

Wild Night 41

Chapter 41 - Handy Tom

The place looked somewhat old-fashioned but modern at the same time. Someone was on the stage singing and playing the guitar, while others conversed with their partners at their various tables while drinking whatever they had in their glasses.

"I have a favorite spot where I like to sit and enjoy the view," Tom said as he led the way to a table at the distal end of the hall. Lucy noticed that from where they sat they could see almost every part of the bar.

"Cool, right?" Tom asked when he noticed she was still looking around the place.

"Undecided," Lucy said as she returned her attention to him.

"Could that be Handy Tom?" A chubby blonde waitress who looked like she was in her mid-twenties, questioned as she strutted towards them.

"If he looks like Tom, then he definitely is Tom," Tom said with a wink making her raise a hand to her lips which were painted red.

"You know, I was in doubt when you walked in. But when I saw you heading to this spot with this beautiful lady beside you, I decided it has to be you! OMG Tom! You look like you just walked out of my fantasy," She said with a dreamy smile,

"Do I look good enough to snatch you from your husband now?" Tom asked playfully wiggling his brow.

"You sure do. As long as you don't mind changing diapers," The Waitress said, rubbing her abdomen. That was when Lucy noticed the wedding band on her finger and her barely noticeable baby bump.

"Just get me a good divorce lawyer and I will elope with you... But wait, hope your lady won't mind?" She asked, looking at Lucy with mock alarm.

"I'm sure she won't," Tom said with a wink, "Tricia meet my neighbor, Lucy. Lucy, meet Tricia the love of my life and my favorite waitress in all of Ludus," Tom introduced, grateful that no one here knew his true identity.

"Neighbors? I see," Tricia said as she looked from Tom to Lucy, "It's nice to meet you," Tricia said with a friendly smile and Lucy returned her smile.

"You seem like a regular here," Lucy told Tom after Tricia had taken their orders and left.

"I'm pretty outgoing. That's how I get my clients," Tom said, which was also partially true in a way.

He frequented pubs, clubs, and bars where people often gathered, and he tried to engage in different conversations to gain information about what people thought about his company and services and also get ideas. Everywhere he went he simply introduced himself as Handy Tom, and that was all they knew about him.

"Nice. So about your lady..."

"Let's talk about her later. I'm curious about something, have you ever been in a relationship?" Tom asked, cutting her off.

"If you're asking because you're worried I won't be able to advise you because of that, you have nothing to worry about. I have a wealth of experience from my twin brother and my best friends," Lucy assured him.

Tom looked at her, slightly amused. It seemed like she was in a haste to help him win her heart, "No. I'm asking because I would like to understand why you chose to be single. Did something happen?" No matter how hard he thought about it, it just didn't make sense that a lady with no prior relationship experience would just choose to be single for no reason.

"I don't want to talk about it," Lucy said and was grateful when the waitress chose that moment to bring their order to the table.

Tom watched her and could tell he had been right. There was a story there. Something must have made her decide she was better off without men, and he intended to find out what that was, "So what would you like to talk about that doesn't involve my love interest?" Tom asked after the waitress left.

"I thought she was the reason you dragged me out because you wanted us to talk about her?" Lucy asked with a slightly raised brow before picking up her glass of cocktail and sipping from it.

"No. I dragged you out because I was bored and wanted to spend some time with someone outdoors," Tom corrected as he raised his glass of cocktail to his lips and took a sip.

"So don't you think the earlier we strategize on how to get her, the better for you? At least once you get a girlfriend you'll be too busy to be bored," Lucy said, raising both brows with a stiff smile on her face as she used her right hand to push her glasses up her nose, while her left hand held the glass.

That explained why she was so eager to talk to him about it, Tom mused. "Shouldn't you take off your glasses? Or do you need them to see me?" Tom asked, realizing he had no idea as to how bad her sight defect was.

"As I said before, I feel more comfortable wearing them. So neighbor, why don't you tell me about yourself? You already know I have a twin brother, and you even know my best friend's name, yet the only thing I know about you is your name, where you live, what you do, and the fact that you are interested in a woman whose name you don't know," Lucy said, before taking a long sip from her glass, and winced a bit at the bitter-sweet taste.

Tom could tell she was trying to shift the conversations from herself to him, "Let's see. I have two younger siblings, a guy, and a girl. I have two really close friends, Jonas and Tyler. What else?"

Lucy looked at him, and even though a voice in her head kept telling her it was a bad idea to voice the question on her mind, she went ahead to ask anyway, "Do you always hook up with random women at the club?"

The corners of his lips twitched in amusement, but he tried not to smile as he looked at her, "You're sure you want us to talk about that?"

"Well, we are friendly neighbors, aren't we? What harm could come from it?" She asked with a shrug as she kept her empty glass, and picked up another one, and took a long sip.

"Let's do it this way, if I answer your question, then you have to answer one of mine too," Tom suggested.

"As long as your question has nothing to do with why I'm not in a relationship, then I'm game."

"Alright then. No. I don't always hook up with random women."

"So what..."

"I answered your question, so it is my turn," Tom said with a grin.

"But I'm not satisfied..."

"No buts, boss. It is my turn."

Lucy looked at him as though she wanted to argue, but picked up her glass again and downed the content before flashing him a smile, "Okay. Fine. Go on and ask your question. I'm all ears," Lucy said as she nursed her now empty glass of cocktail.

Tom signaled to Tricia to serve them again. If he was to judge by the first night at the club, then he knew without a doubt that at the pace she was going, she was likely going to getting drunk soon. That was good enough for him since he knew she was the type to loosen up and talk a lot when drunk.

"What is your favorite color?" Tom asked, catching her off guard since she had been expecting something very personal. He almost smiled when he noticed the flicker of surprise on her face. Who did she think she was dealing with?

"I love colors generally and my color preference at any point is subject to the object. So I'm afraid I can't give you a definite answer," Lucy explained and waited for him to ask her to explain further.

He understood what she meant, but looking at her face he also knew she wanted him to probe further, so he decided not to, "I see," Tom said with a nod, and she pursed her lips as she tried to figure him out.

"Okay, I can continue with my question..."

"Why don't we set some ground rules between us?" Tom asked, interrupting her.

Chapter 42 - I'm Sorry.

Lucy tilted her head back and blinked at Tom, "Ground rules? What ground rules?" She asked as though she was struggling to understand and keep up with what he was saying.

One end of Tom's lips twitched, "Yeah. You only get to ask a question once. And you can't continue from where you stopped or generate another question from my response," Tom said and Lucy rolled her eyes.

"How boring," She muttered as Tricia returned to their table with their drink.

"Thanks," Both Tom and Lucy told her before she left.

It amused Tom that someone like her would refer to anyone else as boring, "So are you in or not?"

Lucy picked up another glass against her better sense of judgment and started drinking from it out of habit. It seemed to Tom like once she started drinking, she couldn't bring herself to stop until she was done. When she was done, she dropped the glass on the table and grinned at him as if something was amusing her, "Of course, I'm in."

She couldn't help noticing that her voice was beginning to sound foreign to her. She was gradually beginning to feel light-headed, and she could tell that she was on her way to becoming drunk. For someone aware of her low alcohol tolerance, it amazed her that she kept drinking alcohol even when she didn't need it anymore.

Tom had expected her to insist on adding her own ground rules too, but it appeared like being tipsy was affecting her ability to think straight, or maybe it was making her bold and daring, "I suggest you carefully think about your questions..."

She waved both hands to stop him, "Worry about yourself instead. So I'm asking the next question, right?" Lucy asked, narrowing her eyes at him.

"Yes, you are," Tom said as he raised his glass to his lips and sipped from it. He was still on his second glass while she was going to her fourth. He watched her with interest as a rosy blush flushed her cheeks, and he couldn't help wondering what she wanted to ask him that embarrassed her that much.

"Did you...." She closed her eyes as she tried to summon up courage, "Did you use a co.. cond... condom? I mean that night?" She blurted out, without looking at him directly.

Tom tried hard to maintain a straight face, and the only indication of his amusement was the gleam in his eyes as his body shook with laughter, "No, I didn't," he said as he watched her over the rim of his wineglass.

Lucy gasped as she glanced at him, "What? You didn't? How can you have unprotected sex with a stranger?" Lucy asked in panic.

Tom smiled, "It's my turn," he said in a calm voice, ignoring her question.

"But..."

"Have you ever been in love?"

Lucy stiffened for a brief moment, "I said don't ask me anything about my past," Lucy said testily.

For someone who was close to tipsy, she was still very alert, Tom noted, "That wasn't what you said. You said I shouldn't ask why you're not in a relationship, and my question has nothing to do with that," Tom said with a wide smile.

Different emotions flickered in her eyes and Lucy opened her mouth to argue, but then decided not to bother with it, "I don't know. Maybe. I guess so," She said with a sad sigh as though she didn't want to dwell on it.

"That is a lot of answers for a simple question of yes or no," Tom observed.

"Yeah. Sorry," she said wearily, making Tom frown. He didn't like the sadness he could sense in her words, neither did he like the thought that he might have reminded her of a sad memory.

"You don't have to be. I'm sorry if I reminded you of an unpleasant memory," Tom said apologetically.

Lucy heaved a long sigh, "It's okay. Let's just call it a night and go home. I should sleep," Lucy said, glancing at her wristwatch.

Tom couldn't help wondering what was wrong. He wished he could ask her about it, but he knew it was probably the reason she had said he shouldn't ask her why she wasn't in a relationship, so he gave her a nod, "Okay," he said as he took out some money notes from his wallet and dropped them on the table before standing up.

He offered his hand to help her stand up, and she placed her small hand in his and allowed him to pull her up. Tom looked down at their intertwined hands, before drawing her closer to his side, and then leading her out of the bar.

"I love the cool evening breeze," Lucy commented once they were out and she inhaled fresh air which was unlike that in the stuffy interior of the bar where the smell of sweat mingled with that of food, alcohol and different perfumes.

"You want to sit out here before we leave?" He asked her thoughtfully as they walked over to where the car was parked, and she nodded. Without asking, Tom placed both hands on her waist and lifted her off the ground and on top of the car trunk.

Lucy who had been alarmed when he touched her without warning, relaxed when she realized what he was doing. Once she was seated, he jumped on the space beside her. She rested her back on the rear windshield of the car looking at the night sky above them which was decorated by a full moon and so many stars, while they sat under it in comfortable silence. Although she was slightly tipsy, she was calm.

"Tom?" She called after some time.

"Yeah?" Tom who had been trying to guess what she was thinking, or whether she had dozed off, turned to look at her.

"I'm sorry."

"What for?"

Lucy shifted her gaze from the sky to his face, "I think I almost cost you your job today," she confessed, making his brow pull together in surprise. He hadn't expected her to confide in him about that.

"What happened?"

"I asked Mr. Harry to give me a different driver. I didn't want you," she explained, looking at him guiltily.

"You dislike me that much?" Tom asked with a slight frown, and she shook her head.

"It's not that. I think you're pretty cool, and that is why I'm telling you this. I will try to be a better friend henceforth," Lucy promised, and Tom was the one to feel guilty now, but he didn't let it affect him too much.

"So what happened? Did he change your mind?" Tom asked with an expressionless face.

Lucy shook her head, "The CEO got involved and insisted that if you leave, I will lose my job. So I guess I'm stuck with you," Lucy said with derogatory laughter directed at herself.

"Is that why you agreed to all I said at the grocery shop? Because you didn't want me to quit?" Tom asked with narrowed eyes, and she giggled.

"Honestly? Yes. I hope you won't take advantage of that and start making absurd demands."

Tom smiled, "I can't promise you that I won't take advantage of it, but I can assure you that I won't ask you to do something that you can't do."

"Fair enough. I owe you that much. So, friends for real now?" She asked, extending her hand for a handshake.

Tom took her hands, "Friends.." At least for now, he added to himself.

Chapter 43 - Let It Go.

"By the way, I was going to ask you why you picked out just Bounty chocolates earlier," Tom said, sparing her a glance as he drove them home.

"Because it is the only chocolate I enjoy, probably because of the coconut in it," Lucy explained, and picked up her phone when she received a text notification from Harry.

"I see."

'Reminder That You're To Resume At The CEO's Office Tomorrow Morning' Lucy sighed as she read the text.

"What is wrong?" Tom asked on hearing her sigh.

"I should probably let you know that I'm resuming at the CEO'S office tomorrow."

"You mean you will be working directly for the CEO now? That is so cool! Congrats!" Tom said with a big smile as he drove into the parking lot of their apartment building.

"I'm not sure it is cool. I don't even know what he looks like. I just think someone like him that loves to stay hidden must be a difficult man to please. I just know he is going to make my life difficult somehow," Lucy complained as they both got out of the car.

"I'm sure he isn't bad looking. Although I overheard another driver say the CEO likes to communicate via texts and emails, so it's best probably best you check your messages and emails frequently. Don't worry. I'm sure you'll do great," Tom assured her as they stopped in front of her apartment and she took out her keys to open the door, "See you tomorrow, boss," Tom said with a wave once she stepped inside her house, and then he walked away.

"Goodnight," she called after him before shutting the door. She took off her shoes and walked barefooted to her refrigerator. She picked up two bounty chocolates, unwrapped one and bit from it before walking over to sit on her couch.

Once she was seated, she took off her glasses and kept them on the table before taking another bite from the chocolate. Her thoughts drifted to Tom as she slowly chewed, and she wondered if she had been too hasty in offering her friendship. She had done that only because she wanted things to be less awkward between them now that she knew she had no choice but to work with him and keep

him from quitting in order to save her job. And also because she was now certain that he had no interest in her but rather in someone else.

Although he seemed like a nice guy, she couldn't help being bothered by the fact that he hadn't been embarrassed or apologetic when she asked him why he hadn't used a condom. Should she be worried about a sexually transmitted infection or disease? Maybe she would just have to go for a medical test so that she could put her mind at ease. She sighed as she took another bite from her chocolate.

She remembered that she had promised to call Sonia back, so she picked up her phone and dialed Sonia's line. She was glad that she had a friend like Sonia who was willing to take her call no matter the hour of the day she called, or the number of times she called.

Sonia who was busy scribbling down something on her jotter, looked around disoriented when she heard a vibration, and it took her a moment to remember she had placed her phone on vibration to avoid distraction. She yawned as she reached for her phone, and smiled when she saw it was Lucy.

"Hey baby!"

"I hope I'm not interrupting something?" Lucy asked in a concerned tone.

"You know I can always put whatever I'm doing on hold to chat with you. So talk to me baby, what's up?" Sonia asked, waiting for an exciting update.

"Well, first of all, my driver had a makeover," Lucy said, standing up from the couch to walk into her bedroom in fear that Tom might walk past her door and overhear her side of the conversation.

"A makeover?" Sonia repeated, knowing that for Lucy to be talking about it, then it probably affected her in a way.

"You heard right. Like he went from looking like a gentleman to looking like a bad playboy," Lucy went on to describe his new look as she got into her bedroom and sat on her bed.

"OMG! I can't see him, but that sounds so hot!" Sonia squealed in excitement.

"I'm sure all the ladies who set eyes on him would agree with you. They all kept staring at him," Lucy said in amusement.

"You inclusive, right?" Sonia asked in a teasing tone.

"Of course not! He is my driver," Lucy lied.

"And your ex one night stand, and your neighbor too!," Sonia countered.

"Those doesn't count. Besides, he is thankfully not interested in me. Apparently he took the job at the company, and had a makeover because of a lady he is interested in at the company. So there goes your perfect romance story," Lucy said with a roll of her eyes.

"He told you that?" Sonia asked doubtfully as she stood up to stretch her body which was feeling cramped due to the long hours she had spent sitting.

"Of course he did! He even asked me to help him get her," Lucy added making Sonia hiss angrily.

"What? He is such a jerk! How can he ask you to do that after what you both had?" She couldn't believe she had been hoping the jerk would be the one to finally make Lucy change her mind about relationships.

"We had nothing! It was a one-time thing, remember?" Lucy said in his defense.

"I can't believe you're even defending him right now. So what did you tell him? Did you agree to do it?" Sonia asked, hoping the response would be negative.

"Of course I did. We even went grocery shopping together, and we just returned from a bar. Remember I have to make sure he keeps working for me else I lose my job? So I'm keeping him as a friend. He's a cool guy," Lucy explained.

On hearing that she had gone grocery shopping with him, and even to a bar, Sonia felt optimistic, "I still don't like him!"

"Don't worry about me. He's cool. Besides, It's a win-win. By becoming friends with him and helping him get the lady, I get to keep my job, and that way I also don't have to worry about him making advances at me," Lucy said.

"As long as you don't get hurt, I suppose I'm fine. Now that aside, I've been meaning to talk to you about this. Don't you think it's high time you get a boyfriend?" Sonia asked, her tone becoming serious.

"Nah. I don't need the distraction," Lucy said dismissively.

"Stop with the excuse already. I understand why you're hell-bent on staying single, but don't you think you have punished yourself enough. You should let it go," Sonia said softly.

Lucy was quiet for some seconds, and then heaved a long sigh, "I'm not ready for any emotional commitment. What about your fiance?" Lucy asked, changing the subject.

"Don't do that Lu. I'm not letting you change the subject. You don't have to be ready for an emotional commitment. I understand that love might happen instantaneously for some, while it takes time for others to fall in love. I'm just asking that you open yourself to being in a relationship be it friends with benefits or a real relationship," Sonia pleaded.

"Tsk. It's not like you're in a relationship yourself."

"At least I have a lot of ex boyfriends, and even a fake fiance. I think you should start meeting guys until you see one you like," Sonia suggested.

"You don't have to give me an answer at once. Rather than refuse immediately, you can just think about it," Sonia quickly added when Lucy remained quiet.

"I should go to bed. I love you.. Goodnight," with that Lucy hung up.

Chapter 44 - Weird Boss

Tom stepped out of the shower with a towel tied around his waist and another in his hand which he used to dry his hair as he walked over to the bed to pick up his phone which had been ringing all the while he was in the shower. The missed calls were from Harry and Bryan. He dialed Bryan's number and connected the phone to his airpod before leaving the phone on the bed and walking over to the drawer to pick a boxer and shirt.

"Sorry I missed your call. I was in the shower when you called," Tom explained once the call connected.

"That's okay. I just got tired of waiting to hear from you. By the way, my assistant is sending your costume tomorrow morning. Where do you want it?" Bryan asked, wanting to get that out of the way before getting into the lecture for the night.

"It should be sent to the office. Harry will receive it on my behalf," Tom said as he put on his boxers and shirt, and walked out of the bedroom to the kitchen where he picked up a glass and filled it with water from the water dispenser before going to the living room to sit on the couch.

"Okay. So tell me, how did your outing go? By the way, you're yet to send the make-over pictures," Bryan reminded him.

"Don't worry. I will just do that after the call. How is your fiancée?"

Bryan's heart skipped at the mention of that, "She is fine. So? Tell me exactly how she reacted to the make-over," Bryan said, wanting to change the subject.

Tom smiled at the memory, "She tried not to let it show, but I caught her staring. And I think I may have slipped. She asked me why I had a makeover, and I told her there is a lady at the office who I'm interested in, and I think she might be into the whole bad boy package," Tom explained making Bryan's brow pull together.

"You're supposed to be making her feel you're a bad boy, not making her think you're a simp who is trying to be what he is not to get a lady!"

"Yeah, yeah. I know. But after telling her that, I also noticed she relaxed around me. It's as if knowing now that I'm interested in someone else, she is more willing to be friends with me," Tom explained.

"That is how you get yourself friend-zoned!" Bryan pointed out.

"I have no intention of being friend-zoned. I managed to convince her I wasn't interested in her, and she agreed to help me get the lady I'm interested in. So don't worry, I'm sure she will give me good enough tips on how to get her," Tom explained, and Bryan chuckled.

"Believe me, she is going to be mad when she eventually finds out that you have been making a fool out of her," Bryan said confidently.

"Well, she hasn't left me much choice, has she?"

"That reminds me, were you able to pitch the whole text and email thing to her?" Bryan asked thoughtfully.

They had both spoken earlier before Tom's outing with Lucy. Bryan had called to find out Tom's preferred color of contact lens, and then Bryan had mentioned that Lucy would easily recognize his voice if she heard him speak.

[Earlier]

"That's right!" Tom had said, realizing that he hadn't really thought of the voice recognition, and had only focused his attention on his physical appearance.

"So you should play the role of the boss who doesn't talk to his employees. You don't have to speak to her when you're at the office," Bryan had suggested.

"You don't think it would seem weird?" Tom had asked thoughtfully.

"You are the boss whose face the majority of his employees don't know. What could be weirder than that?" Bryan had asked dryly making Tom laugh, "I'm sure she would assume you just have a bad personality.

"I suppose you're right. I could just communicate with her via emails and texts." Tom had suggested.

"Exactly. That makes more sense. And maybe you could try to seduce her too, and see who gets her first, the boss or the driver. What do you think?" Bryan had suggested.

"That would be doing too much, don't you think?" Tom had asked, even though the idea seemed appealing to him.

[Present]

"Yeah, I told her to check her texts and emails often," Tom told him.

"So your assignment for tomorrow, you have to make her see you with another girl. Preferably someone hot. Invite a lady over, or better still, approach another lady in front of her," Bryan suggested, making Tom frown.

"I don't think that is a good idea. I told her I'm interested in someone already, remember?"

"Yes, you did. But remember you're playing the bad boy role? If she confronts you, you could just give her a flippant answer about a man having his needs, and how you can't deprive yourself of your basic needs when you don't even know if the lady in question is going to reciprocate your feelings, you catch my drift?" Bryan asked.

"Tell me again, how did your fiancée win your heart to make you quit your playboy ways?" Tom asked incredulously.

Bryan laughed out loud, "I'm good, right? I know."

"You're sure this won't make her keep her distance?"

"Trust me, it's going to make her even more curious about a lot of things. You said she has become more friendly towards you, right? Why should she worry about a playboy friend?" Bryan asked, and Tom nodded in agreement.

"I guess you're right. I'll do that."

"Good. So make sure you report tomorrow. And let me know when you get the costumes," Bryan added before hanging up.

Bryan looked around the house with a bored expression on his face. He needed to get out soon, else he would die. But the question now was where could he go to? He definitely couldn't be seen in public with another lady after only just proposing to one. He would have invited some girls over, but with the way his penthouse was being watched by many eyes, he knew there was no way it wouldn't make the news.

He dialed Mia's line, "Have you..."

"No. We are still trying to find her," Mia interrupted, knowing why he was calling.

"How can it be so difficult to find just ONE DAMN PERSON?" Bryan yelled at her in frustration.

Mia pressed her lips together, fighting the urge to tell him to go find Sonia himself if he thought it was such an easy task. She didn't ask him to propose to a stranger, after all, so why was he taking his frustration out on her?

"We are doing all we can while trying to be discreet. We can't let people know you proposed to a stranger," Mia pointed out, making Bryan raise a hand to his massage his temple. If only he could remember the name of her editor... Or maybe he could.

"Mia? Can you get me some of her books? Go over to any bookstore around you and find me some of her books," Bryan said excitedly.

"Can't you just download soft copies online if it is urgent?" Mia suggested politely, since she was getting ready for a date, and didn't want to be late.

"No. I prefer hard copies. I'll be waiting," he said and hung up immediately. Maybe he could read her books to kill his boredom while understanding her crazy personality from the way she writes.. And who knows? Maybe he could get her editor's information from the book. Why hadn't he thought of that all along?

Chapter 45 - Pretty Psycho

Mia was burning with anger by the time her cab pulled to a stop in front of Bryan's penthouse. She had had to cancel her date because of the books he had asked her to get. She had gone from one bookstore to the other searching for it, and by the time she finally found it, the time was far spent already.

She didn't need to knock since she knew his passcode already in case of any emergency, so she unlocked the door herself and walked into his apartment. She pasted a stiff smile on her face as she approached where he was seated by the dining tapping away on his laptop, "Here are the books you requested for," she said, dropping them beside him on the couch.

"You can leave," Bryan said without sparing her a glance as he continued with what he was doing.

Mia remained where she was, waiting for him to at least raise his head and acknowledge her presence, but when he didn't after a while she shook her head and headed for the door, promising herself that she was going to quit her job after receiving her next paycheck.

"Mia?" Bryan called before she got to the door, and she turned to look at him with a stony expression.

Bryan raised a brow when he noticed the makeup on her face, "I don't assume you're going out on a date, are you?" Bryan asked, eyeing her outfit.

"I was, but had to cancel because of your important books that couldn't wait," She said grudgingly.

"A boyfriend or a blind date?" Bryan asked since he had no idea whether or not she was in a relationship. He was not the type to get himself involved in the business of his staff.

Mia's brows pulled together in confusion, "Blind date," she said, waiting to hear why he was asking, and what he wanted to say.

"Well, you should be thankful I made you cancel. Your blind date would have gone in the opposite direction after taking one look at you in that hideous outfit," Bryan said looking her over with disapproval.

"What is wrong with what I'm wearing?" Mia asked in confusion.

"Your colors are mismatched and the skirt is plain ugly with too many ruffles. Seeing your skirt, I'm glad you only wear suit pants to work," Bryan said as his eyes fell on the books which she had dropped.

Mia looked down at her clothes uncertainly. She didn't know what to say to him, so she pressed her lips together. She liked to believe that she was a fashionista, and maybe he was saying that simply because he didn't understand female fashion.

"When next you have a date let me know beforehand, and maybe we can get you something better to wear to make up for making you cancel your date plans. And that way I don't interfere with your plans next time," Bryan said, and Mia felt her anger dissipate.

That was something she was getting to learn about Bryan. He could be insensitive and sensitive at the same time. It was only because of times like this when he acted like a decent person that she has been able to keep working for him for the past eighteen months.

"Thank you," Mia murmured as she turned to leave, knowing that was as good as an apology that she could hope for.

"Don't forget to send the package to my brother's office tomorrow. The name on the package should be Harry Jonas," Bryan said.

"I haven't forgotten," Mia assured him.

"Alright. Thank you," Bryan said dismissively as he picked up one of Sonia's novels.

There was a picture of her at the back. She was dressed in a white strapless gown, and her long blonde hair was packed in a ponytail while she smiled directly at the camera, her green eyes gleaming with mischief, "Pretty psycho," he muttered as he gazed at her picture.

A small frown creased his forehead when his eyes fell on the short note which was written about the author, but contained next to nothing about her as a person but more about her as an author and her other books, "You love to stay hidden, huh?" Bryan asked no one in particular as he flipped open the book to see if he could get any information on the publisher and editor.

Good enough he got information on the publishing company, and scribbled it down on his notepad. He was going to contact them tomorrow since it was late in the evening already. For now, he would just immerse himself in the book and see what surprises his psycho fiancée had between the pages.

The particular novel he was reading was a fantasy novel, the title of the story was 'The Witch And Her Hunter'. It was about a king who abolished the use of sorcery and magic within the kingdom because of evil witches and set up a committee of hunters which consisted of the most powerful men in the kingdom. He ordered the execution of the leader of a coven when she was caught using

sorcery to save her daughter's life. The leader of the coven had mismatched eyes of blue and green, and just before she was executed she told the King she would love to see how he would execute his own child. Some weeks after her death, the King found out his barren wife was pregnant, and months later she gave birth to a beautiful girl with mismatched eyes of blue and green. Knowing what this meant and that his barren queen would never accept for their only child to be executed, they proceeded to keep her hidden from the public, and the palace staff was made to keep the colors of the Princess's eyes a secret. One day the little princess snuck out of the palace in search of playmates, and all the other kids ran from her when they saw her eyes. Tearfully she returned to the palace, and her mother realizing that her identity has been exposed ran away with her from the palace before she could be gotten by the witch hunters. She took her to a cave where she had been told other witches were hiding and handed her to them. The witches knowing the little girl was the reincarnation of their coven leader used her energy to open a portal through which they escaped from the kingdom where they were being hunted, into the future.

Soon Bryan found himself engrossed in the story. He decided he would love to have it adapted as a movie because the storyline was very interesting.

"Wow! She's good!" Bryan murmured as he continued reading.. He wondered if she was into screenwriting, and made a mental note to recommend her books to some movie producers he knew.

Chapter 46 - No Glasses.

Lucy woke up with a start once she remembered she was resuming at her boss' office that morning, and she quickly glanced at her bedside clock to make sure she hadn't missed the sound of her alarm. Thankfully she was up early, and it wasn't even six yet. She sat up and picked up her phone which was on top of the bedside drawer. Tom had said the boss loved communicating via texts and emails, so maybe it was best she made it a habit checking her mails now.

Her heart skipped a beat when she saw a text message notification from Harry, and she closed her eyes and took in a deep breath to calm her heart, before clicking on it.

"Please kindly note that Mr. Hanks doesn't like ladies wearing their hair up, and he isn't a fan of glasses either, so dress appropriately...."

Lucy paused at that point, and reread it to be sure her eyes weren't deceiving her, "What? This is absolutely ridiculous! Who does he think he is to dictate how I wear my hair or what I use for my eye defect?" She asked no one in particular as she stood up from the bed angrily.

She remembered she was yet to read the remaining part of the text so she checked it, "Also, he doesn't like being stared at or spoken to directly. Even if you're in the office with him, you have to communicate via texts and emails."

"Seriously? I'm supposed to work with someone like this?" Lucy asked as she threw her phone on the bed angrily. She closed her eyes and drew in a deep breath, before trying to count from one to ten. The more she counted, the angrier she became, so she gave up.

"This is preposterous! Simply because he is my benevolent boss, who pays me well and also gave me an official car and driver, doesn't give him the right to tell me how to wear my hair or whether or not to use glasses! This is preposterous!" Lucy hissed angrily as she marched into her bathroom to ease herself.

She came out a moment later, still seething in anger as she sat in front of her dressing table. What sort of a weird being was he? How could he make such demands? And what was that about not being able to talk to him or look at him? Was he that ugly? He must be. That was the only thing that could explain it. But his voice hadn't sounded so bad over the phone.

"Whatever!" Lucy muttered and then closed her eyes and took in a deep breath, and let it out while counting from one to ten again. She was not going to let her weird boss ruin a day that was yet to start.

When she was done she opened her eyes and stared at her reflection in the mirror, "Okay, I will just assume it's a company dress code. It isn't a big deal."

Having come to that decision she stood up and returned to the bathroom to wash her hair and prepare herself for what she knew was going to be a tasking day.

Two hours later she stepped out of her apartment dressed in navy blue suit pants, a pink camisole, and white blazers, with a pink stiletto heel and handbag to match. Her green contact lens was in place, and her long curly jet black hair which she had spent quite some time washing and curling cascaded over her shoulders.

"You definitely do look like you're ready for your new office," Tom who was just heading towards the car commented from behind her, and grinned when she turned to look at him, "Good morning ma'am, you look good."

"I might look it, but I certainly don't feel it," Lucy muttered, "Good morning," she said dourly as she looked him over. Like yesterday he had left the top buttons of his shirt undone and he had rolled up his sleeves to reveal his arms. The scent of his cologne drifted into her nose and she tried to ignore it as she kept her gaze locked on his face.

"Seems like you're in a foul mood? Besides, I thought you said you preferred using glasses? Why did you change your mind?" Tom asked innocently as he unlocked the car.

"I wish I did. That..." She took in a deep breath to stop herself, "I was informed the CEO doesn't like glasses, so I had to make adjustments," Lucy muttered as she got into the car.

"If it's any consolation, you look even more beautiful without the glasses," Tom assured her as he got into the car.

"Hey!"

They both looked out of the car when they heard the breathless feminine voice. They saw one of the girls from the previous morning approaching the car with a smile as she took off her earphone and placed it around her neck, She looked like she had just returned from jogging as her vest and tight was plastered to her sweaty body, and a sports phone strap holder was attached to her upper arm.

"Hi!" Tom said with a surprised smile as he stepped out of the car to talk to her, while Lucy tried to ignore them.

"Good morning. Hi! I'm Jas. As in Jasmine," She said extending a hand to Tom.

"Good morning. I'm Tom. As in, Tom," Tom said, and she giggled girlishly while Lucy rolled her eyes.

"I was wondering if she was your girlfriend?" Jas asked, jerking her head in Lucy's direction.

"Not at all. She is my neighbor and I just happened to be her official driver," Tom explained, making sure his voice was loud enough for Lucy to hear him.

"Oh! That is cool then. I suppose you have a girlfriend?" Jas asked again.

"None that I know of. Why? Wanna fill the space?" Tom asked with a cocky smile and Jas giggled.

Lucy stepped out of the car, "I'm sorry to interrupt your conversation, but I really don't want to be late for work," she said to Tom testily before turning to look at the young lady with a stiff smile, "Don't you have to prepare for school?" Lucy asked, assuming she was a high schooler or college student because of her tiny stature.

"No, I don't. I graduated two years ago," Jas said, making Tom chuckle, "I shouldn't keep you from your impatient boss lady, can I have your number? Maybe we can talk?" She asked, taking her phone from the strap and handing it to him to dial in his number.

"By the way, I love your new look. You look very hot," she said, fanning her face dramatically as he typed in the number on her phone.

"You're far too kind with your words," Tom said with a grin as he returned her phone, happy that Bryan's assignment had been accomplished without much effort.

"Alright handsome, you'll hear from me before the end of the day," she said with a wink and waved at Lucy before jogging away.

Chapter 47 - A What?

Lucy who was sitting in the front seat of the car with him, tried to refrain herself from speaking, but after a few minutes she gave up the struggle, "What sort of a person are you?"

"Me?" Tom asked, pretending like he had no idea what she wanted to talk about.

"I'm sure we are just two in the car," Lucy aid irritably.

"It's possible you were speaking to yourself out loud. I noticed you tend to voice your thoughts a lot," Tom said, turning to look at her with a straight face, even though he was feeling very amused.

Lucy drew in a deep breath to stop herself from giving a sharp retort. Maybe it was because she had started her day in a bad mood, or maybe it was because the more she saw him flirt with other ladies the more scared she became of the possibility of having contracted an infectious disease from him, but whatever it was, she was feeling very annoyed.

"Okay, okay. Don't get mad. You look like you're about to blow up. Calm down and tell me what I did wrong," Tom said, sounding reasonable.

"Are you certain you want the lady at the office or not?"

"Of course I want her, why?" Tom asked her, without turning to look at her.

"Do you? Cause it sure doesn't look like it. The other night you went out on a date with another lady, and just now you were flirting with the sweaty girl," Lucy accused, looking at him squarely.

Tom shook his head before asking, "Is there any law against a single male flirting with an equally single and obviously interested female?"

"What do you think are your chances of getting her if she realizes you hook up with random strangers, and flirt with every lady that gives you the slightest attention?" Lucy asked with a slightly raised brow.

"First of all Lu, I told you before, you were an exception. Does doing something once make it your lifestyle?" Tom asked incredulously.

"Well, I suppose that is why first impressions are important. How do I know that was the first time you were offering a stranger a wild night on your bed?" Lucy asked, making Tom snort.

"That hardly counts as a wild night," Tom muttered under his breath.

"I beg your pardon?" Lucy asked, glaring at him.

Even though Tom was aware what he wanted to say didn't make much sense, he went ahead, "How do I know it was your first time too? Who knows if you go to clubs looking for innocent young men to take you home?" Tom asked, ignoring her question.

"What? What do you mean by that? I'm sure you must have noticed I was a vi..." Lucy faltered there, feeling her face heat up in embarrassment

Thankfully the traffic light gave a red signal so he stopped and turned to her, "A what?" Tom asked innocently, blinking at her.

Lucy looked away and squared her shoulders, unwilling to backdown, "That isn't the point of this discussion!"

"What is?" Tom asked as he returned his attention to the road.

Lucy drew in a deep breath, "I'm saying you shouldn't flirt around while you're interested in another lady."

"I hope you realize I don't owe her any loyalty until she gives me her heart? I'm interested in her, but I also have my desires and needs to cater for. So until she notices my existence and reciprocates my feelings, I'm afraid I can't stay away from other ladies," Tom said, meeting her gaze briefly until she looked away.

"I'm not going to help you get a woman when you can't even control your so-called urges," Lucy muttered under her breath.

"I guess you're forgetting our deal? I could stop this car by the roadside and quit my job," Tom threatened, and turned too flash her a grin when he heard her gasp.

Lucy wished she could relax, but she couldn't. So she decided to voice out her major concern, "How am I sure I've not been infected with an STI?"

"You should probably get tested," Tom suggested with a smirk.

"Did you get tested after we... You know, I mean later after we did it," Lucy asked, and she could tell that her cheeks were very red by now. Luckily his eyes were on the road so he didn't turn to look at her.

"Wow! You seem awfully interested in talking about it lately, why? Are you interested in another round of passionate love making or you're just asking because you're curious?"

Lucy didn't miss the note of amusement in his voice, "Of course not! Why would I want something like that?" Lucy asked, sounding mortified by the very idea that he had even thought she would want a repeat of the experience.

"Do you really want me to tell you why you would want something like that? Or am I to assume that was a rhetorical question?" Tom asked with a small smile.

Lucy pressed her lips together and looked outside the window. She gritted her teeth when she heard him chuckle, but didn't bother to look at him. It was too bad that she could only get mad, but couldn't do anything else about her anger.

After that they both lapsed into silence until Tom drove into the company's parking lot, "Have a nice day at work. I hope the CEO treats you nicely," Tom called out to her as she got down.

"Thank you," Lucy said stiffly as she shut the door, but hesitated a bit by the door, "Hang around today, I'd like to go to the nearest hospital or medical laboratory to get tested when I get the chance," Lucy said before turning to walk away.

"That reminds me, Miss Perry?" Tom called, and she turned to look at him curiously, wondering why he was calling her that all of a sudden.

Tom reached into the pigeon hole and got out an envelope, "I believe that is yours," he said, extending the envelope to her. His eyes gleamed with amusement as though he was waiting to see her reaction after she sees the content of the envelope.

Lucy looked at him with a curious frown, "What is that?"

"I believe you'd appreciate it best if you see for yourself, rather than hear it from me," Tom said, giving her a nod so she would take the envelope. Lucy reluctantly reached for it through the window, while Tom watched her with a crooked smile as she cautiously opened the envelope.

Lucy felt her face flush a bright red with embarrassment when she saw the red lace panties she had worn that first night.

"I thought you'd like to get it back," Tom said, and stifled the urge to roar with laughter when she turned around and walked away in quick steps.

Chapter 48 - Lunch Together?

Harry raised his eyes from the document in front of him and looked at Lucy who just walked into his office.

"He won't be coming in today," He said, in response to her unspoken question. While watching her closely. He had to admit that she looked more pretty wearing her hair down and without her glasses.

"Oh! So what am I to do?" Lucy asked, feeling very relieved that she didn't have to face a boss she knew was likely going to be difficult. It wasn't like she wasn't curious to know what he looked like, but she just wasn't ready yet.

"I already told you, your office changed no doubt, but your responsibilities are the same. You can have your secretary bring you all the work you need to take care of, and if the boss has an assignment for you, I will deliver it to you," Harry assured her.

"Alright. Thank you, sir," Lucy said, turning to leave.

"Miss Perry?" Harry called before she got to the door.

"Yes?" Lucy asked, looking at him curiously.

"You can't go into his office unless you're sent for, or sent there," Harry said, making Lucy frown. The more they gave her these weird rules, the wearier she became of this CEO. If she didn't know better, she would think the CEO was someone she knew who was avoiding her, but that was ridiculous. What was he so bent on hiding from? She wondered.

"Noted, sir."

"By the way, you look really good today."

"Thank you," Lucy said with an awkward smile before leaving. She didn't want to look good. She didn't even care for any of the compliments she was receiving. All she wanted was to wear her glasses and have her hair out of her face. She didn't want any sort of attention from anyone. She knew she looked good, so hearing them say it wasn't a big deal to her.

As she returned to her office, she was like a mini office outside the CEO's office, she checked her drawers to make sure everything was in place and then closed her eyes when her eyes fell on the envelope Tom had handed her.

She didn't know whether to be thankful that he had returned it to her or to feel embarrassed. She had left it there when she couldn't find it that morning, believing that she was never going to run into him again. Who would have thought any of this would happen? She took out the pant and smelt it, and gritted her teeth when she perceived the faint scent of soap. He had washed it. Did he hand wash it? She wondered, her face coloring at the thought.

She would have to dispose of it since there was no way she could wear it again. She threw it into the trashcan and stood up to pick it up immediately. The last thing she needed was for the cleaner, whoever they were to find her panties in the trashcan. That would make them assume all manner of things about her. She took the panties out of the envelope and dipped it inside an inner zip in her handbag before discarding the envelope.

"Time for today's business!" Lucy said out loud, as she picked up her phone and dialed her secretary's number. She instructed her to bring every document she needed to attend, to her. And when she was done with the call, her eyes drifted to the CEO's door. She wondered what she would find behind the door if she went into his office now.

She quickly shook her head to discard any silly thoughts and focused on arranging her desk instead. By the time she was done with that, her secretary knocked on the door, and she gave her the go-ahead to enter.

Although this office was that of a personal assistant, it was undoubtedly bigger and better looking than her previous office. Her secretary looked around with a smile on her face happy that she had

gotten the privilege to glimpse a part of the CEO's office, "Here are the documents," the secretary said, with her eyes everywhere else but on Lucy. She couldn't help wondering what Lucy must have done to have received this sort of promotion. Being the CEO's assistant was a very big deal.

"Thanks. You can leave," Lucy said as she opened the documents in front of her and started reviewing them.

She remained in that position for some hours until she heard a knock on her door, "You can come in," She said without raising her head. She raised her head the moment the scent of his perfume invaded her nostrils, and naturally, her face colored.

"Sorry to bother you, Miss Perry, it's lunchtime," Tom said, raising the food pack he was carrying so she could see.

"You didn't have to worry," She said without meeting his gaze.

Tom said nothing as he looked around the office before looking at her desk, "Nice office. You seem to have settled in," Tom observed.

Lucy was grateful he wasn't bringing up the issues of the panties, "I haven't been here for up to a week, so moving to a different office wasn't really difficult," Lucy explained.

"So have you seen him? What is he like?" Tom asked curiously, glancing at the main office door.

"Thankfully he's not coming to the office today. You won't believe all the outrageous instructions I've been given," Lucy said with a shake of her head. Tom seemed like the only 'friend' she had right now, so she was willing to gossip with him, as long as that removed every awkwardness between them.

"Really? Like?" Tom asked, cocking his head to one side so he could look at her.

"If you're not in a hurry, you can sit down," Lucy offered as she covered the documents in front of her and reached for the food pack which he was still holding.

"Sure. Thanks," Tom said as he handed her the food pack, before taking the seat opposite her. Apart from bringing her lunch as he had promised he would be doing, he had wanted to see if she was still feeling embarrassed about the envelope issue, and also to see if she would treat him differently. He was impressed to see that she was acting as nothing had happened.

Lucy opened the food, thankful that he had remembered to bring her lunch. She was yet to have breakfast as usual, and even though she knew coffee wasn't good for her, she had taken coffee again. It was one of her guilty pleasures even though she had been warned it exacerbates her ulcer. This was probably how she had gotten an ulcer: always forgetting to eat and consuming coffee.

"Thanks for the food," Lucy said with a small smile and reached for a hairband inside her handbag, which she used to wrap her hair in a ponytail.

"You really don't like leaving your hair down? Why?" Tom asked curiously as he watched her.

"I'm more comfortable this way," Lucy said as she opened the box of chicken and chips, "Have you eaten?" Lucy asked, surprising them both.

Tom smiled, "Yes."

"How about you bring your lunch so we eat together next time?" Lucy offered.

"Lunch together? Really?" Tom asked with a happy smile which made her heart flutter. She had to admit that he was very good-looking.

Lucy cleared her throat, "Yes. Since you're new here I'm sure you don't have many friends either apart from the lady you're crushing on, so we can eat together," Lucy said even though a part of her kept telling her that she was making a mistake.

What harm could possibly come from eating with her one-night stand-cum-neighbor-cum-friend-cum-driver?

Chapter 49 - I Don't?

Tom had an amused smile on his face as he watched her eat, "Do you like your new office?"

"Sure. I honestly don't care about the office though, since I spend most of my time looking at documents and not at the office," Lucy said, looking around the office with disinterest.

"Is there a reason you love working so hard? Like maybe you want a big promotion?" Tom asked curiously.

"What promotion could be bigger than this? I should take Mr. Harry's job? or the CEO's office?" Lucy asked with an amused smile.

"Perhaps you want the position of CEO's wife?" Tom asked, making Lucy choke on the chip she had just swallowed, "Sorry," Tom said, seeing how his question had startled her.

Lucy quickly reached for the bottle of water he had brought with him and gulped down some. She blinked back the tears which had gathered in her eyes before looking at him, "How is that a position?" Lucy asked in a choked voice, and cleared her throat before repeating the question.

"You will move up the ladder in the company if you marry the CEO. Has that thought never crossed your mind?" Tom asked, keeping his tone light and easy.

"Sorry to say, but that's a shallow way of thinking. I'm not interested in marriage, and if I was, I wouldn't marry a man just to move up the corporate ladder," Lucy said with a shake of her head.

"Don't tell me you want me to marry him so that I can get you a position in the company," Lucy asked with eyes narrowed suspiciously, but with a playful smile on her lips.

"Wow! You must have the superpower of reading minds!" Tom exclaimed dramatically making her giggle.

"Anyway, I'm sure you'd like to get back to work soon, so I should get out of your hair," Tom said, but before he could stand up the door opened and Harry walked in, carrying a box.

He was taken aback when he saw Tom's new look since he had not seen him since the previous day after he went for his makeover, "Hello sir!" Tom stood up and greeted with a polite smile.

"This is your driver?" Harry asked, ignoring Tom and turning to look at Lucy.

Lucy couldn't help wondering why he was asking, when he had been the one who had introduced Tom to her, "Yes sir. He brought me lunch," Lucy explained, hoping he wasn't going to scold her for letting him into her office.

"Now I see why you were uncomfortable with him working for you," Harry said, looking at Tom from head to toe with disapproval, and Tom subtly glared at him, "Maybe I should speak to the CEO again about changing him, on your behalf?" He asked making Lucy wince.

Why did he have to bring it up? What if she hadn't told Tom about it the previous evening? Would Harry have exposed her this way? Lucy reasoned with displeasure, "Not at all sir. We have resolved our differences and we are okay. I'd love him to remain my driver," Lucy said, making Tom look at her with a big smile, and he bowed at her politely.

"If you say so. I will just leave this in Mr. Hank's office," Harry said handing the box to Tom for him to follow him.

Tom dutifully carried the box which he knew contained his disguise outfits as he followed Harry into the office. Once they he walked through the door and shut it behind them, Tom dropped the box on the table and punched Harry's arm.

"Ouch!"

"So you're my boss now, huh?" Tom asked, glaring at Harry who was now laughing merrily at the little drama he had played.

"I was trying to make it more believable. She wouldn't suspect a thing," Harry said before looking at him with disapproval once again, "I can't believe you actually did this. You look like a thug."

"A handsome thug. You have no idea the number of ladies I've turned down since I had this makeover," Tom said, grateful his office was soundproof, and Lucy couldn't hear them.

"They just want to sleep with you, not take you home to meet their families," Harry pointed out.

"At least they want to sleep with me, when was the last time anyone wanted to sleep with you?" Tom asked dryly as he opened the box.

"So what? I should get a makeover so that I can have ladies queuing up for my bed?" Harry asked with a straight face, and Tom shot him a glare.

"You wouldn't dare. You're the face of the company, so you have to always look responsible."

"Yeah. Yeah."

"This feels like my hair," Tom observed as he lifted the wig and beards.

"That is why it is called human hair. I'm sure even you knows that much," Harry said dryly as he lifted the pack of contact lens in the box.

"Whatever, I need to step out now before she starts getting curious. Make sure to lock the office with your key while leaving. I'll come in through my private elevator later," Tom said as he carried the box into the mini room in his office, and placed it inside a tiny closet where he usually kept extra clothes for days he overworked and slept at the office.

They both walked out together and Harry gave Tom a stern look once they were back to Lucy's office, "Make sure you don't cause her any trouble. If she so much as complains about you one more time, I'll do all I can to fire you," he threatened before walking away.

Tom bowed to him before looking in Lucy's direction. He noticed that she had finished eating and had cleared her desk, "I will be waiting outside," Tom said with a small smile.

"I'm sorry about what Mr Harry said," Lucy apologized guiltily. If only she had not reported him to begin with, Harry wouldn't have been so hard on him.

"It's okay. I should be thanking you for letting me keep my job. By the way, about getting a medical test, I'm not sure you need it," Tom said, feeling he owed her that much since it seemed like she was genuinely worried about it.

"I don't?" Lucy asked hopefully.

"You don't," Tom said with a nod.

"Why not? Did you get tested?" Lucy asked before he could turn to leave.

Tom scratched the back of his head, wondering if he should tell her the truth or not, "Why don't we talk about it when you're done with work? We could spend the evening at your place or mine talking and seeing a movie," Tom suggested, and Lucy looked at him for a while before nodding her head. At least that was much better than leaving the house.

"Later then," she said with a smile, and returned her attention to what she was doing as he walked away.

Tom sighed once he shut the door behind him. He didn't make any move to walk away, but rather stood there staring at the door like he could see through it. He wished he had been able to confide in either Harry or Bryan about what had happened between them that night. Unfortunately he couldn't. It was Lucy's private business, and he wasn't sure he wanted them to know what had transpired between them. That meant he had to handle this himself.. Perhaps telling her nothing had happened between them would change some of her opinions about him.

Chapter 50 - Never Say Never

Bryan's eyes felt really heavy when he opened them and saw that it was mid-day already. He had binge-read Sonia's novel until past 6 AM, and now he wanted nothing more than to sleep all day. He reluctantly stood up from the bed, remembering that he was going to call the publishers of Sonia's novels.

After cleaning up, he picked up his phone and dialed the publisher's number which was written on the novel, he didn't have to wait for too long, as the call connected on the sixth ring.

"Hello! Mason Publishing Agency, what may we do for you?" A lovely feminine voice asked.

"My name is Jeff Banks and I'm a die-hard fan of Miss Sonia Smith. I noticed your company always publishes her books. Is there a way I could get her editor's number from you? I'd love to send them a gift," Bryan lied, using the names of the last character he had played.

"Uhm, hold on for a moment," The lady said, and placed the call on hold to call her boss.

Bryan waited for what seemed like a long time before the call connected again, "I'm only permitted to give you Mr. Conner's email address. You can contact him through his email," The lady said, and waited for Bryan to accept or decline the offer.

"Sure, that would do. Thank you."

," she readout, and Bryan quickly looked for a pen. He asked her to spell it out just so he was sure he was getting the right thing, and when she was done, Bryan had a grin on his face.

"Thank you so very much for your assistance. I will be sure to refer my writer friends to your company," Bryan said before hanging up.

He quickly logged on to his email account and typed in a message, "Hello Mr. Conner! This is Bryan Hanks, and I would love to speak with you over the phone. Please do not tell Sonia about this. Kindly contact me as soon as you receive the text," He added his phone number to the text before sending it.

Having accomplished his task for the day, he felt light-hearted, knowing that he would soon find out Sonia's location. He placed a call to order food and then proceeded to pick up Sonia's novel to continue from where he stopped. He often found himself roaring with laughter or feeling very sad as he read. He was very impressed with her writing style and was glad his fake fiancée was quite a talented writer. He knew without a doubt that many people would purchase her books simply to check her out because she was his fiancée, and he was both glad and relieved to know that they would all be impressed as he was.

He glanced at his phone when it started ringing and winced when he noticed it was a call from his closest friend, Matt, who was also an actor, "Hey!" He asked with false cheerfulness.

"Why do I get the feeling that you're not excited to hear from me?" Matt asked with a chuckle.

"Because I'm not. If you're calling to make fun of me regarding the engagement, don't," Bryan warned.

"There is nothing to talk about. I have no doubt that you're not really engaged to her, although I wonder why you did what you did," Matt said.

"Why are you so sure?" Bryan asked, and Matt chuckled.

"Because I've known you for more than ten years, and you can never keep such a relationship a secret from me, even if it means calling me just to gloat about how you've found the love of your life," Matt said making Bryan grin since that was the truth.

He explained the situation to Matt, and Matt's body shook with the force of his laughter, "I like her. She is totally my type," Matt said with a grin.

"She is?"

"Yeah. I could get her off your hands if you want me to," Matt offered.

"You're sure about that?" Bryan asked hopefully.

"Definitely. Let's just hope you don't fall in love with her after I've taken her off your hands," Matt said with a grin, imagining what it would be like for himself and Bryan to be involved in a love triangle.

"Never. I don't do crazy ladies," Bryan said confidently.

"Never say never. Just let me know once you find her, and I will do what I can."

"Alright, I will let you know once I do," Bryan said, glad that he had been able to confide in his closest friend.

All he wanted was a way to break off this false engagement. It would be best for him if Matt got involved with her. That way he could play the victim and say she had cheated with his friend or had dumped him for his friend. Then no one would blame him for going back to his playboy lifestyle. Bryan had a grin on his face as he poured himself a glass of wine to celebrate his beautiful plan.

Meanwhile, Sonia lay on her bed, unaware of Bryan's plan, as she tried to come up with her own plans. All she was thinking about was Bryan and how to make her story about them more fun. Merely calling him wasn't going to do what she wanted, and it definitely wasn't going to bring them closer since he would keep asking her for the same thing. She needed a new strategy to get his attention.

She thought about his family. His mother had seemed nice. She wished she knew more about his siblings than what was written on the internet about them... She quickly sat up when something suddenly occurred to her, and her mouth rounded in surprise. How had she not connected the dots the whole time? She recalled reading something about Bryan Hank's brother being the CEO of iGlobal and his sister being a lawyer. That meant his brother was now Lucy's direct boss! How had she missed such an important point? A smile slowly spread across her face. Her story was going to become even more interesting now.

She quickly jotted down her thoughts and made a mental note to give Lucy a call once she was done formulating the plan she had in her head. The smile remained on her face as she wrote down everything. She knew she was crazy no doubt, and that her plan was outrageous, but she also knew if she wanted a beautiful result for both her relationship with Bryan as well as her novel, then she needed to follow her instincts and do this.

Once she was done writing she packed her hair and stood up to arrange her room and bags.. She was going on a trip to pay her fiance a not-so-surprising visit.