Chapter 7

I grimaced as I yanked my hand free from his grasp and looked at him dead in the eyes.

His eyebrows slightly furrowed, his nose slightly scrunched, and his lips pursed. His expression was full of anger, jealousy, and suspicion.

The tortured look on his face made my anger evaporate. Of course, he thought I was cheating on him with Aaron, but with no proof, what was he supposed to do about it? My heart swelled with pride at this revelation.

I decided to keep up the facade of the loving, devoted girlfriend. I wanted to see him fall apart, just as I did. I needed to see him lost in his paranoia. Overwhelmed with insecurity.

After a moment, I turned my blank stare into a tender one, eyes gentle and brows drawn as if I actually cared about him getting hurt back at the bar. I held my pajamas with one arm and reached up with the other to fix his collar, my hand caressing his neck.

“I bought you a shirt at the mall today… I didn’t realize you already got a a brand-new one.”

His shirt had the subtle Turnbull and Asser logo printed on its breast. I bit my lip, frowning. I didn’t expect that b*tch Emily to pay such a high price tag for someone else’s man.

Oh, but the look on his face was delicious. The anger in his eyes fad ed as he looked down. It was replaced with slight panic as he realized I’d noticed he wasn’t wearing the same shirt he’d left in this morning.

I wasn’t done yet. I wanted him to see him squirm. What made this hastard think he could question me when he was the one who cheated in

the first place?

“You didn’t answer my texts earlier either…” I dragged my hand up from his collar to his face, caressing his cheek. I mustered up the scraps of my affection for him, giving him the sweetest smile I could muster. “I thought you were working late.”

His expression softened as he looked down at me. It seemed that my act as the oblivious girlfriend was convincing.

What a piece of s*it! It was plain as day that all he cared about was himself

Vincent tried to keep his voice steady as he explained, but his words came out rushed. “These are my friend’s clothes. The polo I wore this morning got dirty at work, so he lent this one to me.”

“Oh! Who?” I tilted my head and continued to smile, “Why don’t you introduce me? You must be close if he’d let you borrow something that ex pensive.”

“It’s just… it’s Aaron’s. You already know him. He wears stuff like this all the time.” Vincent placed his hand over mine but refused to look me in the eyes.

I sighed dramatically, “It’s a lot more high-end than the clothes I usu ally buy you… I was worried Emily bought it for you as a gift or some thing.”

j “What? Babe, we’re just friends. You’re not jealous, are you?” He seemed content as if he believed that was my only concern earlier this svening. He wrapped his arms around my waist and pulled me against his

body. His warm breath on my forehead made me nauseous.

“After I finished my shift, I was about to go home, but Aaron invited me out at the last minute. I should’ve told you.” Vincent kissed my fore head, “But it looks like you made it anyway. Did he invite you too?” –

I pushed Vincent away and smiled innocently.

“He just dragged me in! I think he recognized me while I was walking home from work. I usually pass by that bar on the way back.” I laughed. “I never would’ve guessed I’d see you there!”

“He was drunk,” Vincent said quickly, panic evident in his eyes.

“Oh, yeah, I don’t hold it against him. I do kinda look like his girl friend.” I raised an eyebrow, “Don’t you think?”

“Molly looks like you,” Vincent whispered, voice full of the devotion that used to be only for me. Was I supposed to be flattered? “But I didn’t even know he had a girlfriend. In fact, I’d never seen him with one. He only has f*ck buddies… You should keep your distance.”

Vincent nudged up my chin with his finger and suddenly declared, “You’re so much more beautiful than that girl. What if he tries to get at you? I can’t let that happen.”

My laugh sounded colder than I would’ve liked, but I couldn’t help it. He didn’t want me to see Aaron? Or did he not want me to see him with Emily again?

Regardless of whether I like Aaron or not, I’ve already slept with him, and Vincent was none the wiser.

“But it’s over now,” he continued, then yawned. “I’m exhausted. Let’s just shower and go to bed.” His smile this time was much more suggestive.

“It’s already so late, but you should still try to get as much sleep in as you can. I’m not really in the mood tonight.” I smiled, stepping around him and opening the bathroom door. He didn’t stop me this time.

After I showered, I laid back on the couch instead of heading to our shared bedroom, idly swiping through my social media while I thought about what happened earlier. Vincent was still in the shower when I got a message from Aaron.

I frowned. What was the matter with him? He’d dragged me into a confrontation with Vincent in front of everyone. He might’ve been defend ing me, but now I’m sure everyone thinks we’re close! His recklessness nearly ruined my plan to tear Vincent down piece by piece.

Amorris: Sorry about today…

Not to mention his girlfriend suddenly appearing out of thin air like that. Everyone thought he was standing up for me just because he had me confused for her. Before all of this, Vincent’s friends hardly knew I exist ed, but now I was sure they’ll remember my face for years.

way

56.63%

After a moment of thinking, I responded.

heyOlive: don’t worry about it. it’s not like we’ll meet up again any

heyOlive: today was just a fluke

Amorris: Sure if you say so

Amorris: But I still feel terrible

heyOlive: not interested

Amorris: Ouch

Amorris: I mean it olive

Amorris: I f*cked up big time

Amorris: I should’ve gotten you out of there as soon as I saw you cry

ing

Amortis: I was being immature. I’m sorry.

I stared at his last message on my screen, getting lost in thought. Aaron was being just as ambiguous as ever. I wondered if he was in the same position as I was, texting me while Molly was in the shower.

heyOlive: save your apology for your girlfriend

Amorris: She’s not my girlfriend

Amorris: I told you, I’m single

Was he actually?

No. It didn’t matter if he had a girlfriend or not. I was done with him. I turned over while holding my phone with my other hand, which was a

74.57

mistake. A searing pain shot up my ribs, which had already bruised.

Amorris: Are you ok though?

Amorris: I saw him push you into the table

I froze. Was he watching me right now? Did he hear me wince? I saw him look at me when I hit the table but didn’t think he paid any mind to it His concern made me scowl. I just couldn’t figure this guy out!

The whole thing was exhausting. On the one hand, my boyfriend only cared about saving face in front of everyone, he didn’t care about me On the other hand, some guy I’d h*oked up with once was defending me He was the one who asked me if I was alright, not Vincent

It seems like they have that in common, obsessing more over their lovers than their girlfriends.

I didn’t have the energy to respond to Aaron anymore I deleted the

text conversation, now for the second time, and retreated to bed for the

night.

For a few weeks, my life was quiet. There was no contact between Aaron and me, and Vincent cut back on “working late,” playing the part of

the faithful boyfriend.

Things went back to the way they were before.

As I was thinking of a way to finally end things with Vincent, he cheated on me again.

Of course, my immediate reaction was to reach out to Aaron for the first time in weeks.

I held my breath as I texted him

heyOlive: are you at the windermere hotel too

His reply was instant.

Amorris: Yeah

heyOlive: staying the night?

Amorris: I’m right next door to them

I wanted to hurl my phone into the wall. Once a cheater, always a cheater, and Vincent was no exception.

I’d been biding my time, waiting for Vincent’s “perfect boyfriend” charade to hit its peak before breaking up with him. I imagined him asking me why, promising he’d change, and begging me to stay.

I wanted to look him in the eye with the coldest, most nonchalant ex pression I could muster, to shake my head casually, and say, “No. I don’t love you anymore. We’re done.”

But now I doubted I’d ever get that chance.

Amorris: Do you want to come over…?

I wasn’t sure what I wanted. I didn’t even have time to think about it

before he texted again.

Amorris: Please?

Amorris: I miss you

G*d, what a flirt. I didn’t want to give in that easily

heyOlive: really?

heyOlive: or do you just want a stand in while your girlfriend’s away

Amorris: I already told you. I’m single

Amorris: Plus she’d be *your* cheap knockoff if anything

Vincent told me the same thing. Now he’s with Emily again.

I let out a dry laugh. We’re all terrible people, aren’t we?

Well, if that was the case…

I pushed away my conscience telling me to be the better person, to not stoop down to Vincent’s level for the second time.

heyOlive: where are you staying

Amorris: Room 718

Amortis: Vince and Emily are in 720

Before I knew it, I found myself standing in the lobby of the Winder mere Hotel, hesitating near the elevators

Part of me wanted to rush in. to slam on Vincent’s room and catch him in the act. The other part wanted to indulge in another bout of re

venge.

Both seemed equally alluring

But before I could decide, one of the elevators behind me opened with a ding A man stepped out, eves glued to his phone before he hap pened to notice me standing there He glanced up at me

It was Aaron

He’d lost some weight since I last saw him In the hallway lights of the hotel, his ivory satin shirt shimmered softly My eves followed his open collar down to the outline of his pees, then to the silhouette of his waist, clearly visible as the light shone through his shirt. He wore an un tied scarf lazily draped around the back of his neck, giving his outfit a se

ductive tone.

I couldn’t help but wonder if this was the kind of thing he wears when he’s interested in someone. The past two times I’d seen him, he was dressed much more casually.

After a few seconds of staring at each other in the lobby, his lips quirked upwards in a dazzling smile, revealing his pearly white teeth. “I’m surprised you didn’t get lost this time. I came down to wait for you.”

I’d been eager to see him, I admit, but now that he was in front of me, I was lost.

20.34%

“Oh. Yeah, I found you. The hotel, I mean. Thanks.” I looked away, trying my hardest to not undress him with my eyes right here on the main floor.

He stepped back into the elevator and I followed him. We didn’t say anything to each other on the way to the room, coming to a stop at the door marked 718. Right next door, as he told me, was 720.

If I wanted to, I could still pound on Vincent’s door. I lingered in the hallway, considering it. Aaron rang the doorbell next to his room, frown ing at me. “Come here.”

I walked toward him, curious as to why he rang the doorbell. The door clicked open, revealing a woman leaning lazily against the frame, complaining, “Does it really take that long to buy a cigarette?”

There was the decision then.

ist.

The woman was s*xy in every sense of the word. Long, straight black hair fell past her shoulders as smooth as melted wax, and thick lashes lined her foxy eyes. Her body was flawless in its moderation. She was toned, but not muscular. Thin, but not morbidly skinny. She wore a white button-up blouse tucked into a short black skirt, professional and minimal

It was… Quite embarrassing.

37 70%

Aaron dragged me inside. In the s*acious room, the first thing I no ticed was the large bed, still neatly made. Had they not done anything to gether?

“Sir,” the woman smirked as she playfully chided him, hands clasped

neatly behind her back. “Were you in the mood for a t*reesome tonight?”

He raised an eyebrow. “Tempting, but I’m not interested.” He stepped around her, tossing his phone onto the nightstand and picking up a set of car keys. “You should get going now anyway. Daisy. Drive safe.” .

She hummed, gingerly taking the keys from his outstretched hand. “Take it easy, you two.” Her eyes met mine, and she gave me a devious smirk before reminding Aaron, “You still have that meeting in the morn

ing.”

There was an awkward atmosphere in the room after Daisy left.

Or maybe it was just me because Aaron was already making himself comfortable, shedding his jacket and turning on the TV. He looked at me, a pleasant smile on his face, “Have you eaten yet?”

I nodded, “Yeah, I did.”

“No burger for me this time?” He asked, casually putting his tie on a hanger in the closet.

I nearly choked, my face flushing. “I only brought you food because I wanted to bang, so no. No burger for you this time.”

He clicked his tongue, shaking his head. “I’m only worth a burger? What are you here for this time then?”

I didn’t know what to say. To be honest, I wasn’t sure what I was sup posed to do now

55251 He threw himself down at the edge of the bed, eyes closed while he

folded his arms behind his head.

“I wanted to catch him.” I muttered.

He cracked one eye open to check his watch. “Now’s not the time. Give it a bit.”

With a sigh, I dropped myself in the armchair beside the bed, resting my head in my hands, elbows pressing into my knees. “How long have they been… together?”

He shrugged, “That’s a question for him.”

Of course. I figured there was no point in asking him. What would he tell me anyway? I wouldn’t put it past him to still cover for Vincent, even after what happened at the bar three weeks ago. They were still best friends. They probably even introduced each other to whoever they were sleeping with! I looked at him with anger in my eyes.

He acted as though he didn’t notice, idly patting the spot beside him.

“Sit over here.”

We both ended up lying next to each other on the bed, with the couch in the corner of the room left cold and empty.

Aaron had turned onto his side to look at me, but I was afraid to meet his gaze, my heart pounding. I kept my eyes closed, my head turned up to ward the ceiling.

The awkward tension in the room eventually got to me, and I blurted, “Did I ruin your night?”

“No. You’re here, so it’s quite the opposite,” he replied indifferently.

My eyes were still shut, and I pretended I didn’t hear what he’d just said. Instead, I thought about when the right time would be to crash Vin cent’s private party in the next room.

Aaron suddenly laughed. I was attracted to the low, melodic sound, and impulsively turned to face him. His eyes were closed, and he seemed so… relaxed.

“The last time I was with you, I actually slept until morning. I don’t usually sleep so heavily,” he exhaled in comfort.

I smirked. “You mean you don’t usually spend the night with some

one like me?”

His eyes opened, stunned, and he laughed even harder. “You are too confident for your own good.” Then he added. “But yes. And if I knew you were gonna try to leave so early, I wouldn’t have saved my last round or two for the morning.”

I grew silent and regretted playing along with his teasing. The con versation had started to escalate in a direction that I wasn’t comfortable

with.

The silence was broken by my phone ringing.

It was Vincent.