

Wild Night 281

Chapter 281 Jade Is Here

Tom held Lucy's hand in his as he strolled out of the house with her, wanting to show her the side of the building which housed a garden and a pool, "So what did your dad talk to you about? He wasn't trying to cheat, was he?"

Lucy laughed, "Of course not."

"Good. Cause I don't intend to lose to him."

Seeing that as the opening she needed, Lucy looked into his face, "I'm still surprised that your dad chose my dad over you," Lucy said with a giggle.

"You are nowhere half as surprised as I am. That old man is a traitor," Tom hissed, making her laugh even more.

"Do you believe in zodiac signs?" Lucy asked, and Tom shrugged.

"I don't really care about such things, but if our signs say we are destined to be together forever, then I will become a believer," Tom said, and Lucy's lips curved in a wide smile as she looked into his face.

"You can be so sweet sometimes," Lucy said, and Tom chuckled as he stopped walking and turned to look at her.

"Some times? You mean just some times? Here I thought that I am always sweet. I guess I have to work on that," Tom said with a wide smile, and she laughed as she held his right hand with both her hands.

"Why did you ask, though?" Tom asked as he reached out with his left hand to touch her hair.

"Oh! I was just thinking; maybe their zodiac signs are a good match. That is why they have taken such a liking to each other. What is your dad's zodiac sign?" Lucy asked, wanting to stylishly lead up to the subject of his father's birthday.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you, I don't even know mine," Tom said, and Lucy was almost tempted to tell him that she wasn't disappointed since she didn't know hers either. Not everyone concerned themselves with such things, and she was only bringing it up now to remind him of his father's birthday.

"Well, maybe if you tell me his birthday, we can find out," Lucy suggested.

"Hmm. His birthday is on the eleventh of... Hold on, what is today's date?" Tom suddenly asked, and Lucy raised a brow.

"Tenth. Why?" She asked with an innocent expression.

"My dad's birthday is tomorrow. I almost forgot about it," he said with a slight frown. This just showed how much he had come to rely on Harry. If Harry were here, he would have reminded him.

"Oh, really? That is nice! I guess it's a good thing your parents are here. You have to make it special for him," Lucy suggested, glad that her plan had worked.

Before Tom could say anything, his phone started ringing, and he took it out to see that it was a call from Bryan, "Where are you?"

"I'm showing Lucy around the compound. We are currently heading towards the poolside," Tom said, and Bryan hung up as he hurried out of the house with Sonia.

Meanwhile, inside Harry's car, as they approached Tom's house, his phone's reminder set off, breaking the silence between them, and he quickly picked up his phone to see what it was, "Oh, it's your dad's birthday tomorrow," he informed Jade as he dropped the phone, and she raised a brow.

"Why do you have a reminder for my dad's birthday?" She asked curiously.

"I'm your brother's assistant, remember? He doesn't always remember dates because of how busy he is most times, so I have to set reminders to help him remember and then assign someone to get the gifts delivered. That reminds me, now that he has a girlfriend, I should probably check Lucy's file for her birthday and set a reminder too," Harry said, and Jade rolled her eyes.

"He won't need a reminder to remember his girlfriend's birthday. All he needs to do is forget it once, and that will be the last time he ever forgets it," Jade said with a small laugh at her own joke as she glanced outside the window.

She had also almost forgotten her dad's birthday, but thankfully she also had a reminder set on her phone for midnight, which would have helped her remember.

She sighed. It had been a while since she last visited her parents. She hoped that she would wrap up the case really quickly and go see them. She missed her parents, but most especially her father.

She turned to look at Harry when something suddenly clicked in her brain, "Did you just say you set the reminders and assign someone to pick out the gifts?" She asked, and Harry sighed, knowing that he had just slipped.

"Wow! This scenery is beautiful. No matter how much I..."

"If you have to set up a reminder for my dad's birthday, that means you have one for me too. Don't tell me you have been the one sending the birthday card and gifts every year, and not Tom?" She asked, not bothering to fall for the distraction.

Harry sighed, "All I do is remind him a day to your birthday, and he chooses the gifts himself and tells me what he wants to be written on the birthday card, and then I get someone to purchase and send them. It's not a big deal," Harry assured her.

"So you know everything written on the cards?" She asked, and he tried not to grin as he shrugged. Tom had a habit of writing an embarrassing memory of his siblings on their birthday cards every year.

This whole thing was both annoying and embarrassing. It seemed like he knew so much about her, yet she knew next to nothing about him. Ugh!

Harry, on the other hand, silently commended himself on the wisdom he had applied in answering her questions. In the future, he was going to have to be more careful when talking to her since she was so smart and easily connected dots.

Harry quickly reminded himself that there would be no need for that as he might not be talking to her much anymore since his job was over, and now she had all she needed to close her case without

his help. Unless, of course, she decided to accept his offer and join the I-Global legal team. Even then, their communication would be purely formal.

He made a mental note to inform Tom of the offer he had made to Jade. Although he knew that Tom wouldn't object to it, not just because Jade was his younger sister, but also because Tom trusted his judgment as much as he trusted his.

"Can you not tell Tom that I told you about the birthday reminders?" Harry asked hopefully when they got to the gate, and it opened automatically.

"You said you don't keep secrets from your bestie, remember?" Jade asked with a smirk.

By the poolside, Tom's phone beeped when the gates opened, and he took it out to see who was entering the premises since he had upgraded his security setting after his phone call with Jade the previous evening. His lips curved in a grin when he saw that it was Harry and Jade.

At that same moment, Bryan and Sonia joined him and Lucy, who were already seated by the poolside, "Tom, are you aware that tomorrow..."

"Jade is here," Tom cut Bryan off as he stood up, ready to go welcome his best friend and his sister.

Chapter 282 Official Informal Introductions

Sonia and Lucy followed behind both brothers as they hurried over to where Harry was parking the car to welcome them.

"You sneaky bastard! Why didn't you inform me that you were both coming over?" Tom asked Harry excitedly as Bryan opened the door on Jade's side of the car.

She was already grinning from ear to ear as she got out of the car and embraced Bryan, "It feels like I haven't seen you in ages," she said, and laughed out loud when Bryan lifted her off the ground and twirled her around in circles, "Stop it, Bryan! We are not kids anymore!" She yelled at him even though she continued to laugh, showing that she was actually enjoying it.

"You're still my kid sister," Bryan reminded her without stopping.

"We wanted to surprise you," Harry told Tom with a grin as he got out of the car, and embraced Tom as they both slapped each other's back.

"It worked then. I'm very surprised. Thanks for making sure that she is okay," Tom said, as he turned to look at his siblings.

"Jady!" Tom called to Jade as Bryan set her down, and she turned to face Tom only to be swept off her feet once again as he twirled her around.

"Tommy! What is wrong with the both of you? What am I, six?" She asked, laughing happily, while Lucy and Sonia watched the scene before them with a wide smile on their faces. While Lucy was smiling because she thought the bond between the siblings was a sweet sight to behold, Sonia was smiling because she noticed that Jade and Harry were wearing matching outfits, and she wondered if it was by choice or chance.

"Sup, Bryan?" Harry asked as he extended his hand for a handshake, and Bryan narrowed his eyes at him as he shook his hand.

"I'm cool. Why are you wearing matching outfits with Jade? Is it some sort of couple goal? Nothing happened between you two, right?" He asked suspiciously.

"As if I would tell you about something that isn't your business," Harry said with a snort as he walked past Bryan, but he turned to look at Jade and noticed for the first time that they were actually both putting on denim and white outfits.

How come he didn't notice that earlier? He wondered before turning to Lucy with a grin. Seeing the look on Harry's face after Bryan's question, Sonia could tell that they were dressing in matching outfits by chance as he seemed not to have noticed that they were wearing matching outfits. How cute!

"Hello, Miss Perry!" Harry greeted with a grin.

It was only now that Lucy was standing face to face with Harry that all the lies she had told him from the moment they met at the headquarters came back to her, and she found herself fighting back her embarrassment despite the fact that she was aware that he had also been toying with her the whole time.

"Hello, Mr. Jonas!"

"I hope that your fiance is feeling alright now?" Harry asked with a teasing smile, making both Sonia and Tom chuckle as he set Jade down, while Jade and Bryan looked questioningly at Lucy who was blushing.

"What fiance are you talking about?" Bryan and Jade asked curiously, sensing that they were missing a joke.

"Don't do that to my girlfriend, Harry!" Tom scolded as he went to stand beside Lucy and placed an arm around her shoulder possessively.

"Don't do what? I only asked a question. The first time Lucy resumed here at the headquarters she was late because she had spent the night drinking with Tom, but didn't know that I was aware of it. So when I asked why she was late, she claimed that her fiance was involved in an accident," Harry explained to Bryan and Jade who laughed out loud.

"I was so startled by her lie and the sincerity with which she told it that I almost believed her. Hence I'm enquiring about the welfare of her fiance," Harry said, looking at Lucy as he waited for an answer.

This time she raised her chin as she summoned the courage to meet his gaze. He knew she had lied, yet he was still asking, so she had to give him a befitting answer, "Unfortunately, he didn't make it," Lucy said, flashing him a stiff smile, and everyone laughed.

"Aha! You have a good sense of humor. That is very good. Tom would definitely be needing some of that as he lacks it," Harry said in amusement.

"I think you might be needing it more than my brother. Who knew you had it in you to tease anyone?" Jade asked, and giggled when Tom offered her his fist for a fist bump, while Harry glared at her.

"Although you both know each other formally, I should make the official informal introductions now," Tom said with a grin, "Harry, meet the lady that makes my heart beat, Lucy. My priceless

jewel, meet my right-hand man and best friend, Harry," Tom introduced, and Harry grinned as he stepped forward and extended a hand to Lucy for a handshake. The moment she placed her hand in his, he drew her in for an embrace.

"Sorry, Tom's girlfriend is mine too. We share everything. Work, money, family, annoying sister..."

"Sister falls under family too," Jade pointed out with a roll of her eyes, while Sonia watched them both with interest.

"Yeah, look who needs the sense of humor now," Harry said dryly, "As I was saying, Lucy, I and Tom share everything..."

"Not this one, pal. We ain't sharing my girlfriend. Get yourself a girlfriend, this one is solely mine," Tom refuted as he slapped Harry's arm away from Lucy and pulled her back to himself.

"You are really hurting my feelings right now, Tom," Harry said, touching his chest dramatically and they all laughed.

"Didn't Jade get you a girlfriend anyway?" Tom asked, and Harry scowled.

"You got him a girlfriend?" Bryan asked Jade with disbelief.

"That's only if he doesn't chase her away with his boring and old-fashioned style," Jade said with a roll of her eyes.

"So which of you is going to officially introduce the beautiful ladies to me? Or do I have to do it myself?" Jade said impatiently as she looked at both Lucy and Sonia.

"Oh, yeah. You've spoken with Sonia over the phone already. Baby, Lucy, meet Jade, the Hank princess, and the apple of our father's eyes..."

"I thought I used to be the apple of every member of the Hank's family eyes?" Jade cut in.

"I don't know about Tom, but you're no longer that for me, princess," Bryan said, and Jade pouted her lips as she blinked at Tom.

"What about you, Tommy? Have I been replaced?"

"Sorry, Jady, I'm sure you're still the apple of mom's and dad's eyes, and you will also be the apple of the eyes of the man you decide to give your heart to, but not mine," Tom said, making Jade roll her eyes.

"That was an awfully long explanation for such a simple question," she tut-tutted, and they all laughed.

"If you're done interrupting me, Jade, meet the apple of my eyes, Sonia, and this is Tom's beautiful girlfriend, Lucy," Bryan said, and Jade grinned as she embraced Sonia, and then Lucy.

"I followed the interview yesterday. It was so touching. You both were beautiful..."

"She almost bawled her eyes out," Harry cut in.

"I didn't bawl," Jade hissed at him.

"You did. You bawled so much I had no choice but to go get you a box of tissues," Harry said making both Lucy and Sonia smile.

"I never imagined you could be such a talkative," Jade said with a scoff as she turned to Lucy, "As I was saying before the rude interruption, I want to let you know that I admire your strength, your courage, and of course, your friendship," Jade said, looking from Lucy to Sonia and then back again.

"Aww, thanks. I'm glad to finally meet you. You are so beautiful, and your hair is so chic," Sonia said with a wide smile, and Jade giggled.

"Sonia has said it all, I don't know what else to say. You're welcome," Lucy said with a small smile, wishing she was half the extrovert Sonia was.

"By the way, you did great. I'm glad it all turned out okay," Harry told Lucy as he reached out and patted her shoulder lightly.

"Thank you, Mr. Jonas," Lucy said with a polite smile.

"Just call me Harry. Don't you think it's awkward referring to your man's best friend so formally?" Harry asked before turning his attention to Sonia, "Although I know you, but since neither of them saw it fit to introduce us officially, I figured I do the honors myself. I'm Harry, the only reason Tom can afford to have a social life," he said, and Sonia grinned as she shook his hand.

"I'm Sonia, and it's good to finally meet the very weird Mr. Harry that Lucy talked about..." The rest of her words trailed off when Lucy stepped on her foot.

Harry turned to Lucy with slightly narrowed eyes, "I never said you were weird. She is mistaken," Lucy said with an awkward smile.

Tom chuckled, "Why are you scared of Harry? Did you forget that you told me he was weird? Remember that day in the car while he was driving us to Ocean Airlines? You even said he was sulking," Tom reminded her, and Lucy pressed her lips together, while the others laughed at Harry who had a scowl on his face.

"He is very weird. I completely agree with Lucy on that. So now that the introductions are over, can we go in? I'm so famished. Why were you all outside by the way? And where is Candace?" Jade asked curiously as she turned to head inside.

"I see you are still fond of asking so many questions at the same time. Good luck with getting your answers," Bryan said with a shake of his head.

"By the way, you both are aware that dad's birthday is tomorrow, right?" Tom asked not wanting to disclose to them that he had just found out about it.

"Oh! You remembered?" Bryan asked, surprised.

"Thanks to Harry's reminder, I found out only a moment ago," Jade said, giving Tom a pointed look which he ignored.

"Maybe all three of us should facetime with him tomorrow," Jade suggested, and her brothers exchanged a look.

"Why facetime with him when he is here with us?" Tom asked, and both Jade and Harry exchanged a look.

"Mom and dad are here? When did they get here? And why did nobody mention it to me?" Jade asked, wanting to run for the house.

"I have an idea," Sonia quickly spoke before Jade could run off.

"How about we surprise him with your presence tomorrow? You could go back home with Harry right now, and come over tomorrow evening. You can bring a birthday cake and gifts along with you. I'm sure he would appreciate that," Sonia suggested.

"Today, tomorrow, what difference would it make?" Jade asked, looking at her brothers, while Harry inwardly groaned at the prospect of having her under his roof for another night.

"Well, I'm sure he would be more excited if he sees you tomorrow after thinking we all forgot his birthday than if he sees you now. It would be a very pleasant surprise for him I think," Bryan said thoughtfully.

Tom shrugged, "It's your call. We need to pick out birthday gifts too. How long will you be here for?" Tom asked Jade curiously.

"Maybe a day or two. I will make up my mind after I talk with Candace," she explained.

"Okay then. Let's do that. You can go back with Harry and we will all try to come up with a good plan for his birthday later this night. I and Lucy will leave for work early in the morning as usual, and Bryan and Sonia can leave the house and go hang out at the other apartment. Let's make them feel like we completely forgot about it, and then in the evening we can all go home together," Tom suggested, and the others nodded in agreement.

"Sounds good to me. I'm game," Jade said as she turned to Harry, "You are stuck with my smart mouth for another twenty-four hours," she promised with a wink as she went to where he was and linked their arms together, and Sonia hid a smile. This was going to be fun!

"Unfortunately so," Harry muttered with a shake of his head as he tried to unlink their arms. "If that's your decision, we should get going before either of your parents see her. We will stop by a restaurant on our way so that you can get something to eat," He said the later part to Jade as he separated their arms.

"See you tomorrow," Tom called to Harry, as they watched them get into the car.

"Inform Candace that I will be seeing her tomorrow," Jade called to her brothers as she got into the car, and they all waved at her as the car left.

"Let's go talk about the games," Lucy whispered to Sonia.

"We will see you two later," Sonia told the brothers as she pecked Bryan, and Lucy did the same to Tom before walking away.

"I'm surprised that you remembered dad's birthday despite all this madness. If not for Sonia, I wouldn't have remembered," Bryan said as they both headed for the house, and Tom narrowed his eyes.

How come Sonia had so conveniently reminded Bryan at the same time Lucy reminded him? "Sonia reminded you of it? How did she know dad's birthday? What did she say?" Tom asked curiously, and Bryan relayed their conversation to him. By the time Bryan finished, Tom was laughing.

"It's funny that Lucy was the one who also made me remember dad's birthday," Tom confessed to Bryan and went on to tell Bryan how Lucy had gone about it too.

Bryan laughed out loud, "Do you think either mom or dad told them to remind us?"

"I don't think dad would do that, and I doubt that mom would need to ask them to remind us of it when she can do so herself," Tom said thoughtfully.

"Then do you think maybe that is what Lucy's dad discussed with them after breakfast?" Bryan asked, and Tom gave him a nod.

"I think so."

"I hope not. How can I stop Sonia from crushing on him if I begin to like him?" Bryan asked, and Tom chuckled.

"Give it up, bro. You don't hate the man. You just hate the fact that he has a hold on your girlfriend," Tom said with a chuckle, slapping Bryan's back as they entered the house.

Chapter 283 Talking About Marriage

"Lucy is a really lovely girl," Evelyn said once Tom joined her in the laundry room where she was busy folding some of the laundries.

"Why are you doing this when I have people I pay to do it?" Tom asked with a slight frown as he took the bedspread she was folding, and dropped it in the laundry basket.

"I didn't complain, did I? Besides, you have more guests than usual in the house, hence I'm doing this. When you get married your wife will..."

"Yeah. How did I forget that you always find a way to navigate every discussion back to the subject of marriage? I have a woman now in my life, so give it a rest," Tom said as he took her arm and led her out of the laundry room.

"Yes, I'm well aware that you have a woman. And I love her and her family. So when are you going to get married?" She asked, and sighed.

"That isn't why I came to find you. I just wanted to spend some time with you since it's been a while we just sat down together," Tom said as he pulled her close, and Evelyn looked at him suspiciously.

"How am I sure you're not just trying to change the subject?"

"I'm sure you know me better than that. So tell me, how have you been?" Tom asked, and then he listened to her as she told him all about the different charity groups she volunteered with, and she gave him all the juicy gossips of some of their neighbors, and even some of the people he went to school with who had moved back into the neighborhood.

"Really? Nell is back home? I thought he was a big-time footballer?" Tom asked, genuinely surprised.

"That was until his femur was damaged during a game. Didn't you read of it?" His mother asked with a scoff.

"Anyway, everyone in the neighborhood talks about my successful children, and they're always reading every article that concerns you and your siblings. I always feel like a Queen whenever I step out of the house," she concluded, and Tom chuckled.

"You should feel so. You are our Queen," Tom said, making her smile widen.

"So, what about you? What has been going on? How is work going? And why haven't I seen nor heard about Harry since I arrived? Did something happen between you both?" She asked curiously.

"We are cool. He has been busy. I sent him out on an assignment, but he will be here to say hello to you tomorrow," Tom assured her as he led her upstairs, away from the Den where the men were making noise.

"Oh, that's good then. It's been a while since I last saw him. And you should stop making the poor guy lie to me. He isn't great at telling lies," Evelyn scolded.

"Don't you think it's your fault? You should stop putting him in positions where he has to lie," Tom pointed out, and Evelyn rolled her eyes.

"By the way mom, what do you think about I-Global entertainment agency?" He asked, and she paused to look at him.

"By I-Global entertainment agency I take it that you mean you want to create a subsidiary that deals mostly with entertainment?" She asked, and he nodded.

"Yes. I thought about it, and I asked Bryan to work with me. Does it make sense to you?" He asked since his mother was very intelligent and knowledgeable on stuff like that. Years ago before she stopped working, she used to be the personal assistant to the CEO of a really big company, so he trusted her judgment when it came to stuff like this.

"You just acquired Ocean Airlines, how far have you come with reviving the airline? Are you sure it is not too soon to take on another huge responsibility? I don't think an entertainment agency would be easy to run," she said, voicing out her concern.

"Yes, I understand that it won't be easy to run. But now that I've revealed my identity to the world, Harry won't have to represent me as much anymore. So I offered to make him my Co-CEO, that way neither of us gets overwhelmed. Also, after that interview, the moment I make an official announcement about this and sign Bryan, our stock price will soar," Tom explained as he opened the door to the balcony and held out a chair for her, and Evelyn nodded her head as she sat down.

"I see that you've thought it through," Evelyn said calmly, "So what did Bryan say?"

"He said he will think about it. I just wanted to hear your opinion before discussing it with him or telling dad about it," Tom explained.

"I think it's a good idea. At least you will look out for him," Evelyn said as she smiled at him.

"While you're making all these great plans, I hope you will factor marriage into it? You are not getting any younger and neither are we. We want grandkids," She said and Tom sighed.

It wasn't like he didn't want to get married, but something told him that Lucy wouldn't be willing to do so now, and he didn't want to raise the subject and make things uncomfortable for her. She had barely just agreed to be in a relationship now after so many years of wanting to be single, so marriage was likely going to be the last thing on her mind.

"When I'm ready I will settle down. If you want grandkids so much, I could just get one adopted for you," Tom offered, and his mother glared at him.

"What are you both doing here?" Bryan asked as he opened the door and joined them on the balcony.

"Talking about marriage. When are you getting married to Sonia?" She asked, and Bryan took a step back as he looked at Tom.

"Your twin brother-in-law is leaving, I just came to get you in case you wanted to say goodbye to him," Bryan said and hurried away without answering their mother's question, making Tom chuckle knowingly as he stood up and hurried after Bryan.

"I hope I get to see you again soon," Lucy was saying as she embraced Lucas who was ready to leave.

"Sure. Take care of yourself, alright?" Lucas said as he kissed her forehead before breaking the hug to look at Tom who just joined them, "I trust that you will take care of her."

"You have nothing to worry about," Tom assured him, and they both shook hands.

"Darling, make sure you're fine. If you need to talk, give me a call, okay? No matter what time it is," Janet said as she embraced her son, and held on to him as she patted his back.

"I'll be okay. Just enjoy your stay here," Lucas assured his mother, before facing his father.

"Be good. We got you," Andrew said as he slapped his son's back.

"You will be okay. No wise person ever died of heartbreak. Always remember that" Tom's mother said as she joined them, and she embraced him. Janet had told her all about Lucas' relationship with Rachel and what had led to their breakup.

"You all should give the young man a break! He is only traveling, not going to commit suicide. Why do you all sound like you won't be seeing him again? You should leave now before you miss your flight, son," Desmond said impatiently as he slapped Lucas' back making him chuckle as he opened the car door, but not without stopping to embrace Sonia first.

"You take care of her, Bryan," Lucas said as he shook hands with Bryan before looking at the others, "Y'all should have fun. And let me know who wins the game," he told Lucy with a wink as he got into the car for Adolf to drive him to the airport.

They had all agreed that he should not drive his car since they didn't think that he was in a good frame of mind to drive himself.

Tom had promised to get the car delivered to him since both their parents would be traveling back together and wouldn't be needing the car.

They all stood out there waving at the car as Adolf drove off, and they remained there until the car disappeared from view.

Janet sighed as her husband's arm came around her waist, "I really hope that he will be fine."

"Don't worry. He will be fine," her husband assured her.

"Alright, everyone! It is time for the games!" Sonia announced excitedly.

"Okay, let's see what Lucy has prepared to entertain us," Desmond said with a grin as they all headed for the house.

"The games are all outdoor games," Lucy announced.

"What? Outdoor games? I thought it would be using the play station or something," Andrew complained.

"Why? Are you scared that Tom would beat your pants down?" Bryan taunted.

Andrew smirked, "Take a look at my physique, son. I doubt that your body would be anywhere near this when you get to my age. I'm not scared of outdoor activities."

"Why do you keep being at loggerhead with both brothers, anyway?" Janet asked her husband quietly.

"It's not my fault that the boys feel threatened by your hot hunk of a husband," he told his wife with a wink, and she rolled her eyes, "So what is it going to be? Are we swimming?"

"You will see when it's time. Right now, you all should go to the poolside and wait while we get all the items we need," Lucy instructed them before signaling to Sonia to come with her.

Chapter 284 The Contest

"What?" Both Tom and Lucy's dad exclaimed in unison when Lucy and Sonia joined the others who were already seated at the poolside thirty minutes later with Samantha and Jamal. While Lucy was carrying two sack bags, Samantha and Sonia each carried a bowl that contained whipped cream, and Jamal held two deflated balloons.

"What are the bags for?" Tom's dad asked with a chuckle as he relaxed on his seat, ready to enjoy the show.

"The first game you both will be playing against each other is the sack race," Sonia announced with a grin, and both Andrew and Tom looked at Lucy incredulously while the others laughed out in amusement.

"Can I play?" Jamal asked eagerly.

"No, darling. There is not enough sack for all three of you and they both have to compete against each other," Evelyn said as she lifted Jamal on her lap.

"Come on, Lu, how do you expect the chief executive officer of I-Global to participate in such a silly game?" Bryan asked amidst his laughter, causing the others to laugh even more.

"I'm too old for such a game," Lucy's father complained in disbelief.

"Oh, now he admits that he is old," Bryan said with a chuckle.

"I'm not old," Jamal pointed out.

"Yeah. You are just too young to play," Lucy's mother told the child with a grin as she patted his hair.

"We need a hand. Come with me," Sonia said to Bryan as she took the balloons from Jamal and handed them to Bryan who followed her and Samantha to the other end of the poolside where a table had been set.

"Can I go with them?" Jamal asked hopefully as he attempted to get off Evelyn's thighs. He did not want to be away from the balloons, as that was where he believed the fun was.

"Sure. Go on," Evelyn said as she set the kid down and he hurried after Bryan.

"It is actually a very simple and short contest. You will both wear the sack bags, and then run to the other side where Sonia, Bryan, and Samantha will be waiting. When you get to the other side, we will proceed to the next phase," Lucy announced.

"There is a next phase?" Tom asked incredulously.

"Yes. There are four phases. The first is the sack race. You take off the sack once you get to the other side, and the second phase starts immediately. The second involves finding the bubble gum in the whipped cream bowl, and while you're finding the bubble gum a balloon will be attached to both your ankles, which brings us to the third phase; stomping the balloon. The first person to stomp on his opponent's balloon and burst it races back to the pool and dives in while the other follows. The first to get back to the end of the pool and meet me here is the winner," Lucy explained with a wide smile as she adjusted her glass on the bridge of her nose.

Tom looked at her incredulously, "You are kidding me, right?" There was no way his Lucy was capable of coming up with such a wicked game. It had to be Sonia. This had Sonia written all over it, Tom thought as he turned to look at Sonia who was now standing at the other end away from them and was setting the bowls on the table, while Bryan pumped two balloons, "This was her idea, wasn't it?" He asked Lucy.

"Does it matter whose idea it is? You both should hurry up and get into the sacks. We don't have all day," Tom's father urged them both.

"This is ridiculous!" Lucy's father muttered, and Tom nodded in agreement.

"At least you both agree on something now. It's an improvement," Evelyn pointed out with a grin.

"If you think about it, the game is not as ridiculous as you competing with your daughter's man for her love. Since you both agreed to compete against each other for Lucy's love, you should do so quietly unless you are ready to pay double the money we bet on you," Janet warned her husband, while Tom stood there staring at Lucy who was smiling at him like she had done something praiseworthy.

He exchanged a look with Lucy's father who shrugged, "So what are the rules?"

"Just put on the sack and run once the whistle is blown. When you get to the bowl, you can only try to find the bubble gum with your mouth, not your hands. That means you dip your head in the bowl and try to find the bubble gum with your teeth or tongue, just not your hands," Lucy explained.

"So how do you know who finds it? What if he claims to find it without actually finding it?" Her father asked, eyeing Tom dubiously.

"Yeah, about that. The first person to find it, chews on it and blows a bubble before stomping on his opponent's balloon, and then he can jump into the water," Lucy concluded.

"So what if despite doing that he still comes last in the swimming contest?" Tom asked, and Lucy shrugged.

"That's why it's a game. The first can become the last. You need luck to win," Lucy said with a shrug.

"Are we to swim with our clothes on?" Tom asked, looking down at the trouser and vintage shirt he was wearing.

"That is your call to make," Lucy said with a shrug.

"Okay, let's do this," Lucy's dad suggested, and without waiting for Tom to consent, he picked up one of the sack bags.

Seeing Andrew's enthusiasm, Tom picked up a sack bag and Lucy gestured to both men to move away from each other. One to the left walkway beside the pool, and the other to the right walkway, that way the pool was between them so that they would race without colliding.

"At the first whistle, you step into your sack. And at the second, you start racing," Lucy said as she raised the whistle to her lips, while every other person watched them with excited anticipation. Even though they all knew that it wasn't a big deal, they were filled with suspense as they watched the show.

Lucy whistled, and immediately both men quickly stepped into their sack bags, and before they could finish adjusting them, she whistled again, making her father who was yet to finish adjusting his bag turn to glare at her while Tom immediately started hopping while holding on to the edge of the bag.

Seeing how everyone was laughing, Lucy's dad turned around to see what was funny and he swore under his breath when he realized that Tom was already ahead of him. He quickly grabbed the edge of his sack and started to hop. Because he was too quick, he tripped and cursed as he stood up again and resumed hopping.

Tom's father hooted with laughter as he took out his phone to record the scene before him, while the women laughed each time either of the men almost tripped.

"Come on, Tom, you can do it!" Bryan cheered every time Tom stopped to catch his breath, and each time he looked to the side and saw that Lucy's father was almost catching up with him, he resumed hopping again.

"Come on, Mr. Perry! Don't stop!" Sonia cheered, and Bryan turned to scowl at her.

"Seriously?" He asked, and she giggled.

"He is not just Lucy's father, he is also like a father to me, so I see no reason why I shouldn't cheer him. And if you know anything about me, then by now you should know that the more you keep up with this attitude the more I'm going to rub it in your face. I admire and respect the man, but you are the one I'm in love with you, and I respect you too. He makes me blush, but you give me butterflies in my belly. What I feel for him is the kind of innocent love a child has for an elder who isn't their parents. It's nothing compared to what I feel for you," Sonia assured him and leaned forward to kiss his cheek, but Bryan was quick to turn so she ended up kissing his lip instead. Samantha was too busy cheering Tom on to hear or see what was going on, but Jamal on the other hand wasn't. He closed his eyes when Bryan deepened the kiss.

"Yes!" Samantha clapped happily when Tom made it to the table before Lucy's father, and Bryan and Sonia pulled away from each other as Jamal handed them the inflated balloons.

Immediately they got to the table, both men stepped out of the sack bags and chose a bowl each in which they stuck their faces trying to find the bubble gum. While they were busy trying to find the gum, Sonia went to attach a balloon to Tom's ankle by tying the string of wool that was attached to the balloon around Tom's ankle too, while Bryan did the same to Lucy's father.

Thankfully the bowls weren't filled to the brim with whipped cream so each time the men raised their face to catch their breath it was just their forehead, nose, and lips that were covered in cream, making Jamal laugh out loud as they looked like clowns.

Bryan took out his phone and made a recording of this aspect of the game since his father wasn't close enough to do so, while Sonia captured several pictures of them with their faces stained with whipped cream.

Soon Lucy's father found the bubble gum and immediately he lifted his head and chewed on it very quickly so that he could make a bubble and stomp on Tom's balloon before he lifts his face from the bowl, but while he was still chewing, Tom found his and also started chewing really quickly making the observers laugh out loud at how funny they looked while chewing fast.

Lucy's father soon succeeded in blowing the bubble, and immediately he tried to stomp on Tom's balloon, but Tom was quick to evade him while also trying to blow his bubble.

They both ran around the place as Lucy's father kept trying to stomp on the balloon, but Tom kept avoiding him. Once Tom succeeded in blowing his bubble, he ran after Lucy's father trying to stomp his balloon, and it soon became a game of defense and attack.

By this time no one was cheering either of them anymore as everyone was too engrossed in the entertainment to care about the bet anymore.

When Lucy's father attempted to stomp on Tom's balloon again, he almost slipped, but Tom was quick to catch him, and once Tom held on to him to steady him, he quickly stomped on Tom's balloon and dove into the pool to the surprise and amusement of everyone.

Seeing how he had been tricked, Tom dove into the pool too and moved as fast as he could to catch up with Lucy's father who was doing a butterfly stroke.

Halfway down the pool, Andrew's strokes weakened when he felt a sharp pain in his shoulder, but in Tom's haste to beat him, he didn't notice as he tried to race past him.

Sonia who was walking beside the pool as they swam, and was following every of their movement with her sharp gaze frowned, "I don't think he is okay," she complained to Bryan.

"Who? Tom?" Bryan asked as he squinted against the evening sun to see who Sonia was talking about.

"No, not Tom. Look at Mr. Perry. He is favoring his right arm," she pointed out with a worried frown, and Bryan observed closely, and once he noticed that she was right, he quickly dove into the water, causing Tom who had already swam ahead of Lucy's father to turn around.

Once Tom saw Bryan coming behind him, and he noticed that Mr. Perry was still far behind, he sensed that something was wrong, so he turned back, causing Lucy and the others who had been waiting for him to get to them to stand up.

"What is going on?" Lucy asked in confusion as she watched both brothers swim towards her father who she also just noticed was favoring an arm.

"I think your father hurt his shoulder again," her mother said with a sigh.

"Did you hurt your arm?" Tom asked as he got to where Lucy's dad was.

"Shit! I was going to beat you, but my shoulder seems to have a mind of its own," he swore good-naturedly, and Tom took his good arm and placed it over his shoulder, while Bryan came from the other side and took the arm he was favoring gently and also placed it on his shoulder.

"We could just leave you here to drown, you know? Now you have to give up whatever right you have over Lucy and Sonia in exchange for saving your life. You are too weak to protect them," Bryan said, and Lucy's father chuckled as they slowly made their way to where the others had gathered with concerned expressions which relaxed when they saw how he was laughing.

"Not on your life. I can take you on anytime in physical combat..."

"Then why not take me on right now?" Bryan challenged, and both Tom and Lucy's father laughed this time.

"Don't be a coward. Why will you want to fight with an injured man?"

"You mean an old man? Your shoulder hurts only because you're too old to be doing butterfly strokes," Bryan taunted, and all three of them laughed.

"How about I fight him in your place since I'm going to be a part of your family," Tom offered with a grin, making Bryan lean forward to look at Tom incredulously.

"WOW! I never knew I came from a family of traitors until today. Today has revealed a lot. You are just like your father," Bryan said accusingly, and Lucy's father chuckled as he slapped Tom's back approvingly.

"Welcome to the family, son."

Chapter 285 Feminine Wiles

"Seeing as they both got out at the same time, who is the winner?" Tom's father asked, once his sons climbed out of the pool with Lucy's father.

"Who else, but Tom? He would have won had he not gone back to help Andrew," Tom's mother pointed out.

"And my husband would have won had he not hurt his shoulder," Lucy's mother defended her husband as she went to her husband.

"Unfortunately that wasn't anyone's fault, so no one can be blamed for that. Tom on the other hand gave up his chance to help him," Tom's mother said matter of factly, but Lucy's mom wasn't listening to her.

"Are you okay, darling? How bad is it?" She asked with concern as touched the arm her husband was favoring.

"I'm okay, babe. Nothing a good massage won't fix," he assured her with a wink that relieved her, before facing the guys.

"Thanks, boys," he said as he slapped Tom's back, and then Bryan's back.

"I need to get out of these clothes. I'll be right back," Tom announced as he started to head for the house, but he stopped when he noticed that the deflated balloon was trailing behind him, and he crouched down to untie the string from his ankle.

"Can I have your balloon, please?" Jamal asked Lucy's dad whose inflated balloon was still trailing behind him.

"Sure," he said as Lucy crouched down to untie the string and handed the balloon to Jamal.

"We should all go inside, you need to change out of your clothes too," Sonia said as she linked her arm with Bryan's arm and led him towards the house, while the others followed, and Lucy ran to meet up with Tom.

The elders laughed as they talked about the ridiculous contest, and once they all got inside the house they agreed to all gather in the den thirty minutes later.

"That was a good game you played out there," Lucy said with a wide smile as she and Tom walked into his bedroom.

"Yeah. You made us run around like kids. Well done," Tom said in a flat tone as he took off his clothes and walked over to the bathroom.

The smile on her face faltered, "Is something wrong? Are you mad at me?" Lucy asked with a slight frown as she followed him.

"I'm not mad. But I'm also not impressed either. It's fine. We played your game and humored you. I'm sure everyone had fun. That's all that matters after all, isn't it?" Tom asked without looking at her as he dropped the wet clothes into the laundry basket beside the door and shut the door behind him so that she wouldn't follow, leaving Lucy standing outside with a concerned frown on her face.

"Is there something you want me to get you while you bathe?" She called out tentatively, but Tom didn't respond.

She chose to believe that he didn't respond because he did not hear her voice over the sound of the running shower. Realizing that he would need clothes to change into once he gets out of the shower, she walked into his walk-in closet and looked around the place.

Everything looked so manly and organized, and she noticed that the colors of the clothes were mostly either white, black, gray, or different shades of blue. She looked around until she found the section where his casual clothes were neatly arranged, and she picked out black sweatpants and a biro blue tank top for him.

Once she picked those out, she opened his drawer and also picked out underwear for him before going to lay them on the bed.

Tom opened the bathroom door just as she finished laying out the clothes, and his gaze went to where she was standing by the bed, looking at him uncertainly.

He stood there with a towel tied around his waist as he just stared at her. He tried to ignore the guilt rising within him for making her worry unnecessarily. She deserved this much for making him play such a ridiculous game. He had earned the right to be petty after being subjected to such a childish game.

"I'm sorry I made you..."

"There is nothing to apologize for. You did nothing wrong," Tom cut in before she could finish.

"But you just said..."

"I told you that I'm not mad. I'll get over whatever displeasure I'm feeling. Thanks for picking out my clothes," Tom said as he picked the clothes from the bed and walked into his closet, leaving Lucy standing in the middle of the room with a worried frown.

She hadn't expected that he would be upset over the game when he had played so well. Why was he angry? He had been laughing with her dad and Bryan a while ago, so what changed between now and then? She wondered as she stood there, trying to figure out what to do while she waited for him to come out and talk to her.

"What can I do to make you feel better quicker?" She asked as she took off her glasses and hung them over the front of her shirt.

The corners of Tom's lips twitched, but since he had his back to her she couldn't see his face. Answer and put her out of her misery, or not answer yet? Tom asked himself as he pulled on the briefs and sweatpants she had picked for him, and he sprayed some antiperspirant under his armpit.

Lucy's heart felt painfully tight when he still didn't answer her question. It made her feel like she couldn't breathe, so she took in a deep breath as she slowly approached the closet where he was now pulling on his shirt.

"Tom, this is making me feel really uncomfortable and I don't want to work on eggshells around you. I don't want us to fight either, so please..."

Tom frowned when he heard a slight tremor in her voice, and he turned to look at her and noticed that she had taken off her glasses and her eyes were gleaming with unshed tears.

"Shit!" He swore as he quickly went to her and pulled her close, "I'm sorry. I didn't realize I was overdoing it. I'm not really mad. I was only trying to get back at you for making me play such a silly game," Tom said apologetically as the first tear dropped from her eyes.

"You're just saying that because you don't want me to cry," Lucy said with a snuffle.

"I'm just telling you the truth now because I don't want to see you cry. I really didn't mean any of it. I was just putting up a show," Tom pleaded as he brushed off the teardrop with his thumb.

"You are telling me the truth right now, right? Does that mean the game wasn't ridiculous?" Lucy asked looking into his eyes, and Tom would have laughed had she not looked so serious.

"Of course, I'm telling you the truth. But the game was completely ridiculous, and to be honest, I didn't like the idea at first, but it turned out to be fun. I didn't really play such games growing up, so doing it now wasn't so bad," Tom assured her as he kissed her forehead.

Seeing that he was being honest, Lucy sighed, "I guess it really works after all," she said in her normal voice as she pulled away from Tom, making him raise a brow.

"What works?" Tom asked in confusion.

"Feminine wiles. The tears to be precise," Lucy said with a grin as she blinked at him.

"What? You faked that?" Tom asked in disbelief, and she giggled as she wore her glasses.

"It was either that, or I was going to start crying for real. I figured I do the fake tears first and see your reaction before the real one comes along," she said, and Tom chuckled.

"Damn! And I fell for it just like I fell for you," Tom said as he pulled her close for a kiss.

"Nice line. I suppose I'm not as innocent as you think after all," Lucy said with a giggle as she kissed him back, and then she pulled back to look at him with a serious expression on her face.

"Don't do that next time. The tears might have been fake, but I felt really terrible here," Lucy said pointing to the left part of her chest.

"Here?" Tom asked, cupping her left boob, and she laughed.

"No! That's not what I was pointing at, don't be silly!" Lucy said, trying to slap his hand off as he kept groping her boob.

"But you pointed to this. I should make it feel better since I made it hurt, let's see," Tom said as he reached under her crop top, and Lucy giggled some more as she tried to move away from his reach, but his other arm went around her waist, keeping her close to him.

"I was talking about my heart, not my boob!" She said amidst her laughter.

"And if I remember correctly your heart is somewhere under this boob, isn't it?" Tom asked with a naughty grin as he kissed her.

"Tommm..." Lucy moaned into his mouth when he played with her nipple, and he chuckled since he knew just how sensitive her nipples were.

"I'm glad you are no longer allowing them to lie waste," Tom said with a chuckle as he broke the kiss and pulled away from her.

"Allowing what lie waste?" She asked in confusion wondering what he was talking about.

"You don't remember what you said that first night, do you?" Tom asked, and when she just stared at him blankly, he grinned.

"Who knew my nipples could be that sensitive yet I've been allowing them to lie waste for so long? Does that ring any bell?"

"Oh, God! Don't tell me I said that to a total stranger," Lucy pleaded, and Tom laughed.

"Don't worry. I won't tell. It's going to remain just between us both," he assured her with a wink as he led her out of the closet and into the bedroom.

"Tom?"

"Yeah?" Tom asked, turning to look at her.

"I know that misunderstandings are a natural part of every human relationship, but if and whenever I offend you as I know I will likely do in the future, can you not stay mad at me for too long?" Lucy asked, looking directly into his hazel eyes.

"How long can I be mad for?" Tom asked, and Lucy pursed her lips.

"Five minutes tops."

Tom sighed. This was a tricky question since he knew that there were different levels of offenses, "I will try. Can you do me the same favor?"

"I will try."

"But you do know that offenses vary, right?" Tom pointed out in case she hadn't thought of that.

"This promise is based on trust. Let's hope that neither of us commits an unforgivable offense."

Chapter 286 Little Friend

"Are you okay?" Bryan asked Sonia after they entered his bedroom.

"Sure. Why?" She asked looking at him curiously.

"Nothing. I just figured that you might have been upset after seeing Lucy's dad that way. I wanted to be sure you're okay," he said with concern, and Sonia smiled when she realized what he was talking about.

Having lost her biological father because he drowned to death, he was concerned that seeing Lucy's father that way must have also upset her and brought back painful memories.

"Aww! I'm fine. Although I was worried, but thankfully you listened to me and jumped in there to help. So I'm okay. Thank you," she said as she raised herself on her toes and kissed his lip.

"The least I can do is save the life of the second man you love after me. I come first, right?" Bryan asked with a grin, and Sonia giggled.

"Why? Do you want to compete with him too?" She asked with a teasing smile.

"We both know that I'm nothing like Tom. He wouldn't stand a chance with me, and because you care about him, I wouldn't want his feelings to get hurt when I win. So I have to decline for your sake," Bryan said with a wink and she giggled as he grabbed her by the waist and pulled her to himself.

"Don't! You're going to make me wet," she screamed, trying to get away from him but he held on to her.

"Wet? What's wrong with being wet?" Bryan asked, wriggling his brows suggestively and she giggled.

"Get your mind out of the gutters, Bryan Hank!" She chided but stopped resisting when she grabbed his ass.

"Now that we are both wet. We should get out of these clothes together," he said with a wink, and she shook her head in amusement.

"Can't. Every other dress I have in my luggage box is going to make your mom uncomfortable..."

"Who cares about that?" Bryan asked incredulously.

"I do. You should too. I know that she is nice and willing to accept me the way I am, but I'm not going to overdo it either. I also have to respect her since I'm a visitor here," Sonia pointed out, and he sighed.

"You're such a good girl, Sonia Bardi," he said with a taunting smile, and she giggled.

"Don't worry I'm sure you'll find more than enough clothes to change into in the closet," he assured her as he kissed the tip of her nose.

"I'm still not doing anything with you!"

"Who talked about doing anything? I don't want to do anything with you either... But if you change your mind, then I just might change mine too," Bryan said with a grin, and she laughed again.

This man made her laugh so effortlessly. Sonia felt her heart swell with love for him as she gazed into his eyes "I love you so much, Bryan," she said unable to keep her thoughts to herself.

"And I'm sure you know that I love you too... Even more."

"I'm not sure about you loving me more than I love you, but let's get you out of these wet clothes and warm you up before we debate the subject," Sonia suggested as she reached for the hem of his t-shirt and raised it.

Bryan laughed when she raised the shirt over his head and kissed his nipple, "What did I do to deserve someone as naughty as you?"

"I keep wondering the same thing," Sonia said as she ran her hands over his cool body as he took off the shirt.

"We have less than twenty-five minutes," Bryan reminded her as he glanced at the wall clock hanging on one end of the wall.

"Then you should hurry up," Sonia said as she walked away from him to the closet.

"I should hurry up? I thought this was a we thing? Didn't you talk about warming me up a moment ago? I thought you changed your mind," Bryan said with a slight frown, and Sonia laughed softly.

"What did I do to deserve someone with such a dirty mind as you? I only meant that you need to shower and change into something dry. I'm going to change into something else, and then find something else for you to wear, so go in and have a warm shower before you catch a cold," Sonia suggested as she checked out the clothes.

"Fine," Bryan muttered as he walked into the bathroom, making Sonia grin.

"I was going to ask you earlier, are all of these clothes yours or Tom's?" Sonia called out to him curiously, wondering why there were so many clothes in the closet. She was certain that he hadn't traveled down here with all of these clothes.

"Mine. For reasons best known to Tom, he ensures that the closets in each of our bedrooms are filled with clothes of different sizes in case of whenever we visit him," Bryan called back as he turned on the hot faucet of the shower. He didn't shut the door so that he could still talk with her as he showered.

"That's some billionaire shit man! I should definitely check out Jade's closet. I'm sure I'm going to find some really nice designer outfit that would fit," Sonia said happily as she picked out a boxer, and then denim baggy shorts and a red t-shirt for him.

Bryan shook his head in amusement when he heard the excitement in her tone. He couldn't understand why she continued to behave that way when she could afford stuff for herself. And even if she couldn't afford some things, they both knew that he could, so why was she excited by this?

"I've set the clothes on the bed. I'm stepping out to find Jade's bedroom, and then I will join the others downstairs, so come over when you're done," she called out to him before leaving the room.

Bryan didn't need anyone to tell him that she was leaving earlier than him because she didn't want to be teased again.

"Why are you quiet? You don't feel okay with me going back with you, do you?" Jade asked as she watched Harry.

"It's not a problem. I've handled being around you for the past couple of days so I'm sure I can manage for another night. It's not a big deal," Harry said, and Jade snorted.

"I'm very sure this is the most fun you've had in your boring life. Manage? You wish."

If this was a few days ago, she would most likely have been offended by what he had said, but she was fast getting used to his way of speaking his mind, and she also had adopted his style when communicating with him. It had to be blunt for blunt.

Harry said nothing to that as he continued to drive, but he thought about what she had just said. He couldn't say being with her for the last couple of days had been fun, since half the time she had been invading his privacy when all he wanted was to be alone, but then again he had been sent there so that she wouldn't be alone so he had tried his best to accommodate her.

Since he was an only child and the closest to a sibling he had was Tom who had also been his roommate in college, it was his first time spending this much time with someone else. So yes, it had felt different having her around, but did that qualify as fun?

"Do you have any plan for tonight?" Jade asked when he still didn't say anything after some time.

"Yes."

"You do? What kind of plan?" She asked, surprised, and equally curious to know what he was going to be doing.

"The same kind of plan that every normal human has at the end of every exhausting day. I intend to sleep."

"Oh, that!" Jade said in amusement, wondering why she had been expecting anything else from him.

"So what? You're just going to go to bed when we get home?" She asked incredulously.

"Do you have a problem with me doing that? Or perhaps do you need me to sing you a lullaby before going to bed?" Harry asked dryly, and Jade giggled.

"You have a weird sense of humor, uncle Harry," Jade said slapping his arm playfully, and Harry glared at her, which only made her laugh even more.

"So, I was thinking. How about we hang out tonight? Bills on me. Think of it as a thank you from me, for inconveniencing yourself to help me."

"I didn't do it for you, so you don't have to thank me," Harry said, and Jade sucked in a deep breath.

"Is there some kind of kick you get out of being difficult?" Jade asked irritably.

"Why? I'm difficult because I'm saying you don't have to thank me?" Harry asked in confusion.

"Fine. I'm not thanking you. Let's hang out tonight. It won't take all night. You can always come back to sleep," Jade offered.

"And I already told you, I'm exhausted. I need to get proper rest. I'm going to the office tomorrow," Harry reminded her.

"You know what? Suit yourself! I'm going to go out and have fun tonight whether or not you come with me!" She snapped at him.

"By all means, please have fun," Harry encouraged, and Jade sucked her teeth as she turned her back to him and looked out of the window.

Why was she upset this time? Didn't he have the right to choose what he wanted to do with his evening anymore? Harry mused as he parked the car in front of a five-star restaurant.

Their outfits were too casual for such a big restaurant, but he didn't mind. He wasn't here to impress anyone after all. Once he got out of the car, he walked over to the other side and opened her door, "Are you going to come down, or do you intend to stay back here and sulk?" He asked, but Jade ignored him as she got out of the car with all the dignity she could muster.

Harry handed the car key to the valet stepped back for Jade to walk inside when they got to the door.

Why she always let him get to her was beyond her, Jade thought with annoyance as she walked past him.

"Harry!" The owner of the hotel who looked about the same age as Harry greeted, when he sighted Harry walking in behind Jade, and he hurried towards him.

"Hello, Philip! It's been a while," Harry greeted with a polite smile as he shook hands with the young man.

"It's good to see you. You look... Different," he observed with a smile, and then glanced at Jade who was waiting some feet away from them for Harry to finish with his conversation.

"I guess it's because I'm not dressed in a suit as usual," Harry said, ignoring the curiosity he could see on the young man's face.

"I don't suppose you made a reservation?" The man asked.

"No, I didn't. My little friend here..." Harry said loud enough for Jade to hear him, "...is hungry, so we decided to stop by," Harry said, and Jade scowled at him, making Harry stifle the urge to chuckle.

"That is not a problem then. I'll just escort you to a private table if you don't mind. And maybe you can introduce me to your little friend."

Chapter 287 Whatever?

Little friend? Did he really just refer to her as his little friend? Jade asked herself irritably as she followed both men. It was quite obvious that he enjoyed annoying her. He seemed to know the best ways to annoy her.

She had only wanted to hang out with him because she genuinely felt grateful that he had come around. Spending the last couple of days with him was the most fun she had allowed herself to enjoy since her cheating ex-boyfriend died.

She had withdrawn from everyone, and even though she tried to sound like she was fine while talking with her family over the phone, she had been very far from okay. She barely ate well nor took care of herself. She had buried herself in her job and overworked herself until he had come along and forced her to come out of her shell and communicate with him every day.

The offer of hanging out with him was out of the table now. She was going to go out without him. It had been four years already since she last went clubbing, and she wanted to do just that. The last

time she went clubbing was with Todd, two months before his accident. To think that she hadn't even realized that he was cheating on her.

"Esquire?" Harry called when he noticed that she had a distant look in her eyes and wasn't paying attention to what was going on around her.

"Huh?" She asked, blinking rapidly as she tried to focus her gaze on him.

Harry looked slightly concerned, "Are you okay?"

"Sure."

"Then sit," he said, making her realize that he was still holding out her seat.

She had almost forgotten how much of a gentleman he was. Or perhaps he was just old-fashioned? He was only a gentleman when his mouth was closed.

"Thanks," Jade said as she lowered herself to the seat, and Harry took the seat opposite her.

Philip cleared his throat as he took the seat adjacent to theirs, "So?" He asked, looking at Harry with a hopeful smile, reminding him that he wanted to be introduced to the pretty little friend. He figured that since Harry had introduced her that way, perhaps she was nothing other than that to him.

"Philip, this is Jade Hank. Jade, meet Philip Foreman. He is the owner of this restaurant."

"Jade Hank? You are not related to Thomas Hank, are you?" Philip asked with a friendly smile, which for some reason, put Jade off.

Although he was good-looking and she had caught him staring at her with interest a moment ago, she didn't like the look she noticed on his face when he heard her name. Even if he had actually been interested in her, it seemed like his interest doubled upon hearing her name. From the way he asked the question, she could tell that he already knew the answer.

Harry didn't miss the change in Jade's countenance when the guy asked about her relationship with Tom, and he had a feeling that she wasn't going to answer the question, so he decided to answer the question instead and observe her reaction.

"Yes. She is Tom's only sister. The spoilt Princess of the Hank family," Harry said with a note of humor in his voice, and he picked up the menu to place his order when two waiters, a male, and female, joined them.

"Wow! I never knew that Tom's sister was this beautiful. It's nice to meet you," Philip said with a pleasant smile as he held out his hand for a handshake.

"Thanks, Mr. Foreman," Jade said with a polite smile as she shook hands with him and then withdrew her hand when it seemed like he would hold on to it longer than was necessary.

"Call me Philip, please."

'So you can call me Jade? I don't think so!' Jade thought as she looked away from him and picked up another menu, "I suppose you come here often? What's the best dish here?" She asked Harry, who was pretending not to follow their conversation, and he lowered the menu to meet her gaze.

"You want me to order something for you?" He asked, and she gave him a nod.

"Okay. We will have two servings of your signature dish," he said to the waiters, and the female waiter taking the order for food gave them a polite bow before excusing herself.

"Bring them our best bottle of wine. It's on the house," Philip said, dismissing the male waiter.

"It's been a while since I last saw Tom. However, I read something about him showing his face to the world. How is he doing?" Philip asked, and Harry glanced up from the menu, wondering if Philip was asking him or Jade.

Seeing as Jade remained silent, Harry looked at Philip, "He's doing good. He has just been really busy lately."

"Ah, I see!" Philip said, wondering why Jade wasn't talking to him.

"Do we have to eat here? Can't we just take it home?" Jade asked, not liking the extra company on the table.

She had a feeling that he was indirectly trying to let her know that he was close friends with his brother and Harry. And even if that weren't what he was doing, she would keep feeling like everything the guy did was targeted to impress her, and she didn't want to keep listening to him talk.

Home? Was something going on between Harry and Jade? Were they like a couple and were having some sort of misunderstanding hence she was in a bad mood? He wanted to ask, but he couldn't do it in front of Jade without coming off as rude or nosy.

"Is something wrong? Is the restaurant not to your liking?" Philip asked, concerned.

"Don't worry about her. She is just being her usual sweet self," Harry assured Philip before looking at Jade with a slightly concerned expression.

"Why the sudden rush to go home?" He asked, wondering why she seemed to be so uncomfortable with Philip's company.

For someone who had been trying to get him to be in a relationship and had insisted that she would get a boyfriend before he got a girlfriend, she seemed like she wasn't interested in getting to know Philip. He was good-looking, wealthy, and polite, so what was her problem?

"I would prefer to spend the evening ALONE with you," Jade said, making Harry's brows draw together in confusion, while Philip quickly concluded that they were both in a relationship.

"My apologies then. I'll just excuse you both. I'm sorry for the misunderstanding," he said with an apologetic smile as he stood up to leave, and Jade flashed him an equally cool smile.

"Thanks for your understanding," she said as she watched him leave.

"What was that about? You do realize that you just gave him the impression that there is something between us, right?" Harry asked, looking appalled.

"Something other than the fact that I'm your little friend?" Jade asked innocently just as the waiter came with a bottle of wine and two glasses.

Neither of them said a word as the waiter poured some wine into the glasses, and immediately he left, Harry picked up from where they stopped, "He already figured that I used that phrase because you're Tom's kid sister. It wasn't a big deal. The guy was interested in you, and you just blew him off," Harry pointed out.

"Why? Are you now interested in my love life? Or did Tom ask you to get me a boyfriend too?" Jade asked as she picked up her wineglass and took a sip. She closed her eyes to savor the taste, "This is really good wine," she said as she dropped the glass.

Harry just stared at her and shook his head. He didn't know what was going on in her head. A part of him wished he did, but another part of him didn't want to know, so he said nothing as he picked up his wine glass and sipped from it.

"So, what is your plan?" Harry asked after a while when the silence between them became too much.

"What plan?"

"You'll be seeing Candace tomorrow. Are you going to take her to Jero or bring Jero to her?" Harry asked, and she rolled her eyes.

"Are you incapable of having a conversation outside work-related subjects?" She asked, and Harry sighed.

What did this woman want from him? "What else do you want to talk about?" Harry asked, and she shook her head. It was obvious that the man didn't know anything outside work.

"Tell me about yourself," Jade suggested.

"You already know me. You know my name, you know my dad is my only family, you know about my job, you know my best friend, you know my relationship status, you know how blunt I can be," Harry listed.

"Yeah. I know all of that. So tell me something I don't know. I'm sure there is more to you than all of these aspects of your life that you mentioned," Jade said, leaning forward in her seat and resting both elbows on the table as she looked at Harry, who had a confused expression on his face.

"Why don't you just ask questions about whatever you are curious to know?" Harry suggested since he couldn't think of a thing to tell her.

"Whatever?" She asked with a silly smile.

Seeing the smile on her face, Harry knew that it was a bad idea, but he was also curious to know what she was curious about, so he gave her a nod, "Yeah. But keep in mind that for every question I answer, I will ask a question too," he warned.

"This is going to be fun," Jade said with a wide smile as she sipped from her wine.

Unknown to Jade, who was busy sipping from her wineglass, her prospective sisters-in-law were busy shopping through her closet in her brother's mansion.

"We really shouldn't be doing this," Lucy said, feeling guilty.

When Sonia had called and asked her to join her in the passageway because something urgent had just come up, she had asked Tom to meet her in the Den when he was ready and rushed out to meet Sonia. She was surprised to see that this was the urgent stuff.

"C'mon, Lu. Don't be a spoilsport. We aren't stealing from her. Besides, I'm sure that she won't even notice that anything is missing from here," Sonia pointed out.

"The clothes were bought for her, not for us," Lucy pointed out.

"And I'm sure if we ask Tom, he's going to say it is fine," Sonia said as she picked out a simple long dress, "I think this will look good on you. Change into it," Sonia suggested.

Lucy looked at her dubiously since the dress was decent, "You're actually advising me to wear something decent?" She asked unbelievably, and Sonia laughed.

"It's your thing. It looks like something you would buy. Besides, I doubt that you'd take my advice again if I suggest you wear something sexy," Sonia said with a grin.

"Go on, change into this," she encouraged, but Lucy shook her head.

"No, thanks."

"Why? Because you think it's stealing? I could just call Tom and ask if..."

"No!" Lucy quickly cut her off. She knew that it had probably escaped Tom's mind that there were female clothes in Jade's closet; hence he hadn't insisted on her changing her outfit that morning.

Sonia narrowed her eyes, "What is going on?"

Lucy cleared her throat, "We had a bet last night, and I kinda lost. So I'm supposed to not wear any underwear," Lucy explained, and Sonia's eyes lit up in understanding before she burst into laughter.

"And you don't want to wear the dress because you'd have to do so without undies, and Tom would know?"

Lucy smiled, "Yeah. He's really kind of naughty, and I don't trust him not to touch me..."

Sonia's face split into a happy smile, and she embraced Lucy, "I'm happy your relationship is going so well, Lu. Although you both look so gentle, I never would have imagined you did such naughty things," Sonia said as she felt Lucy's ass to see if she was wearing undies.

"Sonia!" Lucy exclaimed with a giggle when she realized what Sonia was doing and tried to push her away.

"You're really not wearing undies. How did I miss that?" Sonia asked in disbelief, "If I may ask, what was the bet about?" Sonia asked curiously, dragging Lucy towards the bed to sit down.

Lucy considered for only a moment whether or not she should tell Sonia about it, but she also realized that she was dying to talk about it, so she leaned forward and then told Sonia all about it, as what led to the bet.

Sonia doubled over with laughter, "OMG! You're such a slut, Lu! Do you want to switch brothers?" Sonia asked, and Lucy hit her arm as they both burst into peals of laughter.

"Don't joke about stuff like that," Lucy chided.

"But, on a serious note, I never would have imagined that you were capable of all of this," Sonia said with a wide smile, happy that she could finally talk about sex in this manner with Lucy.

"I know. I would never have thought so either. But then, Tom happened," Lucy said with a happy smile as her eyes fell on the wall clock.

"We should join the others downstairs. It's over thirty minutes already," Lucy said, wanting to stand up, but Sonia pulled her back.

"You still have to change into the dress. We will sit away from the guys so he won't touch you. I'm sure it would drive him crazy knowing that you're wearing a dress without undies," Sonia suggested with a silly smile.

"Sonia..."

"Just take this advice, Lu. Trust me."

Chapter 288 Traitors

"Trust? No way! I don't trust you. Not after you left me alone with Evelyn last night," Lucy said with a shake of her head.

"But this is different. What's the worst that can happen if you wear this very decent dress? Or you're scared because the idea of wearing a dress without undies turns you on?" Sonia asked, narrowing her eyes suspiciously.

"I'm not!" Lucy said defensively.

"You are. Else I see no reason you don't want to wear the dress. Fine, I'll wear something similar too," Sonia offered.

"Why are you so bent on making me wear this dress?" Lucy asked, suspecting that Sonia was up to something.

"I have my reasons, okay? Just trust me. No harm will come from wearing this," Sonia assured her once again, and against Lucy's better judgment, she allowed herself to be convinced. She took off her crop top and palazzo pants and changed into the one-shoulder floral print dress that hugged the upper part of her body and then flowed down from her waist, with a long slit that ran from her right thigh to her ankle.

Sonia also took off her clothes and changed into another long dress. The difference was that hers was a simple mix print sleeveless v-neck dress that flowed down her ankle.

"This is the most covered you've ever been when it's not winter," Lucy said as she observed Sonia's dress.

"Thanks," Sonia said with a wink, accepting it as a compliment, "Now we both look decent. I'm sure Mother Hank would love this," Sonia said as they left the room.

"What is taking them so long? I would have thought they were up to something had the boys not been here," Lucy's father said, and Tom's father chuckled.

"I still think they are up to something. Maybe something differs," Tom's father said suggestively, and his wife glared at him mildly as she covered Jamal's ears while Lucy's parents laughed.

"Doing that is pointless. Even if he hears what I said, I don't think he understands the meaning," her husband pointed out.

"You had better start watching your tongue. I don't want you talking like this around our grandkids," Evelyn warned, and Tom exchanged a look with Bryan, who was seated beside him, and they both shook their head.

"Sorry we kept you waiting," Lucy said as she walked into the Den with Sonia, and Tom, who had been playing a game with Bryan, dropped his pad when he heard her voice.

His eyes lit up the moment he saw Lucy walking in with Sonia, and then he did a double-take when he noticed that she was wearing the dress.

"C'mon, Tom! I was just about to score!" Bryan snapped at him.

"You don't need to score to win. I give up. You win," Tom announced distractedly.

She was wearing the dress. Did that mean that she wasn't wearing anything under the dress? He wondered as he waited for her to come to him since he had reserved the space beside him for her.

"Just like that? That's not fun," Bryan said irritably, and their father chuckled.

"Yet you did the same to me last night. What did the Bible say about reaping what you sow? Your harvest came quite early," their father said, and the others laughed, apart from Tom whose brows were creased in displeasure when Lucy smiled at him but sat down on an empty couch away from him, and Sonia went to sit beside her.

Tom glanced at Bryan who also looked confused. There was enough space on their couch to accommodate both ladies, so why did they choose to take the seat away from them?

"Babe? What are you wearing?" Bryan asked with a frown making Tom realize that Bryan was more concerned about Sonia's dress than where she was seated, "Mom, see what you caused! Now she's wearing stuff that she doesn't even like," he said accusingly as he stood up and walked over to where Sonia was seated. He grabbed her hand before she could say a word, "Come with me," he said, pulling her up while the others watched the show.

"Where to? I'm fine," Sonia said with a giggle as she tried to pull her hand away from his grip, refusing to let him drag her away, "I'm comfortable. Stop embarrassing me," she said with an amused smile.

"Are you sure?" Bryan asked, not understanding why she would choose to wear a dress like that. That was completely not her style.

"Yes. And I'm not wearing it because of your mom either. Or didn't you notice Lucy's dress?" she asked, and Bryan's gaze shifted to Lucy.

"If at this point you still think that Sonia would wear a dress like that just to impress your mom, then you still have a long way to go," Lucy's father said with a chuckle.

"Your dress looks lovely," Evelyn said, her gaze shifting from Sonia to Lucy, and it made Lucy shift uncomfortably in her seat since she felt like the woman could see through them and know that they had stolen her daughter's clothes.

"We borro..."

"Thank you," Sonia quickly cut in with a smile, "And I'm sorry Bryan accused you falsely," she added to cover up what she had just done.

"Get back to your seat. I'm okay," she whispered to Bryan as she sat down once again beside Lucy.

"So why are you dressed this way?" Bryan asked again.

Sonia smiled, "I just reasoned that since I made her wear something I picked last night, I should wear something she likes today," Sonia lied through her teeth, and everyone else bought her explanation apart from Tom.

He knew for a fact that it was Sonia who had convinced Lucy to wear the dress, the same way he could swear that she was the one who had suggested that Lucy sit away from him. Too bad for them that he wasn't going to let that happen.

Tom stood up, and Lucy turned to Sonia for help when she noticed Tom was coming over to where they were seated, but Sonia only winked at her, "Loosen up, Lu. Try to enjoy yourself every time you get the chance. You only live once."

Before either Bryan or Lucy could finish processing what Sonia was saying to her, Sonia looked at Tom who had stopped in front of them, "I suppose you want to sit beside her," Sonia said with a wide smile as she stood up.

"Sonia! Where are you going to?" Lucy called, feeling betrayed that Sonia was leaving after convincing her to wear the dress without undies, and Tom chuckled as he sat down on the spot that Sonia had vacated.

"To sit with Bryan. I can't possibly refuse to let him sit down on his own couch, can I? I don't want to be thrown out," Sonia said with mock fear as she linked her arm with Bryan's.

"I'll let everyone know that we stole the dress if you don't sit down," Lucy threatened.

"No, we didn't," Sonia said with a wink before walking away with Bryan, leaving Lucy who was glaring at her back.

"You must trust your friend a lot, don't you? How do you think she found out about the closet? Or chose this particular dress?" Tom asked, looking at Lucy who was sitting away from him.

Lucy turned to look at him with round eyes, "Did you plan this?" She asked in disbelief, and Tom chuckled.

"Did I not promise you that we will correct your not having a dress to change into soon enough? You didn't think I would let you get away without fulfilling your end of the bargain, did you?" Tom reminded her.

She knew he had said that, but she didn't think he meant it would be that same day, "But this morning..."

"It wasn't in the closet. Jade would never wear something like this. I ordered both dresses and had Adolf pick them up after dropping off Lucas at the airport," Tom said with a grin.

"I've been with Sonia all day. When did you talk to her? And what did you tell her?" She asked, wanting to know just how much Sonia knew.

"After Jade left and you went to talk with Lucas, I had a little conversation with her. I told her that I wanted to get you a lovely dress, and I wanted her to convince you to wear it before dinner," Tom explained, and Lucy turned to glare at her traitorous best friend, but unfortunately, Sonia was completely engrossed in whatever she was discussing with Bryan as she had a silly smile on her face.

"She didn't ask you why?" Lucy asked, and Tom shrugged.

"Was she supposed to? It was a reasonable request. I wanted you to wear a dress, not run around naked. I'm sure she didn't read any meaning to it. Why? Did you tell her about our bet?" Tom asked, narrowing his eyes, and Lucy's face flushed a bright red.

Tom shook his head. "Yet, you ladies claim that guys are the ones who kiss and tell," Tom said with a shake of his head, "I suppose I'm free to talk to Harry about it too?" He asked, and Lucy shook her head.

"I'm sorry," she said, pressing her lips together.

"I don't feel offended. I was just making a point which you got already," Tom assured her with a wink.

"The dress looks really lovely on you. And I hope that the only reason you were avoiding me is that you remembered not to wear anything under it," Tom whispered with a naughty gleam in his eyes. Butterflies fluttered in Lucy's belly when he reached out to trail a finger from her bare shoulder down to the slit on her gown, touching her thigh.

This man! Lucy thought with a shaky breath, "Tom, please don't start," she pleaded in a weak voice and looked around them self-consciously.

She flushed a deep shade of red when she realized that the others were not talking but were all staring at them with amused expressions. Thankfully their seat was far apart from theirs, so she didn't have to worry about them hearing what they had been discussing since they had been speaking in hushed tones.

"If you are done flirting with her, can you let her call the results? You can continue that interesting discussion in the safety and privacy of your bedroom," Tom's father who had been watching them along with everyone else, called out to Tom, and Lucy rested her head on Tom's chest, hiding her face from the others who were now laughing.

"Do you know that you always look sexy and cute when you're embarrassed," Tom whispered with a soft smile, ignoring the others, "It really makes me want to..."

"Shut up, Tom. Please don't say any more words," Lucy pleaded as she pulled away from him and stood up.

"And don't do anything naughty. I need to focus," she warned in a tone that was supposed to be stern but came out as a plea, making Tom grin.

She cleared her throat, "Uhm, although they both did really well, I'm sure you will all agree with me that there is neither a winner nor a loser here."

"Oh, come on! That isn't fun," Desmond protested with a defeated sigh as he collapsed back on his seat, and the ladies laughed.

"You can compete with Jade's boyfriend when she gets one. I'm sure you will hear the result then," Tom told his father.

Lucy cleared her throat, "Well, the whole essence of the game wasn't for either of them to win or lose. Rather it was to see how far they were willing to go just to prove to each other that they are deserving of their place in my heart."

"Dad, you're my father and the man I first loved. I will always love you. You have your special place in my heart, so there's no need for you to fight with Tom. He doesn't want your place. He knows that he has his own place in my heart. Am I right, Tom?" Lucy asked as she turned to Tom.

"Yeah. Very correct," Tom said with a nod.

"And seeing how he could have won but decided to turn back just to help you, I think you should cut him some slack and..." Lucy said.

"He already did. He welcomed my traitor brother to the family," Bryan cut in dryly.

"Traitor brother?" Their father asked curiously, and Lucy's father laughed as he told them what had happened.

"That was a smart move, Tom. I hope the guy your sister brings home is as smart as you," Desmond said, and Bryan scowled at them both.

"Traitors."

"Definitely not as traitorous as the person sitting next to you," Lucy retorted, pointing at Sonia, and they all burst into a peal of laughter.

Chapter 289 Tanya Reynolds

Sitting back in her seat as the waiters served their meal, Jade considered Harry as she tried to arrange all the questions she had in her head.

Once the waiters left, she leaned forward in her seat, "What was growing up like?" She asked, surprising both herself and Harry, who hadn't been expecting that question.

She had wanted to ask many other questions, but only now did she realize that she wanted to get to know him better and understand him before doing that.

"Growing up?" Harry asked, confused.

"Yeah. Your childhood. Being raised by just your dad. What was it like?" Jade explained as she picked up her wine glass and sipped from it.

Harry cleared his throat and then leaned forward in his seat as he thought about the question, "Hmm, It was fine, I suppose? Although, at some point in my life, I was very sad and really wanted a mother like other kids. My dad tried his best to explain that he couldn't give me one, but he would try to make up for my mother's absence by loving and caring for me twice as much as he knew my mother would have done. So on my birthdays and during every Christmas holiday, he would get me two gifts, one from him and the other from my mom," Harry said with a distant look in his eyes, and Jade felt tears gather in her eyes when she heard the sadness in his voice.

"Most times, he would make sure the gift from my mom was something I desperately wanted and had asked him for several times in the past, but he refused to get it. And then when I unwrap the gift, he goes, 'Wow! Your mom is the best! I can't believe I said I wasn't going to get you that, yet she went on to buy it' you won't believe that he does that till date even when he knows I'm not a kid anymore," Harry said with a sad smile as he met Jade's gaze, and a tear slid down her cheek as she laughed.

"You're making me fall in love with your dad," she said as she used the back of her hand to wipe her tears.

"Unfortunately, it's going to be an unrequited love, and you're going to get your heart broken," Harry said with a small smile.

"You never can tell. I just might be the lady he has been waiting for this whole time. Who knows? I might become the next Mrs. Jonas, your stepmom," Jade said with a wink, but Harry didn't smile back as he looked at her with a blank expression.

Seeing the look on his face, Jade assumed that he didn't like the joke, "C'mon, it was a joke. You don't have to look so serious. I'm sorry," Jade said apologetically.

"We should eat before the meal gets cold," Harry said as he picked up his cutlery, leaving Jade no other option than to do the same.

"Is that all?" Harry asked after they ate in silence for some time, wanting to know if that was all she wanted to know about him.

"All? No. I just figured that you needed time to calm down before I continue," Jade said, and Harry gave her a nod.

"You can go on," he urged as they continued eating.

"So what kind of kid were you? What class did you fall into? Extrovert or introvert? The bully or the bullied? Were you among the cool big shots in your class? What sports did you play in school?" She asked, and Harry blinked in surprise at all the questions she had just asked at a go. Just how curious was she?

"What kind? I was calm and always kept to myself. I was almost bullied once, but I fought back, and that was the last time it happened..."

"You fought back?" Jade asked, not sure if she believed it.

"Why? You think I can't fight?" Harry asked when he saw the doubtful expression on her face.

Jade grinned at him as she shrugged, "You just look too calm. But on second thought, I guess you have to know how to use your fist with that tongue of yours. If you've always been so brutally honest, you must have gotten into trouble more often than not," Jade said with a grin, and Harry chuckled.

"Yeah."

"So? Did you have your own cool kids clique? Did you play any school sports?" Jade asked, reminding him of the unanswered questions.

"No. I preferred to move alone. I played basketball..."

"No way!" Jade exclaimed in disbelief, and Harry raised a brow.

"Why not?"

"You don't just seem like that type," she said, looking him over.

"And what type do I seem like?" Harry asked with a slightly raised brow.

"Well, not the basketball type," Jade said, unable to find the words to explain it.

"Basketball game isn't for boring people like me, you mean?" Harry asked, and Jade grinned sheepishly.

"A few days ago, you said you didn't think I was boring. Can you tell me what changed your mind so easily?" Harry asked, and she shrugged.

"You. I said that before spending enough time with you. You're always working and talking about work."

"So that qualifies me as boring? And you conveniently forget that I dragged you out of your house and even the hotel to stop you from burying yourself in your work?" Harry asked with a shake of his head.

Jade shook her head in protest, "That is different. I can have fun when I want to..."

"And you think I can't?" Harry asked incredulously.

"Yeah, I think you can't. You can prove it by going out with me tonight," Jade offered.

"No! It's not going to work. I'm boring, and I want to sleep so that I can resume my boring job tomorrow," Harry said, and Jade collapsed against her seat in frustration, making him chuckle.

Why did she even bother to ask again when she had already taken the offer off the table? Jade wondered as she nursed her wineglass in her hand. By now, they had both stopped eating.

"Have you ever been with a woman?" Jade asked out of the blues, making Harry almost choke on the wine he was sipping.

"What?" He asked, looking at her in surprise. Something had told him that she was going to ask something related to his private life, but he hadn't expected such a direct question.

"You said I could ask whatever," she reminded him with a grin.

"I'm with you right now, am I not?" Harry asked, choosing to take the easy way, but Jade shook her head.

"You know what I mean, uncle Harry," Jade said, leaning forward with a grin, eager to hear his answer.

"That isn't a question you should be asking your brother's best friend," Harry reminded her.

"Then forget for a moment that you're Tom's best friend and assume that I'm just a random lady," Jade offered.

"I can't do that," Harry said with a slight frown, and Jade rolled her eyes.

"C'mon, you agreed to answer my questions," she reminded him with a pout, and Harry sighed as he looked away as though he was embarrassed.

"No."

"NO?" Jade exclaimed in utter disbelief, and Harry frowned.

"If you thought I've been with someone, why did you ask?"

"You mean like you've NEVER had sex with a lady?" Jade asked, dropping her voice to a whisper in case he had misunderstood her question, and Harry just stared at her without saying a word.

"Was your dad right?" Jade asked thoughtfully, and Harry's brows furrowed.

"My dad? Right about what?" He asked, not seeing what his dad had to do with their conversation.

"Maybe you're not straight? Tell me, how do you feel around guys? Or is it animals?" Jade asked with an amused glint in her eyes, and Harry glared at her, making her burst into a peal of laughter.

And she quickly raised her hand to cover her mouth when people around them turned to look in their direction.

"How old are you?" She asked when she finally comported herself.

"Twenty-eight."

"You're twenty-eight? I thought you were the same age as Tom," Jade said, surprised.

"Is that a separate question, or is it related to the last question?" Harry asked as he glanced at his wristwatch.

"Why?"

Harry returned his attention to her, "Why what?"

"Why haven't you been with anyone? What's stopping you?" She asked, looking at him curiously now.

"Is there an age limit to having sex? I can always do it, right? So what's the hurry?" Harry asked, and Jade shook her head.

"Are you not physically attracted to ladies?"

This was a very awkward conversation to be having with her. He didn't even know why he was answering her questions when he could easily deflect or just say no, "Of course, I am."

"So?"

"I don't have to have sex with just any person because I'm physically attracted to them, do I? There has to be some sort of connection. An emotional connection. My body is important to me, and I can't share it with just anyone. Now can we stop talking about this?"

Jade looked at Harry for a moment. Somehow in the middle of their conversation, her opinion of him had greatly changed and she had a newfound admiration and respect for him, "Sure," she said with a nod.

"So, can I ask you a personal question too?" Harry asked, and Jade smiled.

"I would have thought you'd ask your question without asking my permission."

"Well, unlike you, I can't impose my questions on you," Harry said, and Jade gave him a nod.

"Go on."

"Have you been with anyone since you lost your ex?" He asked, and the smile in Jade's eyes died.

"No."

"If you don't mind me asking. Why? Are you still mourning him, or you just haven't found someone else you care about?" Harry asked, and Jade let out a sigh.

"Neither. I've just not been interested in getting involved with anyone," she said with a small smile, "Do you know that lady on your three o'clock? She has been staring at you since she walked in with her friends," Jade said, and Harry tried not to look that way.

"What does she look like?" He asked.

"Like a younger version of Jennifer Lopez? She looks like the richest amongst her friends too," Jade tried, and Harry groaned. He only knew one person who fit that description.

"Let's leave."

"Why? Who is she?" Jade asked, not budging.

"You know TANYA corporation? It was named after her. She's the daughter of the Chairman," Harry said, and Jade giggled.

"She likes you?"

"I wouldn't say that. Remember the blind date I told you about?" Harry asked, and Jade giggled.

"The one you told that her make-up looked funny on her?"

"In retrospect, I shouldn't have said that," Harry said with a wince.

"I think she's heading this way," Jade whispered.

"We should have just left," Harry muttered under his breath.

"Harry Jonas?" Tanya asked as she stopped by their table, and Harry turned to look at her with a false confused smile as he stood up.

"Hi? I'm sorry you look familiar, but I don't think I recognize you," Harry said, pretending not to recognize her.

"You don't remember me? Tanya Reynolds, we met some time ago..." She let her words trail because of Jade.

"Oh, Tanya!" Harry exclaimed, and Jade tried to hold back her laughter. Who would have thought that Harry was capable of that? So much for not telling lies.

"I'm very sorry about the last time. I shouldn't have..."

"It's fine. So this is your girlfriend?" She asked, eyeing Jade who was still dressed in her simple button-down dungaree skirt.

Before Harry could say no, Tanya giggled, "I can't believe that you lost your chance with me, only to end up with such a lowlife," Tanya said with disdain. Jade, who had been finding the situation amusing a moment ago, suddenly felt pissed.

Seeing how she had brought unnecessary attention to them and knowing how fast Jade could switch moods, Harry looked at Jade, "No need to respond to that, baby. I'll take care of it," he pleaded with his eyes for her to remain calm before looking at Tanya.

"Point of correction, I didn't lose my chance with you. I didn't even remember that you existed until you walked up to me. So I guess you lost me is why you came to find me," Harry said with a smile on his face as he dropped some dollar notes on the table and stepped away from his seat, leaving both Jade and Tanya staring at him in surprise.

"Baby, let's go home," he said to Jade, extending an arm to her, and Jade quickly stood up and took his arm.

"One more thing. Looking back now, I realize that your attitude is just as bad as your make-up sense, so I take back my apology. And lest I forget, the only lowlife here is you. Unlike you, she

isn't just a pretty face. She is very hardworking and doesn't depend on her family's wealth. Say hello to your father when you get home," Harry said before walking away with a stunned Jade.

"I take back all I said! You are so not boring!" Jade exclaimed after they left the restaurant.

"Seeing as you keep changing your words every few days, I don't trust you," Harry said with a smirk as he led her to the car.

Chapter 290 You're No Longer My Best Friend

Lucy squirmed in her seat when she felt Tom's hand gliding up her thighs. The movement of his hand evoked thoughts and feelings in her that she wasn't supposed to think or feel when their parents were seated across from them in the same room.

She turned to look at him in the darkly lit room, "Tom," she called in a whisper.

"Yes, baby?" Tom whispered back, pretending not to know why she had called him.

"Our parents are here," Lucy reminded him nervously.

"The room is dark, so they can't see us. Besides, they're all too busy watching the moments captured during the contest," Tom assured her, and as though to prove that he was right, their parents burst into a peal of laughter as they watched the scene when Tom and Lucy's father kept trying to find the bubble gum hidden in the whipped cream.

Lucy shifted uncomfortably, her heart beating really fast with a mix of both excitement and anxiety. Making out in front of one's parents was a very daring thing, and she never did daring stuff unless it was work-related. Her gaze shifted to the corner where Sonia and Bryan were seated, and she tried to adjust her sight to make out what they were doing, but she couldn't.

If she could, she would have seen that Sonia's right hand was placed over Bryan's cock, and she was giving him a handjob. At the same time, both their eyes were fixed on the screen, pretending to be enjoying the video like everyone else, when all they both wanted to do was excuse themselves and go upstairs to blow off some steam.

"Relax," Tom said to her as he leaned closer to her and kissed the crook of her neck, making Lucy inhale deeply, and her eyes closed of their own volition.

Tom's fingers slowly caressed through the slit in her dress, up her thigh as though they were seeking a treasure between her thighs. The higher his fingers went, the more labored Lucy's breath became.

What sort of powers did Tom have over her body that she felt hot every time he touched her in a sensual way? Was it always this way for everyone? Or was her body so sensitive because she was only just getting to understand and discover the pleasures of intimacy?

She felt his tongue glide on the spot behind her ear and bit down the urge to moan as her hand involuntarily moved to grab the front of his chest.

Taking that as a go-ahead, Tom let his hand glide further up until he stopped at the spot between her thighs, and then his middle finger separated her folds and circled her clit in multiple successions.

"Oh, God! Thom..."

Thankfully the others around them chose that moment to laugh at something funny, and because they were all talking, no one heard her.

"Do you want me to stop or continue?" Tom asked in a husky whisper as he thrust one finger in and out of her citadel of pleasure

"Stop, no. Don't stop," Lucy pleaded, at a loss.

Tom smiled, "Think of this as a sort of training," Tom whispered into her ear in a husky voice, "You won't always have the opportunity to moan out loud every time we make out. Not when I'm touching you this way in a family gathering or doing something sexual to you during an official meeting. You will have to learn how to enjoy yourself in silence sometimes... Like now," he lectured as he slid another finger into her and allowed his thumb to rest on her clit.

Lucy's whole body trembled as he rubbed her clit, and then thrust his fingers into her repeatedly. Rub and thrust. Rub and thrust.

Lucy leaned into him and bit on his shirt to keep herself from moaning or making any embarrassing sound as he continued.

The room erupted in laughter again as the elders watched the scene where both Tom and Andrew kept running around trying to stomp on the other's balloon, and Tom lowered his head as he took Lucy's lips in a deep passionate kiss. He thrust his tongue deep into her mouth as though he was fucking her mouth with his tongue, and she moaned into his mouth.

"Bryan and Sonia, behave yourselves, or go up to your room and continue," Evelyn warned sternly when she heard the sound and assumed it was from Sonia.

Sonia, pretending to watch the game while still giving Bryan a handjob, exchanged a look with Bryan. Although they were 'misbehaving', they both knew that they were not the ones responsible for the misbehavior that they were being reprimanded for.

"That wasn't..." Sonia lifted her hand from his cock, and placed it over Bryan's hand to stop him from ratting out Lucy and Tom. She could stand being teased about something like this, but Lucy wasn't that way.

"I guess this is the shortcoming of being the bad person in a group. When something bad happens, everyone naturally assumes that you're responsible for it," Sonia whispered to Bryan, and he chuckled when she winked at him.

Seeing that she was trying to cover for her friend and his brother, he sighed, "Alright. We are taking it up to our room. See you at dinner," Bryan announced to his mother as he adjusted his throbbing cock in his trousers and stood up.

He shot a pointed look in Tom's direction as he offered Sonia his hand to help her rise, "Let's go upstairs, babe."

On hearing Evelyn's voice earlier, Lucy had quickly pulled away from Tom, not wanting to be discovered, but Tom only chuckled when he caught Bryan's glare as he found it all to be funny. Who would have thought that in a room with family all around them, he would be the one doing something so juvenile, and not Bryan?

Lucy didn't feel a bit guilty that Evelyn was accusing Sonia of something she had done. No, she didn't. Not one bit. It was Sonia's fault after all that she was in this position, so it was only right that she took responsibility for it.

Lucy cleared her throat, "I need to use the bathroom," she said as she stood up, feeling very uncomfortable with the wetness between her thighs, which she knew had touched on her dress.

The adults didn't pay either of them attention as all three of them left the room. At the same time, Tom had a grin on his face as he relaxed on the couch. He wasn't done with her yet, but it was okay to let her assume that he was done for a little while. He wanted to keep it up that way until she became the one initiating intimacy between them.

Outside the Den, Lucy walked past Sonia and Bryan as she hurried to go upstairs to the bedroom.

"Lu," Sonia called as she hurried to catch up with Lucy, leaving Bryan to follow from behind.

"Shut up. Don't say a word to me, you traitor," Lucy hissed at her, and Sonia giggled.

"C'mon, I didn't mean any harm. Besides, you didn't sound like Tom was hurting you earlier. Or was he? Where did he hurt so I can make it all better?" Sonia asked with an innocent expression.

"I asked you not to say anything!" Lucy hissed, feeling very embarrassed, and Sonia grinned as she placed an arm around Lucy's shoulder.

"There's no need to feel embarrassed about enjoying yourself. Besides, how can I not say anything when I just took a bullet for you in there?"

"A bullet you wouldn't have had to take in the first place if you hadn't deceived me!" Lucy said as she tried to shake Sonia's arm off her shoulder.

"Deceived you? All I did was convince you to wear a dress, and I wore one too..."

"Really, Sonia? Do you think Tom hasn't told me how the dress ended up in that closet? After giving me your word that we would sit away from the guys, you had the nerves to say, 'I can't possibly refuse to let him sit down on his own couch, can I?'" Lucy asked, mimicking Sonia's tone.

"C'mon, Lu. That's not how I sounded," Sonia corrected with an annoyed frown, "I can't possibly refuse to let him sit down on his own couch, can I? I don't want to be thrown out," Sonia said with a grin as she repeated her earlier performance, and Lucy burst into a peal of laughter before she could stop herself, and then she glared at Sonia.

"Fine. I did say we would sit away from the guys, which we did. Didn't we? What I didn't say was how long we were going to sit away from them. And we didn't talk about what we would do if either of them came to sit with us either, did we? So technically, I didn't lie to you. I kept my word by sitting with you until Tom showed up..."

"You're just like Tom..."

"Which is why I think you love the both of us," Sonia interrupted with a grin.

"I'm never going to trust you again. NEVER! You took Tom's side. You are no longer my best friend," Lucy said as she brushed past Sonia and headed for Tom's bedroom.

Bryan, who had been listening to their entire conversation, chuckled when Sonia turned to look at him with a pout, "She can be so dramatic."

"You deserve that much. You're a traitor after all, just like Tom," Bryan said with a shake of his head since she had explained everything about the dress to him earlier.

Sonia looked at him with puppy eyes and a pout, and Bryan opened his arms to her, "But don't worry. Traitor or not, I can be your best friend," Bryan assured her as she walked into his arms.

"You're Matt's best friend, and Lu is my baby girl forever. Don't worry. I will win her trust again soon enough," she said with a confident smile as she pulled away from him, and they continued down the hallway.

"If you say so. However, I'm surprised to see this side of Tom. I'm beginning to feel like he is the bad one, and I'm the good one," Bryan said with an amused smile, thinking that Tom had obviously not needed to take any lectures from him on being a bad boy.

Sonia giggled as he opened the bedroom door, and they both walked inside, "I think Lucy is just as bad. She is just being this way because she is new to it. Those two are a wild pair," Sonia said with a small smile as she sat on the edge of the bed.

"By the way, what do you think about Harry and Jade?" She asked as she stood up to pick up her journal and pen when she remembered that it had been a while since she last wrote down her novel ideas.

"Harry and Jade?" Bryan asked, wondering why she was thinking of them now.

"Yeah. I think there is chemistry between them," She said with a grin as she scribbled down the details she had noticed about them earlier. She couldn't wait to watch them interact the next day.

"It should remain just chemistry. I don't want them to have any biology between them," Bryan said dryly, and Sonia giggled.

"Why not? Don't they look cute together?"

"I don't know. Maybe it comes with being a protective older brother. And I don't know Harry well enough, apart from the fact that he's a good friend to Tom and he's good at helping Tom handle his business. Although Tom has hinted that he hopes something happens between them, so I guess he's a good guy. I'm just very protective of Jade," Bryan said as he took off his shirt.

Sonia sighed, wishing she had an older brother too. Immediately she made the wish, she remembered Jamie, and she shuddered at the thought as she quickly took back the wish. Not all older brothers were good.

"Now, can we stop talking about the chemistry and biology between others and focus on our own biology?" He asked as he pointed at his bulging erection.

"Happy to misbehave with you," she said with a wink as she stood up and took off her dress to reveal her naked body.

Away from their bedroom, Lucy took off her dress as she walked into the shower. She needed to clean up and also calm herself after the havoc Tom had wrought on her senses.

As she stood under the shower with her eyes closed and her back to the door, she thought about all Tom had just done and imagined how far they would have gone if she hadn't stopped him. She felt hot all over again.

Her eyes shot open, and she gasped in surprise when she felt Tom's hands come around her and his naked body press against hers. She was surprised that she had not heard him come in.

"Would you like us to continue from where we stopped?" Tom whispered as he kissed her neck, weakening her knees.

"Tom, you're going to make me a sex maniac," Lucy complained with a moan.

"It's not my fault that you're so irresistible. I want to make love to your body and soul. I want to pleasure you until your body recognizes my every touch," Tom said as he nibbled on her earlobe, and his right hand found its way to her pussy, while the other hand grabbed her boob.

Lucy spread her legs so that his fingers would have better access to their destination, and her whole body shuddered as he drove her to pleasure with his fingers.

She buried her fingers in his wet hair as she kissed him deeply while making throaty sounds as she orgasmed.

While she was still recovering from that orgasm, Tom broke the kiss and went down on his knees to feast on her pussy, driving her on to another climax.

Unable to hold back herself, Lucy cried out loudly as her entire body shook with the force of her orgasm until her knees were too weak to hold her, and she weakly lowered herself to the floor with Tom's help.

Tom, who was now seated on the floor, embraced her so that her chin was resting on the crook of his neck as she tried to catch her breath while the cold water of the shower fell on them both.

She pulled away from him after she found her voice, "What are you doing to me, Tom?" She asked, gazing adoringly into his eyes.

"I should be asking you the same question," Tom said as he watched her with equal adoration and reached out to touch her wet face. It still surprised him greatly that, for the first time in his life, he wanted to just give pleasure to someone without necessarily taking it back.

"Please don't do that during dinner. I'm wearing undies to dinner," Lucy pleaded.

"Don't worry. I have other plans for dinner. It wasn't just the dress that I had Adolf pick up," Tom said with a wicked glint in his eyes, and Lucy groaned inwardly.