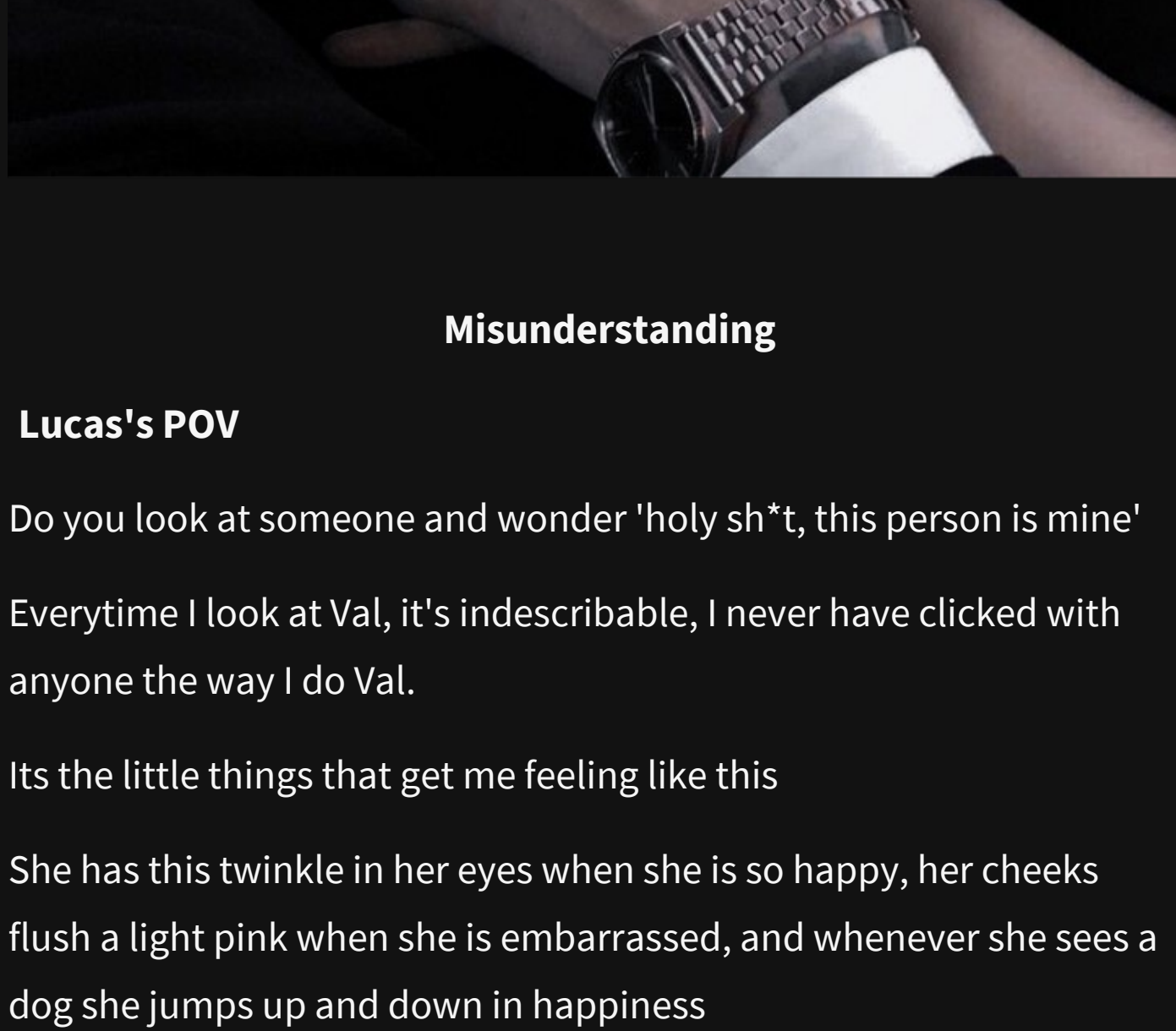




Misunderstanding

Lucas's POV

Do you look at someone and wonder 'holy sh't, this person is mine'

Everytime I look at Val, it's indescribable, I never have clicked with anyone the way I do Val.

Its the little things that get me feeling like this

She has this twinkle in her eyes when she is so happy, her cheeks flush a light pink when she is embarrassed, and whenever she sees a dog she jumps up and down in happiness

She is full of surprises, she is understanding,

And the only person I want in my life

I love her, and every moment spent with her feels like the first time I met her

I loved her so much the thought of her in another man's arms ticked me o , just the thought of it, even worse she was no where to be found, which was not helping my nerves

I was also worried, maybe she isnt ready to love me the way I love her

I was interrupted by my thoughts with a tap on my shoulders "Hey Luc" The perky voice of Briella Banks rang through my ears

"Ms. Banks" I replied coldly not taking my eyes

"care for a drink" Shock was all I felt, I looked down at her in confusion to see her hand out with a playful smirk on her lips "don't worry about little Val, she having a talk with Noah"

"cut the crap Banks"

"oh don't believe me, glad I brought proof" she replied as she showed me her phone, picture of Valery and Noah, sitting next to one another

I tried to ignore the pain I felt, and prevent it from showing on my face, this could all be a misunderstanding, would Valery really talk to Noah, I mean I am talking to Briella right now, nothing is stopping her, maybe she still has feelings for Noah

I could feel my fists balling at my side as I clenched my jaw. I had to keep my temper in check but I could feel my self failing at doing so

though she reassured me before she no longer loved him I couldnt help but overthink what if Noah wanted her back, what would he be willing to do to get her back? Would his e orts be enough to win her heart again?

"How about a dance to take your mind o' things"

My gut told me to refuse she was the last person I ever want to dance with, but in the corner of my eyes, I saw Valery enter the hall, followed behind her was Noah, I wanted to storm up to him I punch him square in the jaw, but I couldnt do that to Valery, instead against my better judgement I dragged Briella to the dance floor

I felt like a child, who is only dancing with someone just to make their partner jealous, but it was the only solution I could think of that didn't involve my fists connecting with his face

"Congrats on your hotel" she spoke first as we danced along to the music

"Thank you, it took alot of work but we were able to do it" I replied

"How are you and Valery" she asked, choosing to ignore my last comment "I noticed she doesn't have a ring"

"A ring doesn't define love"

I want everything to be just right and I also want her to be completely sure I am the one she wants to be with, I know being with Noah le her with some trust issues and understood. I will wait for her, not to mention we haven't discussed what will happen a er this, now that the hotel us complete, Ive been waiting for the right time to ask her to return back to New York and live with me.

"Why arent you dancing with your girlfriend" with a smirk and a playfully glint in her eyes she poked at me trying to gain a reaction "maybe she rather be with her ex, I mean they are together, I was quite surprised that you two werent glued together, trouble in paradise"

"Why arent you dancing with you're boyfriend" already angered I snapped back at her, my actions only seemed to have amused her

"I rather dance with you" she purred seductively

I held back a gag at her attempt of a sexy voice

"Why don't you say we get out of here, let those two rekindle their childish love while me and you, have a little grown up fun" she o ered, attempting to look sexy she licked her lips before giving me a smirk

"As if" I sco ed "I'm not dumb like Noah, I wont throw away my happiness for a overused slut, dancing with you was a mistake"

"Oh please dont act like you dont want me"

"I'm not acting" I glared "I don't want you"

I let her hands drop as I walked away from her, there would be no way I would give up the one women I love just for one night of meaningless sex.

I was letting my emotions cloud my judgement

I had more important things to do, like find the women I love interrogate her on why she was talking to her ex, or better yet smack her ass as punishment, possibly do both, but first talking

My eyes roamed around the hall trying to find her, my search came to a stop, when a clicking of glasses rang out, drawing everyone's attention towards the source, Tanner, who also had to give a speech since he is the CEO, stood behind him was his timid girlfriend slash assistant or head or HR I didnt bother to take notice, I was really paying attention to his speech, I was still searching for Valery

I am so whipped.

Valery's POV

I didnt know what to think as I saw him dancing with Briella, of course she would try to make a move on him just to tick me o , but the real question is why did he even agree to dance with her? was he having second doubts with me

I had to pry my eyes away from them, it was taking everything in me not to make a scene right here and now

"he was just probably trying to be nice dont over think it" Lily reassured me

thankfully I spotted her and Jade near by, when I first entered the hall, talking to them was distracting the urge I felt to run over to Lucas and Briella, and pull the two apart

"I suppose you are right"

"he was looking for you, where did you disappear o' to" Jade joined in

we stood near the back hidden behind the crowd of people, but we had the perfect view of everyone else

I "my Ex stopped me and I guess we had closure I dont know this night is just crazy"

"woah did you say ex"

"Yes, my ex husband surprisingly it wasnt a complete disaster seeing him and talking to him made me realize who I do love and its kinda freaking me out"

Lily let out a laugh, while Jade looked at me like I was crazy "you know that is same reaction I had when I realised I love my husband, I was petrified"

"Lily with all due respect, your fear can be justified because your lets hope so"

"love is about conquering fear Red" Lily said as she smiled encouragingly

Jade let out a sco "how romantic of you Lil, now Val tell us more on the details of your talk with Noah, leave nothing out"

"it was a strange counter to say the least but it was oddly needed, like closure I never knew I needed" I tell them honestly

"clearly you are the better women than I" Jade starts "I wouldve kicked his b'ls"

"I went o' looking for Tanner, to try to understand what has been going on, do you guys know whats up, I mean did you notice Rosie, or am I just crazy"

"Rosella also seemed a bit distracted, I asked my husband if he knew anything about Tanner, since a little voice says her mood is because of Tanner, but he is as clueless as us"

"does anyone know where she is now"

"she said earlier she was going to help Tanner prepare for his speech, maybe then they had time to talk"

My eyes made its way back to the dance floor, where I almost jumped for joy when Lucas dropped his hands, and le her standing dumbfounded, mouth gapped, in the middle of the floor

thats my mar! thought to myself, as I smirked to myself victoriously, while doing so a busboy was passing us more drinks when an idea came to my mind

I motioned him to come closer before saying to him lowly "Be a dear and tell security to drag her out, Im pretty sure I saw her pickpocket from that man she just danced with"

with a quick nod, he le to do as told, I shouldn't have felt proud but I couldnt help it when I saw the guard escorting Briella away

"well aren't you a mischievous one" Lily remarked with a wink

"I have my moments"

"there they are" Jade abruptly says, drawing our attention to where she was looking

with smiles we watched Rosie and Tanner make their way to the mic, looking ever so graceful and happy

"maybe we were all just overthinking" Lily commented

"I wanna just say thanks to everyone who put their time and e ort to make this hotel, Mr. Petrova, Klien Designs team, Carmicheal INC, and board members and investors who had a role in the development as well as strengthening the bonds of our company, which is why with a heavy heart, this will be my last night as the CEO of Klien Design, as I will be stepping down e ective immediately"

"okay maybe we werent overthinking" I bluntly say as we all stand up

The second the words le Tanners mouth all hell practically broke loose, it was not something anyone was expecting, that the owner and CEO would be stepping down, when that happens everyone is at risk, including me and Rosie, I could only imagine what was going in Rosie's mind, the look of horror and shock was evident in her eyes, as she stood behind Tanner, as he gave the announcement, questions were instantly thrown at her,

Even I had a thousand questions pouring into my mind.

Tanner was rushing o' the stage, Rosie struggling to keep up from behind, it was chaos, Lily ever so elegantly made her way to the mic, smiling brightly, I knew it was just for show, in the corner I could see Dmitri practically storming his way to Tanner, my eyes still searched for Lucas, I had lost him in the crowd, there was a possibility he went a er Tanner as well, while I was frozen in place like ever so useless, I suppose I havent recovered my shock, or figure what to do now

"Everyone please let us all calm down, clearly tonight has been eventful, but there is no point dwelling on it, let us please continue to raise our glasses, in joy" slow claps, and hesitate raising of glasses irrputed the room "thank you all for joining us tonight, don't forget to book your own stay here if you want something eventful" some so laughs were heard, and another round of so claps very witty of her to use a pun to distract people if I do say so myself

Lily smiled down, taking a sip of her own glass, before making her way towards the crowd, which they instantly swarmed her

as I look towards the direction, Tanner and Rosie disappeared o' to, I instantly spotted Jade, wide eyed looking upwards towards the door, I take one last glance at Lily, whose eyes locked with mine as she smiled tightly before giving a slight nod

our own little girl code

"I can't believe that just happened you don't think he was being serious do you" Jade whisper shouts to me as I neared her

"I know just as much as you do"

"Valery" Lucas called from behind us, I turned to face him with a sad look, not knowing if I should run to him, or ignore him, I was mad at him

"go talk him, I'll check up on Rosie, catch up a erwards" Jade motioned towards Lucas, as she gave me an encouraging smile, which I needed, it was soothing to have her support, I smiled thankfully towards her before making my way to him

"Love, I've been looking everywhere for you" he goes to reach for me, and I almost let myself sink into his touch, but I couldn't

"got tired of dancing with Briella" I commented mockingly, with crossed arms trying to intimidate him

apparently I was humorous to him, with a smirk he replied "Actually yes, the person I wanted to dance with was busy talking with her ex husband he spat out bitterly causing me to shiver

well damn,

I shouldn't feel guilty right? I didnt do anything wrong, while he, he danced with Briella, who is not just his ex, but the women I despise, which honestly hurts more

"I didn't realize I wasn't allowed to talk to people"

"you are, but I don't think your Ex-Husband should fall under the category of people to talk to"

"the same should apply to, people you shouldn't be dancing with"

"you still love him"

"what, ew no, have you lost your mind" I let out a long sigh "I shouldn't need to explain myself, but he was the one that wanted to talk to me, it was brief he only apologized, we talked about Leah briefly, and that was all, for me it was the final closure"

"I'm sorry, I guess I was overreacting, Briella was the one who told me, and I guess I jumped to conclusions"

"its okay these things happen, we can talk more later, I need to go check on Rosie"

"what is gonna happen to us a er tonight" he asked melancholy, as he gazed down on me so ly, causing my heart strings to tug

I let out a so sigh, this was the conversation I was hoping to put on hold, and not have to have until a few weeks maybe even a month, but circumstances really do change everything "I don't know, all I know is Rosie needs me right now, and Tanner has a lot of explaining to do, hopefully I wont leave right away, and we can have some more time to talk and time together" I tell him honestly, hoping it brought some comfort to him, I wasn't even sure what was gonna happen, maybe I was thinking of the worst case scenario, or maybe I was spot on, whatever the sort I didn't want to bring him even more then he already appears to be

"don't leave" he says

"what" I reply taken back by his comment

"stay with me"

I let out a breath I didn't even know I was holding "I dont know Lucas thats a big step, and right now really isnt the best time to talk"

"Carmichael" Petrova's booming voice calls from down the hall

what perfect timing thought bitterly

"you chose Noah, then you chose yourself, and I never stopped you, but now I am asking, practically begging for you to choose me"

"you can't ask that of me Lucas" I reply with wide eyes, not believing what he had just said to me, was he really asking me to choose him over my friend? my job? my home?

"we are just getting a handle on our relationship, enjoying each others company and now you wanna leave" he exclaimed, taking my hand in his

"Lucas it's not that simple and you know it" I say sadly things like this need to be discussed further, before jumping into things hastily, right?

Now I'm second guessing myself.

"I love you, I want to be with you, but the question is do you feel the same"

"L."

"Carmichael" Petrova called again

me and Lucas stared at each other for a moment, I was lost for words, unable to reply, or think.

"Its fine if you not ready to say it back, I said because I mean it, we can talk later" and with that he le me, frozen in my place still trying to make sense of what happened.

He just said he loved me.

shit.

WE HAVE TWO CHAPTERS LEFT BEFORE THE STORY OF VALERY AND LUCAS COMES TO A CLOSE.

THANK YOU FOR THE LOVE YOU HAVE GIVEN MY BOOK ON MY JOURNEY I HOPE I HAVEN'T DISAPPOINTED YOU GUYS.

there are some things I wanna clarify quickly...

TANNER AND ROSIE ARE DATING, I MENTIONED THEY WERE A COUPLE IN CHAPTER 18 BUT IT WAS BRIEF.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN WITH LUCAS AND VALERY? WILL SHE STAY WITH HIM? OR WILL SHE GO BACK TO PARIS? DROP YOUR THOUGHTS!!!