

Wild Night 571

Chapter 571 Medical Abortion

The breakfast table was unusually quiet that morning as everyone seemed to be preoccupied with various thoughts, and those who weren't too busy thinking were busy eating.

Sonia played around with the fried egg on her plate as she thought about the positive pregnancy test result and what to do about it. The mere thought of it made her heart beat very fast and made her feel nauseous.

She couldn't tell Bryan about it. That would cause another friction in their relationship, and she didn't want that. Bryan had once again made it clear last night during dinner that he wasn't ready for such a leap in their relationship yet. She needed to get rid of it silently so he wouldn't find out.

She had thought long and hard about it over the night and has made up her mind to have a medical abortion. That was the easiest to deal with. No one would know about it, and she wouldn't need to go to a hospital.

Despite having come to that decision, her heart ached at the thought of stifling the life that was growing inside her.

Seated across her, Evelyn had her own worries to think about. Tom's statement during dinner had given her a sleepless night, and she needed to talk to either Tom or Lucy privately to be certain that it wasn't what she thought Tom meant. It couldn't be. She didn't want it to be.

Although Desmond had argued with her over and over again from last night to this morning that even if that was what Tom meant, he had every right to make such a decision for himself, and she had no business getting upset or trying to change his mind about it, Evelyn paid no heed to his words.

Tom was her son, and whatever he chose to do with his life was her business. Tom had always been all about having his own family, and if for any reason something had changed that, she needed to know exactly what it was and why. It couldn't be Lucy, could it? Evelyn mused as she looked at Janet, who was eating as though she didn't have a care in the world.

Evelyn picked up her phone when it rang suddenly, "It's Tom," she announced apologetically as she received the call since she was big on not receiving phone calls during mealtimes.

"Good morning, mom. I need you to pack a suitcase for me. I'm flying out of the country in a bit to take care of an I-Global emergency situation. Could you do that for me?" Tom asked, sounding sort of urgent since he was about to leave his office for a meeting.

"Sure. Do you need me to bring it to your office?" Evelyn asked eagerly, hoping she would be able to meet and discuss with either him or Lucy privately.

"You can just give it to Adolf...."

"I will bring it myself. It's been a while since I last visited the company. I will stop by," Evelyn said before hanging up.

"Is everything alright?" Desmond asked, and Evelyn noticed that all eyes were on it.

"Yeah. He needs me to bring his luggage to the office. He has to travel out of the country to handle an emergency," Evelyn explained.

"That's quite sudden," Desmond said, wondering if Tom was doing this because of his misunderstanding with Lucy.

"Things like this happen all the time when you run a company," Evelyn assured him.

"Can I come with you?" Sonia, who had been silent all morning, blurted out without thinking, and Bryan's brows pulled together as he looked at her.

"Didn't we plan to go see a movie today?" Bryan asked, and Sonia nodded.

"Don't tell me you can't stand to be without me even for an hour?" Sonia asked in a teasing tone, "I'm only accompanying her. I'm sure Evelyn doesn't plan to spend all day at the company, right, Evelyn?" Sonia asked, and Evelyn nodded.

"Sure. You can come with me if you want to," Evelyn said, and Sonia flashed her a smile of gratitude.

"Can I come too?" Jamal asked, and Candace turned to him.

"Don't you want to visit your grandpa today?"

"We won't take long. I want to see the company again. You should too. You haven't seen it yet, have you?" Jamal asked, and both he and Candace looked at Evelyn, wanting to know if they could join them.

Although Candace wasn't the type to say what was on her mind or what she wanted, she was curious to see where Tom and Harry worked.

Even though Evelyn could tell that she was stretching it, she went ahead. What harm could come from letting them join her? "Sure. You both can come," Evelyn said, and they beamed at her.

"What about me? I can come too, right?" Janet asked, and both Andrew and Desmond exchanged a look.

"You should as well get an excursion bus," Andrew muttered, and Desmond chuckled.

"Tom is going to be in for the shock of his life when he sees y'all," Desmond said and then raised a brow at Bryan and Jade.

"Are you both not going with them?" He asked his children.

"No, I'm not," Bryan said, sensing that Sonia wanted to leave with Evelyn because she was avoiding him.

Her behaviour, since they went to I-Global the previous day, had told him that much. What happened in Lucy's office? She had been all chatty and excited on their way to I-Global but had been as cold as a fish by the time they were returning.

It didn't help that she and Lucy had locked themselves up in their bedroom for whatever reason the previous day. That Had told him that Lucy knew what was wrong.

Although he had tried his best not to feel that way, but it had been next to impossible not to feel locked out. Or was it shut out? This wasn't about him feeling insecure or jealous about Lucy. Something was up with Sonia, and he wished she would tell him what it was. Did he do something wrong? Or was it that he was just being overly sensitive and reading too much meaning into whatever was wrong with Sonia?

Although he couldn't tell what it was but he knew that she was hiding something from him, and maybe it was best to let her be alone if that was what she wanted for the time being. He wanted to believe that she would come around to tell him what the problem was. Or should he just ask Lucy about it? Bryan mused.

"Jady?" Desmond called when she said nothing, and she sighed as she dropped her cutlery and rose.

"I have stuff to attend to in my bedroom. I'm full," Jade announced as though everyone at the table was blind and couldn't see that she had barely touched the meal in front of her.

"Alright," Desmond responded, not bothering to ask her what the problem was.

After his conversation with her the previous day, he was sure she could deal with whatever the problem was, as he suspected it had to do with Harry.

As always, Desmond was right about the cause of Jade's sad demeanour. It was true that her mood was because of Harry.

Jade had no idea why she was still feeling so worried about Harry's date with Aurora despite all that had happened between them over the weekend and the assurance he had given her.

Did her insecurity run so deep? Right now, she was more worried by her worry over their date than she was about the date itself. Why couldn't she just act like it wasn't a big deal? Why couldn't she just go about her day normally? Why was her heart racing? Why was her stomach churning?

"Jade," Candace, who Jade hadn't noticed was following her, called softly behind her, and Jade turned.

"Hey!" Jade forced a smile.

"Are you alright?" Candace asked since she considered Jade, a close friend.

"Yeah. What about you?" Jade asked as she let Candace get in step beside her, and they continued up the stairs together.

"I'm okay. I've decided to move back to Sogal after Aaron gets well and is ready to leave," Candace announced, and Jade paused.

"Why? Because Matt is moving to Ludus?" Jade asked, and Candace tried not to roll her eyes.

"You're smarter than that question, Jade. My life doesn't revolve around Matt," Candace said in a disapproving tone.

"Well, if you must know, I want to live with Aaron and get to know him better. If possible, catch up on lost years. I will always have time to do that with Harry, but Aaron is getting older by the day. Besides, I need to make something out of my life before getting involved with anyone. Something I can be proud of," Candace said, and Jade sighed and nodded as they stopped in front of her bedroom.

"Alright. I understand. Sorry I brought Matt up," Jade said, and Candace smiled.

"It's okay. So, how are things going between you and Harry?" Candace asked with interest since she had been wondering if Harry was responsible for Jade's mood.

Jade smiled as she thought of Harry, and Candace could tell it was genuine, "Beautifully. Harry is everything," Jade said as she opened the door, and Candace smiled as she walked in with her.

"If that's the case, why have you been sulking all morning?" Candace asked, and Jade sighed.

"I wasn't sulking. I don't know. I'm just anxious about his meeting with Aurora. And no, I'm not thinking about going there to spy on them. I'm just worried, and that is what is bothering me," Jade said as she dropped onto her bed, and Candace sighed in understanding as she sat beside her.

"I see...." The rest of her words trailed off when her phone rang with a call from Harry, "It's your boyfriend," Candace told Jade with a wink as she received the call.

"Hey, twin brother!" Candace greeted cheerfully, knowing it would make Harry wince.

"Hey, twin sister!" Harry greeted back in an equally cheerful tone, determined not to let her ruffle his feathers, and Candace giggled.

Jade smiled as she watched Candace, feeling somewhat happy to observe the interaction between them even though she couldn't hear what Harry was saying.

"Did you call because you want to hear my voice or because you want to talk to your girlfriend?" Candace asked curiously.

"I was hoping you'd be home when I got back from work yesterday. Why are you always in a hurry to leave when I can easily drop you off?" Harry asked with mild annoyance, and Candace's heart skipped at that word 'home'.

"Well, I didn't want to be a bother and...."

"You could never be a bother even if you tried...."

"Are you sure about that?" Candace interrupted in a teasing tone, and Harry could hear the smile in her voice.

He paused to reconsider what he had just said, "I think I can tolerate you," Harry said with a grin, and Candace giggled. She could never get used to knowing she had her own family now.

"Can you not leave tonight? I will love to see you and Jamal when I get back. I want us to talk," Harry said, and Candace paused her lips. He was asking her to spend the night.

"About what? Did Dad tell you I'm moving back to Sogal with him?" She asked, and they both paused.

Jade smiled. It was the first time she was hearing Candace refer to Aaron directly as her dad.

Candace cleared her throat, "I mean...."

"Yeah. He told me. That's not all I want to talk to you about. When you're coming, come prepared to spend the night, okay? We should have a proper family dinner and spend the night together," Harry urged her, and Candace nodded.

"Alright. I will be stopping by the company with Evelyn and the others. I want to see where you work," Candace said, and Harry glanced at his wristwatch.

"I might not be here when you arrive, but I promise to show you around before you leave for Sogal," Harry said, and Candace smiled.

"Jade is here. Want to say hello to her?" Candace asked, and Jade looked at her expectantly.

Although she had spoken with Harry earlier that morning already, she was eager to hear his voice again.

"No. If I want to say hello, I will dial her line. Tell her I love her eyes. And ask her to try not to worry too much about the meeting with Aurora because I will be thinking about her the whole time," Harry said before hanging up.

"He said to tell you he loves your eyes," Candace said, and Jade's lips curved in a smile.

"And he said you should not worry about his meeting with Aurora since he will be thinking of you the whole time," Candace added, and Jade sighed.

"I'm trying not to."

"I guess he can see through you even when he is not with you," Candace said, and Jade smiled once again.

"I told you he is everything, remember?" Jade said with a small smile.

Chapter 572 The Middle

Inside Tom's office, Harry sat opposite him as they discussed his trip and what he was expected to do, and also talked about how Harry would take care of things in his absence.

Once they were done talking about business, Harry eyed Tom with interest, "So? What did you decide to do?" Harry asked. Knowing Tom, he knew that Tom was acting as his usual self only because he had made up his mind on what to do.

"About what?"

"About Lucy and her decision? I take it you've gotten a solution?" Harry asked, and Tom shrugged.

"She decided to go for therapy," Tom said, and Harry grinned.

"She did? See? I told you. Lucy is reasonable. She only needs time and patience," Harry said, but Tom merely stared at him.

"What now?" Harry asked, sensing that Tom wasn't satisfied.

"Well, I told her therapy is not enough," Tom said, and Harry shook his head in disapproval.

"Sometimes I can't believe you. Just yesterday, you said...."

"I know all I said. But I also got to realise that even if she receives therapy and decides she still doesn't want to get married, I won't let her go," Tom said, and Harry raised a brow.

"So what are you going to do? We both know you're a family-oriented person, and in our line of business, most old-fashioned people trust you more and believe you to be more responsible when you are married and have your own family," Harry pointed out, and Tom shrugged.

"Good you know all that. Although I haven't completely worked out the details yet, but I'm going to make Lucy my wife. I think I can settle for adopting kids if she is vehemently against that idea, but she has to be my wife," Tom said with a stubborn set of his lips, and Harry grinned.

"Whenever you have that determined look in your eyes, you almost always get what you want. I look forward to seeing how you go about this one. Although I'm afraid tattoos and earrings won't help you this time," Harry joked, and Tom smirked.

"I won't be needing those. The stake is much higher this time. I'm going to risk losing her to marry her," Tom said, and Harry raised a brow.

"How do you risk losing her to marry her?" Harry asked, and Tom shrugged.

"I will let you know after my plan is in place. Although I'm hundred per cent sure you're going to call me crazy...."

"Don't do anything crazy, Tom," Harry advised, but the wild determination in Tom's eyes told him that his mind was made up, and Harry shook his head.

"Just don't hurt her, and don't lie to her...."

"I will do whatever it takes, Harry. Whatever." Tom cut in.

"And you will end up losing her...."

"Are you listening to me? I just told you I'm willing to risk losing her to marry her. It's a gamble. Don't worry, I won't get you involved," Tom promised, and Harry sighed.

"It's not about getting me involved. Just don't hurt her, Tom. I really won't forgive you if you do," Harry warned.

"Do you think I derive pleasure from doing any of this? Don't you think hurting her is going to hurt me too? Whatever I'm doing is for Lucy and me. If she needs to experience the pain of losing me to realise how much she wants me, then she will! Don't go all protective cousin on me right now! You're first my best friend before you're Lucy's friend or cousin," Tom snapped at him, and Harry sighed.

"It's not about being a protective cousin or anything. I really do not want you to do anything you're going to regret. Your relationship with Lucy means a lot to me too," Harry said defensively.

"And it doesn't mean anything to me? If this was between you and Jade, do you think I would take sides?" Tom asked, and Harry paused and considered it.

Knowing Tom, he most likely would let them resolve it between themselves and not interfere. That was just the sort of person Tom was when it came to relationships.

Harry had no idea what to say. How was he supposed to stay neutral in this? Lucy was hardly someone he could see going through stuff and look away. Tom was his best friend, and Lucy was his friend and cousin.

Yeah, he might have only just recently gotten close to her and got to know that she was his cousin, but that didn't mean he didn't feel strongly about her.

"You're meeting with Sara soon, right?" Tom asked, changing the subject.

"Yeah," Harry said with a sigh as he glanced at his wristwatch. If Tom wanted to change the subject, that was fine by him, but he wasn't going to let Tom do anything he was going to regret. That was part of his duties as a best friend, wasn't it?

"I have checked out Wilson Peterson's (Rachel's dad) main opponent," Harry informed Tom.

"And?"

"As you must know, the polls show that Wilson is in the lead, and it will take a miracle for his opponent to close the gap. If we send what we have to him, he should be able to do what we want. He must be desperate enough by now," Harry concluded.

"What sort of person is his opponent?" Tom asked, and Harry raised a brow.

"He is a politician. What sort of a person do you expect him to be?" Harry asked dryly.

"Well, I just don't want us to help someone evil climb the political ladder," Tom said, and Harry snorted.

"That is not and has never been our business. Our business here is bringing down Wilson Peterson, not choosing a Governor for Heden," Harry pointed out, and Tom sighed.

"Alright. So when do you plan to go ahead with the plan?" Tom asked, and Harry smiled.

"Tomorrow. I'm going to tell Candace about it tonight. I want the whole drama to begin tomorrow. I will have the orphanage contact Jade's previous boss tomorrow about finding the girl he is searching for. Before the weekend, Sara should be reunited with her long-lost daughter," Harry said, and Tom smiled.

"At least one thing is going according to plan," Tom said as he played with his pen.

"Are you still worried about the Miller family? Any update from Barry?" Harry asked, and Tom met his gaze.

"Yeah. A conversation between the pregnant sister and Anita," Tom said as he pushed his phone to Harry for him to listen to the recording that Barry had sent him the previous evening while he was having dinner with his family but had only been able to listen to it a short while ago. He had been listening to it a moment ago before Harry walked into his office.

Harry played it, and the first voice he heard was Lisa's happy and relieved cry, "Annie, Benny is awake! She regained consciousness," Lisa cried.

"Mighty nice of her to wake up just after I left. She must be avoiding me," Anita said dryly, but the relief in her voice was unmistakable.

"Are you going to see her before you leave?" Lisa asked hopefully.

"Leave? Is Anita leaving? Where is she going to?" Harry asked Tom as he paused the recording.

Tom rubbed the bridge of his nose, "I think she has made up her mind to quit her job and move away," Tom said, and Harry frowned as he resumed the recording.

"No. There is no reason to. I'm glad she survived. I only hope she doesn't go back to Adam," Anita said with a sigh.

"I spoke with her. She doesn't plan to return there. What do you think we can do for her?"

"Good. For starters, let's help her find a good lawyer who isn't scared of going against Adam's family. She can move into my house, and then we can talk about getting her a job," Anita said, and once the sisters reached an agreement, they hung up.

"Hmm, I guess we should be glad we have one less enemy to worry about?" Harry asked with a sigh as he looked at Tom.

"And just let her go after what she did?" Tom asked, and Harry shrugged.

"Why don't we let Lucy decide if she wants to forgive Anita or not?" Harry asked, and Tom nodded.

"Yeah. We agreed to wait and see," Tom said, and Harry rose.

"Good. I have to leave you now. I need to handle some stuff before heading out to meet the old witch," Harry said, and Tom's lips twitched.

"Let me know how the meeting goes," Tom said as he watched Harry walk away.

Harry met Eric by the doorway, coming in with two styrofoam cups of coffee, so he took one from him, and instead of going to his office, Harry headed straight for Lucy's office.

Lucy was still pondering over the state of things between her and Tom when he knocked on her door, and she raised her head to see Harry standing there with a cheerful smile and a cup of coffee in his hand.

"Good morning, LuLu! Can I come in?" Harry asked, and Lucy smiled back.

"Sure," she said as she sat up and looked at Harry, wondering what he wanted to talk about.

"Please sit," she urged him.

"How are you?" Harry asked as he sat, and Lucy shrugged.

"I'm okay. Thanks for not letting me walk away yesterday," Lucy said, and Harry nodded.

"It's nothing. Besides, Tom asked me to stop you," Harry said, and Lucy's smile faltered.

"Tom asked you to stop me?" she asked, and Harry gave her a nod.

"I was busy and didn't notice you leaving until Tom brought it to my attention. He couldn't possibly let you make such a mistake after all," Harry said, and Lucy sighed.

"Thanks all the same. How is Aaron doing? I should stop by to pay him a visit soon. I miss him," Lucy said, and Harry grinned.

"He is feeling much better now doing all that grandpa stuff. I'm sure he will love to see you too," Harry said as he continued to watch Lucy with interest.

"Tom said he has to leave the country today?" Lucy asked after Harry had remained silent for some seconds.

"Yeah. I would have handled this, but I can't leave my dad right now, and I also have to meet with Aurora today, the lady you met at the spa," Harry explained.

"Oh! The date! She spoke so much about it. I hope it goes well. She is a sweet lady," Lucy said, and Harry nodded.

"Yeah. I'm hoping so too," Harry said as he raised the cup to his lips and took a sip from it.

"So, why are you here?" Lucy asked when she got tired of waiting for him to get to the point.

"Two reasons. To see if you need someone to talk to and to tell you about my meeting with Sara."

"Tom told you about our misunderstanding, didn't he? Is that why you are here?" Lucy asked suspiciously, and Harry shook his head.

"We don't have to talk about that if you don't want to. But I'm here just in case you need someone to listen to you. I mean, I know Tom better than anyone else, and I'm really rooting for you both, so maybe you can talk to me," Harry suggested, and Lucy sighed.

"Thanks, but I think I'm fine. You don't have to worry about me. And if for any reason I need to talk, I will find my way to your office," Lucy assured him.

"Is that a promise?" Harry asked, and Lucy gave him a nod.

"So why are you meeting with Sara?" Lucy asked and listened as Harry brought her to speed on his plans.

"She must underestimate you a lot if she believes that you would want to meet with her despite all she has done," Lucy said, and Harry nodded.

"People like her tend to feel superior and believe they are smarter than everyone else. I thought I should let you know so that you would behave accordingly if she reaches out to you for any reason," Harry said, and Lucy smiled.

"Sure," Lucy said, and Harry rose, ready to leave.

"I have to leave now. It's almost time to meet with the witch," Harry said with a crooked smile.

"Harry?" Lucy called, stopping him.

"Yeah?"

"Would you still be this way with me if Tom and I were to break up?" Lucy asked, and Harry considered the question for only a moment.

"You might stop being my best friend's girlfriend, but you won't stop being my friend or cousin. Also, I don't think you both would break up. I trust you both to meet in the middle and not lose each other," Harry said reasonably.

Tom had said the same thing about her meeting him in the middle, Lucy remembered. She knew that meant compromise, but she had no idea where the middle was in this situation.

"Where do you think is the middle?" she asked, and Harry shrugged.

"The point that is fair to the both of you. Where no one is giving too much or losing too much, I'm sure you will figure out your middle," Harry said with a small smile before walking away.

Chapter 573 Great Performance

Harry was already comfortably seated at the Golden Lotus Restaurant thirty minutes before the agreed meeting time.

He had arrived much earlier because he needed the time to take care of some part of his personal business and also compose himself before her arrival. The last thing he wanted was for his face or voice to give off his dislike and disgust for her.

The moment he sighted her, he rose from his seat, and a wide welcoming smile was etched on his face as he watched her approach. So this was the face of the evil witch who had hurt his father and sister? Harry mused as an unfamiliar feeling settled in his chest. A feeling he had no doubt was genuine hatred.

Although he had seen her before and had formed an opinion of her the first time, seeing her again now, not as a stranger but as the woman who had brought him and his twin sister into the world, made him despise her even more.

He waited until she was a few feet away before starting the performance, "Mother!" Harry exclaimed loudly as he approached her, causing Sara's steps to falter as she quickly looked around to see if anyone had heard him.

Unfortunately for her, what she didn't know was that the people seated in that part of the restaurant were journalists who were planted by Harry to cover the news of his reunion with his mother, who had abandoned him.

"Harry, what are you doing?" Sara asked with an awkward smile when Harry suddenly met her halfway and embraced her tightly, pretending to weep.

"I'm so happy to finally meet you, mom! All these years, I thought you were dead," Harry said loud enough for everyone to hear and held on firmly as Sara tried to pull away from the hug.

"You're creating a scene, Harry. Don't embarrass us both," Sara said through gritted teeth, wanting to walk away, especially when she heard the shutters of cameras.

"Oh!" Harry said as though realizing that he was in public, and he straightened, "I'm sorry. I was so emotional I lost my mind for a minute," Harry said with an apologetic smile as he pulled away from her.

"Let's sit down," Sara said with an awkward smile that didn't reach her eyes as she walked briskly to their table, leaving Harry to follow her.

Once they were seated, Sara raised a brow, "I didn't expect you would be so welcoming," Sara said as she watched him.

She had been sort of wary of meeting with him, as she had kept wondering if this was a trap, but seeing how Harry had publicly made a fool of himself and embarrassed them both, she doubted he was in any way competent enough to trap her.

"Why not? You are my mother. That is all that matters. Whatever happened in the past is between you and dad. It has nothing to do with me," Harry said dismissively.

"How sweet of you," Sara said with a pleased smile.

It was unfortunate that he wasn't like her in any way. Too bad for him that he had inherited his father's weakness and gullibility exactly as she had thought. Maybe she would have been more open and receptive to him had Lucy not interfered with her plans and had her options not increased.

Thankfully she had checked out the research center, and it was legit. She had booked a zoom meeting appointment with the founder and research head. Once she was certain she had everything in place, she would disappear once again.

Harry could see the wheels turning in her head as he rubbed his hands together, pretending to be nervous, "I'm so happy to see you. Thank you for coming back into my life and insisting on meeting me," Harry said as he signaled to a waiter to attend to her.

Sara ordered a glass of wine since she wasn't in the mood to eat, and seeing as Harry was only having wine as well, she guessed the feeling was mutual. They had a lot to talk about, and food would only get in the way.

After the waiter had taken their orders, Harry looked at Sara eagerly, "Can you tell me more about yourself? I would love to know you better," Harry said excitedly, while Sara tried not to tut in disappointment.

Sara thought as she began to tell him what little of herself she thought he needed to know, "There is so much to tell," Sara said with a sigh.

"I should probably start by telling you the truth. I lied to your dad about some things," Sara said, and Harry raised a brow.

"You did?" He asked, curious to know what lies she was about to tell him too. Only an idiot would believe any word that comes from Sara, and Harry Jonas couldn't be mistaken for one.

"I'm not an orphan as your father thinks," Sara said, and Harry's mouth fell open as he tried to look shocked.

"You're not? Do you mean you have family somewhere? I--- have a family?" Harry asked, and Sara's face fell as she shook her head and looked down at her hands.

"I can't exactly call them my family," Sara said as she raised her head to look at Harry, and he almost snorted when he saw the pool of tears in her eyes. The woman should have become an actor and not just a model, Harry mused.

"Why is that?" Harry asked softly, looking at her with concerned eyes.

"Well, my mother gave birth to triplets, and amongst the three of us, only my sister was healthy. Our brother died at birth, and I was a very sickly child. My health cost my parents so much money, so they... they didn't want me," Sara said as a tear dropped from her eyes, and Harry watched incredulously as she reached into her handbag for a handkerchief to wipe her tear.

She didn't say another word until the waiter came with their order, served them, and left.

"I once heard my mother say she wished I had died like my brother," Sara said, and Harry shook his head, flabbergasted.

"Your own mother said that? How can a mother be that mean? That callous?" He asked in disbelief, and Sara smiled weakly.

"I always asked myself the same question. How could my own mother wish I was dead? It hurt me so much, especially the times when my parents would lock me up in the house and go out with my

sister. They always hid me, saying I was a nuisance and an embarrassment to them," Sara said as tears pooled in her eyes once again, and she looked at Harry, hoping he was buying her story.

"Those people are evil. They are not your family!" Harry said angrily, and Sara sniffled.

"I've learned to leave with it. Especially after they abandoned me. When I was seventeen, I was seriously ill, and I guess they thought I was going to die, so they took me to the hospital in the middle of the night and left me there. By the time I was well enough and got back home, my family had moved," Sara said, and Harry looked at her with a stunned expression.

He couldn't believe that a person could be so evil to concoct such a story. If he didn't know better, he would think she was telling the truth. What was she thinking making up such a story? Where was she driving at? Harry mused as he watched her.

"Was that when you met dad?" he asked finally, and she shook her head.

"I had to work for some time and save enough money while squatting with friends...."

"You had friends? I mean, I thought you were always locked up?" Harry asked, and Sara blinked at him, slightly taken aback.

"Yeah. Friends I made while at the hospital. I was there for quite a long time," Sara said with a stiff smile, and Harry nodded, allowing her to go on with her tale.

"I met your dad after I was duped by someone who offered to help me achieve my modeling dream," she said, and Harry's brows pulled together.

"Modeling? Weren't you sickly? How could you consider modeling as a career?" Harry asked, and Sara smiled stiffly.

"It was my dream. Besides, I got a lot better after receiving treatment...."

"How were you able to take care of the hospital bill?" Harry asked, and Sara sighed inwardly, despising the constant interruption.

She picked up her wineglass and took a sip before answering his question, "A kind gentleman took care of it. Unfortunately, he never revealed his identity," Sara said before Harry could ask who the person was.

Sara sighed, "Anyway, I met your father later, and after I gave birth to you, I began to feel sick again, and I was scared that I was going to die. I didn't want to be a burden to your father, so I fled...."

"With his money?" Harry asked casually as he nursed his wineglass.

"I know it was wrong. But I needed to receive treatment," Sara said, looking contrite.

"Not long later, I ran into the kind gentleman who paid my hospital bill back then, and he offered to be my sponsor and help me become a model," Sara said, and Harry nodded thoughtfully.

"I'm glad things turned out well for you," Harry said after a moment.

He was just going to let her entertain him and worry about all the loopholes in her story later. The idea of meeting with her wasn't to let her know he knew what kind of person she was after all. It

was to make her relax and trust him. So making her believe he was buying the story she was selling wasn't a big deal. The end would always justify the means.

"Is there a way I can meet this man and thank him?" Harry asked, and she shook her head sadly.

"Unfortunately he passed away," she said with a sigh and Harry looked at her apologetically.

"I'm sorry about that. I'm sure he must have meant a lot to you. I mean, he did what your parents couldn't do. Did you ever meet your parents again?"

"I tried to. When I got back into the country, I hired a private investigator to find my family. I wanted to fix things, you know. My therapist said I behaved the way I did and abandoned my husband and son because I was still traumatized by my experience with my family. So I wanted to fix things with them and with you and your dad," Sara said, and Harry watched her with interest.

Therapist? He thought with amusement. He could swear Sara had never sat in the four walls of a therapist's office before.

"Did you meet them? Did they apologize to you?" Harry asked, encouraging her to go on with her story.

He was glad that he was recording the entire conversation. She was a good storyteller, and what better way to spend the evening with his father and sister than to let them be entertained by the beautiful tale spun by Sara?

"I found out my parents were dead, but I met my twin sister and her husband. They wouldn't even let me go into their house. They threw me out, and she said I was cursed," Sara said, and opened her mouth as though to say something else but shut it and pressed her lips together like a little girl trying hard to keep a secret.

"Is something wrong?" Harry asked when he noticed her slight hesitation to say something, and Sara shook her head and sighed.

"I don't know whether or not I should say this. I'm scared," she said, looking at him with frightened eyes.

"Of what?" Harry asked with a slight frown.

Sara took a deep breath. It was now or never, she told herself as she met Harry's gaze, "Lucy."

"Lucy?" Harry asked with a surprised frown.

"Yes. Your best friend's girlfriend," Sara said as she rubbed her hands together nervously.

"Why? What does she have to do with you? With us?" Harry asked in confusion as he watched Sara fidget in her seat.

"She threatened me," Sara said as tears gathered in her eyes once again, and Harry frowned.

"Lucy did? Why would she do that? What does she have against you?" Harry asked, and Sara shook her head.

"I guess she thinks I'm going to get in her way of marrying your best friend if I reveal the truth about her. She is my sister's daughter," Sara said in a rush, and Harry was almost tempted to throw his head backward and laugh.

Lucy, who was against the idea of marriage, was worried about Sara getting in the way of her marriage with Tom, who was more than eager to marry her?

"Lucy is your sister's daughter? She is aware?" Harry asked with a confused frown, and Sara almost laughed gleefully, glad that Lucy had kept the information to herself.

"Yes. I don't know how long she has known, but when she came with Aaron to meet me, she threatened me. She bragged about how much you all trust her and how you have her back. She said if I came close to you or said a word to you about our family ties, she was going to deal with me. She threatened to accuse me of selling off your late twin sister and doing a lot of other hideous things. That girl is evil, I tell you. Lucy is just as terrible as her mother, and I'm so scared she might make good her threat. You have to help me, Harry," Sara cried, her hands beginning to tremble, and Harry watched her in stunned silence, amazed by her theatrics.

So this was it? This was the reason for all that story? Discrediting Lucy was the reason for this outstanding performance? Wow!

Harry wished he could stand up and applaud her performance.

Chapter 574 I'm In Love....

Rebekah paced around her bedroom with a wine glass in hand as she tried to figure out a way to fix things. Everything was falling apart. Everything was a mess.

She was losing her daughters, and the life she had built for herself and them. First, it was Lisa, and then it was Bernice, and now it was Anita and Tiffany.

How was she going to fix this and get her girls back where she wanted them? Neither of them was taking her call to tell her how Bernice was doing, and she couldn't just show up at the hospital because she didn't want them to embarrass her like they had done the previous day.

She turned to the door with a scowl when one of her housekeepers knocked on it, "What?" she barked at her without opening the door.

"Mr. Adam is downstairs," the housekeeper informed her politely.

Rebekah opened her mouth to ask her to send him away but changed her mind at the last second since she knew just how stubborn Adam could be, and she didn't want him to create a scene.

Without saying another word to her, Rebekah opened the door and headed out of her bedroom to meet Adam downstairs. She needed to put an end to his nonsense once and for all.

She stopped abruptly and turned to her housekeeper when it occurred to her that she might need to speak with Adam privately unless she wanted her private business to be everyone's business.

"Where are the others?" Rebekah asked, referring to the cook and the two cleaners.

"They went grocery shopping," the housekeeper said, and Rebekah nodded.

"So you're the only one in the house right now?" she asked, and the housekeeper gave her a nod.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Come with me. I need you to go get me something," Rebekah said as she returned to her bedroom with the housekeeper following behind.

Once inside her bedroom, she gave the housekeeper some money and a long list of items she didn't need.

"You don't need to hurry. You can take your time," Rebekah told her as they left the room once again, and the housekeeper hurried down the stairs to her bedroom to dress up while Rebekah joined Adam.

"What makes you think... Oh, my God! What happened to your face?" Rebekah asked in surprise when she saw how battered his face was, like he had received a thorough beating.

"Were you aware? Did you know that bastard Jackson was fucking my wife?" Adam barked at her with bloodshot eyes that glared at Rebekah, who was standing at the foot of the stairs.

"Will you keep your voice down and watch your language?" Rebekah hissed at him as what little concern she had disappeared and she looked around them to see if the housekeeper was nearby.

"No, I won't! I won't let you tell me what to do anymore!" Adam growled at her, and Rebekah eyed him with annoyance.

"Shouldn't you be at work right now? Are you drunk?" she asked when she noticed that he seemed sort of unstable.

"What if I am? You made me marry your slut of a daughter, and now you think I will let you walk out of our arrangem.."

"Shut your mouth!" Rebekah snapped at him just as the housekeeper approached.

Sensing the seriousness of their conversation, the housekeeper quickly hurried past them to the door and left the house, shutting the door behind her.

"No, you shut up! I'm divorcing Bernice, and we are going to continue with our relationship!" Adam said as he advanced towards her.

"There is NO relationship! Nothing of such exists between us. And this had better be the last time you show up unannounced in my house spilling such nonsense! Now get out!" Rebekah yelled, pointing at the door.

"Do you really think I'm going to just let you use me and dump me? After all these years? After all I've fucking done for you?" Adam asked incredulously as he stopped in front of her.

"After what you have done for me? What the fuck have you done for me, you moron?"

"For starters, I married your whore of a daughter when no one else wanted her enough to marry her!"

"Get out, Adam! Leave before you make me do or say something we would both regret. Be a good boy and get lost while I'm still being nice, else I'm going to call the police," Rebekah threatened angrily.

"Call the police? Why don't you go on and do that, Rebekah? I dare you to call the police! Do you think I'm going to just walk away and let you go? I'm going to fuck everything up for everyone, Rebekah! I'm going to start by taking that motherfucker to court for having the guts to hit me after fucking my bitch of a wife! I'm going to divorce Bernice and make sure she goes through the worst

humiliation ever so much so that she won't be able to show her face in public. And you? I'm going to ruin you, Rebekah!" Adam retorted, and Rebekah snorted.

"Ruin me? Why don't you try and do all of that? I sure do have so much to talk to your father about, after all. I'm sure he will love to hear about all your secret deals," Rebekah said with a stiff smile.

"Fuck it, Rebekah! I still want you! For heaven's sake, I love you! How can you be so mean to throw it all away? Fine, let's say we are all even now. Let's call it even. I won't divorce Bernice. She can fuck Jackson all she wants, and I won't make a big deal out of it. We can continue our affair, and it will all stay within the family," Adam pleaded as he grabbed her arm and pulled her to himself, crushing his lips to hers and grabbing her boobs roughly.

Rebekah pushed him away angrily, and before he could regain his composure, Rebekah's vicious backhanded slap knocked him back a couple of steps.

"Don't you dare lay your filthy hands on me without my say-so, you hear me? We had our fun, Adam, and now it's over. Take your drunk ass home and sober up!" Rebekah snapped at him before turning around and climbing up the stairs.

Adam raised a hand to his split lips, and his eyes heated when he touched blood. Blinded by rage, he hurried after Rebekah.

"You fucking bitch!" he roared as he reached out to grab her hair.

Hearing him come up behind her, Rebekah spun around quickly, and just before Adam could touch her, she pushed him hard and watched in shocked surprise as he lost his footing and tumbled down the stairs.

"Adam? Adam?" Rebekah called out in an alarmed voice from her position at the top of the stairs as she looked down at his unmoving body which was lying at the foot of the stairs.

"Come on, Adam, don't do this!" Rebekah pleaded, her breath coming in shallow pants as she hurried down the stairs to check him.

Blood drained from her face when she noticed the pool of blood under his head. Her heart pumped very fast as she placed her hand under his nostrils to check if he was still breathing, but his breath was very faint.

Her hands trembled as she moved away from him and just stood there staring down at him.

What was she going to do? Although he was still alive but needed urgent medical care, but she definitely wasn't stupid enough to call for an ambulance.

How was she going to explain his presence in her house or the accident? What if she did call the ambulance, and he died? His father was the chief judge, and there was no way she wouldn't be tried or convicted for murder, even though this wasn't exactly her fault.

"Calm down, Rebekah. Don't panic. You're in charge," she told herself quietly and began to pace around the living room.

Rebekah used both palms to wipe off the sweat that was now dripping from her face despite the air conditioner. She stopped pacing, closed her eyes and took in a deep breath.

What could she do about this messy situation? Rebekah asked herself, and immediately she ran to the door, changed the passcode, and locked the door. The first thing she could do was to keep this a secret by making sure no one walked in on her until she decided on what to do.

Perhaps it was best for everyone if she left him to die? Especially Bernice. Adam's death would make her a wealthy widow instead of a penniless divorcee, she mused as she wiped her sweaty palms on her gown.

Adam was a corrupt lawyer and most likely had a lot of enemies so she didn't have to worry about being a suspect. No finger would point at her as long as she did a good job of disposing the body.

Realizing that she couldn't just leave him lying there on the ground at the foot of the stairs, Rebekah contemplated taking him up the stairs to hide him in her bedroom but there was no way she could carry him or drag him there so she dragged his body across the floor and hid him under the staircase.

After doing that she got a mop and quickly wiped the blood stains off the tile. She knew she had to hurry before the housekeepers returned.

She paced around as she tried to figure out what next to do. She couldn't move the body alone. After contemplating for a moment she went upstairs to her bedroom to get her phone. Once she picked it up from the top of her dresser, she dialed a number.

"Come over to my house right now. I have a job for you," she informed the person on the other end of the line before hanging up.

Away from there, Tiffany walked into her house, and saw Jack seated by the dining as though he was waiting for her.

"Why are you at home? Didn't you go to work?" she asked as though he had not cheated on her with her sister.

"You weren't taking my call. I asked the housekeepers to let me know if they hear from you, so I was waiting to see you. How is Benny? I heard she regained consciousness?" Jack asked with concerned eyes that made Tiffany frown.

She was exhausted and had only come home to freshen up and get some change of clothes and food for Bernice. She was not really in the mood to talk, "Jack...."

"I'm sorry about yesterday, Tiff. I shouldn't have caused a scene. I'm sorry. But I really need to know how she is doing, Tiff. I need to see her. Please let me," Jackson pleaded, and Tiffany sighed.

"Why Jack? This whole time I let you do your stuff, but you had no right treating Benny like one of your whores! Why did you take advantage of Benny? How could you do such a thing?" Tiffany asked, and Jack shook his head.

"Whore? I could never treat Benny as a whore, Tiff. Never. I'm in love...." Jack let the rest of his words trail off when he realized his slip. That wasn't something a man should be admitting to his wife.

"You are in love with Bernice?" Tiffany asked in disbelief. Although she had suspected it but hearing it directly from Jack shocked her.

"I'm sorry, Tiff. I really am. But I've always been in love with Bernice. I just couldn't work up my courage to talk to her and by the time I was ready to open up about my feelings I learned of her engagement to Adam...."

"You have always been in love with Bernice? This whole time?" Tiffany asked in confusion, and Jack nodded.

"I know I shouldn't be telling my wife that I'm in love with her sister. The truth is I never would have made any pass at Benny had I thought she was happy in her marriage. When I walked into the house that night and saw her looking so miserable I felt really hurt. I didn't realize how bad things were between her and Adam even though he always said the most awful things about her, which always made me feel bad. All I wanted was to make her happy. I wanted to put the smile back on her face," Jack said with so much sincerity in his gaze that Tiffany almost staggered back.

"Why then did you marry me?" Tiffany asked weakly.

"I have no idea what deal your mother made with my father. He threatened to cut me off if I didn't marry you. And then I figured that if I married you I would at least still get to see Benny," Jack confessed, and Tiffany shook her head as she looked at her husband.

Adam was in love with their mother, and her husband was in love with her sister. Had always been in love with her?

"I think I need to be alone," Tiffany said, not knowing what else to say to him. She didn't even know how she was feeling so how would she know what to say to him?

Seeing how stunned she looked, Jack could tell she needed the space so he stepped out of her way and let her walk away while cussing himself for being a stupid Coward.

If only he had not been so cowardly seven years when he saw her for the first time. If he only he approached her then, none of this would have happened. He screwed up back then and was now screwing up her life when all he had wanted was to make her happy.

Chapter 575 Pregnant?

"You really did not have to come over, mom. Adolf could have done this," Tom said as he rose from his seat when his mother walked into his office carrying a suitcase.

"I wanted to see what you've done with the place. Besides Janet, Jamal and Candace wanted to take a look around the place," Evelyn said with a bright smile.

Something about her eyes put Tom on guard. There was a sort of pleased, knowing look in her eyes that he couldn't tell its source.

"You all came together?" Tom asked in surprise, and Evelyn nodded as she looked around the office.

"Yes. They're busy looking around. Don't worry. We won't be here for long. We are heading to Harry's to see his father after we leave here," Evelyn assured him as he took the suitcase from her.

"Thanks," he said as he placed it on the table to check if she had included all he needed.

Tom blinked back his surprise when he saw a pregnancy test kit packed on top of his clothes, "What is this, mom?" He asked, looking at her with a confused frown as he wondered why she had included that in his luggage.

"I should be asking you," Evelyn said, watching him closely as she took out the pack and held up the kit.

She had been surprised to find Lucy's handbag hidden in the corner of the closet and had picked it up to hang it along with the others when the pregnancy test kit fell out from it. She had been both shocked and elated to see a positive test kit.

"Why should you be asking me? Do I look like I missed my period?" Tom asked dryly, and Evelyn narrowed her eyes.

"It does look like Lucy did. Am I to assume you weren't aware?" Evelyn asked, and Tom frowned.

"This belongs to Lucy?" He asked as his gaze moved to the kit she was holding, and Evelyn nodded.

"It was in her handbag, hidden away in your closet, so I suppose it's hers unless you're sharing your bedroom with another lady I know nothing about," Evelyn said, and Tom's heart skipped a beat.

"You saw this in Lucy's handbag? And it's positive?" He asked again, unable to believe it.

Seeing the surprise on his face, Evelyn realized she had made a mistake, "I guess you didn't know about it yet. Perhaps it was meant to be a surprise. I should have asked her first," Evelyn said, regretting her thoughtlessness.

Tom said nothing as he kept staring at the kit in disbelief. Was Lucy pregnant? How? And why would she be pregnant and not tell him about it? That didn't seem like something Lucy would do. She had her flaws, but she wasn't the type to keep such secrets to herself. Or had she kept quiet because she thought it was the wrong timing, especially after their misunderstanding?

"You should take it back," Tom said, not bothering to touch it, and Evelyn returned it to the pack and dropped it in her handbag.

"Are you going to ask her about it?" She asked curiously, and Tom sighed, resisting the urge to comb his fingers through his hair.

"No. I'm sure she will tell me about it when she is ready."

"What is going on with you, Tom?" Evelyn asked as she lowered herself to the chair closest to her.

"Nothing. I'm good," Tom assured her as he sat on the edge of his desk, wishing his mother would leave so he could think.

"Were you serious about not wanting to get married?" Evelyn asked, and Tom scratched the back of his ear.

"I'm not ready at the moment, but I will eventually. I still need to figure out some stuff," Tom said, and Evelyn let out a sigh of relief.

"You should have just said so last night. I could barely sleep last night because I kept worrying about you," Evelyn complained, and Tom watched her curiously.

"Can I ask you a personal question?"

Evelyn smiled, "Sure."

"It's unrelated to the topic. But I'm curious. When you didn't want to get married initially, did you appreciate dad trying to change your mind?" Tom asked, and Evelyn broke into a smile.

"Getting married and having you and your siblings is the best decision I ever made," Evelyn said without thinking twice.

"That's what you know now, over three decades later. But at the time, did you like being persuaded?" He asked, and her brows knit together thoughtfully.

"I can't say I did or didn't. Your father was quite subtle. He snuck up on me and slipped past my defenses. Before your father, I was always independent and self-sufficient, and then one day, I realized I wasn't anymore," Evelyn said with a soft smile as she thought of Desmond.

"You mean he exposed you to a need you didn't realize you had?" Tom asked, and Evelyn beamed a smile at him.

"You sound just like your father. And yes. He made me realize that not all men were like my father, and I didn't deserve to be lonely or do life on my own because of something my father did," Evelyn explained.

"Did you ever get help? I mean, therapy?"

"I did, but it didn't really help. I guess I had a terrible therapist, and he completely put me off therapy. But your dad was right for me. He was the therapy I needed," Evelyn said, and Tom sighed.

"That's nice," Tom said as he rose, and Evelyn eyed him with interest.

"It's Lucy, isn't it? She doesn't want to get married?" Evelyn asked knowingly.

"It's not a big deal, mom. I can change her mind," Tom assured her, not wanting her to make a big deal out of it.

"I could talk to her," Evelyn offered and rose to meet Tom.

"Please don't. I don't think she would appreciate that," Tom said and looked at his mother when she stood in front of him and palmed his face in the cup of both hands.

"You are like your father in so many ways," she said with a soft smile.

"Don't worry. I won't interfere. I know you love Lucy, and I love her. I just really hope she doesn't take as long as I took," Evelyn said, and Tom smiled, grateful that his mother was not overreacting.

"I hope so too, mom. I really do," Tom said, and they both glanced at the door when Eric knocked, wanting to remind Tom of his meeting.

"I should let you get back to work. Let me know when she tells you about the pregnancy," Evelyn said with a twinkle in her eyes.

"Mom, all of this has to remain...."

"Between us. I know. I won't say a word to anyone," Evelyn promised, making a zipping gesture on her lips.

"Have a safe trip," she said before leaving the office.

As she walked away from the office, Tom shut his suitcase while thinking about the positive pregnancy kit. Was Lucy really pregnant? How did she feel about it? What did she plan to do? Tom mused, beginning to feel very worried about her now.

Away from there, in Lucy's office, she sat with Sonia, who had decided to stay back in the office with Lucy while Janet, Candace, and Jamal had gone on a tour of the company.

"You can't make such a decision without informing Bryan," Lucy said with a worried frown as she sat on the chair beside Sonia, holding her hands for support.

"What good is going to come from telling him about it?" Sonia asked, and Lucy raised a brow.

"No good has to come from it. It's just the right thing to do. You both formed the baby together, and Bryan has a right to know...."

"It's my body," Sonia said stubbornly as she pulled her hands away from Lucy's.

"Seriously? Are you going to go the pro-choice route now? We both know this doesn't make any sense. Bryan deserves to know and make the decision with you. He should be with you through the process if you both agree on terminating the pregnancy. If the situation was reversed...."

"Lucy, please!"

"I love you, Sony, and I know you don't want to hear all this from me right now, but I'm obligated as your best friend to tell you the truth. Didn't you both just have a fight over the fact that you make decisions that involve the both of you without consulting him? How do you think Bryan is going to react or feel if he finds out about this after the deed has been done?" Lucy asked, and Sonia raised a brow.

"How is he going to find out about it? Do you plan to tell him about it?"

"For Christ's sake, Sony! I understand how you feel and why you think you need to do this, but I think it's a bad idea."

"So you won't support me?" Sonia asked as tears gleamed in her eyes, and Lucy sighed.

"If you still decide to go ahead with it, I will surely stand by you, but I hope you change your mind," Lucy said, and Sonia nodded.

"As long as I have your support, that's all I need. Now enough about me. Were you able to resolve things with Tom last night?" Sonia asked, and Lucy shrugged as she stood up and returned to her seat.

"He asked me to move back to my apartment," Lucy said, surprising Sonia.

"He said so?"

"Yeah. I think it's probably a good thing for us both. Lucas also thinks I should return to my apartment," Lucy said, and Sonia sighed.

"Are you sure that's a good idea? Won't you both drift further apart?" Sonia asked, and Lucy smiled.

"Says the same person that wanted to do the same thing with Bryan. Didn't you say things were moving too fast? I think it's the same for us. It's probably best we stay apart," Lucy said, and Sonia sighed.

"Why do things have to be so complicated for us?" Sonia asked, and Lucy shrugged.

"Maybe we still have so much we need to learn. Tom wants me to meet him in the middle. I don't even know where that is," Lucy said, and Sonia raised a brow.

"Meeting him in the middle means giving something if not all. You could choose to marry him and not have kids, or decide to have kids with him and not marry him," Sonia pointed out.

"I see," Lucy murmured as she picked up her click pen and began to click and unclick distractedly.

"What are you going to do?" Sonia asked with concern, and Lucy smiled.

"I should start by moving back to my apartment and taking therapy more seriously. I should leave while Tom is away on his trip. It would make it easier. I think I will take things a day at a time from now on. I need to learn to worry less about the future. Who knows? The world might end, Tom and I might fall out of love with each other, or I may even die before I have to make a final decision," Lucy said jocularly, but Sonia didn't laugh.

"You shouldn't joke about something like that," Sonia scolded.

"But it's the truth, Sony. Anything can happen. Think about the Miller family, for instance. Who would have thought that things would take such a turn?" Lucy asked, and Sonia looked at her curiously.

"Did Tom tell you about it?" Sonia asked, and Lucy sighed.

"Yeah. Anita is sort of making a U-turn. Can you believe that?" Lucy asked in disbelief.

"So, are you going to forgive her? I mean, after the last stunt she pulled at the spa, do you really believe this change thing? How can she change in just Twenty-four hours?" Sonia asked, and Lucy shrugged.

"I don't know, Sony. I'm keeping my fingers crossed. I'm exhausted, and I don't have any fight left in me. I just want to live a quiet, ordinary life without having to plot or plan against anyone. I want to mind my business and live on my own terms," Lucy said and straightened when she sighted her mom, Candace, and Jamal approaching.

"They're here," Lucy said as she rose and smiled as Jamal burst into her office.

"Lucy!" Jamal called cheerfully as he embraced her.

"I'm heartbroken, Jam. I thought I'd be the first person you'd want to see when you walked into the building," Lucy complained, and Janet slapped her arm.

"You shouldn't hit Lucy," Jamal said, looking at Janet with mild disapproval for hitting Lucy.

"Aww! My champion," Lucy cooed as she kissed Jamal's forehead, and he gave her the kind of shy smile that only a smitten seven years old could give.

"Be a responsible adult, and don't lead the kid on," Janet scolded.

"Leading me on to where?" Jamal asked innocently, and they all laughed.

Candace, who had taken the seat Lucy vacated, turned her attention from them and looked at Sonia with interest, "Your package was delivered a moment ago," she informed Sonia as she reached into her handbag for the sealed parcel.

She had no idea what Sonia had ordered or why she had placed the order using her details, but she could tell that Sonia wasn't alright.

"Oh, thanks!" Sonia said as she reached for it and placed it in her handbag while avoiding Lucy's gaze.

"Your office looks better than I expected," Janet observed as she looked around while Jamal went to sit on Lucy's chair and swiveled around playfully.

"What about your secretary? The girl that came over to your apartment...."

"Amy is fine. She took a leave of absence," Lucy explained, and Janet nodded.

"Did you see Harry's office?" Lucy asked Candace, and she shook her head.

"He's not in. He promised to invite me over and show me around next time," Candace said, and Lucy smiled.

"We couldn't go to Tom's office because Grandma Evelyn said he was busy," Jamal informed Lucy.

"Yes, he is."

"We brought his clothes because he is traveling," Jamal said, and Lucy nodded.

"So I heard."

"Maybe now that Tom is traveling, we can have some time to ourselves. Your father and I have barely spent time with you since we got here," Janet said happily, and Lucy smiled.

Since she met Tom and moved in with him, it seemed like her whole life had begun to revolve around him, and she barely had time for anyone or anything else. She had become too dependent on him emotionally, and it was probably best she took some steps back if she didn't want to get hurt at the end of the day.

"Yeah. I was thinking we should move to my apartment. You know, spend some quality family time together before you travel back. What do you think?" Lucy asked, and Janet smiled happily.

"That's fine. I'm sure your dad wouldn't mind," Janet said, and Sonia sighed, hoping that Lucy wasn't making a mistake.

Chapter 576 Fishing

Very satisfied with the meeting with his mother, Harry didn't leave immediately after seeing Sara off. He couldn't since he had to conclude his business with the journalists and also had to meet with Aurora there in a couple of minutes.

Immediately he walked back into the restaurant, the journalists gathered around him, "Is Sara Walker really your mother?" One of them asked excitedly.

Harry had not exactly given any one of them the specific detail of what they were to do. He had simply told them to come to the restaurant if they wanted something interesting to write about.

"Everything you saw and heard is true. She abandoned me days after giving birth to me. I only knew of her existence some days ago. You can write about it," Harry said, not minding that he was making his personal business public. As long as Sara was affected negatively by it, he would do anything.

"I will advise you to do a thorough research on Sara Walker. Only then can you understand the importance of this information. Now if you don't mind, I have to prepare for my next appointment. Thanks for honoring my invitation," Harry said, and just as he turned to leave, he paused.

"One more thing. I will reward whoever comes up with the most gratifying but genuine story," Harry said before walking away to find the reserved spot for his meeting with Aurora.

Ten minutes later, Harry rose as he watched a beaming Aurora walk towards the table to meet him.

"Hello!" Harry greeted her with a friendly smile, extending a hand for a handshake but was surprised when she embraced him instead.

"Hello, you! I can't believe I'm actually seeing you for real. You look gorgeous," Aurora said as she let Harry hold out the chair for her, and she lowered herself to it.

Harry cleared his throat, "Thanks. You don't look bad yourself," Harry said as he sat down and signaled to a waiter while Aurora picked up the menu.

After they had placed their orders, Aurora set aside her menu and focused on Harry, "So, how have you been? How is the anniversary week coming?" Aurora asked excitedly.

"I've been quite busy."

"That's not surprising. I've always wanted to ask. How does it feel being Harry Jonas? I mean, working in such a successful company," Aurora asked, and Harry narrowed his eyes.

"Are you a reporter?" He asked, and she giggled.

"I can't believe you caught me. The spa is just a place where I work under a false identity to gather information on other people," Aurora said, and Harry chuckled.

Soon their food was served, and they ate in silence for a while until Harry cleared his throat, "The job is demanding, but it's fulfilling. I love what I do. I love doing it with my best friend...."

"Doesn't that sound weird? Doing it with your best friend?" Aurora asked with a wink, and Harry chuckled.

"Since I'm sure you know what I mean, I won't expand on that. I've done quite well for myself, and although I'm content, I know we are nowhere close to the target yet," Harry said, and Aurora smiled.

"An ambitious man. I like that."

"How long will you be in Ludus?" Harry asked, and Aurora shrugged.

"Well, to be honest, I'm not sure yet. I'm thinking of moving to Ludus," Aurora said, and Harry almost choked on his drink, making her smile.

"Why do you look so surprised? Do you think I'm relocating because of you?" she asked in amusement.

"You're not?" Harry asked before he could stop himself, and this time Aurora giggled.

"Of course not. Relax. A friend of mine who owns a major beauty salon and spa here in Ludus is relocating with her family, and I'm considering buying the business from her," Aurora explained.

"But you have your own place in Varis," Harry pointed out.

"And last I checked, I-Global has various branches all over the country and outside of it, and that isn't stopping you from buying more businesses," she said, and this time Harry smiled.

"You are right. So this is going to be a branch?" Harry asked with interest.

"Yeah. But more like the headquarter since this place here in Ludus has so much more potential. I mean in terms of the quality of the clients. I've been having this itch for some time. Like I've been restless and wanting a change of environment and a change of pace, and I think it's a good opportunity. What do you think?" Aurora asked, wanting to hear his honest opinion.

"You're certain I have nothing to do with your reason for moving here?" Harry asked, and Aurora smiled.

"And here I was, thinking I was the blunt one," Aurora said dryly.

"I like you, Harry. I really do, but I'm not the sort of person who would make such a risky move because of a man. Especially one who I think is in love with someone else," Aurora said casually, and Harry raised a brow.

"In love with someone else?" he asked in confusion, and Aurora grinned.

"Aren't you in love with Jade? Or did I think wrong?" Aurora asked, and Harry's heart stuttered.

Seeing the stunned guilty look on his face, Aurora smiled, "Relax. I'm a lot of things, Harry, but my mother didn't raise a stupid daughter. I mean, the signs were all there from the day you both walked into the spa. Am I wrong?" Aurora asked, and Harry shook his head.

"I'm sorry," Harry murmured.

"What for?"

"For leading you on, I suppose," Harry said, and she chuckled as she waved off his apology.

"You didn't lead me on. I prefer to think I led you on. I lead you all on, actually," Aurora said with an easy smile.

"I was going to tell you about it today," Harry said, and she nodded, still with the smile plastered on her face.

"I figured so when Jade said she wasn't joining us anymore," Aurora said with a giggle.

"How did you know?" Harry asked, and Aurora shrugged.

"It was more of a guess. I didn't know anything for sure. I guess I should attribute it to my sharp feminine instinct, I suppose? It was sort of sweet hearing from Jade that her elder brother's best friend was visiting her. Maybe it was just the romantic in me, but I pictured a romance story when I heard that. And then when I saw how cute you looked, and the way you looked at her like no one else was in the spa but her, I decided you couldn't be doing that solely out of duty to your best friend," Aurora said with a grin.

"Remember I asked if you liked her? but you didn't exactly answer the question," Aurora said, and Harry sighed.

"If you thought I was in love with her, why did you keep trying to--" I mean, why did you keep reaching out and wanting to meet me?" Harry asked, and Aurora shrugged.

"Because I like you. And because I wanted to see how long it would take for you to open up about your feelings, especially since she kept calling you old uncle Harry," Aurora said with a wink.

"Does that mean you're not interested in me?" Harry asked, wanting to understand her before he relaxed.

"Maybe if Jade weren't interested in you, I would be. But after seeing how pale and distressed she looked when I talked about getting married to you and making her my maid of honor I can't do that to her. I consider her my friend," Aurora said with a giggle, and Harry's brows pulled together.

"You did all that deliberately?" Harry asked, remembering what Candace had said about Aurora's conversation with Jade.

This time Aurora laughed out loud as she bobbed her head and then raised a hand to her lips, embarrassed when heads turned, "Of course. In the same way, I know you deliberately asked me to give your regards to Jade and ask for your favorite shirt I was taken aback when you asked me to accompany you to the anniversary dinner, so I wanted to subtly check with Jade to be sure everything was okay. Her reaction told me all I needed to know," Aurora said, and this time Harry smiled.

"You're much smarter than I gave you credit for. I'm sorry," Harry said, and Aurora grinned.

"It's fine. I have to say I like your circle. The lady with Jade kept scowling at me when I talked about marrying you...."

"Candace?" Harry asked in amusement.

"I believe that's her name."

"She is my twin sister," Harry said, and Aurora's eyes widened in surprise.

"No kidding?"

"Yeah," Harry said with a proud smile, happy to tell someone who wasn't already part of the whole family about Candace. He hadn't realized how much he had wanted to say the word to someone else.

"Wow! I had no idea. Jade didn't introduce her as such, either. And there is no mention of her in the articles online. Well, I'm glad I'm not in competition with Jade," Aurora said with a genuine smile.

"You both have really loyal and amazing people in your lives. Lucy kept looking at me with her pitiful doe eyes like she wished she could tell me the truth, and Tom tried his best to be friendly," Aurora said as Harry watched her in amazement.

"You are something else," Harry said, and Aurora laughed gaily.

"So, I've been told. I guess one of you has worked up enough courage to confess your feelings to the other?" Aurora asked, and Harry pinched the bridge of his nose.

"Everyone has been worried about this meeting, especially Jade, who has been scared you'd be mad at her. And I planned to lie to you."

"About what?"

"That I haven't told her how I felt. I've always been in love with Jade from the first time I met her four years ago," Harry confessed, and Aurora smiled.

"I'm glad to know you were all worried. And I'm extra glad because I went with my gut feeling and didn't make a fool of myself. It would have really hurt," Aurora admitted.

"Thank you, Aurora. You have no idea how relieved I am," Harry said, and Aurora raised a finger and shook her head.

"Not so soon," she said, and Harry raised a brow.

"I'm going to forgive you both and give my blessings on one condition," Aurora said, and Harry sighed inwardly.

"What?"

"Fishing. I want you to go fishing with me. Jade is welcome to come as your girlfriend, of course," she quickly added.

"And she has to be willing to learn how to fish. That should be enough punishment for trying to hook me up with a man who has eyes only for her."

"Why do you want me to go fishing with you?" Harry asked, remembering that she had asked him that the first time they ate together

"I used to go fishing with my dad when he was alive. None of my friends know how to fish or are interested in fishing. And finding someone whose company I enjoy and who can fish has been almost impossible. You could see it as a romantic getaway for you and Jade. I just need the company out there in the water while I do something I love to do," Aurora said, her eyes pleading with him to agree.

Before Harry could respond, they both heard his name and looked up to see Philip approaching, "I was told you were around here somewhere," Philip said with a pleasant smile, and Harry rose to shake hands with him.

"You didn't get back to me as promised about the hangout," Philip said in an accusatory tone, even though he wanted nothing more than to ask Harry if the rumors he had just heard about meeting his mom were true.

"I'm sorry about that. Things have been sort of busy for us," Harry said as they shook hands.

"I forgive you then. I received the invitation to the anniversary dinner. Thanks," Philip said as his gaze shifted to Aurora, who was still seated and watching their exchange unashamedly.

"Phil, meet my friend, Aurora. Aurora, this is Philip Foreman," Harry introduced, and Aurora flashed Philip a smile as she rose.

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Foreman. I'm Aurora Adams. You can call me Aura," Aurora said as she shook hands with him.

"The pleasure is mine. And you can call me Phil. I'm sorry for interrupting your meeting," Philip said with a pleasant smile.

"It's fine," Aurora assured him as she sat down, and Philip returned his attention to Harry.

"I will get out of your hair once you give me a sure date for the hangout," Philip urged him.

"Can you fish?" Harry asked, thinking fast, and Aurora's ears perked up at the question.

"Of course. That's my favorite pastime activity when I need to relax. Do you want us to go fishing?" Philip asked with interest.

"I want to," Aurora blurted out, and Philip turned curious eyes on her.

"You can fish?" He asked, and she grinned.

"Of course," Aurora said with smiling eyes while Harry watched them in amusement.

"Really? Do you mind if I join you both briefly? Maybe we can share fishing tips?" Philip asked, looking from Aurora to Harry.

"You're welcome to join us if she doesn't mind," Harry said, and Aurora looked at Harry for a moment before looking at Philip.

"You're welcome to join us only if you don't have a girlfriend or someone you've been in love with for four years," Aurora said, and Harry chuckled while Philip grinned as he sat down.

Chapter 577 Dinner Date

Unable to wait until later to tell Jade all that had happened, since Harry knew how worried she probably was, the moment he got into his car, he dialed Jade's line and connected his phone to the car's Bluetooth device so he could speak with her as he drove.

Almost immediately, the call connected, "Tell me you are done with the meeting. How did it go with Aurora? Was she very mad?" Jade asked anxiously, and Harry smiled.

"Calm down," Harry said softly.

"I can't. I've paced around my bedroom so much that I won't be surprised if there is a crack on the floor," Jade said, and Harry chuckled.

"Well, the meeting was quite interesting and nothing as I expected. Aurora is wonderful," Harry said, deliberately stalling since he wanted her to sweat a bit.

"Aurora is wonderful? So one date with her, and you're in love with her now?" Jade asked with a hiss, and Harry chuckled.

"I didn't say that. I'm not. But I think Philip might be. I left them together," Harry said, and Jade paused.

"Philip?" she asked, trying to remember who that was.

"Yeah. You remember him, don't you? The guy we met at the restaurant the same night we met Tanya. The owner of Golden Lotus Restaurant...."

"Your friend who tried to hit on me because I'm Tom's sister?" Jade asked with a scowl, and Harry chuckled.

"I'm sure that wasn't why he tried to hit on you, but yeah. That's Philip."

"How did he meet Aurora? Wait, what exactly happened?" Jade asked curiously.

"Well, don't be surprised, okay? Aurora suspected all along that I was in love with you and you with me," Harry said, and Jade's mouth dropped open in surprise.

"That can't be true," Jade said in disbelief as she tried to recall all her conversations with Aurora to see if Aurora ever acted like she knew of her feelings for Harry.

"Well, it is. Thankfully she brought it up before I could, and...."

"I don't want a summary, Jonas. I want details. What exactly led to it?" Jade cut in impatiently as she sat in the middle of her bed with both legs folded under her.

Jade did her best to patiently listen to Harry tell her about his discussion with Aurora.

"She is moving to Ludus? She didn't mention that when we met," Jade cut in.

"Maybe that's because she is still thinking about it," Harry said and continued his story.

"Wait, what? She deliberately talked about getting married to you to get a rise out of me?" Jade asked in disbelief, and Harry chuckled.

"Yes."

"So I've been worried this whole time for nothing?" Jade asked as she let herself fall back on the bed and give in to the overwhelming feeling of relief.

"Obviously. She is smarter than you gave her credit for," Harry said, and Jade's lips curved in a relieved smile.

"She is crazy," Jade murmured and then sat up when she remembered what Harry had said about Philip.

"So, what's up between her and your friend?" Jade asked, and Harry continued the story.

"I don't mind learning how to fish for her sake. That's the least I can do to apologize to her and thank her for not making a big deal out of my fuck up," Jade said, and Harry smiled.

"I knew you were going to say that, so I agreed to a hangout. I'm going to talk to Tom so he and Lucy can join us. It would be the six of us."

"Does that mean Aurora and Philip are an item?" Jade asked with interest.

"Seeing how Philip offered to pick her up and escort her to the anniversary dinner, I suppose they might very well be on their way there. They were chatting like long-time best friends when I left them at the restaurant," Harry said, and Jade smiled in relief.

"I never knew people could hook up over something as ordinary as fishing," Jade said, and Harry chuckled.

"Do not let either of them hear you. I don't think they will appreciate you referring to such a sacred ritual as ordinary," Harry said, and Jade giggled.

"Your friend, Philip. He is single, right? I mean, unattached? The last thing I want is for her to get hurt," Jade said after a slight pause.

"I'm sure he is. Philip knows better than to toy with Aurora. I introduced her to him as my friend, so I'm sure he knows not to mess with her," Harry assured her with his gaze fixed on the road.

"So, I guess I get to be your date to the anniversary party?" she asked hopefully.

"There is no guessing. How about we go on a dinner date tomorrow?" Harry asked, and Jade's eyes lit up as she quickly got off the bed.

"A dinner date?"

"Yeah. I will pick you up by six after I get out of work," Harry said, and Jade threw her phone on the bed and screeched happily, making Harry laugh.

"Wait!" Jade quickly picked up her phone again when she remembered something.

"I forgot to ask. What about your meeting with Sara? How did it go?" Jade asked as she moved to her closet to see if she had something suitable to wear to a dinner date.

"It was smooth. You won't believe all the lies she told me," Harry said with a shake of his head.

"What lies?"

"I will tell you all about it tomorrow...."

"No! I don't want to spend my first date with you talking about her," Jade quickly cut in.

"Alright. I will give you the details over the phone when I'm less busy," Harry promised.

"I guess that means I'm not seeing you today then," Jade said with a pout.

"Yeah. I'm spending the evening with my dad, Candace, and Jamal," Harry said, and Jade sighed.

"That's fine. I will just have to go to bed early. That way, it will be tomorrow already by the time I wake up," Jade said, and Harry grinned.

"I love you, esquire," Harry said, and before she could respond, her phone buzzed with an awaiting call notification.

"I love you too. I have to go. Aurora is calling. Talk to you later," Jade said quickly as she disconnected Harry's call and received Aurora's call.

"Aurora...."

"I guess you were on the phone with our sweet old uncle Harry?" Aurora asked dryly.

"I'm very sorry, Aura. It was not my intention to hook you up with him and then go behind you to get involved with him. Things just turned out that way," Jade rushed to say.

"Harry already apologized on your behalf, and he also promised that y'all will go fishing with me, so I'm cool," Aurora said dismissively.

"Are we really cool? No hard feelings?" Jade asked cautiously.

"Of course we are. It wasn't like I was dating Harry yet or anything. It was an honest mistake on your end, so I see no reason to lose a friend over it. Besides, Harry introduced me to a fine-ass guy who loves fishing," Aurora said with a girly laugh.

"So I heard," Jade said with an easy smile. She made a mental note to treat Aurora even better and take their friendship more seriously now.

"Phil asked me to have dinner with him tonight, and since I have nothing planned for the evening, I agreed. Can you do me a favor and find out for sure if he is single? I hate to invest my time or emotion in other people's men."

"You could ask him directly," Jade pointed out.

"Sure, I already did. He said he is single. I just want to be extra sure. After seeing how those women almost dealt with your brother's girlfriend, I don't want to be in any way associated with...."

"Harry wouldn't leave you alone with him if he didn't trust him," Jade said simply, and Aurora sighed.

"Alright. I will keep my fingers crossed. When are we meeting? You promised we would meet after my date with Harry," Aurora reminded her.

"We could meet today if you're not too busy...."

"I was hoping you would say that. I need to go shopping, and I want you to come with me," Aurora said excitedly.

"Shopping?"

"Yeah. I need to get something to wear. I have a date tonight, remember? I only came to Ludus with two date outfits. One for my date with Harry and the other for the anniversary dinner party. Why don't we go together, and then you can fill me in on how you finally got to realize you're in love with your old uncle Harry? I love to hear a good love story," Aurora said hopefully, and Jade smiled.

"Alright. Let's do that. I think I might also need a dress for my first date with Harry and for the anniversary dinner party," Jade said, and Aurora squealed excitedly.

"Perfect! Although I'm not very familiar with Ludus, I'm sure we can both find our way around," Aurora said, and once they had agreed on a place and time for their meeting, Jade hung up the call and let out a deep sigh of relief, feeling even more than grateful now that the whole thing had not blown over her face.

She was glad that everyone was happy.

Chapter 578 Kiss And Make Up

No matter how hard Tom tried to focus on the documents in front of him, his conversation with his mother kept coming back to him.

The pregnancy kit had to be Lucy's, right? It wouldn't make sense for her to have such a personal item belonging to someone else, would it?

If it was hers and she was pregnant, as the kit had said, he needed to get her to open up to him about it so they could resolve it as soon as possible.

If she was going to have a medical abortion or whatever was more suited to her, he needed to be with her through it. He couldn't just travel and leave her to handle things on her own.

As much as he loved Lucy and wanted nothing more than to marry her and have children with her, he couldn't be selfish right now and think about himself or how his heart kept racing at the thought of the possibility of a life growing in Lucy's abdomen.

He couldn't expect her to keep the baby if truly she was pregnant. He knew Lucy well enough to know she wouldn't be able to handle being pregnant right now. That would be too much of an unplanned and unexpected change, and it would rock her world.

He picked up his phone as he contemplated calling her to ask her about it, but changed his mind, thinking that this wasn't the sort of conversation to have over the phone.

He glanced at the wall clock in his office to see if he had enough time before the next meeting to stop by her office but turned to the door instead when it opened, and Harry walked in, "Tom!"

The cheerful smile on Harry's face disappeared, "Did something happen?" he asked when he saw the worry lines on Tom's face.

"I'm glad you're back. It's almost time for the next meeting, but I need to talk to Lucy before I leave...."

"Then go to her. I will take care of it," Harry said without hesitation.

"How did your meeting with Sara go?" Tom asked as he rose from his seat.

"I will tell you about it later. You don't have much time left before you leave on your trip," Harry said as he glanced at his wristwatch.

"Thanks," Tom said once again as he hurried past Harry and headed for Lucy's office.

Once he got to the office, her teammates were startled to see him and rose immediately, but he ignored them as he walked straight into her office.

"Tom!" Lucy called in surprise as she rose, flashing him an uncertain smile while wondering what he was doing in her office.

"Do you have a minute to talk?" he asked as he stopped in front of her desk.

"Sure. I could have come to your office had you called," Lucy said as she walked around her desk to meet him.

"It's fine. I wanted to get out of my office anyway," Tom said awkwardly as he looked at her.

"Are you ready to leave now? I heard Evelyn brought your suitcase."

"I will be leaving soon. Can we step out of here?" Tom asked, and Lucy picked up her phone from the desk before responding.

"Where are we going?"

"Let's talk in the car?" Tom suggested, and once Lucy gave him a nod, he led her out of the office.

Neither of them said a word to the other as they took the elevator back to his office and from there to his private parking lot.

Once they had both gotten into the car, Tom turned to Lucy, "Are you alright?" Tom asked as he observed her.

Lucy smiled, "Yeah. Sure. You?"

"I'm okay. Is there something you need to tell me?" Tom asked, and her brows pulled together.

"Something like what?"

"Anything you think I need to know before traveling? Or maybe something you plan to do in my absence?" Tom asked, thinking if she was deliberately keeping it from him, then she probably was planning to get rid of the pregnancy in his absence.

Did Sonia tell Bryan about it or let it slip to Tom that she was moving out in his absence? Lucy mused with a sigh.

"I figured it was best not to mention it to you since I didn't want things to be any more awkward between us than they already are," Lucy said quietly.

"So you thought keeping it away from me was the best?" Tom asked calmly, struggling not to be mad at her for thinking of making such a decision without informing him. To say he was disappointed in her was an understatement. He was both hurt and disappointed.

Lucy nodded, "Yes. I thought it was the best. Lately, it seems like everything I say seems to be wrong, so pardon me for not wanting to tell you about it before going ahead with it. Besides, when I asked you about it today, you insisted...."

"Asked me about what?" Tom asked with a frown, wondering what she was talking about.

"About moving out. Didn't you say you wanted me to leave?" Lucy asked, beginning to feel annoyed by Tom's questions.

"I'm not sure I understand what you're talking about," Tom said, and Lucy took a deep breath.

"I'm moving back to my apartment while you are away. So, I won't be at your house when you get back," Lucy said, and Tom felt his heart skip.

"I thought we agreed you would move after our parents leave?" Tom asked, and Lucy shook her head.

"No, you said so, not me. I don't want to have to stay in that bedroom alone in your absence, only to move out immediately after you get back. I'd rather leave while you're away. It's easier that way," Lucy said, and Tom sighed.

He could see reason with what she said, but that wasn't exactly what he was here to know.

"Are you pregnant?" Tom asked before he could change his mind, and Lucy frowned.

"Pregnant? Am I supposed to be? Why would I be pregnant?" She asked in confusion.

"You're not pregnant?" Tom asked, equally confused by her confusion, and Lucy took a deep breath to calm herself.

"Why would you think that I'm pregnant? Were you trying to get me pregnant or something?" She asked, struggling between confusion and irritation at the question.

"What about the positive pregnancy test strip in the closet?" Tom asked, and Lucy's gray eyes iced over.

"Were you snooping through my stuff?" She asked coolly.

"I wasn't snooping, and that is not the point...."

"That is exactly the point! And if you must know, it isn't mine!"

"The test strip isn't yours? Whose is it? And why was it in your handbag?" Tom asked in confusion.

"That is NOT your business! I think moving back to my apartment is probably best for us both since I can no longer have my privacy in your house. In all the time I spent under your roof, I never touched anything that wasn't mine or that wasn't given to me, and neither did I go snooping around your stuff, so I see no reason why you had to go through my handbag without my permission," Lucy said angrily as she reached for the door, but Tom held her back.

"Are you sure you want to leave in the middle of a conversation again? Just before I travel?" He asked patiently, and Lucy shut her eyes and counted to five to calm herself before facing him.

"Although I don't think this should be a reason for argument between us, I didn't snoop through your stuff. I wouldn't do that, no matter how curious I am. If you say you're not pregnant, I will take your word for it. I just wanted to be sure everything was okay with you before leaving. I'm sorry I found out about the stuff in your handbag, and I'm sorry I asked who owns it. It's not my business...."

"Tom...."

"That was the reason I wanted to talk to you. You can return to your office. I will let you know when I arrive," Tom said calmly and started reaching for the door, but this time Lucy stopped him.

"Can we stop fighting and arguing over every little thing? Please?" She asked, feeling exhausted.

"I'm not the one fighting with you, Lu."

"I know. I'm sorry. I overreacted once again. I'm very sorry. I know I shouldn't have responded that way," Lucy said apologetically, but Tom said nothing as he listened to her.

"I don't know what I'm doing. I'm always saying and doing all the wrong things. I'm sorry, Tom. I'm not deliberately doing any of this, I swear. I don't know why I keep having the wrong reaction...."

"There is no right or wrong reaction to anything," Tom cut in before she could finish.

"But I don't want to keep being on edge with you and fighting you over everything. I'm scared. I'm anxious. I'm worried. I don't know what to do about any of this," Lucy said, fighting back her tears.

Tom was tempted to reach out and comfort her, but he stopped himself, knowing that would only distract them from the issue on ground.

"I have no idea why you are on edge with me, Lu. I understand that this is your first romantic relationship, and I know you're probably still struggling with a lot of things. I know it must not be easy on you, but I would appreciate it if you didn't walk out in the middle of a conversation with me. I really do not like it, and I'm not saying this just because you're my girlfriend," Tom said calmly.

"I'm sorry. It won't repeat itself," Lucy said, and Tom sighed as he reached for her face and used his thumb to brush off the single tear drop on her cheek.

"My mom saw your handbag hiding somewhere in the closet while she was packing my bag, and she asked me about it, assuming I knew about your pregnancy," Tom explained.

"Oh, no!" Lucy exclaimed softly.

"Yeah. I'm not telling you this because I'm trying to prove I didn't snoop through your stuff. I'm telling you this because she thinks you are pregnant, so you might want to clear the air with her. I will talk to her," Tom assured her.

"I'm sorry," she murmured.

"It's fine. And you should know that I have no problem with you snooping through my stuff. I'm an open book with you, Lucy. I'm all in. It's okay if you don't want me going through your stuff or if you don't trust me enough to confide in me about other stuff going on around you."

"It's not that. I do trust you...."

"No, you don't. You still doubt my intentions and actions. But I won't fight you over that. I'm waiting for you, Lu. I hope you get over everything that is holding you back soon," Tom said as he took her hand and raised it to his lips.

"Thank you," Lucy said, her lips trembling.

He brushed his knuckles over her cheekbone, "You're just moving back to your apartment, not breaking up, right?" Tom asked softly, looking into her eyes.

"I don't want to break up," Lucy said quietly.

"Good. Me too. So why don't we put all of this behind us?" Tom asked, and Lucy smiled, her first genuine smile, Tom noted with relief.

"Can we really do that?" She asked hopefully.

"Sure. Now we can kiss and make up, and then maybe a make up sex will convince you that we've put it behind us. I'm sure that will convince me, I don't know about you. If I had known I would be traveling and you would be moving out before my return, I would have spent the whole of last night making love to you," Tom said with a wink as he ran his hand down her arm.

Lucy giggled, "About meeting you in the middle...."

"For real, Lu, I need you to take your time to think about it. Get therapy. I will go with you to see your therapist at every of your appointment if you want me to. Let's revisit this subject as we agreed to do next year. By then, you would have gotten therapy, and I will be sure your decision is not trauma-based," Tom said, and Lucy's brows pulled together.

"But what if my decision doesn't change?" She asked, and Tom smiled confidently.

"What if it does? We don't know anything for sure, Lu. I love you today, Lu. That's all that matters. I love you today."

"I love you too today, or should it be, I love you today too?" Lucy asked, and they both laughed at how it sounded.

"Can you promise me for real this time that you won't bring up this conversation about marriage and kids until the specified time, unless you're bringing it up to propose to me?" Tom asked, and Lucy sighed softly before bobbing her head.

"I promise not to ever bring it up until it's time for us to talk about it next year unless I'm bringing it up to propose to you," Lucy said, and Tom grinned.

"Good. So, how about that make up kiss I talked about?" Tom asked with a puckered lip, and Lucy pressed her lips to his.

She was over the moon with joy that Tom was back to normal and he wasn't going to be traveling while on bad terms with her.

"Can I convince you to let me make love to you right here? I read somewhere that make up sex is good for the mind," Tom asked as his hands deftly moved to cup her boobs.

"Or maybe we can sneak back into your office and do it there instead? Is it soundproof? Your office?" Lucy asked, her voice riding on a moan when Tom located her nipple despite her blouse and bra.

"It sure is. Let's go."

Chapter 579 The Hell With That!

Lucy would never have described herself as wanton or reckless, but that was how she felt after letting Tom make love to her right there on his office desk before moving to the bed inside.

Somehow, in the last twenty minutes, she had come to believe that make up sex was every bit as intense and pleasurable as she had heard.

It had taken every ounce of self-control they both had not to rip their clothes in their hurry to touch and pleasure each other.

Imagine having to return to her office in different clothes than she had worn earlier while leaving with Tom.

That would have started quite a very interesting rumor around the office, Lucy thought with a giggle, and Tom, who was cradling her on the bed in his office bedroom, looked at her.

"What is amusing you?" he asked with interest.

"How would I have explained my change of outfit had you ripped my blouse earlier?" she asked, and Tom grinned.

"Maybe something spilled on it during lunch?" Tom suggested, and Lucy giggled.

"Do you think they're going to know?"

"Know what?" Tom asked in confusion.

"That we had sex. My clothes look rough. Do you think they are going to suspect a thing?" Lucy asked, and Tom looked at her clothes which were on the floor with his apologetically.

"I'm sure they won't look so rough on you. If you feel tempted to explain yourself, you could tell them you got into a scuffle with someone," Tom said with a wink, and Lucy chuckled.

"I'm going to miss you," she whispered before she could stop herself, and she chewed her lower lip as she buried her face in his chest.

Tom pressed his lips to the side of her head, "Want to come with me?" he asked, and she shook her head.

"I wish I could," Lucy said with a sigh, and although Tom was tempted to tell her she could if she wanted, he chose not to.

It was not necessary.

"I will be back before you know it. And when I come back, we can go on a proper date," Tom promised as he raised her hand to his lips, and then his gaze moved to the clock.

"You will be back before the dinner party, right?"

"I hope so. I'm not entirely sure about that," Tom said apologetically.

"It's fine. I can just skip it if you're not back by then."

"You shouldn't. I will love you to be there whether or not I'm there. Now as much as I love to lounge here with you doing nothing, I need to go over some details with Harry and be on my way," Tom said, and Lucy sighed as she rose.

"Can I see you off?" Lucy asked hopefully.

"I don't think that's a question you should be asking, Lu," Tom chided as he rose.

"Alright. I will quickly clear up my desk while you meet with Harry. Let me know when you're ready to leave," Lucy said as she walked into the bathroom to freshen up, and Tom followed her.

"You know, I didn't think you would agree to have sex in the office," Tom said as he watched her clean up.

"I didn't think I would either. And it wasn't bad," Lucy said, and Tom's lips curved in an amused smile.

"It wasn't bad?" he asked with a slightly raised brow.

"Yeah, it wasn't so bad," Lucy said with a challenging glint in her eyes.

"If I weren't in a hurry, I would make you take back those words," Tom said, and Lucy giggled.

"Too bad you're in a hurry," Lucy said with a coy smile as she brushed past him back into the room to dress up.

Tom chuckled as he watched her, "Too bad," Tom repeated as he went into the bathroom to clean up.

After dressing up, Lucy walked out to the office to find her earring since she was missing one ear, and after seeing it, she went to stand by the window as her thoughts drifted to Sonia and the parcel Candace had received on her behalf earlier.

She knew without a doubt that the content of the parcel was the abortion pills. She had tried talking Sonia out of it again after her mom, Candace, Jamal, and Evelyn had left for Harry's house, but Sonia had remained adamant, and she was worried.

"Enjoying the view?" Tom asked as he snuck up and embraced her from behind, and Lucy smiled.

"Can I ask you a question? It's unrelated to us," she said, and Tom nodded.

"Sure," Tom said as he glanced at the clock. He still had a couple of minutes. He decided as he let her turn to look at him.

Seeing the tension in her eyes, he could tell she was worried, and whatever it was she wanted to talk about was important to her.

"Say, for instance, two people are in a relationship. They're in love with each other and doing great. The guy says he is not ready for marriage or kids yet. He just wants to spend his time knowing and loving the lady, and then the lady finds out she is pregnant. Do you think it's okay for her to have an abortion without informing him? Mind you, she would love to have the baby, but she can't because the guy is not ready for that step yet. She feels like telling him about the pregnancy might put some strain on their relationship. If you were the guy, what would you want her to do? How mad would you be if you found out about the pregnancy and abortion later?" Lucy asked, wanting to have a second opinion.

Tom didn't need her to spell it out for him to know her question was related to the positive pregnancy kit.

"Are you sure she loves him? Her decision is selfish, and love is not supposed to be selfish. Is she making this decision for herself or him? I know that a lot of ladies love to argue that it's their body and their decision, but it's unfair to the man to make such a decision without his knowledge, regardless of what he had said at a prior time. She needs to understand that things change. Desires change. What if he would love them to have the baby? If I were the guy and I found out about it after the deed had been done, we would have to go our separate ways. I can't be in a relationship with someone that makes such a major decision that involves us both by themselves," Tom said, and Lucy sighed.

"What would you do if she was your friend? Support her or tell her boyfriend?" Lucy asked, and Tom raised a brow.

"We are not talking about Sonia and Bryan, are we?" he asked, and when Lucy didn't meet his gaze, Tom narrowed his eyes.

"Sonia is pregnant and wants to have an abortion without Bryan's knowledge?" Tom asked incredulously, and Lucy sighed.

"Don't overreact. I'm not supposed to be telling you...."

"The hell with that, Lu! Convince her to tell Bryan, or I will!" Tom threatened.

"You can't do that...."

"I can, Lu! And I'm telling you I will."

"I'm telling you this in confidence because you're my boyfriend. I've broken Sonia's trust already. You can't say a word of this to Bryan."

Tom took a deep breath, "If you don't want me to do that, then you either convince Sonia to tell him about it, or you tell him about it yourself. I see no reason why you should be worrying about keeping her trust when she is about to do something detrimental not only to herself but to Bryan and their relationship as well. Christ, Lu! If you're trying to be a good friend, then shouldn't you do so by not letting her ruin her relationship? Didn't they just have a fight over this attitude of hers?" Tom asked incredulously.

"Calm down, Tom. I don't think we should fight over this. I will do my best to convince her to tell him about it," Lucy said quietly.

"And if she doesn't, you tell him. I won't be pleased if she goes ahead with this without Bryan's knowledge," Tom insisted, and Lucy sighed.

"Alright. Just don't say a word. I will take care of it," Lucy insisted, and Tom sighed.

"Bryan is not as irresponsible as you think, Lu. Trust me, you will be doing Sonia a world of good by telling Bryan about this," Tom said, and Lucy raised her hands.

"I hope you are right. I should return to my office now. Let me know when you're ready to leave," Lucy said and kissed Tom before walking away.

She knew that Sonia was going to be mad at her for spilling her secret to Tom, but she was going to take Tom's advice on this one. She was scared that Sonia was making a mistake, and she would rather risk offending Sonia than stay back and do nothing while Sonia made such a mistake.

Chapter 580 Fixing Things

As Tiffany descended the stairs carrying a duffel bag, she paused when she saw Jack seated by the foot of the stairs where she had left him as though he had remained there waiting for the past two hours.

He stood up immediately he heard her footsteps, "Tiffany, I know this is a lot to ask, but can I come with you to the hospital? Please?" Jackson asked hopefully.

"I don't think that is a good idea," Tiffany said flatly as she tried to walk past him but he grabbed her hand.

"Please, Tiff. I just want to see her, know how she is doing, and apologize to her. I understand I went about it all the wrong way. I took advantage of her loneliness. I thought seducing her would be easier than confessing my feelings to her. Please let me see her just this once, Tiff," Jack pleaded, while Tiffany looked at him surprised by the genuineness in his gaze.

The only problem she had always had with Jack as her husband was the fact that he flirted with so many ladies and usually wasn't discreet about it.

She didn't have a problem with him having an affair since she wasn't sexually interested in him, but she would have preferred if he had just a mistress and kept the relationship a secret instead of doing it so openly to the extent that everyone called him a dog.

Apart from that flaw, he was not a bad person. He treated her well even though they both knew they weren't in love with each other and he tried to show up at events that were important to her.

"I really don't think she would want to see you," Tiffany said weakly.

She had spent most of the last two hours upstairs crying and feeling bad for herself and Bernice. She had spent that time asking herself so many what ifs. What would her life had been like had she come out open about her sexual preference and lived her truth? Would Bernice's life had been better had Bernice gotten married to Jack instead of Adam? Would Jack have been happier and probably more decent?

"If she asks me to leave, I will. I won't create a scene I promise. Please, Tiff," Jack pleaded as they both held each other's gaze.

Tiffany sighed, "Let me get the food and then we can leave," Tiffany said, and Jack took the duffel bag from her as she went to the kitchen to get the food she had asked them to pack for her and Bernice.

As she approached the car, Jackson went to her and took the food pack from her which he carefully placed in the backseat while she got into the car.

Once Jackson got into the drivers seat he turned to Tiffany, "I'm sorry, Tiff. I know this whole thing is stupid and I must have sounded insensitive earlier. I did not mean to hurt your feelings by having an affair with Benny or telling you how I feel about her...."

"Can we not talk about it right now?"

"I'm sorry. It's all my fault. Please don't be mad at Benny," Jack said apologetically.

"I can't make up my mind yet if I prefer you fucking around with everything in skirt or I'm okay with you being in love with Benny," Tiffany said, and Jackson nodded.

"I understand how you feel. I know I made a mess of things. I'm sorry. I will apologize to Benny and try to fix things with Adam...."

"There is no need to fix things with Adam. Benny is divorcing him," Tiffany said, and for the first time Jackson felt hope surge within him.

"She is?" He asked, sounding more excited than he had intended to.

"Yes. But I hope you realize that this doesn't mean you can get together with Benny. You are still married to me. It would be weird for you to be with my sister," Tiffany reminded him.

"We both know she wouldn't want to have anything to do with me either, so let's not think about that. I will apologize to her, and also apologize to Adam, because it's the right thing to do," Jackson insisted, and Tiffany sighed.

"Alright. Let's go," Tiffany said, and with that Jackson started the car and drove off to the hospital.

By the time they arrived at the hospital, Lisa was in the room with Bernice, and she stood up immediately she saw Jackson, wanting to yell at him to leave, but paused when she saw that Jackson wasn't even looking at her, and his gaze was fixed on Bernice's sleeping form.

"Why did you bring him here?" Lisa asked in a tight voice, and Bernice opened her eyes.

"Because I wanted to. Benny, is it okay if Jack speaks with you? If you say no, he will leave right now," Tiffany said as she took the duffel bag from Jackson and placed it on the couch along with the food pack.

Bernice's gaze shifted to Jackson and she turned away from him when she noticed the bruise beside his left brow, and the crack on his lower lip. Tiffany had told her about the fight between Adam and Jack, and as much as she felt sorry for getting sexually involved with her sister's husband, she had felt an odd sense of satisfaction in knowing that Adam had been mad enough by her action to fight. She had been even more glad when she heard that Adam had taken more punches from Jack than he delivered.

Although Bernice didn't want to speak to Jack since she wasn't sure she wanted to be alone with him, she gave Tiffany a nod since the request had come from Tiffany.

"Thanks," Jackson whispered to Tiffany as he moved closer to the bed, while Lisa watched him with hawk eyes.

"Let's excuse them," Tiffany said, and Lisa raised a brow.

"Why would I want to leave your husband alone with her?" Lisa asked in annoyance, every bit the protective sister that she was.

"Lisa, we don't have to fight over everything, and I'm particularly not in the mood right now," Tiffany said, and without waiting for Lisa to follow her, she walked out of the room.

"Lisa, please excuse us," Bernice said quietly even though she was grateful to have Lisa looking out for her this way.

Lisa looked from Jackson to Bernice reluctantly and then back again, "Don't you dare try anything. I will be standing right outside the door. If she so much as whimpers I will kick your ass," Lisa threatened, before waddling away.

The moment Lisa shut the door behind her, Bernice turned her face away from Jackson. She couldn't bring herself to meet his gaze. She didn't want to.

"How are you feeling now?" Jackson asked in a concerned tone.

"I'm fine. The doctor said I can leave by tomorrow morning," Bernice said without looking at him.

"I'm glad," Jackson said as he continued to look at her.

"I know I messed up. I almost messed up your life. I'm sorry," Jackson said, not minding that she wasn't looking at him.

"None of it was your fault."

"It is my fault. I seduced you. I took advantage of your loneliness. Christ, Benny! You tried to take your life. If I had not seduced you, things would never have gotten to that extent. I would never have forgiven myself if you did not survive. Never," Jackson said and this time Bernice turned to look at him.

"I'm an adult and can take responsibility for my actions. I didn't try to take my life because you seduced me. I tried to take my life because I was feeling frustrated and I hated the person I had become. I wanted to end it all. It had nothing to do with you," Bernice said calmly.

"You wouldn't have felt that way had I not gotten into the picture. I'm going to do my best to fix this, Benny. I will do all I can, I promise."

"There is nothing to fix. Although, I'm sorry I slept with Tiffany's husband, we all agree that everything probably happened this way for the best of everyone. I finally got to see the sort of person my mother is and what she is capable of. Anita and Tiffany got to see for themselves too. Now we will all be free from her," Bernice said, and Jackson sighed.

"Does that mean you are not mad at me?" He asked hopefully.

"I have no reason to be mad at you. I knew you were my sister's husband when I chose to do what I did. We share equal responsibility in whatever happened between us. Now I hope we can put it behind us. I hope you can work things out with Tiffany, and this doesn't affect your marriage," Bernice said and Jackson nodded.

"Thanks. If there is anyway I can be of help to you, do not hesitate to let me know. You can tell Tiffany," Jackson said, and without waiting for her to say anything he quickly headed for the door so he wouldn't be tempted to tell her exactly how he felt about her.

Immediately he opened the door, Lisa rushed in to check on Benny, while Tiffany met her husband, "Are you done?" She asked, and he gave her a nod.

"Yeah. Thanks, Tiff," he said as he looked at her, and she sighed when she saw the sadness in his eyes.

"Are you going to the office now?" She asked, and he shook his head.

"I'm not sure. I think I will just head back home," Jackson said, and kissed Tiffany's cheeks before walking away.

Tiffany felt a pang in her heart as she watched him leave with his shoulders drooped in resignation, and she sighed as she returned inside the room to join her sisters.

Jackson dialed Adam's line the moment he got into his car, wanting to settle things with him and get that out of the way. He didn't want Adam to make a big deal out of his affair with Bernice or use that against her in any way.

Away from there, in Rebekah's apartment, she stood over Adam's unconscious form with the man she had called earlier.

Thankfully she had been able to call her maids and ask them to take some time off to themselves and come back later in the evening since she was in the middle of an important meeting and didn't want to be distracted.

"What do you want me to do with him? Bury his body or just dump him somewhere and make it look like he was involved in an accident?" The man asked.

"Judging by the crack on his head anyone call tell his head hit something. You can move his body somewhere else. And make it look...."

The rest of her sentence trailed off when Adam's phone suddenly started ringing, startling her.

"His phone. I forgot about that," Rebekah said as she looked down at Adam, and the man with her deeper his gloves hands into Adam's jacket to take out his phone.

"Jackson," Rebekah murmured when he showed her the name of the caller.

It would have been very nice if she could find a way to pin this on Jackson since they had both been involved in a fist fight just the previous day. It would prevent any further investigation that might point to her. But if she did that, she would be exposing the fact that Bernice had an affair with Jackson, and that would cause a lot of issues for Bernice.

How was Bernice going to cash out as Adam's widow if the news of her infidelity got out?

She pursed her lips as she considered it. If she would be able to get her daughters to deny Bernice's affair with Jackson, then maybe she could pull it off, after all she was doing it for them. She was certain her daughters would be willing to cooperate with her.

If Jackson gets jailed for the crime, Tiffany could file for divorce and take as much as she can get from him, and then Tiffany would be free to live as she wanted. It would be a win for her girls.

Having made up her mind she turned to the man, "Let's pin this on Jackson. Text him with Adam's phone. Make it clear Adam is leaving my house and going somewhere to meet with a witness. Ask Jackson to meet you there in an hour. Do you have any place in mind with stairs? Somewhere you can make it look like he really fell off the stairs in the middle of an argument?" Rebekah asked, and the man only thought about it for a moment before nodding his head.

"Perfect. I will let you take care of it then," Rebekah said with a satisfied sigh.

Although killing Adam had not been her plan, but this just as well served her purpose. Her daughters had accused her of ruining their lives, and now she was just going to fix it and make sure they all ended up happy. This was the least she could do to make her girls happy.