ran through the office corridors, not caring about the curious stares she attracted.

She wasn't sure where she was going but she knew she needed to be alone. She just had to be alone.

As the glass doors swung shut behind her, the world outside greeted her with a torrential downpour. It seemed as if the heavens themselves were mourning Miley's departure.

Amy hesitated only for a moment, glancing back at the safety of the office building. But grief urged her forward, pushing her into the relentless rain.

The raindrops mingled with her tears, providing an oddly comforting cover to her anguish.

Amy's sobs became indistinguishable from the rhythmic sound of the rain. Every step felt like a painful reminder of the void left by Miley's absence. She didn't know where she was going; she just needed the release that the rain offered, a cathartic cleansing of her soul.

Half-soaked and emotionally drained, Amy continued her tearful sprint through the city streets.

The rain had transformed into a tempest, drenching her completely. Her clothes clung to her skin, reflecting the weight of sorrow that clung to her heart.

As she rounded a corner, a car pulled over in front of her. The sudden interruption brought her back to the present, and she looked up through the curtain of rain to find Lucas, the person she least expected at that moment, behind the wheel.

Lucas had received a call from Dr Drew, informing him that Miley had passed away, so he had decided to stop by the office, since it was almost closing hour and it was raining, to pick Amy and to see if she had heard the news and how she was doing.

He had just driven into the company premise when he saw her run into the rain, so he had reversed the car to go after her.

Seeing her standing there in the rain soaked and shattered as she gazed at him, he took off his jacket and got out of the car to meet her.

Without a word, he pulled her into a warm, comforting embrace, offering the solace that words failed to convey, not minding that he was going to get soaked in the rain.

Amy's tears mixed with raindrops, and she clung to Lucas as grief overwhelmed her. He didn't utter platitudes or empty consolations; he simply held her, letting her mourn in the midst of the storm. The world seemed to fade away, leaving only the two of them in the downpour.

Eventually, Amy's sobs subsided, replaced by a quiet numbness, and Lucas guided her into the car and handed her his jacket which he had taken off earlier.

The interior of the car was a sanctuary from the relentless rain pouring outside. Lucas started the engine, driving through the wet streets as the city lights blurred into streaks of color.

In the cocoon of the car, Amy found a momentary respite from the agony of loss.

Lucas, understanding the inadequacy of words, remained a steady presence beside her.

And the rain, now reduced to a gentle drizzle, painted a melancholic tableau on the windowpane.

"I'm sorry," Amy said quietly after some time, but didn't look at him.

"What for?" Lucas asked, turning to spare her a glance.



"I made you get drenched...."

"It's either you are the rain, you caused the rain to fall, or I was too blind to see it was raining. Which is it?" Lucas asked and Amy sighed.

"Mile-- Miley is...."

"I know. I heard," Lucas said, and Amy nodded, unable to say anything as fresh tears gathered in her eyes again.

"How did you find out? How did you find me?" Amy asked, struggling for some semblance of control over her emotions since she didn't want to cry in Lucas' presence again. She had done that twice already.

"Her family doctor called to let me know. And I stopped by the company to pick you up but saw you leaving so I followed you," Lucas explained, and Amy nodded once again.

"Thanks. Where are we going?" Amy asked as she looked out of the window unable to look at him.

"Your apartment. I figured you would want to be alone," he said and she nodded.

"Thanks," she said, and neither of them said anything else.

Lucas wasn't sure what he was doing or why he had decided to come pick Amy and comfort her, but when he heard the news of Miley's death, all he could think about was that night at Miley's hotel apartment after Amy arrived and how she had cried her eyes out.

Maybe he was letting himself get this involved because somehow he understood everything and had been there from the beginning when Amy joined Miley after finding out about her condition.

He was after all the first person Miley shared her crazy plans with and he had been the one who told Amy about everything.

He had seen their friendship and the love they shared, and that had inspired him to live and get over his heartbreak faster. So, maybe a part of him felt like he owed this much to them.

"I can't believe it. I can't wrap my head around the fact that Miley is no more. It just doesn't make sense that she isn't existing in this world anymore. I know I should have been better prepared to receive the news after all this while, still, it is so shocking. I just can't accept it," Amy said with quivering lips and her voice broke as she broke into a sob again, and she raised both hands to cover her face as she cried.

As much as Lucas wanted to comfort her, he didn't know what to say. He didn't have the right words. He had never been confronted by the lose of a very dear one before.

He had lost patients and he had felt the lose of every single one of his patients, but that was different from Amy's loss and he knew it the same way he knew that there was nothing that he could say to cheer her up.

"I know there is no bright side to this, but maybe it would help if you think of it this way, Miley won't be in pain anymore," Lucas said after some time since that was something he usually told the family of his deceased patients. It was better than saying nothing.

"It's my fault. She would have lived longer had I convinced her to receive treatment," Amy cried.

"Remember what you told me when I asked you to convince her otherwise?" Lucas asked, and Amy looked at him, unable to believe that he was about to also place the blame on her and say 'I told you so'.

"I said I will do whatever I can to make whatever she wants to do happen. I know what you want to say. I know it's all my fault...."

"You obviously don't know what I want to say. So, shut up and listen. You said, Miley wasn't the type to be convinced otherwise after making up her mind. You said Miley was the type to go ahead to do whatever she wants to do and leave you to decide whether or not you want to be a part of it. You didn't want to miss out on spending some of her last moments with her, hence you went along with all her plans even though I'm sure you would have wanted her to receive treatment. I am also very certain that if for a moment you thought you could change her mind, you would have tried to do so. So, you shouldn't blame yourself for anything," Lucas said softly as he parked the car in front of her apartment.

Amy bit her lower lip to keep herself from crying more as she brushed away the tears on her face. She knew that her makeup was ruined already and her face was probably a mess but looking good in front of Lucas was the last thing on her mind at the moment.

"Thanks. That means a lot," Amy said as she risked a glance at Lucas.

"Tyler and I have moved to the hotel. You can be alone at Lucy's place. I'm sure you will feel safer there. So, why don't you go in, get out of those wet clothes so you don't catch a cold, and then pack up what you need and I will drop you off at Lucy's?" Lucas suggested and Amy nodded.

"Will you come in?" She asked, maybe I can brew some coffee for you to warm you up while I pack up, so you don't catch a cold," she offered.

"Alright. Let's go in," Lucas said as he turned off the engine and unfastened his seatbelt, and they both got out of the car.

Once they got inside the house, Lucas looked around once again, since he could tell that Amy had invited him in partly because she was scared that Malone might be inside the house.

"It's clear," he said to Amy after he was sure that no one was lurking in any corner of the house.

"Thanks. You can make yourself comfortable while I get you the coffee," Amy said as she handed him the jacket he had given her earlier.

As Amy walked into the kitchen and took out the pack of coffee, she broke into a sob when she remembered that her and Miley had shopped for it together some days before their trip to Heden and that was Miley's favorite brand.

Lucas who was seated in the living room, looked in the direction of the kitchen when he heard her cry, and he contemplated between leaving her to cry or going to offer her some comfort.

After a moment, he decided to check on her and when he walked into the kitchen, he saw her holding a coffee pack to herself as she cried, and he took a deep breath.

"You know what? Let's forget about coffee," Lucas said as he walked over to where she stood and pulled the coffee pack from her grip.

"I'm sorry," Amy cried as Lucas gathered her into his arms.

"What are you sorry for this time?" He asked quietly.

"I'm a mess," she said and Lucas nodded as he patted her back gently.

"You have every right to be. You lost someone important to you. Anyone would be a mess in such a situation. So, don't apologize for it," he assured her.

"I don't know what to do now," she murmured tearfully, thinking nothing of the fact that she was still standing there in Lucas' embrace.

"You should get out of those wet clothes and pack your stuff. I'm sure there are lots of memories of Miley here, so I'm determined now more than ever to take you out of here for the time being. At least until you pull yourself together," Lucas said and kissed the top of her head, causing them both to freeze.

Chapter 794 Luca?

Kissing Amy's forehead was an instinctual gesture, an expression of comfort he had offered to friends and family countless times.

That was the way he comforted the females in his life generally. Kissing the top of the head was something he did with his mother when comforting her. He did it with Lucy, he had done it too with Rachel.

So, it wasn't like there was any romantic meaning attached to it. There was none whatsoever. Yet, the atmosphere in the kitchen shifted instantly.

Amy pulled away, her eyes widening with surprise. Lucas felt a twinge of awkwardness settle between them, understanding the unintended gravity of his action.

Lucas knew that he had acted more out of habit than desire or anything of the kind. His action had been borne out of habit.

But was he supposed to explain that to Amy without sounding like a pervert who was trying to take advantage of her vulnerable state? Lucas mused as he stepped away from Amy.

"I—I'm sorry," he stammered, as he awkwardly took several steps back and raised both hands.

"I didn't mean to do that. It's just something I do to comfort people, and I didn't think..."

Amy's expression was a mix of confusion and vulnerability. She wiped away a tear, her gaze fixed on Lucas. "No, it's okay," she murmured, her voice soft. "It's just...unexpected, I guess."

Lucas fumbled for words, attempting to explain the innocent intention behind the impulsive gesture. "I didn't mean it in any other way. It's just, when people, by people I mean ladies, including my mom and sister. When they are hurting, I've always done that. It's a gesture of comfort, like telling someone, 'Hey, you're not alone in this.' I've done it with friends, family, and it's never meant to be anything more than that. I assure you," Lucas rambled.

He paused, searching for the right words to alleviate the awkwardness that lingered in the air since Amy was still just staring without saying anything.

"I am here as a friend. Your friend. I don't want to add any more pain or confusion during an already difficult time," Lucas added, wishing he could kick himself and just shut up.

Amy nodded slowly, a mix of emotions playing across her face. "I know you mean well. It just caught me off guard, that's all." She managed a small smile, a fragile attempt to reassure him.

Lucas sighed, relieved that Amy seemed to understand, yet an underlying tension lingered.

"There was nothing sexual about the gesture...."

"I didn't think there was. I will go pack up my stuff," Amy said, and quickly walked past him to avoid any further awkwardness.

"It really didn't mean anything," Lucas called after her defensively, not sure she believed him since she had accepted his explanation too easily.

Not knowing what to do with himself, Lucas decided to make the coffee himself as he waited for her, so he went about making the coffee.

Inside her bedroom, Amy looked back in the direction of the kitchen and touched the top of her head where he had kissed her before placing a hand over her heart which had been racing earlier.

She might be inexperienced when it came to men, but she knew enough to know that it wasn't a sexual gesture, although that wasn't something you did with people with whom you didn't have a close relationship.

What was the deal with Lucas? Why was he here? Why was he helping her? They weren't even friends so why did he keep going out of his way to help her? Amy mused and then paused when she remembered he had just said he was there as her friend.

When did they become friends? She mused and then sighed. That wasn't what was important at the moment. She had just lost Miley, she reminded herself as she looked around her bedroom which she had shared with Miley all through her stay in Ludus.

She wasn't going to cry again. She had cried enough in front of Lucas. She was just going to hold it all in and wait for Lucas to drop her off at Lucy's and leave. Then once she was alone, she could cry and mourn to her heart's content.

Who knew what would happen if Lucas heard her crying in here? The last thing she wanted was for him to come into her bedroom to console her. Especially not after what just happened a moment ago.

Choosing to focus, Amy started to take off her clothes, and then she paused when she remembered that just that morning when she picked the outfit she had been thinking of Miley, and now Miley was no more.

Tears gathered in her eyes, but she quickly brushed them off and took off her clothes. She changed into a sweatshirt and pant and when she turned to look at her reflection in the mirror, she was horrified to see how terrible she looked.

Her hair and makeup was a mess.

She knew she had thought she didn't care about how she looked in front of Lucas, but this was terrible for crying out loud!

She quickly washed off what was left of her makeup and dried her hair before going on to pack her bags.

It took her a while to decide on what to take with her and when she was done packing, she returned to the living room with her bags to meet Lucas.

She perceived the aroma of freshly brewed coffee even before she walked into the living room and saw him standing by the window with his back to her and a cup of coffee in one hand and his phone in the other hand raised to his ear.

"I'm not sure yet. I will let you know. Sure. Be good," Lucas said before hanging up.

"I'm ready," Amy said and he turned to see Amy standing awkwardly by the doorway.

He was relieved to see that she looked better now than she had been earlier, and she no longer looked like she would fall apart if he looked away for a moment.

"That was Lucy on the phone. I took the liberty to make coffee. Do you want a cup?" He offered as though she had imagined the awkward situation between them earlier.

"It's raining again," Amy noticed as she looked past him to the window.

"Yeah," Lucas said and Amy excused herself as she walked into the kitchen to pour herself a cup of coffee.

She returned to see that Lucas was seated now, so she sat on the couch opposite him, feeling like she was the visitor in her own home.

Amy clutched the mug tightly as she raised it to her lips, and Lucas watched as her hands trembled as she drank from it.

Amy looked up to meet his gaze, her eyes puffy and red from crying. The sight tugged at Lucas's heart, awakening a protective instinct.

"She loved this coffee," Amy finally whispered, her voice trembling. She gestured towards the mug.

"We used to sit here, laugh, and share stories over a cup. Now she's gone, and all I'm left with are memories of her in an empty apartment."

Lucas listened attentively, and although his heart ached for her pain, Lucas didn't move or say a word.

They sat in silence for a while, the only sounds the soft hum of the refrigerator and the occasional snuffle from Amy.

Lucas contemplated the complexities of loss, the way it lingered in the air like an unwelcome guest.

As they sat there, the rain outside intensified, its rhythmic patter echoing the subdued atmosphere within.

"What can I do?" Lucas asked after a moment and Amy looked at him in confusion.

"What?"

"What can I do to help? Would you prefer I listen silently, or do you want me to say something? Should I try to cheer you up or leave you to mourn?" He asked, since he needed to know what she wanted in order to know what to do.

"I don't know," Amy said with a shake of her head.

"I've never lost anyone very close to me. I've lost patients and mourned some who were dear to me, but they were only patients, not friends. So, I'm not exactly sure what to do in this situation especially as I understand to an extent the depth of your friendship," Lucas explained.

"You've done more than enough already by being here. Thanks for being here with me right now when we both know you don't have to," Amy said softly.

"You're welcome. Will it help to talk about her? Perhaps I could tell you about how I met her and all I thought about her, and you can talk about her too and dwell on happy memories," Lucas offered, and Amy nodded.

Lucas tried to steer their interaction back to a sense of normalcy, and they shared stories about Miley that brought both laughter and tears especially when they talked about the dinner date. Amy's laughter, though tinged with sorrow, made Lucas smile as he watched her.

Eventually, the awkwardness between them began to dissipate, replaced by a shared understanding of grief and the unpredictable ways people navigate it.

Lucas provided her comfort without any gestures that might be misconstrued and listened as Amy spoke of Miley, remembering her quirks, her infectious laughter, and the moments that had bound them together.

As the evening wore on, the rain outside started to relent, leaving behind a cleansed, glistening city.

Lucas and Amy found solace in each other's company, the shared pain gradually transforming into a poignant connection that deepened their new friendship.

"Can we leave now?" Lucas asked as he glanced at his wristwatch.

He had to leave soon for Sonia's party since that was the major reason he had travelled down, and Tyler was waiting for them to leave together.

"Yes. Sure," she said as she quickly rose and Lucas did the same.

Lucas drank what was now left of his cold coffee and reached for her mug since she it didn't seem like she wanted to drink it, and she quickly drank it and held out her hand for his mug instead.

"I will rinse...."

"Hand it over," Lucas ordered calmly and she reluctantly handed him the mug and she followed him as he took it to the kitchen.

She watched him as he rinsed the mug and hung it to dry on her mug rack.

"Thank you, Luca," Amy said as she watched him dry his hands.

"Luca?" He asked with a raised brow, ignoring her gratitude since it seemed like she was either always apologizing for something or thanking him.

"You said you don't want me calling you Lucas," she reminded him and his lips twitched a bit.

"Luca. Not bad," he murmured in amusement as he walked past her to go pick up her bags so they could leave.

As he picked up the bag and headed for the door, he paused and returned to the table. He placed the television controller on the center of the table and organized some things making her look at him with questioning eyes.

"Can I have your phone?" He asked, and she unlocked it and handed it to him.

Lucas took a picture of everything the way he had set them, "When you come here, confirm that nothing is out of place before you settle in. But it will be best if you change your locks," Lucas said and Amy nodded.

"I will have them changed," she said and he nodded in approval.

"Let's leave then," he said and they headed for the car.

Once they were seated in the car, Amy turned to Lucas as she fastened her seatbelt, "Luca?" She called, and he turned to look at her.

"Yeah?" He asked as he started the engine.

"Are we friends?" She asked and he raised a brow.

"I will leave you to decide that. Are we?" He asked and she paused for a moment before giving him a nod.

"Yes."

"Then we are," he said and she smiled before looking ahead of her again as he drove off.

On their way, Lucas stopped by a pharmacist, and she frowned in concern when he asked her to wait in the car while he dashed in to get some medicine.

Was he ill? Did she make him stand in the rain when he was ill? She mused.

A short moment later Lucas returned and got into the car, "Here. I'm not sure if Lucy has any medicine at home. You were in the rain for a while, you might catch a cold, so take this if you feel ill, and take that for a headache since you might have one after crying the way you did and the way you might do later," Lucas said, and Amy blinked as she looked at him without taking them from him.

"What?" Lucas asked when she just sat there staring

Amy shook her head, "Thank you," she said in a thick voice, laced with emotion as she took the medicine from him.

She really wasn't sure what to think about Lucas, or how to feel about his kindness which was beginning to make her heart flutter in an unexpected way.

## Chapter 795 All-White Party

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"God! Are we still on that? I moved on already. And it was meant to be a joke," Sonia said and Jade smirked.

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"I do, don't I?" Sonia said as she looked at herself in the mirror.

"Let's take a group picture before we go downstairs," Lucy suggested after they had all exchanged compliments.

"That's a good idea. But the guys are waiting...."

"Let them wait, Sony. Tonight is your night and the party won't start without you. We are the party," Jade said with a grin and they all laughed as they agreed with her.

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After they were done, they stepped out of the room, entering the living area where the men awaited.

The moment the ladies stepped into the living room, the men who had been conversing all rose.

Since the women had decided on an all white party, the men had no choice but to be dressed in white.

Tom settled for a stylish white linen button-down shirt paired with well-fitted white trousers and loafers, adding a touch of sophistication.

Bryan donned a classic all-white tuxedo, complete with a white silk bowtie, exuding elegance for his special celebration.

Harry opted for a crisp, tailored white suit with a black silk lapel, paired with a white dress shirt and a sleek black tie.

Matt chose a more casual yet polished look, sporting white chinos paired with a tailored white dress shirt, rolled-up sleeves, and white sneakers for a laid-back vibe.

The men, suited up in crisp white attire, exuded charm and enthusiasm. The contrast of the ladies' all-white elegance against the men's sharp white shirts and tailored trousers created a visually stunning picture.

The men couldn't help but be captivated by the stunning elegance of their partners. The air was filled with admiration as each of the ladies stopped in front of their men with beaming and eager smiles as they waited to hear what their men had to say about their appearance.

Tom, mesmerized by Lucy's ethereal beauty, remarked, "Lucy, you look absolutely radiant and too beautiful to be true. It's as if you stepped out of a dream."

Lucy blushed, "Your dream, maybe. And you look too handsome for your own good," she said and Tom chuckled.

Away from them, Bryan couldn't take his eyes off Sonia, who looked effortlessly chic in her white ensemble. "You are the most stunning bride-to-be, and I'm the luckiest guy to have you," he said with a smile.

Sonia grinned, "Yes, you are. And you better don't forget that. And you don't look so bad yourself, groom-to-be," she joked and he laughed as he took her hand and raised it to his lips.

"You look absolutely enchanting, goddess, and you just made white my favorite color," Harry said to Jade and she grinned at the look of awe in his eyes.

"If you look this awestruck now, how are you going to look when you see me in a wedding dress on our wedding day?" She asked with a wink and Harry chuckled.

"I just might burst into tears," Harry said and Jade giggled.

"Who is this absolutely gorgeous damsel?" Matt asked in utter admiration and Candace grinned.

"She is your girlfriend. You clean up nice," Candace said as she removed an imaginary flint from his shirt and Matt chuckled.

As the compliments flowed, Andy, stood back with a wide grin on her face as she looked at each of them.

Harry, being the caring big brother turned to Andy, "Andy, you look absolutely lovely," Harry said and Andy grinned.

"Thanks, Harry. Here I was thinking I wasn't going to get any compliment after all my effort to look this good," she said and Matt looked at her.

"I'm glad the invitation is limited to only a few of us, else it would have been hard to keep the guys away from you," Matt said and Andy laughed softly.

"I will appreciate it if you don't keep them away," she said with a wink that made everyone laugh.

"Can we leave now?" Bryan asked and they nodded.

"How are we going?" Andy asked, since she wasn't sure who she was going with seeing how they were all evenly paired and she seemed to be the odd one out.

"We came with our cars. You can join us," Matt said, holding out his spare arm to her since he was holding Candace with the other.

"Sorry, Matt, but family comes first. Andy, you're with Jade and me," Harry said and Candace raised a brow.

"I'm family too," she reminded Harry.

"You've had her to yourself all this while. Stick with your boyfriend. I'm responsible for Andy. Andy? Come with us," Harry said and Andy grinned as she went to take Harry's arm.

Jade winked at Andy. "Looks like you're stuck with us, Andy. Let's make it a memorable night!" Jade said excitedly, surprising Harry and the others who had expected her to complain about the intrusion.

Andy chuckled, feeling the warmth of friendship and familial protectiveness.

As they all stepped out of the house, the group radiated an aura of elegance and camaraderie, ready to embark on a night of celebration for Bryan and Sonia's impending journey into marriage.

"I'm so glad it finally stopped raining," Lucy said as Tom led her to the car.

"I have a white blazer inside the car. You can wear it when you start feeling cold," Tom said since her jumpsuit had no sleeves and the weather was a bit cold.

"Thanks. I was sort of worried about catching a cold. I didn't foresee the cold weather," she said and he nodded with understanding.

"I brought the blazer because of you, a gentleman has to make sure his lady is never cold. And don't worry. If the blazer doesn't do the job, I will. I can make you sweat really fast if we have a moment alone," he promised and Lucy giggled as they got into the car.

The moment Tom started the car, Lucy turned to him, "Lucas is here," Lucy said, wanting to see Tom's reaction.

"Really? When did he get in?" He asked innocently and Lucy giggled.

"I was going to forgive you for not telling me about it last night, but now you've made it impossible," Lucy said and Tom slapped his forehead.

"Shit! I thought you meant he is right here. I didn't know you meant Ludus...."

"Keep lying, Tom. You're increasing the list of your offenses," Lucy cut in.

"Alright, I'm going to shut up."

"Also you told Lucas all about Amy. Stuff I told you in confidence. Do you know how embarrassing it was? After I assured Amy that you would keep everything to yourself?" Lucy asked and Tom shook his head.

"I'm sorry. It wasn't intentional. And you didn't ask me not to tell Lucas. I remembered that he had been involved with Amy and her friend in the past so I didn't think it was meant to be a secret from him. I will apologize to Amy if you want me to," he said and she shook her head.

"No. You don't have to apologize to her, I already did. But I'm going to punish you myself," She said and Tom glanced at her.

"What's the punishment? I don't mind being chained or tied to the bed post and you having your way mercilessly with me. I know I deserve that. I've been a very bad boy," Tom drawled and Lucy laughed.

"Let's just focus tonight. Tomorrow we will decide on a suitable punishment after the wedding," Lucy said and Tom grinned.

"You realize I didn't mean to keep secrets from you about Lucas, right? I only did because it was meant to be a surprise," he said apologetically.

"Well, it was. I got to my apartment and saw Lucas...."

"What is it with you and ruining surprises?" Tom asked and she raised a brow.

"What do you mean?"

"I flew down to Heden to surprise you, and you chose that time to fly back to Ludus, and now it's Lucas whose surprise you ruined," Tom said and Lucy giggled.

"What you mean is that I love surprising my surprisers," she said with a wink and Tom chuckled, hoping inwardly that she wouldn't ruin his engagement surprise too.

Bình luận

36

Xem tất cả?

Đăng bình luận của bạn!

18

Biểu quyết

Gửi Ý Kiến

Liên tục xem thêm

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Each of them took personal photos, and each took a photo with Sonia and then just like that they all ended up spending over thirty minutes snapping photos. The room was a symphony of beauty and friendship, a testament to the bonds they shared.



After they were done, they stepped out of the room, entering the living area where the men awaited. The moment the ladies stepped into the living room, the men who had been conversing all rose. Since the women had decided on an all white party, the men had no choice but to be dressed in white.

Tom settled for a stylish white linen button-down shirt paired with well-fitted white trousers and loafers, adding a touch of sophistication.

Bryan donned a classic all-white tuxedo, complete with a white silk bowtie, exuding elegance for his special celebration.

Harry opted for a crisp, tailored white suit with a black silk lapel, paired with a white dress shirt and a sleek black tie.

Matt chose a more casual yet polished look, sporting white chinos paired with a tailored white dress shirt, rolled-up sleeves, and white sneakers for a laid-back vibe.

The men, suited up in crisp white attire, exuded charm and enthusiasm. The contrast of the ladies' all-white elegance against the men's sharp white shirts and tailored trousers created a visually stunning picture.

The men couldn't help but be captivated by the stunning elegance of their partners. The air was filled with admiration as each of the ladies stopped in front of their men with beaming and eager smiles as they waited to hear what their men had to say about their appearance.

Tom, mesmerized by Lucy's ethereal beauty, remarked, "Lucy, you look absolutely radiant and too beautiful to be true. It's as if you stepped out of a dream."

Lucy blushed, "Your dream, maybe. And you look too handsome for your own good," she said and Tom chuckled.

Away from them, Bryan couldn't take his eyes off Sonia, who looked effortlessly chic in her white ensemble. You are the most stunning bride-to-be, and I'm the luckiest guy to have you," he said with a smile.

Sonia grinned, "Yes, you are. And you better don't forget that. And you don't look so bad yourself, groom-to-be," she joked and he laughed as he took her hand and raised it to his lips.

"You look absolutely enchanting, goddess, and you just made white my favorite color," Harry said to Jade and she grinned at the look of awe in his eyes.

"If you look this awestruck now, how are you going to look when you see me in a wedding dress on our wedding day?" She asked with a wink and Harry chuckled.

"I just might burst into tears," Harry said and Jade giggled.

"Who is this absolutely gorgeous damsel?" Matt asked in utter admiration and Candace grinned.

"She is your girlfriend. You clean up nice," Candace said as she removed an imaginary flint from his shirt and Matt chuckled.

As the compliments flowed, Andy, stood back with a wide grin on her face as she looked at each of them.

Harry, being the caring big brother turned to Andy, "Andy, you look absolutely lovely," Harry said and Andy grinned.

"Thanks, Harry. Here I was thinking I wasn't going to get any compliment after all my effort to look this good," she said and Matt looked at her.

"I'm glad the invitation is limited to only a few of us, else it would have been hard to keep the guys away from you," Matt said and Andy laughed softly.

"I will appreciate it if you don't keep them away," she said with a wink that made everyone laugh.

"Can we leave now?" Bryan asked and they nodded.

"How are we going?" Andy asked, since she wasn't sure who she was going with seeing how they were all evenly paired and she seemed to be the odd one out.

"We came with our cars. You can join us," Matt said, holding out his spare arm to her since he was holding Candace with the other.

"Sorry, Matt, but family comes first. Andy, you're with Jade and me," Harry said and Candace raised a brow.

"I'm family too," she reminded Harry.

"You've had her to yourself all this while. Stick with your boyfriend. I'm responsible for Andy. Andy? Come with us," Harry said and Andy grinned as she went to take Harry's arm.

Jade winked at Andy. "Looks like you're stuck with us, Andy. Let's make it a memorable night!" Jade said excitedly, surprising Harry and the others who had expected her to complain about the intrusion.

Andy chuckled, feeling the warmth of friendship and familial protectiveness.

As they all stepped out of the house, the group radiated an aura of elegance and camaraderie, ready to embark on a night of celebration for Bryan and Sonia's impending journey into marriage.

"I'm so glad it finally stopped raining," Lucy said as Tom led her to the car.

"I have a white blazer inside the car. You can wear it when you start feeling cold," Tom said since her jumpsuit had no sleeves and the weather was a bit cold.

"Thanks. I was sort of worried about catching a cold. I didn't foresee the cold weather," she said and he nodded with understanding.

"I brought the blazer because of you, a gentleman has to make sure his lady is never cold. And don't worry. If the blazer doesn't do the job, I will. I can make you sweat really fast if we have a moment alone," he promised and Lucy giggled as they got into the car.

The moment Tom started the car, Lucy turned to him, "Lucas is here," Lucy said, wanting to see Tom's reaction.

"Really? When did he get in?" He asked innocently and Lucy giggled.

"I was going to forgive you for not telling me about it last night, but now you've made it impossible," Lucy said and Tom slapped his forehead.

"Shit! I thought you meant he is right here. I didn't know you meant Ludus...."

"Keep lying, Tom. You're increasing the list of your offenses," Lucy cut in.

"Alright, I'm going to shut up."

"Also you told Lucas all about Amy. Stuff I told you in confidence. Do you know how embarrassing it was? After I assured Amy that you would keep everything to yourself?" Lucy asked and Tom shook his head.

"I'm sorry. It wasn't intentional. And you didn't ask me not to tell Lucas. I remembered that he had been involved with Amy and her friend in the past so I didn't think it was meant to be a secret from him. I will apologize to Amy if you want me to," he said and she shook her head.

"No. You don't have to apologize to her, I already did. But I'm going to punish you myself," She said and Tom glanced at her.

"What's the punishment? I don't mind being chained or tied to the bed post and you having your way mercilessly with me. I know I deserve that. I've been a very bad boy," Tom drawled and Lucy laughed.

"Let's just focus tonight. Tomorrow we will decide on a suitable punishment after the wedding," Lucy said and Tom grinned.

"You realize I didn't mean to keep secrets from you about Lucas, right? I only did because it was meant to be a surprise," he said apologetically.

"Well, it was. I got to my apartment and saw Lucas...."

"What is it with you and ruining surprises?" Tom asked and she raised a brow.

"What do you mean?"

"I flew down to Heden to surprise you, and you chose that time to fly back to Ludus, and now it's Lucas whose surprise you ruined," Tom said and Lucy giggled.

## Chapter 796 Vanessa Rosewood

After spending most of the day out, getting a makeover, Jeff stepped inside the apartment, freshly transformed from a rugged individual to a suave, clean-shaven man.

His usually untamed beard was gone, replaced by a meticulously groomed appearance. And his outfit, an all-white loose shirt with free flowing pants and a white hat, more for aesthetic than protection from the sun, completed the transformation.

"Mia? Are you in?" Jeff called, eager to show off his appearance to Mia who had aroused his desire for a makeover.

As he walked further into the apartment, he noticed that Mia's bedroom door was slightly ajar, a soft light seeping through the crack.

He could see her seated on the floor, engrossed in her laptop, a few papers scattered around her.

Jeff hesitated for a moment, a playful smile on his face as he contemplated surprising Mia with his new look. He knocked on the door gently before pushing it open.

"Hey there, Mia," Jeff announced, his tone a mix of excitement and mischief.

Mia looked up, her eyes widening as they fell upon Jeff's transformed appearance. She blinked in disbelief, then broke into a wide grin. "Jeff? Is that really you?" she exclaimed, as she rose up.

Jeff took off his hat and did a dramatic twirl, showcasing his outfit. "Ta-da! What do you think? Bryan's wedding calls for a change, doesn't it? And as his manager and one of his groomsmen, it's only right that I look good," Jeff said with a grin which showed off dimples that Mia had never noticed.

Mia laughed, genuinely impressed. "You look amazing! I didn't recognize you at first. Bryan is going to be shocked."

"That's the plan!" Jeff winked, then his brows pulled together when something occurred to him.

"Why aren't you getting ready? Bryan called to say they were on their way already and that we could join Lucy's twin. The party starts soon, and you need to look as stunning as me," he said and Mia's smile faded a bit.

"I'm not feeling too well. I think I will skip the party tonight," Mia said and Jeff narrowed his eyes.

"You don't look ill to me," he said and she gave him a pointed look.

"I don't have to look ill to be ill. I don't feel well, so I'd rather stay back. Let them know I'm not feeling okay and I'm sorry to miss the party," Mia said and this time concern creased Jeff's forehead as he leaned forward.

He knew how much Mia loved Sonia, so he doubted that she would lie or pretend to be ill to miss Sonia's bachelorette party for no reason.

"Are you okay? Do you need anything? I can stay here with you if you want?" Jeff offered.

Mia appreciated the genuine concern in Jeff's eyes. "I will be fine, really. It's probably just a headache. You go and enjoy the party. Bryan will need his trusty manager by his side."

Jeff hesitated for a moment, torn between his commitment to the party and his concern for Mia. "I can't leave you here alone if you're not feeling well. I don't mind missing the party," he said and Mia shook her head, offering a reassuring smile.

"Jeff, I appreciate it, but you can't miss Bryan's bachelor party because of me. It wouldn't make sense for the two of us who work for him to miss his party. I'm a big girl. I will be fine. Besides, I could use some quiet time," she said and reluctantly, Jeff sighed, glancing at Mia with a lingering worry.

"Promise me you will take care of yourself. And if you need anything, just call or text me, okay?" He said and Mia nodded, appreciating Jeff's caring nature.

"Of course, I will take care of myself. I think you should let open some of the buttons. It would give you a sexier look," Mia said and without thinking anything of her action she stepped forward and unbuttoned the first two buttons.

As she did that, Jeff gazed at her delicate hands, "Your hands are pretty," he said and she smiled.

"Thanks. I think you're good now," Mia said with a pleased smile as she stepped back to look at him.

"Now, go and have fun. Bryan is counting on you," she said, pointing to the door for him to leave.

As Jeff left Mia's bedroom, he couldn't shake off the lingering concern for her. Although he knew she was hiding something, he couldn't tell what she was hiding.

He wished she would be honest with him so he could help her in whatever way he could, Jeff thought as he made his way to his bedroom, where his reflection in the mirror reminded him of the stark contrast between his usual appearance and the polished version he now presented.

The transformation had been more than just physical— it was as if something inside him had been transformed too and with this new look of his, he was open to meeting ladies now. He made a mental note to ask Mia to sign him up on one of her dating sites as she had offered to do some weeks ago.

Outside the apartment, Lucas parked the car to let Amy out so he could hurry back to the hotel to pick Tyler and get ready for them to leave for the party.

"Thank you so much," Amy said for what was beginning to seem to Lucas like the one millionth time.

Without responding, Lucas got out of the car and took out her luggage from the backseat, and she got out of the car to join him.

"I can take it insi...." Before she could finish Lucas walked past her to go get the door and once he dropped the bag inside the bedroom, he turned to Amy who was standing in the living room and staring at him.

"Here is the key. I will be off now. Be good," Lucas said as he set the key on table before heading for the door.

"Wait!" Amy called before Lucas could leave.

"Yeah?" Lucas asked, and Amy gazed at him, unable to say what she wanted to say.

"Uhm, never mind," she said with a shake of her head even though she had wanted to ask him if he would come back to the apartment and if he was leaving Ludus soon.

"Alright then," Lucas said as he walked out of the house and shut the door behind him.

He was aware that she wanted to say something to him but he just wasn't curious enough to want to make her say it. And neither did he have the time. He had other commitments and as far as he was concerned he had given Amy enough of his time for the day.

Lucas walked over to the apartment which Mia and Jeff shared and he pressed the doorbell.

Jeff answered the door, "You are Lucas, right?" Jeff asked and Lucas nodded.

"Yes. We can leave now, but if you don't mind we would have to stop at the hotel for me to pick Tyler and also change into my outfit. I don't think it makes sense for me to drop Amy over and then go back to the hotel to get dressed and then come back here to pick you," Lucas said and Jeff nodded in agreement.

"I agree with you. We can leave now since I'm ready. I will wait in the car," Jeff said and Lucas raised a brow.

"What about your girlfriend? Is she ready?" He asked and Jeff frowned.

"Mia? She isn't my girlfriend. And no, she is not coming with us. She isn't feeling well," Jeff said and Lucas nodded.

"Alright. Let's leave then," Lucas said as he returned to the car, and Jeff called out to Mia that he was leaving before following after Lucas.

"I suppose you know the venue?" Lucas asked hopefully after he started driving.

"No, I don't. I thought you did," Jeff said and Lucas sighed.

"I thought you would know it. Tom offered to send his driver to get us but I said we would find our way," Lucas said and Jeff chuckled.

"Then we will just have to hope we don't get lost," Jeff said and Lucas laughed too.

"We can use google map...."

"No way! I'd rather get lost on my own than let google map do that to me. The last time I did that, I had my regrets. I'm sure we will find our way. And we can call Tom or Lucy and ask for directions as we go. I wonder why they chose to throw a party outside the city," Lucas said the last part more to himself than to Jeff.

A short while later after they had picked Tyler and Lucas had changed into his outfit which Tyler had gotten for them both, Tyler looked at Jeff.

"I thought your girlfriend was coming with us?" He asked Jeff curiously.

"He said she is not feeling too well so she isn't coming with us," Lucas informed Tyler.

Tyler could bet his last cash that she wasn't ill and was not joining them because she was avoiding him. Of that he was very sure.

But why? Was it possible that she was Vanessa Rosewood? If she was, why was she here when she was supposedly dead and buried? Tyler mused.

"And she is not my girlfriend. We only work together," Jeff said and Tyler raised a brow.

"Really? How long has she been working with you?" Tyler asked curiously, wanting to get as much information as he could on her.

"Close to two years now. If you're asking because we live together, it's just a temporary arrangement because we moved here on short notice," Jeff clarified.

"No. That isn't why I was asking. She just looks very much like someone I used to know. It's almost like she came back from the dead," Tyler said and Lucas sighed.

"I can't believe you're still on that. She is most likely not the one. Doppelg?ngers exist," Lucas said but Jeff's interest was piqued.

"That's highly unlikely. Did she have a reference? Maybe somewhere she worked before joining you. Of where she is from? Do you know her family?" Tyler asked, and this further aroused Jeff's interest.

"Did you tell her she looks familiar?" Jeff asked ignoring Tyler's question.

"Yes. Earlier. But she claimed she had a common face," Tyler said, and that made Jeff remember what Harry had said as well when he met Mia for the first time and how she seemed to have avoided every gathering where Harry was present including the anniversary dinner party.

He remembered she had claimed she was ill then as well, and he also remembered how flustered she had been to see Harry at Bryan's engagement party.

Jeff also remembered how uncomfortable she seemed each time he asked about her family or anything personal.

"Can I see a picture of this person you think she looks like? What's her name?" Jeff asked, wanting to see if it was truly Mia since it made sense that Mia was possibly avoiding this party because of Tyler.

"Vanessa Rosewood. At first I thought I was mistaken but then I asked a friend and colleague of mine who was close to her for her picture and name, and he sent this today," Tyler said as he passed the phone from the back to Jeff who was seated in front.

The moment Jeff saw the photo of Vanessa Rosewood, he knew without a doubt that it was Mia, only that her eyes seemed sadder than they already were, but there was a forced smile on her lips, and she was dressed very elegantly in stylish and expensive clothes.

"This lady is dead?" Jeff asked as he gazed at the face which he knew very well was Mia's.

"Yes. She supposedly died in an accident. Don't you think she looks like your colleague?" Tyler asked and Jeff shook his head.

"There is a resemblance, but I'm sure she isn't the one," Jeff lied, determined to protect Mia from whatever it was she was running from.

Although he didn't know her story, he didn't need to know the details to know that she wasn't a criminal and whatever she was running from must have made her really sad seeing how she looked so sad even in the picture and kept crying till date.

"You didn't tell your friend that you saw someone who looked like her, did you? It would be mean to give false hope to someone after they had grieved," Jeff said, wanting to be sure Tyler wouldn't cause any problems for Mia.

"I didn't," Tyler lied, "Did I mention that they never saw her body after the accident?"

"Too bad she isn't the one. They will have to keep looking for the body elsewhere," Jeff said stiffly.

## Chapter 797 Kiss Or Snap

As the cars stopped at the mountainside resort, the others who had never been there gushed softly at the beautiful sight of the mountains and waterfall.

"This is so much more beautiful than I expected. Thanks for sharing this with us," Bryan said to Tom when he saw how speechless Sonia was as she looked around.

"You don't have to thank me for anything," Tom said, while Lucy eagerly ushered them in the direction of the yacht since she was very excited to show it off.

She stopped and gasped in belief when she saw the yacht which was once a plain white now had colors on it. Not just colors, letters.

The words "QUEEN LUCY" were boldly displayed in red.

She turned to look at Tom who was now grinning at her, "I thought I should name her on your behalf since you didn't seem to know you were supposed to name her," he said and Lucy smiled as she walked back to him and kissed him.

"Aww, that's so lovely," Andy said, while the others smiled as they continued to the yacht, leaving Lucy and Tom behind.

A glittering white sash at the entrance of the yacht welcomed the guests to Sonia and Bryan's bachelor bachelorette party.

Sonia was welcomed by a young man who handed her a bouquet of flowers, "This looks like a romantic dinner for many," Sonia said with a pleased smile when they got on the deck of Queen Lucy and met the men playing the violin on the deck with a wide glass banquet table at the center, filled with wineglasses in front of each seat, and there were candles at the center of the table.

"It looks more like a scene plucked out of titanic," Andy said.

"Thankfully there are no silly teenagers running around here, so I believe we are safe," Jade said and Candace snorted.

"Not with you and Harry here," Candace said and Harry chuckled.

"Do you really want to do that with me here? In the presence of your sugar boy?" Harry asked and Candace glared at him while Matt raised a brow.

"Good. I didn't think so," Harry said while Matt turned to Candace.

"Sugar boy?"

"He calls you that because I'm older than you," Candace explained and Matt scowled at Harry's back since he had walked past them.

"He is one to talk when he is dating the youngest amongst us here," Matt said and Candace giggled.

"The most childish too, if you ask me," Candace said and Matt chuckled liking that they were gossiping Harry together.

"Are you sure Lucas and the others would be able to locate this place easily?" Lucy asked and Tom nodded.

"Sure. I wouldn't build a resort in a place that isn't easily locatable, would I? As long as he follows the direction I sent him, he will find his way," Tom said as they joined the others.

"Let's wait to see if the others will join us within the next thirty minutes before we begin. So, until then, you can look around," Lucy said and everyone else went to take a look at the interior of the yacht while Lucy and Tom hung out at the deck.

Thirty minutes later, everyone returned to the deck, and no sooner had they settled down and were about to begin before Aurora and Philip arrived and joined them.



"Congrats on your engagement," Sonia, Lucy and Candace told her, and Aurora raised a brow when she noticed the way Matt was seated closely to Candace and holding her hand.

"Thanks. Don't tell me you are both officially an item now," Aurora asked with a grin, remembering all the drama at the anniversary party.

"Alright. I won't tell you," Candace said, and Aurora giggled.

"Aww. This is so cute. I guess we all are here with our partners," she said and Andy scowled.

"I suppose as the only single lady in your midst I should excuse you all then," she said and they all laughed.

"Aurora, meet Andy, my favorite sister-in-law to be. Andy, meet Aurora, the lady who almost snatched your brother from me and asked me to be her maid of honor when she marries my boyfriend," Jade said and they all laughed.

"I didn't almost snatch him. You hooked me up with him saying he was your old boring uncle, and he wasn't even your boyfriend," Aurora said and Philip scowled playfully.

"Don't talk about another man in front of me, baby," Philip said and Candace shook her head.

"Another clingy man spotted. It's like clinginess and possessiveness is a thing with the males in your group," Candace said to Harry.

"Says the one who couldn't stand her actor boyfriend kissing on a movie set," Harry said and Candace looked at Jade incredulously.

"I can't believe you told him that, you snitch!" She hissed and Jade raised a brow.

"And what makes you think I told him and not Andy?"

Before Candace could respond, Lucy used a spoon to hit her glass, "Ladies and gentlemen, I need your attention. Tonight is not about any of you. It's all about Sony—— soon-to-be Mrs Hank rather..." Lucy corrected and Sonia raised her wineglass to Lucy, making them laugh, "And Bryan. Tonight is a celebration of them both and their love, so I will appreciate it if we don't get distracted or make it about ourselves——"

"Why are you staring at me while saying that?" Jade interrupted with a frown when Lucy looked at her.

"Because of that exactly. She looked at everyone before looking at you, yet you're the only one interrupting her to ask her that," Candace said and Jade frowned.

"Why did she have to look at me at the exact time she made that statement?" Jade asked and almost everyone looked at Harry.

"Esquire...."

"They all keep picking on me," she complained to Harry.

"I wasn't picking on you. I was only addressing everyone. I'm sorry if you misunderstood me," Lucy said and Sonia looked at Jade.

"The beautiful thing about tonight is that I'm the first in this group to be getting married. That means whatever you do tonight is what I'm going to be doing at your bachelorette party too. So, everyone should act wisely," Sonia promised with a relaxed smile and Jade scowled at her.

"Can I go on?" Lucy asked, looking at Jade directly this time.

"Sure. I won't utter a word for the rest of the evening," Jade promised and Harry turned to her as he rose.

"Come with me, babe," he said, extending his hand to her and she took it.

"Please excuse us," Harry told the others before leading her away.

"What? Do you want to scold me for embarrassing you?" She asked as she followed him.

"You didn't embarrass me, and no I don't want to scold you," he said and she frowned.

"Then why did we leave the others?" She asked as he led her to one of the cabins.

"Because I thought you were upset and needed timeout," Harry said and Jade sighed as they walked into the cabin and Harry shut the door behind them.

"Lucy gave me a pointed look when she made that statement. How come she was looking at everyone else but chose to look at me at that point if she wasn't referring to me?" Jade asked and Harry faced her and placed both hands on her shoulders.

"Do you think you make things about yourself?" Harry asked and she frowned.

"Of course, not!"

"Don't you think responding the way you did sort of made it seem like you just made all of that about yourself?" Harry asked and she frowned.

"Do you think so?"

"Do I think what?" Harry asked and Jade shrugged.

"That I made that about myself?"

"I think you shouldn't have responded to what Lucy said since she didn't make any direct reference to you. So, what if it was a public gathering and not an intimate one like this, and the speaker looked at you after saying something unflattering? Would you interrupt that way?" Harry asked and Jade scowled.

"So, you brought me in to scold me after all. And you agree with them that I made that about myself. Couldn't you have taken my side and.... Ouch!" She hissed in annoyance when Harry finger flicked her forehead.

"Pay attention. I will always have your back. What happened out there was a girl thing between you and your friends hence I couldn't interfere. And it's not like anyone was outrightly rude to you...."

"Candace was," she hissed.

"You've known Candace longer than I have even though she is my sister. That is between the both of you. I won't get in the middle of that. And I'm not scolding you. You asked for my opinion and

I'm only letting you know as the brilliant lady you are, you could have handled it better. Don't make any conversation be centered around you tonight. It's all about Bryan and Sonia unless you are asked a personal question. Can we stick to that?" He asked and she grudgingly gave him a nod.

"Good. I brought you here because I realized we haven't taken a photo together yet," he said and she raised a brow doubtfully.

"Really?" She asked and he nodded.

"Yes. That and also because I wanted to kiss you so badly. You look too beautiful tonight," he said and she giggled.

"Which should we do first? Kiss or snap?" She asked, and Harry grinned, satisfied that she was no longer sulking.

"Let's snap first. I don't want to ruin your lips," he said and she fluttered her lashes.

"I don't mind my lips or body being ruined by you," she said making him chuckle as he took his phone to take selfies with her.

By the time they returned outside to join the others, Lucas, Jeff and Tyler had just arrived and Lucy was introducing Lucas and Tyler to Philip and Aurora since they were the only ones who didn't know them.

"And there is Harry, your very male cousin," Lucy said and the ladies giggled when they remembered how Lucas had mistaken Andy for Harry.

"Very male cousin?" Harry asked, wondering why he was being described that way and Andy explained it to him making everyone else who had not gotten the joke to laugh.

"It's nice to finally meet you," Lucas told Harry as he shook hands with him.

"Same here. I do hope we can hangout after the wedding," Harry said and Lucas nodded.

"Sure," he said with a grin.

"Why is Mia not with you?" Sonia asked Jeff after the guys were seated.

"And Amy. I thought you would all be coming together," Lucy said, looking at Lucas.

"Mia wasn't feeling well thanks to the rain. I even had to get her some medicine before leaving," Jeff lied, wanting to make sure it was believable to everyone especially Tyler.

Harry looked at Jeff, wondering if Mia was really ill or she was avoiding the party because she was made uncomfortable by their discussion the previous day.

"Oh, that's so sad. I was looking forward to spending the evening with her as the single ladies in the group," Andy said with a sigh.

"You don't have to be single if you don't want to be. I'm right here," Tyler said with a playful wriggle of his brow, and Andy giggled.

"I suppose it won't hurt to have you as my partner for the night. But only for tonight," she said and Tyler nodded eagerly as he took the seat beside her.

"And Amy?" Lucy asked Lucas again since he was yet to respond.

"Miley passed," Lucas said simply and understanding dawned on Lucy.

"Oh, dear!" Lucy murmured, feeling sorry for Amy.

"Let's talk about it later," she told Lucas, not wanting to ruin the mood of the party.

"Now that we are all here, let's get the party started. Soon-to-be Mrs Hank, and Bryan, I hope you both are ready to answer all our questions," Lucy said with a grin as she gave a nod to Matt to take over as the master of ceremony.

#### Chapter 798 Game Night

Matt, the emcee for the evening, took center stage, microphone in hand, ready to orchestrate the festivities.

"Alright, ladies and gentlemen, let's get this party started!" Matt announced, his voice echoing over the sound of laughter and music.

"But before we dive into the fun, let's take a moment to celebrate the love between our bride and groom-to-be," Matt said and everyone cheered as the champagne flowed, and they raised their glasses in a toast to Sonia and Bryan.

"I'm very excited about these two. I still remember clearly how Bryan invited me over to his house in Sogal to help him get rid of Sony," Matt said and everyone laughed.

"Really? Bryan did that?" Andy asked in disbelief.

"You shouldn't talk about that here or now," Bryan said, glaring at him while Sonia giggled.

"The moment I saw you, I knew that was why you visited. He thought he could get rid of me so easily," Sonia said with a smug smile.

"So, what did you do?" Aurora asked Matt with interest, curious to hear the story.

"I went and fell in love with Sonia," Matt said with a chuckle, and everyone laughed.

"I fell for her first before Bryan did. She won my heart with a beautiful nature, so it was us both against Bryan," Matt said and Sonia giggled.

"I love you, Matt," Sonia said as she blew him a kiss, while Bryan scowled dramatically.

"I love you more my dearest, Sony. Not every man is lucky to have his best friend marry a woman he also loves. I think I should also mention here that Bryan said he would rather cut off his dick than...."

"MATT!" Bryan growled, red faced, and Matt grinned as everyone else laughed at Bryan's obvious embarrassment.

"Let's move to the next item on the list. Tonight, we're going to put Sonia and Bryan's love to the test," Matt declared with a mischievous grin.

"Each of you will have the chance to ask them a question about their relationship. How did they know they were meant for each other? What made them take the leap into forever? Let's find out!" Matt said and everyone clapped.

"Who is going first?" Matt asked, and Lucy raised her hand

With a twinkle in her eye, Lucy asked Sonia, "What was the moment you knew Bryan was the one for you?"

Sonia's smile was radiant as she recounted the memory. "I believe it was during your scandal. When I broke up with him and left to be with you. I thought I was going to die from the heartache," Sonia said, her eyes shining with tears.

"Aww," the ladies echoed.

"Really?" Bryan asked with a grin.

"Of course. And then I came to find you at Tom's apartment but you chose to hide," she said, slapping his hand at the memory.

"You didn't exactly come to find me. You just wanted to ask if he had heard from me..."

"And you were hiding like a little girl and eavesdropping on our conversation," Tom cut in and everyone laughed when Bryan glared at him.

"Why are you all doing this to me? This is supposed to be a night to celebrate my fiancée and I not embarrass me!" Bryan complained.

"Okay, no one is permitted to embarrass the group anymore! Next question? That should be the person seated next to Lucy," Matt said and Tom smiled.

"Bryan, when did you realize you were in love with her?" Tom asked, since he was seated next to Lucy.

Bryan grinned, "It's so funny that now that you ask I can remember the moments when I started falling for her. But I realized it was over for me during our first interview together at my house while we were still doing the reality show. As I responded to the interviewer's question about how she captured my heart, I realized I wasn't acting but meant every word I was saying," Bryan said and Sonia turned to him, her love for him shining brightly in her eyes.

"For real? You meant all of that?" She asked when she remembered how she had been hoping the words would be real.

Bryan nodded as he beamed at her, "I meant every word of it. I've not given a single moment of thought to another lady since I crossed path with you. Everyone else pales in comparison to you," Bryan said as he held her gaze and raised her hand to his lips.

Lucy sniffled. When she had suggested they do this in order to remind Sonia how much she loved Bryan and wanted to be with him, she had not expected to be so much affected by their affection for one another.

"You're both going to make me teary," she said with a wobbly smile and was pleased to see she wasn't the only one affected, the other ladies were too.

"It's your turn to ask a question," Jade nudged Harry's side when he remained silent.

Harry cleared his throat and then glanced at Bryan, "How could you just propose to a random stranger? What were you thinking?" He asked incredulously, like he had been dying to ask Bryan that question, and everyone laughed.

"I wasn't thinking. My feet led me to her. Or I suppose it was the universe that led me to her. I was destined to be with her and fated to love her," Bryan said and sounds of 'aww' rent the air and Sonia giggled

"I'm the writer yet you have the best lines," she said as she leaned over and kissed him on the lips, surprising Bryan since she had not kissed him ever since her spitting episode started.

"What about you, Sony? Why did you say yes?" Jade asked since it was her turn, and Sonia giggled.

"Maybe because I'm crazy. He was my celebrity crush, I was single and bored, and there he was asking me to marry him. What did you expect me to say? I didn't honestly care why he did that," Sonia said with a grin and everyone laughed, enjoying the story.

"I was beyond shocked when she accepted. And then she gave me the craziest kiss of my life," Bryan said with a chuckle as he remembered that night

"You kissed him right there?" Andy asked in amusement, jumping everyone else to ask.

"Yes. In case it was a prank I wanted to know what his lips tasted like before the prank would be over," Sonia said with a wink and they all laughed.

"You're indeed, crazy. But then again, you've always been crazy," Tyler said with a grin as he raised his glass to his lips.

"Between the both of you, who said I love you first?" Candace asked, and the questions and answers continued, each one revealing a new layer of their love story. From the moment they met to the challenges they've overcome together, Sonia and Bryan's bond only grew stronger with each shared memory.

As the questions and answers continued round the table, Jeff couldn't help missing Mia's presence as they spoke, since he believed that Mia had played a huge role in all of this. The reality show and living together had been her idea after all. And she had called it from the beginning that Sonia had what it would take to tame Bryan.

As the night unfolded, amidst the laughter and music, Matt suggested they play a game of "Couple Trivia" to test their knowledge of Sonia and Bryan's relationship.

"Alright, everyone, listen up!" Matt called out over the chatter of the group.

"We're about to put your knowledge of Sonia and Bryan's love story to the test. I'll ask a series of questions, and the team with the most correct answers wins bragging rights for the rest of the night!" Matt said, with a grin plastered on his face as he explained the rules, while the teams were formed.

Everyone wanted to be on Lucy's team because she was Sonia's best friend and they believed she would know more exclusive details about Sonia and Bryan's relationship, so Matt exempted Lucy from the game, asking her to be the judge instead.

Tom and Jade, being Bryan's siblings were asked to head the two teams and choose their teammates.

Immediately, Jade chose, Harry, Jeff, Andy, and Lucas.

"No way, you can't choose Harry and then choose Lucas too. Lucas should be on my side since he is my girlfriend's twin brother," Tom protested.

"Alright. I will take Tyler. You can have the rest of them," Jade said with a grin since apart from Harry, she had taken the other three people who knew Bryan and Sonia unlike the others.

Tyler knew Sonia from childhood, Andy was close to Sonia like she was, and Jeff worked closely with Bryan.

"Wow. You didn't choose me," Candace said and Jade shrugged.

"You've been too annoying lately and I want your team to lose," Jade said and Candace giggled.

"Alright then. So, I have Lucas, Philip, Aurora, and Candace. That's fair. The game can begin," Tom said and Matt began to ask the questions.

Tom and his team huddled together, whispering strategies, while Jade and her team exchanged playful banter, determined to outsmart the competition.

With the teams in place, Matt cleared his throat and began firing off questions with gusto. "First question: Where did Sonia and Bryan share their first kiss?"

The teams buzzed with excitement, frantically scribbling down their answers on slips of paper. After a flurry of whispered debates and quick calculations, they submitted their responses to Matt, who eagerly tallied up the scores.

"Let's see how you did!" Matt announced, a twinkle of mischief in his eye. "The correct answer is... at the lobby of the hotel where they first met and Bryan proposed!"

Cheers erupted from the Tom's team as they celebrated their victory, while the other teams groaned in good-natured defeat. But there was no time to dwell on losses as Matt dove into the next question, keeping the energy high and the competition fierce.

Laughter filled the air as friends competed in the ultimate test of love and friendship to see who knew Sonia and Bryan best.

As the game progressed, the questions delved deeper into Sonia and Bryan's shared history, from their favorite date spots to the nicknames they had for each other. Each correct answer was met with cheers and high-fives, while incorrect guesses sparked playful ribbing and laughter.

Amidst the friendly rivalry, the true spirit of the game shone through—the bonds of friendship and love that united everyone on board. Even as the teams vied for victory, there was a sense of camaraderie and joy that filled the air, reminding Sonia and Bryan of the incredible support system they had surrounding them.

As the final question was announced, the tension mounted, with the fate of the game hanging in the balance. With bated breath, the teams waited for Matt to reveal the ultimate challenge that would determine the winner.

"And now, for the last question," Matt declared, a mischievous grin spreading across his face. "What does Bryan love most about Sony?"

The teams exchanged knowing glances, their minds racing as they wracked their brains for the answer. With a triumphant shout, Jade's team proudly scribbled down their response, confident in their victory.

After a suspenseful pause, Matt announced the correct answer, "Sonia's craziness!"

Cheers erupted as Lucy announced Jade's team to be the winning team, and they celebrated their hard-earned triumph.

But in the end, it wasn't about who won or lost—it was about the memories made, the laughter shared, and the love that filled the air on this unforgettable night aboard Queen Lucy.

As the game came to a close, Sonia and Bryan looked around at their friends and family, their hearts overflowing with gratitude for each and every one of them. In that moment, surrounded by the people they cherished most, they knew that this night would be etched in their memories forever—a testament to the enduring power of love, laughter, and the bonds that bind them together.

After the couple trivia, they played some other games, having Bryan and Sonia sit with their backs to each other while Matt asked them both questions to test how well they know each other.

As the night wore on, the music pulsed through the yacht, and the stars glittered overhead, casting a magical glow over the festivities. They danced and sang late into the night, celebrating the love that brought them all together.

While everyone mingled after the party, Harry sought Sonia out, "I have been meaning to speak with you alone. Tom said you asked him to propose to Lucy at the Christmas party," Harry asked and Sonia grinned.

"Don't you think it's a good idea?" She asked and Harry shook his head.

"I would rather Lucy proposes first," Harry said and Sonia nodded.

"Sure. We can make that happen. It's left for us to plan the engagement to make sure it happens," Sonia said just as Bryan approached them.

"Let's find time to discuss the details," Sonia said as she let Bryan lead her away so she could go get some rest for their big day tomorrow.

## Chapter 799 Scars

All through the night, Mia had contemplated packing up and running off to go start afresh somewhere else before Tyler blows her cover, but she hadn't been able to bring herself to do that.

She owed it to Bryan and Sonia to be present for their wedding. Maybe after the wedding, she could run off to go start over somewhere else, but for now, she had to be present and be there for them.

Knowing that Jeff would most likely be back soon since they had spent the night on the yacht, she decided to go freshen up so she would leave for Bryan's place and spend time with Sonia and the rest of the ladies before it was time for the wedding.

The wedding had been fixed for evening because of Sonia, so she could get enough rest before the wedding, and also because she had said she preferred an evening wedding party.

As Mia showered, Tyler's face flashed before her, his knowing smirk a silent accusation. Run, a voice whispered in her mind. Run before they tear off your carefully constructed mask, and expose the scars beneath.



She was startled out of her thought by the sound of the persistent sound of the doorbell, and only then did she remember that she had locked the door from within because Jeff had spent the night out.

She quickly rinsed the soapsuds off her body and tied her towel over her chest as she hurried out to confirm if it was Jeff and to open the door.

She looked through the peephole and when she saw that it was Jeff, she opened the door.

"Sorry. I was in the shower," Mia said the moment Jeff stepped in.

"I guess you are feeling better now, that's good," he said and she flashed him a smile.

"Yes, thanks. Give me a minute to finish up in the bathroom, and then you can tell me all about the party before I leave to go get ready with Sonia and the others," Mia said before walking past Jeff to return inside.

The moment she turned her back to him, Jeff frowned when he saw some jagged scars etched across her back, barely concealed by the towel wrapped around her.

His breath caught in his throat as he realized the depth of the secrets she harbored beneath her calm exterior.

The scars spoke volumes, telling a story of pain, fear, and resilience that Mia had kept hidden from the world.

He hesitated, torn between respecting her privacy and confronting the truth that lay just beneath the surface. But the sight of those scars, stark against the pale canvas of her skin, gnawed at his conscience. He couldn't ignore them, couldn't pretend he hadn't seen the evidence of her suffering.

"Mia," he began, his voice soft but tinged with concern and Mia turned to look at him, wondering what was wrong.

It wasn't until she saw the look on his face and his eyes that she realized what was wrong.

"What... what happened?"

Mia's shoulders tensed at the question, and her grip on the towel tightened as she realized that she had momentarily forgotten about her scars in her hurry to answer the door.

Her expression was guarded as she avoided his gaze, "I... I don't want to talk about it," she murmured, her voice barely audible over the pounding of her heart.

With that she turned away from him, retreating into the sanctuary of her bedroom. Her movements were stiff.

Jeff's heart ached at the pain evident in her every movement, in the haunted look that shadowed her eyes. He wanted to reach out, to offer comfort and support, but he knew he had to tread carefully. Whatever had caused those scars was a wound that ran deep, one that Mia obviously wasn't ready to confront.

He stood there helplessly as Mia closed the door to her bedroom, shutting him out along with her secrets.

The silence that followed was heavy with unspoken truths, with the weight of the past that lingered between them.

Did her scars have anything to do with the reason she had run away from home and pretended to be dead, or were they a result of the accident that was claimed to take her life?

Did the scars have any reason to do with the reasons she cried almost every night and why she always looked sad to him no matter how much she smiled or laughed?

Jeff stood outside Mia's door, his mind swirling with questions and emotions he couldn't begin to unravel.

He wished he could erase the pain etched into Mia's skin, wished he could shield her from whatever memories that haunted her every waking moment, but he knew that healing was a journey Mia had to embark on herself.

All he could do was offer his unwavering support, his steadfast presence in the face of her darkest moments.

As he turned away from Mia's closed door, a resolve settled over him. He may not have all the answers, may not be able to erase the scars of her past, but he would stand by her side, a silent guardian in the storm that raged within her.

And together, they would navigate the tumultuous waters of healing, one step at a time, until Mia found the peace and solace she so desperately deserved.

Inside her bedroom, Mia trembled as she sank onto the edge of her bed, her heart pounding in her chest.

The memories she had fought so hard to suppress came rushing back with a vengeance, threatening to overwhelm her fragile defenses.

The sight of Jeff's concerned expression, the way he had hesitated before asking about the scars, stirred a whirlwind of emotions within her.

She had spent the last three years burying the pain, the fear, the shame, deep beneath a facade of strength and composure. But now, faced with Jeff's knowledge of her scars and his unspoken questions, the walls she had built around her crumbled like sandcastles against the tide.

Talking to Harry about her past had been different. Harry didn't see her scars, and Harry wasn't as close to her as Jeff was. Harry had not asked the question because he had any idea about anything or because he cared.

She had told him the summary of it all and had been able to detach herself from it as much as she could without giving in to the humiliating details of the abuse she had suffered.

But she knew it wasn't the same for Jeff. His question had come from a place of suspicion and genuine concern, and after catching a glimpse of her ugly scars, she could only imagine what he must be thinking.

Her mind drifted back to Henry, the man who had once been her husband. His cruelty and brutality, were etched into every scar that marred her skin, a constant reminder of the nightmare she had endured.

But Mia had fought back, had clawed her way out of the darkness, determined to reclaim her life from the clutches of her tormentor. Faking her own death had been her only escape, her only chance at a future free from Henry's suffocating grip.

And yet, the past had a way of resurfacing when least expected, of clawing its way back into the present like a relentless specter haunting her every move.

Jeff's question, had dredged up memories she had long buried, forcing her to confront the demons she had fought so hard to outrun.

Tears welled in Mia's eyes as she rose from the bed to stand in front of the mirror, and the tears dropped as she let down the towel and stared at her reflection in the mirror, the scars on her body a roadmap of pain and suffering she could never forget.

She wished she could confide in Jeff, and unburden herself of the weight she had carried for so long, but her shame and fear held her back. The shame of exposing her vulnerabilities, and the fear of reliving the horrors of her past.

With a shaky breath, Mia wiped away her tears, steeling herself against the tide of emotions threatening to engulf her.

She couldn't afford to unravel now, not when the stakes were higher than ever. She had promised to be there for Bryan and Sonia, to celebrate their love despite the shadows that lingered in her own heart, and she was going to do just that today, Mia resolved as she dressed up.

She had a wedding to attend, a celebration of love and new beginnings that she refused to let her past overshadow.

Determined to push aside the memories that threatened to consume her and cast aside the shadows that lingered within, Mia took a deep breath as she opened her bedroom door.

Slightly taken aback by the sight of Jeff seated in the living room like he was waiting for her, Mia squared her shoulders and forced a smile onto her lips as she joined him, masking the turmoil churning beneath the surface.

Jeff, who had been busy checking the internet for news of Vanessa Rosewood, looked up when he heard her coming, and she read his expression which was a mix of concern and sympathy.

"Hey, Jeff! Sorry about earlier. I was just caught up in getting ready for the wedding," she said, her voice bright and cheerful, though it rang hollow in her own ears.

Jeff nodded in understanding, his gaze lingering on her for a moment longer than usual. Mia's heart raced at the thought that he might press her further about the scars, but to her relief, he simply returned her smile.

"It's okay, Mia. I understand," he replied, his tone gentle but tinged with a hint of concern.

Mia breathed a silent sigh of relief, grateful for Jeff's willingness to steer the conversation away from the topic she dreaded discussing.

Relieved, Mia took the seat opposite him, "So, how did the party go last night? I still feel sorry that I couldn't make it," she said, her voice light and friendly, a stark contrast to the heaviness weighing on her heart.

Jeff's gaze softened as he regarded her, his eyes reflecting a depth of understanding that sent a shiver down her spine.

"It was... eventful," he replied, choosing his words carefully.

"The party was great. Bryan and Sonia had a blast, and everyone had a good time. But we missed having you there. I particularly missed having you there since I remembered clearly how you rooted for Sonia from the beginning," he said, and Mia's heart clenched at the sincerity in Jeff's voice, at the warmth that radiated from him despite the distance she had placed between them.

Seeing how he had respected her wish to not talk about her scars, she wished she could open up to him, but the fear of exposing her vulnerabilities held her back, tethering her to the safety of silence.

"I'm sure it must have been fun," she murmured, her gaze flickering away from his. "I just... wasn't feeling up to it."

Jeff nodded understandingly, though a hint of concern lingered in his eyes. "That's okay. We all have our off days. Here are some pictures and videos from last night. I tried to capture as much as I could for you," he said as he passed his phone to her, and Mia took it from him thankfully.

He watched as she smiled and giggled as she watched the videos of the games and conversations and he contemplated whether or not he should tell her that he had talked to Tyler last night and now knew her real identity.

After all he had seen about her and her husband online, he couldn't help but wonder what her story was.

Her husband seemed like a pretty good man. He was a wealthy philanthropist, given to charity and her parents were prominent business people.

Mia savored the fleeting moment of normalcy as she watched the videos. She was grateful for the chance to pretend, if only for a moment, that her past didn't exist between them.

"I see it was fun. Thanks for capturing these beautiful moments. Thanks to this, I feel like I was there," Mia said as she returned the phone to Jeff.

"I need to leave now," Mia said as she rose, but Jeff's voice stopped her in her tracks.

"Mia," he began, his tone gentle but firm. "I know you're going through something, and I want you to know that you don't have to face it alone. Whenever you're ready to talk, I'm here. I hope you know that you can trust me with whatever it is that's bothering you. If you ever need someone to talk to, I'm here for you. You know that, right? Friends, remember?"

As he spoke, Mia couldn't shake the feeling of his piercing gaze, as if he could see straight through the mask she wore to the vulnerability hidden beneath. She fought the urge to look away, to retreat back into the safety of her own thoughts, but Jeff's presence anchored her to the present, a reminder that she couldn't keep running forever.

She swallowed hard, forcing herself to meet his gaze. "Thank you, Jeff," she whispered, the weight of her gratitude heavy upon her tongue. "I appreciate that."

"I hope you will stop running from your past and fears whatever they are. You don't have to face them alone. Whenever you're ready to talk, Mia, I will be here. I promise," he said, his voice a soothing balm to her wounded soul.

Mia's throat tightened at his words, the lump of emotion threatening to choke her. She forced a smile onto her lips. "Thanks, Jeff," she replied, her voice barely above a whisper. "I'll keep that in mind."

With a final nod, Mia left the house, the weight of Jeff's promise lingering not only in the air but in her heart.

#### Chapter 800 It's Okay Not To Be Okay

After dropping off Jeff, Lucas hesitated as he contemplated whether or not he should go check on Amy or just drive back to the hotel so they could get some rest before it was time for the wedding.

"You know you want to check on her, so why not just do it and be quick about it? I'm exhausted," Tyler complained, seeing how Lucas remained seated in the car without driving.

"Should I just leave her alone?" Lucas asked Tyler, unsure.

"What do you want with her?" Tyler asked and Lucas shook his head.

"Nothing. Yet, I'm worried about her," he confessed.

He had been worried for most of the night during the party and had wondered how she was doing both emotionally as she mourned the loss of Miley, and physically as a result of being under the rain for a while. A couple of times he had almost been tempted to ask Lucy for her number so he would reach out to her to check on her.

Seeing that Lucas was still not making any move to go check on Amy or take them to the hotel, Tyler sighed dramatically as he unfastened his seatbelt and got out of the car.

"Where are going?" Lucas asked as he did the same.

"If you won't check in on her, I should check on her so you can take me to the hotel. I need to get some rest," Tyler said as he walked over to Lucy's door and before Lucas could stop him, he pressed the doorbell.

Inside the house, the weight of grief hung heavy in the air as Amy lay in Lucy's bed, her body wracked with sobs that seemed to have no end.

All through the night, her tears flowed freely, unchecked by the passage of time, as memories of Miley flooded her mind like a torrential downpour.

She had slept for only a moment, and tormented with dreams of Miley, she had woken up to resume crying.

What pained her the most was that because of the state of things between her and Miley's parents, she would most likely not be able to attend Miley's funeral and bid her best friend goodbye.

Amy clutched at the blankets, her heart aching with the emptiness of loss, and she closed her eyes, willing herself to find peace in the beautiful memories they had shared, amidst the storm of grief that threatened to consume her.

Amy's reverie was interrupted by the sound of the doorbell, and her heart skipped a beat. Lucas. It had to be Lucas, she mused, since he was the only one she knew who would check on her. She didn't expect Lucy to send Mia or Jeff, to check on her again.

She hesitated, unsure whether she had the strength to face him, to confront the rawness of her emotions in his presence.

Reluctantly, Amy pushed herself out of bed, her footsteps heavy as she made her way to the door.

As she walked past the mirror she paused, and her breath caught in her throat when she saw her reflection.

Her eyes were swollen and red, her cheeks flushed with the remnants of her anguish. She looked a mess, a shadow of the vibrant woman she had been just the previous morning.

She didn't want Lucas to see her like this, didn't want him to witness the devastation etched into every line of her face. Seeing her that way yesterday was enough.

But the ringing of the doorbell persisted, a gentle reminder of the concern that lay beyond the closed door.

What could she do? Ignore the door? Wouldn't that only make him more determined to see her? Amy thought with a resigned sigh as she continued to the door.

She discreetly looked through the window to confirm that it was Lucas, and when she saw him standing there with Tyler, she sighed inwardly.

Seeing that Tyler was there too, she figured they were probably there to pick something and she couldn't lock them out of Lucy's apartment. This wasn't her place after all.

Amy braced herself and opened the door just a crack, her swollen eyes downcast.

"Hello, Amy. We wanted to see how you are doing," Tyler greeted softly, his voice tinged with sympathy.

While Lucas stood at his side, his gaze warm and compassionate as he took in her disheveled appearance.

"Sorry to intrude. We just dropped off Jeff and decided to check on you before leaving and see how you're holding up," Lucas said apologetically.

Amy forced a small smile onto her lips, though it faltered under the weight of her grief. "I'm... I'm okay," she lied, her voice barely above a whisper. "Just... just tired, I guess," she said without looking up.

"Amy, it's okay not to be okay. You've been through a lot, and it's okay to take some time to grieve," Lucas said gently, while Tyler stepped aside for them to talk.

Amy swallowed back a sob, the lump in her throat threatening to choke her. "I know," she whispered, her voice barely audible over the pounding of her heart. "I'm just... struggling, I guess."

Lucas looked at her, not sure what to do. This was the exact reason he had been reluctant to check on her, cause he knew even if he did speak with her, he wouldn't know how best to comfort her.

Maybe if it were someone else he would embrace them, but with Amy, he was being extra cautious and he didn't even want to figure out why. Perhaps it was because of that awkward moment in her kitchen the previous day.

"Do you want to come in?" Amy asked still without meeting his gaze.

Seeing how she was avoiding his gaze, Lucas could tell that she didn't really want him in. Or maybe she did but was just too embarrassed to let him see her in that state.

"No. We just wanted to check in and be sure you weren't sick or anything. Be good, okay?" Lucas said and tears welled in Amy's eyes at his words.

"Thank you, Lucas. I... I appreciate it," she whispered.

With a final nod, Lucas stepped back, "I will get going now. See you when I see you," he said, knowing that he was most likely not going to see her again, since he wouldn't be coming back here anytime soon.

"Why did you excuse us?" Lucas asked when he got into the car and joined Tyler.

"You're the one who wanted to see her. I already said hello," Tyler said, and Lucas shook his head as he started the car.

"About the other lady, Mia...."

"Give it a rest, Ty," Lucas muttered.

"Yeah, I know. It's just that I already mentioned to my colleague that I saw someone who looked like Vanessa Rosewood," Tyler said and Lucas frowned.

"I thought you said you didn't?" Lucas asked and Tyler sighed.

"I did but I felt sort of embarrassed to admit it to Jeff. I know what I was talking about. I really believe she is the same person," Tyler said and Lucas shook his head.

"Even if she is, it shouldn't be your problem. Did she commit a crime and is wanted? If she faked her death and ran away from her life over there, then don't you think she might have a good reason to not want that life?" Lucas asked and Tyler nodded.

"Yeah, that was what I was thinking. And that's why I'm sort of worried that I mentioned it to my colleague," Tyler said and Lucas raised a brow.

"Do you think your colleague might tell her family about it?" Lucas asked and Tyler shrugged.

"Maybe. I don't know."

"Then you should inform the lady that you blew her cover...."

"How can I tell her that when she won't even admit who she is?" Tyler asked with a frown.

"Well, tell her anyway, whether or not she admits it," Lucas said impatiently.

"Alright. If she doesn't avoid me and shows up at the wedding, I will approach her and tell her," Tyler said and Lucas sighed.

"I don't think I can hang around Ludus till Monday as I planned," Lucas said and Tyler raised a brow.

"Why not?"

"I would like to go to Heden earlier than planned and sort out my business there. So, maybe we can leave for Heden tomorrow," Lucas said and Tyler nodded thoughtfully.

"That's fine by me. My family will definitely be happy to see me a day earlier," Tyler said and Lucas nodded.

"I guess you told your girlfriend that you're leaving tomorrow? Or do you plan to come see her after the wedding?" Tyler asked and Lucas scowled.

"She isn't my girlfriend, and I didn't tell her anything," Lucas said and Tyler chuckled.

"She isn't your girlfriend yet you worry about her more than...."

"Shut up. If you knew Miley or saw them both together, you'd worry about her too," Lucas said and Tyler nodded.

"I hear you," Tyler said and Lucas eyed him irritably not trusting his response.

"I'm serious," Lucas said defensively.

"And I said I've heard you. If you ask me, I don't mind you liking her. She is completely different from you know who," Tyler said, referring to Rachel.

"It's not your place to mind whether I like her or not...."

"It is. I didn't give my opinion on Rachael, but I plan to give it every step of the way for whoever else you choose to date," Tyler said and Lucas sighed.

"I'm not interested in a relationship yet. I'm not even sure I want to date anyone seriously or get married. When I'm ready to get involved again, it's not going to be anything serious. Maybe I'd get a friend with benefits," Lucas said and Tyler chuckled.

"What's funny?"

"Apart from the fact that you're not the friend with benefit type, you do not even have female friends, so why are you going into such a relationship with? Me?" Tyler asked and Lucas glanced at him with disgust.

"I can easily make female friends if I want to. Do you have any idea how many ladies flirt with me on a daily basis?" Lucas asked and Tyler grinned.

"I do have an idea. But I can bet my last dime that you're going to end up going into another serious relationship with your friend with benefit. That's the kind of person you are," Tyler said and Lucas shrugged.

"Bet it then. I'm not the same Lucas you used to know."

"Listen, you're not the type of person you're portraying yourself to be right now. And if for any reason you are trying to make yourself into who you are not because of what happened with Rachel, then I suggest you sign up for therapy," Tyler said with a serious expression.

"It's not about what happened with her. Do you realize that she is the only lady I've been with all my life? I should have fun...."

"That's not Lucas talking. I'm going to sign you up for therapy immediately we get back," Tyler said and Lucas chuckled.



"Alright. I was just kidding. But I'm really not ready for a relationship anytime soon," Lucas said and Tyler nodded.

"I understand," Tyler said quietly.

"What about you, though? I heard you asking Andy for her number last night. Don't tell me you are interested in her," Lucas asked and Tyler laughed.

"If you heard me asking for her number then how come you didn't hear what she said?"

"I was seated close to you, not her. What did she say?" Lucas asked curiously.

"She said doctors are boring, and she doesn't do doctors," Tyler said and Lucas chuckled.

"She really said that?" Lucas asked and Tyler laughed.

"I told her we are wealthy, and she said she was wealthy too," Tyler said with a grin.

"Are you interested in her?" Lucas asked and he shook his head.

"Not exactly. She is blunt and I like it. And she is pretty too," Tyler said with an amused smile, as he remembered the kiss he had shared with Andy.