

HAVE S*x WITH ME!

(Penny's POV)

"A penny for your thoughts?"

With that proud smirk on the stranger's incredibly handsome face, there was no denying the fact that the word play had been very intentional.

"You know who I am."

It wasn't a question, rather a mere statement of observation as I stared up at him curiously, trying to gure out if I knew him from anywhere.

But I couldn't recall ever meeting him.

With a face that handsome and as dangerous as sin, I was pretty sure I'd never forget him if we had encountered each other before.

"Well, who doesn't know who you are?" He c****d an eyebrow arrogantly as he stared down at me, his voice taking on a lazy, laid back drawl, "Penelope de la Cruz, youngest person, rst woman to be made Vice President of Alu-Steele Trust and Co, married to Fabian Tarantino, my douche of a brother... is there anything I've missed?"

Fear lit up in my chest, sending my heart pumping at an irregular rate, and yet I did my best to ignore it, choosing instead to glare at him. "Well, your brother and I are over now," I spat out the words, "Congratulations on having me all gured out... for knowing every single thing about me, but I believe you missed this little bit, so you can update your records now. Have a good evening." I made to leave him, but he grabbed me by the elbow, turning me to face him so fast that I almost gave myself whiplash.

I opened my mouth to give him a piece of my mind, but all of my words got stuck in my throat at the dangerous, murderous look on his face. "What did he do? Just say the word, Dulce, and he'll be gone." His words carried a promise in them, the intensity of his gaze sending a scary chill down my spine.

He'll be gone?

What did that even mean?

I stared at the handsome man.

Maximo Tarantino.

That was his name.

It was the rst time I was meeting him.

The supposed black sheep of the Tarantino family, infamous stepbrother to Fabian... a self-made billionaire who had gotten to where he was without his family's connections, the very man who was rumored to have possible aliations to the Diavoli, the city's most notorious maa...

Somehow, he had managed to avoid the media effortlessly...

Everyone knew the name, but not the face.

It made me wonder why he had so casually introduced himself to me... why he'd let me, the stepsister-in-law he had avoided for so long, nally know who he was.

But all those tales about him were probably made up by the press to try and gure out the enigma of a man who they had no information on, right?

I mean, they certainly couldn't be true.

So why was I scared then?

I took a deep breath, refusing to allow myself to be intimidated by him, and then I furiously yanked my arm from his hold, glaring at him, "Thanks, but no thanks. I want nothing to do with you and your family for as long as I live."

Even though it was mostly the alcohol talking, I wanted that very little fact to be the truth. I wanted to be the kind of woman who did not settle for a cheating bastard and a backstabbing w***e of a friend, but I knew myself, and I knew that when push came to shove, settling would be the exact thing I'd do.

At least that was better than being alone.

It was frustrating, I know, and darn well disappointing, but it was unfortunately the sad truth.

Surprisingly, Maximo Tarantino didn't seem deterred by my outburst. If anything, he appeared to nd my deance rather amusing. I watched him lean against the bar, still wearing that infuriating smirk.

"Feisty... I like that." He observed, seemingly unbothered by my hostility, "But Penelope, listen. I'm not my brother. Neither am I here to defend him or his actions. Knowing him, I would not be surprised if he did something terrible, like cheat on you."

The blood drained out of my face as his words repainted the heart-shattering picture I had been trying so hard to forget.

"Ah, fanculo!"

He hissed silently as it registered just how true his wild guess had been. Whatever he had said was probably some swear word in Italian. I unfortunately didn't learn when I got the chance, choosing Spanish over it instead.

"Look, Penelope, I'm so sorry, I didn't know..."

But I cut him off, unable to help the scoff that slipped past my lips, "That's rich, you know? That's real rich coming from you. With everything the media has been saying about you, I'd say you're just like him, hell, maybe even worse."

He tsked disapprovingly at me, "You should know better than to believe the media and their many lies, Dulce... because even you hadn't been spared from their vicious tongues and pens when you rst started out and were making a name for yourself at Alu-Steele Trust and Co. Does that make you the ruthless corporate shark they portrayed you as back then? The woman who grew from grass to grace, from rags to riches by sleeping her way to the top?"

I froze, his words slicing through my already wounded heart, making my jaw clench in annoyance.

God, this man was infuriating.

I could see why Fabian hated him.

But he actually wasn't lying. You see, I had experienced the media's incessant, malicious scrutiny in the early days of my career, and it had only gotten worse when I met Fabian and we started going out. Their criticisms had wounded me at rst, but I had learnt the hard way to grow a pair and deal with it, and with time, they had warmed up to me, but it sucked to be reminded of those days.

I narrowed my eyes at Maximo, feeling a spark of anger course through me. "The difference is that I've proven them wrong. Have you?"

The infuriating bastard leaned closer, his intoxicating cologne and the scent of bourbon on his breath washing over me, making me want to be absorbed into him.

Woah, what the hell was that?

"I don't need to. But Dulce, don't be so quick to judge me based on what you've read or heard. The truth might surprise you." He whispered, snapping me out of my thoughts.

For a while, I stared into his eyes, lost in the striking green in them. They reminded me of a peaceful meadow on a sunny day, bright and refreshing.

I blinked to clear the thoughts, turning down the rest of my drink and requesting for another.

"Why are you still here? I thought we were done." I deadpanned when I turned to see him still staring at me, a hint of concern on his otherwise blank, handsome face.

"I'll take you home, Penelope... or wherever you want to go, but I am sure as hell not leaving you here all by yourself, especially in the state you're in." He stated matter-of-factly, opening his elegant, black suit jacket to sit on the barstool right beside me.

"Look, I don't need you to save me, Mister... I am done with you Tarantino men, I can take care of myself, so chop chop... off you go." I icked my hand at him, feeling a slight woozy feeling in my head.

Wow, the drinks sure did work fast, am I right?

"Do you know what it is like," I gulped some air, letting out an unladylike belch, "To have what is supposed to be the happiest day of your life ruined? To nd the two people that mean the world to you in bed together, cheating on you? How could Fabian do that to me? How could Kira do that to me?" Tears were quickly forming in my eyes, and nothing I was doing was stopping its imminent descent, but then my phone buzzed, an instinctive feeling instantly assuring me that it was Fabian.

My heart lit up with excitement as I ransacked my workbag, wondering why he was calling.

Maybe he wanted to apologize?

To beg me to take him back?

The call ended just as soon as I pulled the phone out of the bag, and right when I reached out to call him back, I received a text,

My mother said she'd pass by the house in the morning. Let's keep all of this from her, yeah?

The tears that had threatened to overow stopped in their tracks as I read Fabian's message, and I blinked in disbelief, trying to process the audacity of the request he was making.

This was not an apology text... no, this was meant to humiliate me even further, to completely disregard my pain. It was all for him to save face, to maintain his golden boy image with his family and the rest of the world.

I was so done with this.

The bartender's warning about overindulging in alcohol faintly echoed in my mind, but I brushed it aside, this time asking for the whole bottle and drinking right from it.

The sheer impudence of the bastard!

After all he had done, he expected me to be home when he got in, ready to welcome him with open arms, ready to play the perfect wife for when his mother came calling...

Oh, but he wasn't going to nd me there.

I stood up, stumbling slightly as I tried to head for the exit, refusing to acknowledge the other Tarantino who just wouldn't leave me be as I went in search of some hotel or inn I could spend the night in...

But as I turned away from him, a sudden bright light bulb lit up in my head.

Why was I turning away the opportunity of a lifetime to hurt Fabian just as much as he had hurt me? This golden opportunity that the fates had delivered into the palm of my hand... why was I turning it away?

I may not know this mysterious Maximo, but one thing I knew without a doubt was that Fabian absolutely and passionately hated his guts.

A dangerous idea formed in my mind.

One that had me turning and walking back to Maximo, a determined glint in my eyes. "I have an idea," I slurred excitedly, "Let's give Fabian a taste of his own medicine. Help me with a plan to make him realize he can't take me for granted. Have s*x with me!"

Maximo regarded me with a mixture of concern and intrigue. "Penelope, as much as it would be an honor and a pleasure, you're unfortunately not in the right state of mind for this. What we need to do is get you into bed so you can sleep all the alcohol off."

But I was too intoxicated and too stubborn to listen to reason. "No, Maximo. We need to go have s*x now... maybe take a few pictures to, you know, make a lovely video for him while we're at it," I said rmly. "Can't you see? This is the perfect revenge to get back at him for how he betrayed me... and what better person to carry it out with, but you, the man he hates the most in the world?"

His supple, full lips dragged out in a sexy smirk at my words, "He hates me a lot, doesn't he?"

I nodded like an excited toddler, "He really does. So, are you going to help me?" My eyes were wide with eagerness as I asked him this,

But he crushed my hopes.

"No, Penelope... our rst time won't be when you're drunk."

Wait what?

But I was too drunk to fully process his words, all my mind focused on were the words, 'no' and then I was storming off away from him.

Maximo caught up with me in an instant, spinning me to face him, "Where do you think you're going to?"

I glared up at him, "Why, to nd someone else to help me with my plan, of course. I extended the offer to you and you declined. It happened a few seconds ago, remember?" I told him cheekily.

Even in his seemingly calm, amused state, he was like a lion lying in wait for his prey as he glared down at me, "Oh, really?" He asked.

"Yes." I deadpanned, turning away from him again, but I had barely taken two steps when I was suddenly being lifted into the air and caged in his surprisingly warm, powerful embrace as though I weighed nothing. "Like hell you are, Dulce."