

Chapter 31

It was just as if they had never left. Everything was exactly the same.

Gabriel went back to work immediately they got out of the plane, leaving Tony to take her and the baby home. Back home, Grace wasn't back yet, but Elliot was in and he was sitting in the living room when she came downstairs to make a bottle.

He was wearing the usual beach shorts he seemed to have a lot of and he was also wearing a grey sweatshirt.

"Hey!"

He called out cheerfully as he waved at her.

"Hey."

Lori said shyly. She wasn't totally comfortable around him yet. She was still a bit weary of him, especially with what Gabriel said about him.

She couldn't avoid him though, they lived under the same roof, technically not in the same house.

"I heard you went on a trip. Canada."

Lori nodded.

"Have you been?"

He shook his head.

"No. I haven't. But I hear it's cold this time of the year."

"It is."

"So what were you guys doing there?"

He persisted and Lori raised her eyebrow.

"Why are you so curious?"

She asked and he shrugged.

"I just want to know what was so urgent that has Gabriel flying you and the baby out of the country."

"You should ask him when you see him then."

Elliot chuckled as he ran a hand through his hair and relaxed in his seat.

"Yea, If you've not noticed by now, Gabriel doesn't like me. Never did never will."

"What did you do to him?"

"Why are you assuming it's something I did?"

Elliot retorted and Lori shrugged.

"I don't know. Gabriel doesn't seem like the kind of person to hate someone for no reason."

Elliot rolled his eyes.

"Ugh."

He scoffed.

"I see he's got to you too."

"Got to me?"

Lori asked and Elliot shrugged.

"I mean he has fooled you too. He's not a saint Lori."

"I never said he was."

"Anyways. If you don't like him either why are you living in his house?"

Lori fired back, her hand on her waist while she gave him a pointed look.

"Who says I don't like him?"

Elliot asked and Lori shrugged as she folded her arms.

"It sounds very much like you don't like him."

She said and Elliot shrugged.

"Oh I like him. He's alright. But that doesn't mean I have to worship him or anything."

Lori furrowed her eyebrows.

"I don't think anyone is asking you to..."

She said and Elliot sighed.

"Anyways. Do you know where he is? I need to talk to him."

"He left for work. Why don't you call him?"

"Call him?! He would ignore my calls."

Lori sighed.

"Then you'll wait for him to get back."

She said as she started walking to the kitchen, Elliot followed her. There was no avoiding him truly, he could be annoying and persistent when he wanted to be.

"Lori, you're quite an interesting character. You know I tried to look you up on social media. I didn't find anything."

Lori chuckled.

Keeping a social media account wasn't the wisest when running from enemies. She didn't have any social media accounts because of Jared and Asher. Also, the ones she had created in the past had no way of being traced back to her.

"I'm not too keen on social media."

"And why is that? Are you hiding something?"

Elliot persisted and Lori laughed.

"Oh you're insufferable."

She said and he smiled. A nice gorgeous smile that would have any other girl swooning, but not her, not her because there was already someone else who could make her swoon.

"I aim to please."

"What about you? What do you do in the pool house all day?"

She asked and he shrugged.

"Not much. I play games. Gabriel doesn't let me bring friends over so

once in a while I go back to the city to hang out with my fiends and come back here to unwind and relax."

Lori nodded.

"That sounds refreshing."

"Shouldn't you be working or in school or something?"

She asked and he nodded.

"Oh I am. My classes are online you see."

"Ooh."

Lori said as she went back to what she was doing, aware that his eyes were still on her.

"What about you? You're around my age, what college did you go to?"

Lori's checks flushed.

"I haven't.. gone to college yet..."

She said and he shrugged. She looked at him and he didn't seem to have that judgmental look that she was expecting to see on his face. He actually didn't seem bothered or flustered about it.

"Oh. That's cool. Do you plan to?"

He asked and Lori paused to think.

To be quite honest, she had not really thought about going back to college. She could now, she had the funds, it would be easy for her to do, but she wondered why it never really crossed her mind.

"I think I could. After this job maybe."

Elliot nodded.

"Or you can do it all online like me."

"Hnmm. That's not a bad idea."

She mused.

After preparing the baby's bottle she went upstairs, with Elliot following suit and chatting with her about mundane stuff. She actually didn't mind his company, he talked a lot, so all she had to do was listen to him ramble on about his friends and school.

It didn't seem like a particularly hard thing to do.

Besides he was good with Emilia too, despite claiming he had no prior knowledge of babies. He was very good to her and made her laugh.

After they both put the baby to sleep, they went back downstairs and Lori grabbed a tub of Ice- cream. It was peanut butter. Grace had started stocking up the fridge with icecream for Lori when she heard that it helped with breast milk production. Lori didn't know if it was true or a lie, her milk supply had stayed the same but she did love having Ice- cream around so she wasn't complaining.

She could finally unwind, at least for a bit.

"So, where were you born again?"

He asked and she shrugged.

"Cali."

Elliott's eyes widened.

"There is no way you're a Cali girl!"

He said and Lori laughed.

"I left a while ago."

"That's probably it. Only child?"

He asked and she shrugged.

"I wasn't. Two brothers. Adopted. Just like me."

"Ohh! That's good. Do you keep in touch with them?"

Lori shook her head.

"What about you? How exactly are you related to Gabriel?"

"We're cousins. My Dad is his Dad's younger brother."

"Ohh. That's good. How's your Dad?"

Elliot shrugged.

"My Dad died years ago. It's just me and my Mum."

"Only child?"

She asked and he hesitated a bit before nodding.

"Yes. My mom travels a lot, so we don't really get along..."

"I guess you can say Gabriel is like the only person I get along with in my family."

Elliot chuckled and Lori shook her head.

"It must be really lonely. If Gabriel is the only one you get along with."

Elliot shrugged.

"I don't really care. My family's quite messy to be honest."

"Messy? How?"

Lori asked.

It wasn't everyday she heard something about Gabriel's family. There was very little she knew about them in the first place and she couldn't help but be curious about them.

Elliot waved his hand.

"Let's not talk about that. It's depressing enough."

He answered.

Elliot left shortly after, he had to take a call. Lori stayed and enjoyed her ice-cream.

"Grandfather."

Elliot said as he picked the call.

His grandfather had been calling nonstop after finding out about Gabriel's illegitimate daughter. Elliot didn't know how the old man found out, he was almost a hundred years old and he was so nosy. He also was supposedly living off the grid, how was he even getting information?! Not to mention the fact that he was at least a thousand miles away yet he still managed to peer into their lives.

Chapter 3

Oh Gabriel was going to be pissed.

They had a cordial relationship, but there was only so much of Grandpa's meddling he could take.

"I just landed."

Elliot froze.

"Landed where?"

"The United States."

His grandfather said in a clipped annoyed tone.

"You.. you didn't tell anyone you were coming. Gabriel isn't going to like this..."

"Like what? Did he think I won't find about his daughter?!"

The man barked into the phone and Elliot sighed.

"Where are you now?"

"I'm in DC. I'm going to see your mother first. Then I'll be coming home."



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One full bottle of Merlot later and a lot of nonsense talk, Gabriel and Lori were laughing their asses off hysterically on the bed. Lori couldn't even remember what was so funny. But it had to do with a deer, or was it a llama? Oh she really couldn't tell.

After their laughter died down, Gabriel turned to Lori, they were lying next to each other, the both of them on their sides, their faces so dangerously close that they shared breaths. Gabriel could hear her heartbeat, so close, almost as if it was thudding in his heart too.

Gabriel reached out and tucked in a strand of hair beneath Lori's ear, his hand lingering a bit.

"You have lovely hair."

He commented and she smiled.

"Thank you."

"And a beautiful face."

He continued, his eyes drifted to her lips, the air in the room grew thicker. Lori could feel her breath hitching as she looked at him.

She looked at his lips, they looked soft, she had the insane urge to reach out and touch them. She wondered how they tasted.

If they would taste like the fettuccine he had earlier, or the wine. Or maybe both.

Lori was aware of Gabriel's blue eyes on her face and she was aware of him leaning towards her. The gap between them slowly disappearing.

Her toes curled in anticipation and she closed her eyes to savor the

Chapter 32

moment.

Gabriel's lips met hers, slowly.



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11/11

