

Wild Night 711

Chapter 711 Settling Things

The moment Lucy stepped inside the house, Sonia who had been waiting for her, took her hand and dragged her to the porch since everyone else had gone into the study to discuss their grandfather's funeral arrangements, while one of the housekeepers was attending to Dawn and prepping her for bed.

"What is wrong?" Lucy asked as she followed Sonia.

"I should be asking you. I noticed how you were acting with Dawn during dinner earlier. Did something happen during the short nap I took?" Sonia asked as they walked through the door that led to the porch.

"Does something need to happen in order for me to be nice to the kid?" Lucy asked and Sonia shook her head.

"No. Not exactly. But it seemed like you were making so much effort to get everyone to talk to her," Sonia said as they sat on the swings and Lucy nodded.

"Yes, I was. Earlier when I went to check in on her, she was crying silently in the guest room."

"Aww. Poor kid," Sonia said softly.

"I will need your help too. You should also be more friendly towards her. That way it would be easier for Bryan to accept her. I'm sure Desmond and Evelyn would relax better around her when they see she has been accepted by their children," Lucy said and Sonia sighed.

"Alright. You know I'm not as good with kids as you are, but I will try," Sonia said and Lucy laughed softly.

"You're not as good with kids yet you are the one who is pregnant," Lucy pointed out and Sonia grinned.

"One of the ironies of life. But that doesn't mean I won't be good with my kid," Sonia said and Lucy nodded.

"That I am sure of," Lucy said and then after a second she sighed, "I spoke with Kimberly earlier," she said and Sonia raised a brow.

"Who called? And why?" Sonia asked and Lucy explained the details of their conversation to her.

Sonia sighed when Lucy was done, "She must have really loved the old man," Sonia said with a shake of her head.

"Yeah. I feel sorry for her. I hope she is able to resolve things with her parents and show up in time for the funeral so she can take Dawn home," Lucy said and Sonia nodded.

"Me too. Did you tell Tom about the call?" Sonia asked and Lucy raised a brow.

"Do you expect me to? We both know he is going to freak out, and that's the last thing I want. All I want is for everything to be over so we can return to our normal peaceful lives," Lucy said with a sigh.

"I understand. By the way, Bryan wants me to apologize to Evelyn for what I said during breakfast. He said I came off as rude," Sonia said and Lucy nodded.

"Yes, I think you should do so. The last thing I want is for you both to be on bad terms because of me," Lucy said and Sonia scowled.

"I was hoping you would say I wasn't rude," Sonia said and Lucy grinned.

"You were in a way. And I think I was too. As much as I appreciate you standing up for me, Sony, I'd prefer it if you don't take my side me that way next time. It's not me and you versus them," Lucy said and Sonia raised a brow.

"What's that supposed to mean? I shouldn't do anything when you are standing alone? Had Tom defended you I wouldn't have had to step in," Sonia pointed out.

"Sony, I love you and I love how loyal you can be. But I don't think it's wise for you to have problems with Bryan or the rest of the family on my account. I will make sure I never get involved in such a situation with the family next time. But if for whatever unavoidable reason it happens, don't jump to my defense whether or not Tom takes my side. Allow me deal with it myself," Lucy said and Sonia raised a brow.

"Are you saying if it were the other way around you wouldn't have stepped in to have my back?"

"I wouldn't have had to because you wouldn't have handled things the way I did," Lucy said but Sonia wasn't having that.

"That was a yes or no question, Lu," Sonia pressed testily.

"I would have spoken up but not the way you did. All I'm trying to say is that I don't want you fighting with Bryan or anyone else on my account. How do you think that's going to make you look after I might have resolved my issues with them?" Lucy asked and Sonia rolled her eyes.

"Fine. Whatever. Suit yourself," Sonia said irritably and Lucy grinned.

"I'm just going to tell Evelyn to blame my action on her grand baby," Sonia said and Lucy giggled.

"As if anyone is going to buy that. So, how are the pregnancy symptoms coming?" She asked, wanting to change the subject and Sonia sighed as her hands moved to rub her flat abdomen.

"Apart from the fact that I feel tired and sleepy all the time, the nausea is terrible," Sonia complained.

"That's the same thing you say every time I ask. Let me know if you need my help in any way to make things easier," Lucy offered.

"I'm going to need your help. I was hoping we could go over to my apartment to sort out my stuff. I have to do it before we return to Ludus. Since I'm getting married to Bryan and won't be coming back here, this is the best time to bid the place goodbye," Sonia said and Lucy sighed when a wave of nostalgia hit her.

"I'm going to miss that place," Lucy said and Sonia rolled her eyes.

"As if you've given it any thought since you moved to Ludus," Sonia said dryly and Lucy giggled.

"I've been too busy worrying about all the drama that came into my life since Tom to worry about anything else," Lucy said and Sonia nodded.

"True. It all started from your first night in Ludus, didn't it? First drama was hooking up with a stranger at the club, then finding out he is your next door neighbor, and then getting to know he is your driver, and then he turns out to be your boss, and the drama with Anita. It's been from one drama to another, and here you are dealing with the family drama," Sonia said and Lucy shook her head in amusement.

"It's safe to say all the relationship drama I've been avoiding by being single for years caught up with me in this one relationship," Lucy said and both she and Sonia laughed out loud.

"Is the wedding still set to hold in a month?" Lucy asked and Sonia gave her a nod.

"Sure. Maybe I could appease Evelyn by involving her in the plans. What do you think?" Sonia asked and Lucy grinned.

"I'm sure she would love that. Let's go in. They should be done with their meeting by now," Lucy said and they both headed inside.

"Where have you two been? I have looked everywhere for you," Jade said and Sonia scoffed.

"Liar. You obviously didn't look everywhere if you didn't check the porch," Sonia said making Lucy and Jade laugh.

"Anyway, my mom is asking for you, Lucy. And Dawn was asking for you too."

"What about me? Is nobody asking for me?" Sonia asked with a pout and Jade giggled.

"I'm asking for you," Jade assured her as she placed an arm around Sonia's shoulder.

"I guess Dawn is in the guest room. Where is Evelyn?" Lucy asked Jade.

"At the balcony," Jade informed her.

"Alright. I should go see what Evelyn wants before going to see Dawn," Lucy said but Sonia stopped her before she could leave.

"Why don't I go keep Evelyn company while you go attend to Dawn? You can join us when you're done," Sonia said and understanding what she meant, Lucy gave her a nod as they all headed for the stairs.

"Do you think she is mad at me?" Sonia asked Jade as they both approached the balcony.

"I don't know about being mad but I'm sure she must not have liked the way you spoke to her. Did she say anything to you?" Jade asked and Sonia sighed.

"No, she didn't. We haven't said anything to each other since breakfast," Sonia said and Jade laughed softly.

"Funny how she seems to be cool with Lucy, and here you are," Jade said in amusement and Sonia scowled.

She guessed this was what Lucy had been saying earlier.

"I guess I shouldn't have interfered," Sonia said with a sigh.

"Or you could have interfered without sounding so confrontational. It's not a big deal, don't worry. If you're sorry, just tell her that and I'm sure she will be okay. Mom is not one to hold grudges. Do

you want me to be there or should I leave you to go alone?" Jade asked as they got closer to the balcony.

"Well, join us in five minutes. Don't go too far away incase she decides to pull my hair to express her displeasure," Sonia said and Jade laughed.

"Don't be such a drama queen," Jade said and gave Sonia a nod to go ahead.

Sonia couldn't help feeling sort of nervous as she got closer to the balcony. She didn't know what to expect. Perhaps she really shouldn't have done that in the first place.

"Evelyn? Do you have a minute?" Sonia asked cautiously as she stopped a couple of feet away from Evelyn who was seated with her back to her.

"Is something wrong?" Evelyn asked as she turned, surprised to see Sonia instead of Lucy who she had been waiting to see.

"Not really. I just wanted to have a word with you if you don't mind," Sonia said and Evelyn gestured to the chair beside her for Sonia to sit down.

Sonia cleared her throat as she sat down, and she shifted uncomfortably when Evelyn merely stared at her without saying a word.

"I'm sorry for speaking to you in such a manner this morning. I realize I was rude and it wasn't my intention to disrespect you that way," Sonia said without meeting Evelyn's gaze.

Evelyn said nothing for some time as she stared at Sonia and after a while she sighed, "I must admit that your behavior was unexpected and it made me wonder if you had something against me before now," Evelyn admitted and this time Sonia met her gaze.

"I was with Bryan when he called you the other night and you both talked about what transpired between Tom and you, and I heard all you said. I really didn't like any of it, but that isn't any excuse for my action. I could have found a better way to talk to you about it instead of being so confrontational," Sonia said and Evelyn nodded thoughtfully.

"I see."

"I'm really sorry. I didn't mean to disrespect you. If it will make you less mad at me, you could blame your grandfetus for my behavior. You know, pregnancy hormones and accompanying mood swings," Sonia suggested with a shrug, and Evelyn let out a small laugh.

"I'm not mad, and I don't hold anything against you. I admit that I didn't like all that happened during breakfast, but some times stuff like that is bound to happen when people from different background are coming together and. It's just a sign that the family is growing," Evelyn said and Sonia reached for her hand, surprising them both.

"Thanks for not being mad. I promise to do better going forward. And if anyone, I repeat anyone, including and especially Lucy. If she dares to ever disrespect you I won't let it slide. I will give her a good spanking," Sonia promised enthusiastically and Evelyn laughed softly.

"Wow! I heard that, Sony," Lucy said dryly as she joined them at the balcony since Dawn had slept off already by the time she got to the guest room.

"Well, I only said that because I'm sure you would never deliberately do anything to disrespect her," Sonia said defensively, and Evelyn smiled as Lucy came to stand in front of her.

Lucy crouched down in front of Evelyn since only two seats were kept there and both were occupied.

"I know I've apologized to you already, but I still feel terrible. Is there a way we could put all that happened behind us? I don't want things to be tense or awkward between us," Lucy said and Sonia jumped in.

"Me too. Especially not when we need to put our heads together in making the wedding preparations," Sonia said, and Evelyn's eyes lit up.

"The wedding preparation?" Evelyn asked and Sonia bobbed her head.

"You didn't think we would go ahead without carrying you along, did you? We have a lot of plans to take care of, and since we are all here, I figured we ladies get to it and leave the funeral arrangements to the men. What do you think?" Sonia suggested and Jade who joined them rolled her eyes, knowing that this was Sonia's plan to get back on Evelyn's good book.

Jade hugged her mother from behind, "It's been a very long and awkward day around here. Feels like everyone has been tiptoeing around the other. So, why don't we put it behind us and focus on more important things like the wedding preparation?" Jade asked and Evelyn nodded.

"Yeah. Let's do that. And just so you know, I heard everything you all said and I will work on not interfering unless when absolutely necessary or you ask for my help," Evelyn promised and Lucy smiled.

"I will also work on not keeping to myself too much. That way I can meet you in the middle. I understand that I also need to make some personal adjustments," Lucy said and Evelyn smiled.

"That will be nice," Evelyn said and Jade clapped.

"Great! Let's have a group hug then," Jade suggested excitedly and they all rose to embrace each other.

As they all left the balcony with Lucy and Sonia flanking Evelyn at both sides, Evelyn turned to Lucy, "Thanks for taking care of Dawn despite the situation of things," Evelyn said since that had been the reason she asked for her earlier.

"It's the least I could do after all the trouble I caused..."

"I thought we agreed to put all that behind us?" Jade cut in before Lucy could finish.

"Yeah, we did. Sorry," Lucy said with an apologetic smile.

"It's been a long day. Why don't we all get some rest, and tomorrow we can talk about the wedding plans?" Evelyn suggested and they all nodded.

"Yes. And maybe go shopping? I'd like to get something to wear for the funeral," Jade suggested and they all agreed.

"Let's do that then," Evelyn said before bidding them goodnight.

As Evelyn walked into her bedroom she let out a breath of relief, grateful that she had been able to resolve things with Lucy and Sonia, and the family was at peace once again.

Although it might be difficult at first, she was going to do as they all had said. She knew she had done a good job raising them and as Desmond has said, it was time to step back and watch them live out their own lives.

After everything was settled, she was going to focus on herself going forward and take Jade's advise to travel to places she had always wanted to see.

Chapter 712 Playing Hard To Get

Once Harry was done freshening up, he returned to the living room to join his family for dinner at the dining.

They all ate in silence for some time until Aaron spoke up, "So, how are things going with Tom and Lucy?"

"I'm yet to speak with Lucy, but I know Tom is isn't faring really well. Everything is getting to him," Harry said and Aaron nodded.

"Something like that would get to anyone. Considering his grandfather's reputation, I was quite surprised to read about him being the kid's father. That was quite a twist."

"It was an unexpected twist no doubt. But why should you be surprises the kid is his? Being an ex president doesn't mean he isn't human. Like every normal human he must have needs and feelings. Not everyone is like you, you know?" Candace said and Aaron's brows shot up.

"What do you mean not everyone is like me?" Aaron asked while Harry ate in silence, amused by the sudden turn the conversation had taken.

"Well, you did say you've not been with anyone since Harry's mom..." the rest of her words trailed off on a giggle when both Aaron and Harry glared at her.

"But grandpa has been here with us, why do you say he has not been with anyone? And why do you say uncle Harry's mom when you both have the same mom?" Jamal asked curiously, and they all turned their attention to him.

"Mind your table manners, Jam! How many times do I have to tell you it is bad manners to talk when eating?" Candace asked and Jamal frowned.

"But you're all talking too. It's not fair that only I get to mind my table manners " he pointed out.

"Well, we are adults and it is okay for us to talk," Candace said even though they have this same conversation every time they dine together.

"Why is it okay for adults to talk and not for me?" Jamal asked with a frown.

"Because we are adults and you are a kid. Our gullet is developed enough to eat and talk at the same time but yours isn't. We don't want you choking on your meal, do we?" Candace explained patiently.

"So, when will my gullet become developed and how will I know?" Jamal asked while Harry listened to the familiar conversation with amusement.

"When you become an adult," Candace said.

"When will I become an adult?" Jamal asked and Candace sighed.

"When you are eighteen," she said and Jamal did a quick calculation.

"That means I have to wait until eleven years more to..."

"Eat!" Aaron ordered with a stern expression and Jamal shuddered as he immediately snapped his mouth shut and looked down at his plate of food while Candace shook her head at her father before patting his back.

Aaron frowned when he noticed the way Jamal's lips trembled like he was going to cry.

"What did I do?" Aaron asked, and Harry's brows pulled together when he remembered what Tom had told him about Jamal's reaction when he had yelled in the car.

"He wasn't going to hit you..."

"Hit? I would never hit him. Why would you even say that?" Aaron asked feeling offended.

Candace sent Aaron an apologetic look as she rose and took Jamal away with her.

"What just happened?" Aaron asked Harry with a frown.

"His father used to yell and hit him. He's still traumatized," Harry said and Aaron scowled.

"What?" He asked in disbelief.

"Don't worry about it. He's dead now. If he wasn't I would have gone after him and made sure of it myself," Harry assured his father.

"I should go check on him," Aaron said and rose, leaving Harry alone.

Once he got to Candace's bedroom he knocked on the door before going in.

"Dad..."

"Please leave us. I want to be alone with Jamal," Aaron cut off whatever Candace wanted to say.

"But he is upset and...."

"Jam, are you scared of me? Do you think I'm going to hit you?" He asked and Jamal shook his head without looking at him.

"See? He's not scared of good old grandpa. Go have dinner with your brother. I will stay with him and tuck him in when he sleeps off," Aaron said and Candace hesitantly rose and walked away.

Harry said nothing as she returned to the dining and they ate in silence for some time until Candace spoke again, "I wonder who was crazy enough to release the news about the little girl being Tom's. There should be a law against people who spread false information," Candace said with disapproval.

"I agree with you," Harry said with a nod.

"Has Tom and his family always been aware of the kid's existence?" Candace asked curiously and Harry shook his head.

"No. They only found out she was the old man's kid last night," Harry said and Candace sighed.

"That must have come as quite a shock to them all. I suppose all this came up because of the prank? And it's the same kid?" Candace asked and Harry raised a brow.

"How did you know about that?" He asked and she rolled her eyes.

"I was there the other night, remember?" She asked and Harry sighed.

"Yeah. It's the same kid," Harry said and Candace shook her head.

"I can't imagine how they must all feel. Especially Desmond. Imagine finding out I have a kid brother or sister of that age at this point of my life," she said with a shake of her head.

"You have no idea how happy I am that you are a bit grown up," Candace said and Harry arched a brow.

"A bit?" He asked and she grinned at him.

"Yes, baby. Why?" She asked sweetly, making Harry chuckle.

"You do realize that we are exactly the same age and I'm older than your baby boyfriend, right?" Harry said earning him a glare from Candace who picked a piece of chip from her plate and threw it at him.

Harry took a piece from his plate and threw it right back at her, "Why? You think you're the only one who knows how to be mouthy?" Harry asked as he resumed eating.

"Whatever. Any news about the funeral arrangement yet?" She asked and Harry shook his head.

"It's still being deliberated on because of the people who have to be in attendance, but Tom says it wouldn't be later than Tuesday," Harry said and Candace nodded thoughtfully.

"Well, before you came back from work we were talking about stopping by Heden to pay the Hanks a condolence visit before leaving for Sogal," Candace said and Harry looked at her with interest.

"Really? When?" Harry asked and Candace raised a brow when she heard the eagerness in his voice.

"Why do you seem so excited to hear that?" Candace asked and he shook his head.

"I'm not excited. I'm just curious," Harry said and Candace narrowed her eyes.

"You definitely sound excited and curious. Why? You can't wait for us to leave so you can go be with Jade?" She asked knowingly and Harry sighed in resignation.

"I was thinking of traveling down to surprise her tomorrow after work, but I couldn't bring it up because there's no way I can leave you all here when I know you're leaving over the weekend," he said honestly and she nodded.

"I understand. And you don't have to worry about us. We can arrange to leave together and then we can leave for Sogal from there. I'm sure Jade would love to have you there with her," Candace said and Harry sighed in relief.

Now all he had to do was give his secretary a call to reorganize his schedule and tomorrow he would handle all that he needed to handle.

His dad, Candace and Jamal could share the two bedroom suite at the hotel while he stayed back at the Hank home with Jade.

All he had to do now was give Tom a call to let him know of his plans and to make sure his visit was kept a secret from Jade until he arrived.

"How are things going with Matt?" Harry asked, and Candace narrowed her eyes.

"Why are you bringing him up suddenly? Did dad say something to you?" She asked and he cocked his head to the side.

"Is there something dad is supposed to say to me about Matt? Did he perhaps realize that you're too much of a trouble and chose to dump you?" He asked with a sweet smile and she gave him a false sad face.

"Something like that. He says he doesn't want any dramas," Candace said with a shrug as she looked down at her plate, wanting to see Harry's reaction.

Harry scowled and clenched his fists as he rose, "Did he really say that to you? That bastard! I'm going to teach him a lesson," Harry said in annoyance and unable to keep up the act, Candace giggled before she could stop herself.

"Aww! You're so protective of your big sister, aren't you little one?" She asked sweetly and seeing that she had been pulling his legs he shook his head.

"I should ask him to dump you for real," he said as he gathered the dishes while Candace grinned at him.

"I will do the dishes," he said and she rose a brow.

"You weren't thinking I would offer to do them, were you?" She asked and Harry shook his head once again as he took the dishes to the kitchen.

Candace still had a smile on her face when her phone started ringing and her smile widened when she saw it was Matt calling.

He had been busy all day and had not been able to find time to call back as he had promised to do when they spoke earlier in the day.

"Hey!" She said as she rose from her seat and moved away from the dining to the living room so that Harry wouldn't overhear her.

She would have preferred to go to the bedroom but she couldn't since Aaron was there with Jamal and she needed privacy.

"Hey, you! How are you doing?" Matt asked and Candace shrugged as she paced slowly around the living room while keeping her eyes out for Harry and Aaron.

"I'm good. I guess you had a very busy day?" She asked as she bit her lower lip, not knowing why she was feeling sort of giddy with delight hearing from him.

"Sort of. I was called to do a reshoot for an ad," he explained and Candace nodded.

"I see," she said when she remembered he couldn't see her nod.

Neither of them said a word for some seconds, and the silence dragged on awkwardly until they both spoke up again at the same time.

"So..."

"About earlier..."

They both stopped to let the other continue, "Go on," Matt urged her.

"No, you go on," Candace said instead.

Matt tried not to smile since he could sense that she was uncomfortable. He wasn't going to feel sorry for her. She deserved that much for treating him the way she had done.

"How is Jamal doing?" Matt asked and she scowled.

Why was he asking about Jamal when they were yet to clear up the air completely? She mused.

"He is fine. He is in the bedroom with my dad," Candace said and Matt nodded.

"What about you? Where are you?" He asked and she went to sit on the couch.

"I just had dinner. I'm in the living room watching the television right now," she said just as Harry stepped out of the kitchen.

Harry took one look at her and shook his head, since he could tell she was speaking with Matt. Instead of going to his bedroom, he sat down on the couch opposite her and grinned at her.

"Hello, Matt!" Harry called out loud enough for Matt to hear as he picked up the television remote controller and increased the volume of the television.

"Is Harry there with you?" Matt asked with interest.

"He only just came here now but I'm leaving to find somewhere more private," Candace said as she rose while eyeing Harry with disapproval.

"Do yourself a favor and end whatever you have with her," Harry called out to Matt as Candace walked away, and she giggled and raised her middle finger to him without turning back.

She headed for down the passageway and walked into the guest room since no one was there.

"You both must be really close," Matt said, amused at how relaxed and easygoing Harry sounded in contrast with his formal self.

Candace smiled, "We like to get on each other's nerves. By the way, did you see the news about Bryan's grandfather?" Candace asked, wondering if he would be at Heden, and hoping that they could meet.

"Yes, I did. It's sad."

"Yes, it is. We plan to pay the Hanks a condolence visit on Friday before proceeding to Sogal," she said as she lay on the bed face up.

Matt raised a brow, wondering why she was telling him that.

"That's nice," he said, waiting for her to get to what she really wanted to say.

"Uhm... so, will you be attending the funeral?" She asked, and Matt stifled the urge to chuckle.

"Are you asking because you want to see me there? Or are you asking just so you can make sure not to run into me there?" He asked and Candace sighed.

"Are you still mad at me? I thought you said we were cool now?" She reminded him.

"Sure, we are cool," he assured her.

"So? Will I be seeing you there?" She asked and Matt smirked.

"Do you want to see me there?" He asked and she frowned.

What sort of question was that? Was Bryan not his best friend? Shouldn't he attend the funeral?

"You will be attending the funeral, won't you?"

"Most likely. So?"

"That means we can meet in Heden," she said and he shook his head.

"If you want to see, you have to be explicit," he said and she rolled her eyes.

"Alright. Fine. I want to see you. So?" She asked and he smirked once again.

"I will be in Heden on Sunday. If you want to see me, you can handle the arrangement yourself and let me know where to meet you," he said and she raised a brow.

Was he playing hard to get right now?

"What?"

"You heard me. Each time I wanted to see you, I asked, pleaded, and arranged to meet with you. Now you want to see me, you should do the same," Matt said with a shrug.

"You said we are cool and you're not mad," she reminded him.

"I won't be having this conversation with you if I was mad, would I?"

"Alright. Fine. I will handle the details and let you know," she said with a scowl.

"Good. Take care of yourself, then. Sweet dreams," Matt said, and hung up without waiting for her to say anything else.

Candace frowned as she stared at her phone. Why did it feel like their situation had suddenly been reversed and she was now the one chasing him?

Hello Everyone!

I welcomed my Babygirl on the 29th of September hence the break. We are both taking our time to recuperate. I can't say I'm fully back but I can assure you that I will write whenever and as much as I can.

Dearest privilege readers, you don't have to purchase privilege chapters as I don't want you to not get your money's worth and I don't want to have to feel guilty about you being cheated. I'm sorry if you've purchased some already as I've noticed some of you have done.

I will do my best to release a minimum of two chapters weekly. It could be more. But won't be less than two. Thanks for your understanding and patience. Much love from my baby and I.

Chapter 713 Pleasant Surprise

By Friday, the Hank family had sort of adjusted to the idea of Dawn being Lawrence's daughter, and were now back again to focusing on his death than on his misdeed.

Of course they had no choice than to adjust to the idea of Dawn being a part of the family seeing how much ruckus Tom's public statement had caused all over the internet.

Just as Lucy had expected, Dawn had become one of the most searched topic on the internet from the moment the statement was released, and even though the Hank family didn't like it, they had left it up to Kimberly and her parents to clean up the mess they had created for the kid.

Although, they were still not all that comfortable with having Dawn around, but Evelyn and Jade had better adjusted to it, and Tom and Bryan had no choice since Lucy and Sonia kept bringing the kid to them.

Desmond on the other hand completely kept his distance. Not necessarily because he had anything against the kid, but he just wasn't himself.

He was more quiet than usual and preferred to stay in his study alone when he wasn't having a family discussion with them.

Although it was not yet midday, he was in his study drinking from a snifter of brandy when Evelyn walked in and took the seat opposite him.

"How are you feeling, Des?" She asked, feeling very concerned about him since she could tell he had a lot on his mind.

Apart from the fact that each time she woke up in the middle of the night, she had seen him awake, and he had not been eating much, he was much too quiet and seemed uninterested in everything.

"I'm fine," Desmond said but Evelyn shook her head in disagreement.

"No, you're not. I know you're not, she said and he sighed.

"I'm fine. I just have some stuff in my head I'm trying to work through," he assured her.

"Is this about Dawn?" Evelyn asked and he shook his head.

"No, it's not. What are the kids up to?" Desmond asked, wanting to change the subject.

"Tom and Lucy are in the Den watching cartoons with Dawn. Bryan and Sonia are in their bedroom, and Jade is taking a nap," Evelyn said and Desmond nodded.

"Tom told me you were going to talk to your father before we got the news," Evelyn said as she cautiously broached the subject.

Desmond shrugged, "Yeah."

"Is that what has been bothering you? You haven't been sleeping much and you're always so quiet. Are you feeling guilty or regretful?" She asked knowingly and Desmond sighed deeply.

"He wasn't a great father, but I could have done better," Desmond said quietly as he rose from behind the desk to go stand by the window overlooking the garden.

Evelyn didn't move from her seat and she said nothing as she watched him, waiting patiently for him to tell her all that he was thinking.

"I failed as a son as much as he did as a father. All my knowledge about people. All my wisdom was useless when it came to my own relationship with my father," He said with a shake of his head as he continued to look outside.

"Last night I remembered my conversation with Lucy Do you know what I told her then? I asked her to forgive her mom for being human. I asked her to forgive her mom for not being perfect and

for not being there for her as she would have wanted her to. I said it with such boldness and passion. But I couldn't even take my own advice and do the same for my father. I loved being bitter and judging him. What right do I have to advise anyone when I couldn't even advise myself?" He asked incredulously and this time Evelyn rose when she felt his body tremble with emotion.

"You are being too harsh on yourself," Evelyn said softly as she went to meet him and embraced him from behind.

"I should be. I was just as harsh on him, and my last words to him were terrible. Words I can never take back now even if I wanted to." Desmond said sadly and a tear dropped from Evelyn's eyes.

"You don't have to worry. Lawrence always loved you and he never blamed you for treating him so harshly," Evelyn assured him.

"Maybe he should have. It's funny how last night I remembered for the first time the couple of times he played with me as a kid. Why didn't I ever recall those memories all these years? Why am I only just having these thoughts now that he is gone? Of what use is all of this now?" Desmond asked and Evelyn sighed as she simply patted his chest.

"I really don't know what to say or how to make you feel better. I'm sorry this is so hard for you," she murmured softly.

Neither of them said anything for some time as Evelyn simply held him close and they stood there until Desmond sighed.

"I want you to be alright, Des. I don't like you looking so sad," she said and Desmond smiled as he wrapped his arms around her.

"Don't worry. I will be fine," he assured her as he caressed her face.

"How are you holding up?" He asked, and she sighed deeply.

"Life has to go on," She said and he nodded as he led her back to the desk so they could both sit down.

"How about we go on a trip after this is all over?" She asked, and Desmond raised a brow.

"A trip? Where to?" He asked and she smiled.

"I've made a list of countries and places we should visit. Once the funeral is over and Dawn has gone back to her mom, we can leave," she said and Desmond looked at her with creased brows.

"Why are we traveling all of a sudden?" He asked in confusion.

"It's not all of a sudden that's why I'm telling you now. You said we should focus on ourselves, remember?" She asked and he nodded.

"But Bryan's wedding is coming up soon," he reminded her.

"We can fly in for their wedding from wherever we are," she said with a shrug.

"I thought you were involved in the wedding preparations?" Desmond asked since she had spent the previous day with the girls making the wedding plans and shopping for their funeral outfits.

"I already gave them my opinions. They don't need me to be present to do anything," Evelyn said and Desmond noted from the look in "You really want to travel?" He asked and she nodded.

"Yes. I do."

"Alright. Let's do that then. You said Harry is coming over today?" He asked when he remembered she had mentioned it the previous day.

"Yes. He should be here soon. But Jade isn't aware. He called to inform me of his visit since he thought it might be rude to show up without notice," Evelyn explained and he smiled.

"He is always so polite to a fault. Is Tom aware?" He asked and Evelyn nodded.

"Yes. Tom and Lucy are aware," She said and he nodded.

"And he will be staying here in Jade's bedroom, I suppose?" Desmond asked thoughtfully.

"Yes. Why? You don't want him to?" She asked and he smiled.

"Maybe I should have let you change the decor after all," he said and Evelyn giggled.

"It would serve her right. Next time she would listen to me," Evelyn said and they both turned to the door when one of the housekeepers knocked on it.

"You have a guest," she announced and they both exchanged a look.

"It must be Harry," Evelyn said with a pleased smile as she headed for the door, leaving Desmond to follow her.

As she walked into the living room, she beamed a happy smile when she saw Harry standing there with a duffle bag and before Harry could say a word she embraced him.

"You're welcome, Harry! I'm glad you were able to make it. I was beginning to feel bad for Jade," Evelyn said as she pulled away from Harry.

"..."

"Harry! You're welcome once again to our home. I remember the her eyes that she meant what she was saying.

first and last time you were here," Desmond said with a welcoming smile as he joined them, not giving Harry room to say a word.

"I'm sure he remembers it too," Evelyn said with a wide smile before turning to the two housekeepers who were standing with them and awaiting instruction.

"Go get, Jade and Tom. Tell them Harry is here," Evelyn instructed before taking Harry's hand.

"Thanks for having me in your home. And I'm sorry for your loss," Harry finally said as he looked from Evelyn to Desmond.

"You know you are always welcome here. And thank you," Evelyn said and they turned when Tom stepped out of the Den.

"You missed me so much you couldn't stay at the office without me?" Tom asked as he joined them and Harry chuckled, glad to see that Tom still had his sense of humour.

"I wish I was here for your sake," he said as Tom hugged him and he slapped Tom's back playfully.

"How are you holding up?" he asked as Tom stepped away.

"I'm good. And it's even better seeing you," Tom said and Harry smiled as he turned to Lucy who had just returned after taking Dawn upstairs for her nap.

"I thought you were coming with Jamal and the others?" She asked, since she had been hoping to see Jamal but couldn't see him around.

"They had to settle in at the hotel. They will be here tomorrow," Harry explained as he held out his arms to her and she embraced him.

"Good to see you, HaHa!" she said and he chuckled.

"HARRY!!!" they heard Jade screech from somewhere upstairs seconds before she showed up on the staircase, and Harry grinned.

"Lucy, get those hands off my man!" Jade yelled from the top of the stairs as she raced downstairs, and Harry chuckled as he stepped away from Lucy, who was also laughing along with the others, so he could catch Jade.

Jade threw herself at Harry once she got to the foot of the stairs and he caught her, laughing as she wrapped her legs around him and hugged him fiercely.

"Doesn't this remind you of his first time here?" Evelyn asked Desmond in amusement, and he chuckled.

"I can't believe you're here. Why didn't you tell me you were coming over?" she asked without making any move to get off him.

"It was meant to be a surprise. I guess you're happy to see me?" Harry asked with a grin as he carried her back to join the others.

"Happy? That has to be an understatement," Jade said happily and tightened her grip around his neck as he attempted to set her on her feet.

"Can you at least let him say hello to everyone first?" Tom asked in amusement.

"No! He's here to see me not everyone, so why does he need to say hello to you all? You're here for my sake, right?" she asked Harry and he chuckled.

"Of course," he said, and she kissed his lips soundly.

"See? He came for me," Jade said excitedly as she looked at her audience.

"Y'all have been with your partners, and now I'd like to be left alone with mine. The rest of you can talk to him after I've had my fill," Jade said as she got off him and took his hands.

"Let's go," she said, and Harry raised a brow.

"Where to?"

"My room," she said matter-of-factly.

"Your room?" Evelyn asked, subtly reminding her of their conversation the other day.

"I'm sure Harry wouldn't mind a little pink," Jade said as she took his hand and led him away.

"We will catch up later," Harry whispered to Tom as he followed Jade, and Tom shook his head.

"Isn't that your bag?" Tom asked and before Harry could turn around to go pick it up from where he had left it, Evelyn waved him off.

"I will have someone bring it up now," she promised him as Jade pulled him on, uninterested in whatever they were saying.

"Jade is so extra," Tom said with a shake of his head, and his parents laughed.

"I'd be extra too if I was away from you and you surprised me this way," Lucy said with a grin.

"Where is Dawn? I thought you were with her?" Evelyn asked Lucy since she had become Dawn's self-appointed guardian.

"It's naptime, so she's sleeping," Lucy said and Desmond looked at her.

"I'm sorry we had to put you through this trouble. Thank you, Lucy," he said and she flashed him a smile.

"She is a little Angel, so it's really no trouble taking care of her. I enjoy her company," Lucy assured him.

"Let's go see a movie in the bedroom before she wakes up. I've hardly spent any alone time with you because she's always around you like your shoulder," Tom said as he took Lucy's hand and led her away, leaving Desmond and Evelyn.

Evelyn smiled as she watched them leave, "Everything will be fine. They will all be just fine," she said more to herself than to Desmond, but he nodded in agreement as he placed an arm around her.

He could guess what she was thinking. He could tell she was saying that to reassure herself that their kids had good partners and were doing okay and didn't need her interference.

"Why don't we send someone to take Harry's bag upstairs and then we can go see a movie too or do whatever you prefer?" He suggested and she smiled.

"Sure. Let's do that."

Chapter 714 Bringing Plans Forward

Harry raised a brow when Jade opened the door to her bedroom, and his vision was assaulted by the sheer pinkness of her bedroom.

He said nothing as she pulled him into the room and once she shut the door behind them she turned to him once again and embraced him fiercely.

As his gaze swept across the room, taking in the teenage decor as well as all the Barbie stickers and picture clips of her in dancing costumes decorating the walls, he couldn't help wondering how she had managed to stay sane in such a pink environment, teenager or not.

He felt like if he stepped out of her room now, he would need a moment for his vision to readjust to other colors.

"I still can't believe you're here. I feel like I'm dreaming," Jade said, oblivious to his thoughts, and Harry chuckled as he broke the hug.

"You're not dreaming," he assured her as he lowered his lips to hers.

He kissed her with deliberate slowness, savoring the taste of her lips and exploring every inch of her mouth with his tongue until her entire body tingled.

"How can this be a dream? Does it feel like it?" he asked against her lips.

"It doesn't feel like a dream, unless it's one hell of a wet dream," she said with a dazed look in her eyes and Harry chuckled as he pulled away from her.

"So, how have you been?" Harry asked as he walked over to the bed and sat down.

"You know how I've been. If you ask me how I'm doing right now, I can assure you I'm giddy with pleasure," she said with a happy smile as she joined him on the bed, but instead of sitting on the bed, she sat on his thigh.

"I can't believe you left work for me," she said happily as she cupped his face in both her hands and looked into his beautiful brown eyes.

"I couldn't stand thinking of you alone and lonely," he said and she kissed his lips softly.

"Thanks, Jonas. You have no idea what this means to me. I mean having you here," she said and he ran his hand down her back.

"You don't have to thank me for doing something I ought to do as your partner. Showing up for you when you need me is a basic responsibility," Harry said as he took her hand and kissed her palm.

"Also, I'm not entirely here just because I think you need me. I have my own selfish reasons too. Ludus was so boring without you," he said, and her eyes twinkled happily.

"Hold on. What about your dad, Candace and Jamal?" She asked when she remembered that they were trouble to leave for Sogal the next day.

"We all traveled down here together, but they will be staying at the hotel. They will come over tomorrow," Harry said, and she relaxed.

"That's good. I guess you will be going to join them at the hotel later in the day," she asked, and he shook his head.

"No. I will be staying here with you until we all leave for Ludus," he said and Jade's eyes widened in surprise as she quickly looked all around her room as though realizing for the first time that she had brought him into her bedroom.

"Shit!" She muttered, and Harry chuckled when she quickly got off his laps and hurried over to the wall to pull out all the stickers and picture clips.

It was one thing for him to stay in her pink themed room, but entirely another thing for him to have to look at all those pictures.

"What are you doing? I saw all that already," he said in amusement.

Jade said nothing to him as she focused on the task before her.

"I'd like to take a look at those pictures," Harry said referring to the pictures of her dressed in skimpy dance costumes as a teenager.

Once she was done clearing the wall, she left the Barbie stickers on the floor and shoved her personal pictures into a drawer before turning to him.

"Did my mom know you were coming over?" She asked, wondering if that was why her mother had kept insisting they change the room decor.

"Not until yesterday. Why?" He asked and she shook her head.

"It's nothing. Are you sure you can stay in here? If you can't stand the all pink decor we can move to the guest room," she offered as she stood in front of Harry and he shook his head.

"I don't mind a little pink," he said with a grin and they both laughed at the incredulity of the understatement.

"We both know there is nothing little about all this pink. You know, I don't know what I was thinking going for this," she said with a shake of her head as she looked around her bedroom as if seeing it for the first time.

"You've had no problem staying in here since you got here, have you?" Harry asked reasonably and she shook her head.

"Not exactly. As a matter of fact I loved the fact that it was just as I left it."

"So, why do you have a problem with it now?" He asked and she shrugged.

"Maybe because I'm looking at the room through your eyes right now. Plus you seem out of place in the room. Too masculine," Jade said, remembering all her mom had said about Harry being too masculine for her bedroom.

Although she had not agreed with her mom back then, but now she did. Harry was nothing compared to Todd. He was much more masculine and stood out in the feminine room.

Harry nodded thoughtfully, "I suppose your room has always been this way, right? Not much has been changed in here since my last visit?" He asked, and Jade raised a brow as she looked at him.

It was as though she could see into his head and guess what he was thinking. She could tell he was asking if anything had been changed in the bedroom since she shared it with Todd.

"Everything is still the same," Jade said as she held his gaze squarely, letting him know she understood what he was asking her.

"I see," Harry said as he looked down at the bed, wondering just how much she had done with Todd on the bed.

"Like I said, we can use the guest room if it makes you uncomfortable to be in here," she offered sensing he wasn't uncomfortable.

"And why wouldn't I be comfortable?" Harry asked and Jade rolled her eyes.

"Maybe because you know I shared this room with him. This bed. It is totally understandable if it makes you uncomfortable, I get it. We can move," Jade said with a shrug.

"I'm okay," Harry said, both surprised and amused.

Surprised because he didn't feel as jealous as he had thought he would feel being in the bedroom she had shared with her ex, and amused because Jade thought he was.

"Harry..."

"I'm serious, Jade. There is no reason for me to be jealous of your nonexistent ex. He's not the one standing in here right now with you. I'm the one here. He's not the one you're so in love with right now either. And he's not the one about to kiss you either," Harry said as his arm went around her waist to pull her against him.

He lowered his head to hers once again and took her lips in a fiercely possessive and passionate kiss that left Jade shaken.

"It would be my pleasure to wipe off every memory you have of him in here. Both pleasant and unpleasant," Harry said and Jade raised a brow.

"Are you sure?" Jade asked in a husky voice and he gave her a nod.

"Very sure. For now, I should start by making myself more at home so you can relax," he said as he rose and shrugged off his suit jacket.

"Feel better?" He asked as he took off his tie and she smiled.

They both turned to the door when a knock sounded on it and Jade scowled as she went to answer the door so she could see who was interrupting their moment.

"Your mother said I should bring this up," one of the housekeepers said as she held out Harry's duffel bag, and Jade took it from her.

"Thanks," Jade said before shutting the door.

"You're really going to stay, right?" She asked, and Harry smiled as he took the bag from her and walked over to the bed to open it.

"Yes, I am," Harry said as he took out his neatly folded clothes from the bag and Jade grinned at the thought that their weekend plan was still in tact.

They both spent some time organizing his stuff in the closet and on the dresser and once they were done, Harry looked at her, "I need to freshen up and change out of these clothes," he said as he unbuttoned his shirt.

"You know I'm not going to excuse you even if you want to change your clothes, right?" She asked as she watched him and Harry chuckled.

"I was prepared for that much before deciding to come here," he assured her as he took off his shirt.

"Really?" Jade asked with a wide smile as she stepped closer to him and took the shirt from him while he unfastened his belt.

"Really," Harry said as he stepped out of his trousers.

"I wonder just how much more you're prepared for," Jade said with a suggestive smile and Harry shook his head in amusement as he folded his trouser, but Jade took it from him and threw it into her laundry basket.

"Do you mind clearing up that mess you made on the floor before I get out of the shower?" Harry asked, pointing to the Barbie stickers on the floor.

"I will take care of it," she assured him, and watched with a raised brow as he picked up his towel and his fresh clothes.

"What are you doing? Won't you take off the rest of your clothes?" She asked and he chuckled.

"I will do that in the bathroom," he said with a wink and walked away before she could protest.

Jade was still too happy at the thought of having him around to get upset over not seeing his body.

It didn't matter. She was eventually going to see the whole of him.

If only she had known he would be coming, she would have bought the vibrator so he would see it 'accidentally'.

Maybe it wasn't too late. She could still order for it even now, she thought with a grin.

The best part of this arrangement was that they would be sharing a bed tonight. She was going to be spending her first night with Harry on the same bed, she thought with a giggle.

She was going to have to find something really sexy to wear to bed. Or maybe just go to bed completely naked.

There was no way even Harry was going to resist the allure of a naked feminine body beside him all through the night, Jade thought with a giggle as she went about cleaning the mess she had made on the floor.

Inside the bathroom, unaware of Jade's plan for him, Harry had a grin on his face as he showered.

Seeing her and being with her made him so much more happy than he thought possible and with each passing day he doubted that he would be able to wait until the six months to ask her to be his wife as he had told her.

No. He wasn't sure he could wait that long to have her living with him as his wife. He was going to have to bring his plans forward.

All of his plans. He was already working on taking care of Sara. Once he was done with her, he would go on the planned vacation with Jade and ask her to marry him.

Chapter 715 Movie Time

As Lucy and Tom lay on the bed watching a romcom on his laptop, Lucy tapped on the pause button when it suddenly occurred to her that this was the first time they were actually doing this.

"What is wrong?" Tom asked as he turned to her when she paused the movie.

"Do you realize that this is the first time we are seeing a movie together this way? I mean just lying down idly on the bed and seeing a movie on a laptop?" She asked, and Tom considered it for a moment.

"I guess it is," he said and she smiled.

"There are a lot of things we haven't done together, you know?" She said and he raised a brow.

"Like?"

"Taking selfies, going on normal dates, taking strolls together. We haven't even swam together yet you have a pool," she said and Tom nodded.

"Why don't we make a list of everything we haven't done together so we can tick them one after the other?" He asked, and Lucy nodded as she reached for her journal by the bedside.

"What? Don't tell me you want to do that now. C'mon, we can always do that after we are done with the movie," Tom said but she shook her head.

"We might forget about it. Just give me a moment. It won't take long," Lucy promised as she picked up her journal and pen, while he picked up his phone.

As she quickly penned down all they had mentioned, her head snapped up when she heard the camera shutter sound of Tom's phone, and she saw him grinning as he took pictures of her.

"What are you doing?" She asked even though she knew he had just taken a photo.

"Making memories," he said as he took some more pictures, and he chuckled when she covered her face with both hands.

"I don't think I look good enough right now. My hair is rough and my face is bare," she complained.

"You always look great. And don't think your hand is going to stop me from taking the pictures," Tom said as he continued snapping some more photos and he laughed when Lucy picked up the pillow to cover her face.

"Are you done writing?" He asked, and she bobbed her head.

"Let's take a couple of selfies before resuming the movie," Tom suggested, and grabbed her hand before she could get off the bed.

"I need a minute to brush my hair," she said but he shook his head.

"I don't look my best either...."

"It hardly matters. You're a man," Lucy said matter of factly.

"And that means I am not supposed to look my best?" He asked in amusement.

"It means you look good whichever way you are. Take for instance, even though you haven't shaved since we got here, you still look sexy with those 5 O'clock shadows," she said and he grinned.

"Is that a subtle way of telling me I need to shave?" He asked and she giggled.

"Not at all. If I could stand you with that awful moustache and beard disguise you wore back then, trust me, this is nothing," she said and he howled with laughter.

"Did you never find me sexy for a minute?" He asked and she shook her head.

"Nope. You looked weird and hideous," she said and Tom nodded thoughtfully.

"I guess that's why you didn't hesitate in turning me down," he said and she shook her head

"Maybe one of the reasons. But it was more because I was in love with my driver and plumber," she said with a wink and Tom chuckled as he pulled her closer to himself and quickly took a picture of them both before she could resist.

"Tom!" She hissed as she glared at him, and he chuckled.

"You look sexy, trust me," he assured her as he took some more shots not minding that she was glaring.

Lucy leaned closer and bit his ear, making him yelp, "That's for having ears you don't make use of," she snarled and he chuckled as he rubbed his ear.

"Well, now that I've gotten a couple of natural shots, you can go fix your hair if you want to," Tom suggested and she scowled.

"No, I'm not doing that anymore. I wanted to look my best for your phone, but now that you've captured those, who cares?" Lucy asked, and Tom grinned.

"Exactly. You should know that I love you whichever way you look, you know? Be it in the morning when you are just waking up from sleep, or after you're beautifully dressed for work, or when you look exhausted after a tiresome work day, or last thing at night before you go to bed," Tom said and she rolled her eyes.

"Doesn't mean I shouldn't make an effort to look good all the time. If someone was to steal your phone or hack into your phone, I don't want them seeing any unpleasant pictures of me," Lucy said and Tom chuckled.

"I didn't think you were so concerned about your appearance," he said and before she could respond her phone beeped with a message notification and she picked it up.

Seeing it was an Instagram message notification she moved away from Tom, knowing it was Kimberly who had texted her.

She wasn't really a social media person so no one else could be sending her a DM on Instagram.

"Give me a minute," she told Tom, and he gave her a nod as he directed his attention to the pictures he had just captured, while she responded to Kimberly's message.

[Hello, Lucy! I'm sorry it took so long to reach out to you. I've been busy since I arrived and the only time I could call was late due to the time difference.]

Although Lucy had sent Kimberly a text the previous day to find out if she arrived safely and to assure her that Dawn was doing good and she didn't have to worry herself, it was the first time she was hearing from Kimberly since the last time they talked when Kimberly asked her to watch over Dawn, and that was two days ago.

[It's fine. I figured you had a lot to handle. How are you doing?] Lucy texted back.

[Great! You're online. Can I call you right now?] Kimberly texted and Lucy glanced at Tom.

She knew it wouldn't make sense to excuse herself to go talk to Kimberly outside since that would only make Tom suspicious, and if she kept chatting as well, Tom would also get suspicious since he knew very well that she wasn't exactly the texting type and the only people she exchanged texts with were Sonia, Candace, and Jade.

She didn't want to have to lie to him. Perhaps she could tell him she was chatting with Kimberly?

"Are you done?" Tom asked when he caught Lucy staring at him.

"Not exactly," she said and he raised a brow.

"Is there a problem?" He asked, and she shook her head.

"Do you mind if I give Kimberly a call?" She asked, and his brow rose.

"Why would you want to do that?" He asked, and she shrugged.

"To let her know how Dawn is doing and also find out how she is doing," Lucy said and he shook his head.

"Why would you concern yourself with that when she didn't ask you to? It's not like you're both friends. It's one thing for you to get close to the kid, but I don't want you becoming friendly with Kimberly," Tom said and Lucy sighed.

Of course, that was the exact reaction she had been expecting from him, "Why don't you call her then? Are you not curious to know if she has spoken with her parents..."

"No, I'm not. Why should I be? That is their family business not mine," Tom cut in before she could finish.

"Well, that family business determines how long Dawn will be here," Lucy pointed out.

"And why should that be my problem? I wasn't the one who offered to keep the child, my parents did. If anyone should be speaking with Kimberly, it should be them and not either of us. Lucy, please, do not get any more involved than you already are," Tom said with a very serious expression and she sighed.

"What if I'm involved already?" Lucy asked, and he frowned.

"What do you mean?" Tom asked and Lucy looked away guiltily as she set aside her phone.

"I spoke with Kimberly after she left Dawn..."

"If I remember correctly you said it was your therapist," Tom said in a controlled voice.

"Yes. It was my therapist who called, and then Kimberly texted me and I called her," Lucy explained.

"You lied to me," Tom said simply.

"No, I didn't lie. I just didn't say the whole truth," Lucy said and Tom raised a brow.

"Really? Is that what we do now?" He asked and she shook her head.

"No, I'm sorry. I figured it was going to get you upset, and I didn't want that. Not after we already had a misunderstanding. I'm sorry I didn't tell you the truth," she said, and Tom held her gaze for a moment.

"So, she asked you to take care of her daughter..."

"Tom, please. I meant all I said about Dawn. Kimberly might have asked me to keep an eye on Dawn, but I'm not doing this for her sake. It's for Dawn," Lucy said as she touched his arm.

"I suppose she is the one you were chatting with just now?" Tom asked and Lucy sighed as she gave him a nod.

"She wants to call," Lucy said and Tom shook his head.

"Why can't you just block her? You can take care of the kid until we leave if that's what you want. But I don't want you interacting with Kimberly in anyway. I don't want you being friends or whatever with her. I'm not comfortable with it," Tom insisted.

"What if I let you listen in our calls whenever we talk and you go through our texts? It's really not a big deal. She just needs a friend right now," Lucy pleaded.

"And I don't want you to be that friend. How would you feel about me being friends with a guy you've been involved with in the past and who played such a prank on us?" Tom asked and Lucy nodded.

"Yes, I understand where you're coming from. But shouldn't I be the one feeling awkward about this?" Lucy asked, and Tom shook his head.

"The fact that you're not feeling that way is also making me worried," Tom said and Lucy sighed.

"So, you want me to ignore her?" She asked and Tom nodded.

"Yes, Lucy. Please do. Stop responding to her texts. Let her deal directly with my parents and leave us alone. I don't want any form of connection to her, especially not through you," Tom said, and Lucy sighed when she remembered how he had also been adamant about her not being friends with Anita.

"Alright. If that's what you want, I will stop," Lucy said, thinking that maybe she could ask either Sonia or Jade to reach out to Kimberly instead.

If she couldn't be friends with her for Tom's sake, the least she could was to at least offer her other friends while she kept taking care of Dawn. Even Kimberly could understand that.

"Thanks," Tom said as he raised her hand to her lips.

"Anything for you. Let's go back to seeing our movie then," Lucy said as she got back in position with Tom.

Tom groaned when a knock sounded on the door followed by Dawn's voice calling out to Lucy, "Lucy? I'm up!"

"You see what you caused? We could have finished the movie had you not decided to jot stuff down," Tom said accusingly, and Lucy giggled.

"Don't be so surly. We can always finish the movie later at night. But don't worry, I will take her to Evelyn and Desmond. We should all take turns in spending time with her, especially Evelyn and Desmond since they will be the ones looking after her if Kimberly doesn't come for her soon," Lucy said placatingly.

"Lucy? Are you in there?" Dawn called again as she knocked on the door.

"I'm coming darling," Lucy called back to Dawn as she got off the bed.

"Got to attend to the little Angel," Lucy said and Tom shook his head as he rested his head on the pillow and shut his eyes.

Chapter 716 Red And Lacy

By the time Harry stepped out of the bathroom some time later, Jade had arranged the bedroom and not a thing was out of order.

He smiled as he towel dried his hair and looked around the bedroom, "Good job, esquire," he said and she smiled.

"I was beginning to think you were going to sleep in there. Why did you take so long?" Jade asked with a pout.

"Because I love to take my time to clean up," Harry said and Jade rolled her eyes.

"What's there to spend so much time in cleaning up? It's not like you're a lady, and even I don't take that long in the bathroom. How are we going to share the bathroom use when we get married and we have to be somewhere?" She asked and Harry raised a brow.

"Apart from the fact that there will be multiple bathrooms in the house, I don't see why we need to shower separately," Harry said and Jade looked at him with an amused expression.

"You would want to share the shower with me?" She asked and he gave her a nod.

"I don't see why not. Why? Don't tell me you will be too shy to do that," he said and she giggled.

"Well, I haven't exactly done that before," she said with a shrug.

"Really?" Harry asked with a pleased smile, glad to know it would be a first for her.

"Yeah."

"Well, good thing I haven't done it either, so we will do it together," Harry said and Jade grinned.

Whether or not he knew it yet, she planned to do that with him before they returned to Ludus.

"Are you feeling very tired?" She asked, and he raised a brow.

"Not exactly. Why?"

"Well, I figured we could take a stroll around the neighborhood if you're not feeling too exhausted from the flight," she said and he grinned.

"I guess you're ready to fulfil your four years old promise now," he said and she nodded.

"Yes, I am. It's long overdue already," she said and Harry shrugged.

"Let's do it then," he said and she flashed him a brilliant smile.

"Great! So, about you have something to eat first and then we take the stroll?" She asked just as a knock sounded on the door.

"That should be your lunch," she said as she went to get the door.

Harry watched as she received a tray from the housekeeper and he raised a brow after she shut the door, "I could have gone downstairs for lunch," he said as he watched her take the tray to the bed.

"So, that you can chat with Tom and the others? I don't think so. After I've had you to myself today, you can do whatever else you want tomorrow," Jade said and Harry shook his head in amusement as he returned to the bathroom to hang the towel on the rail.

After he returned to the bed and sat down, Jade sat with him and watched with interest as he ate, "By the way, how is Candace doing?" She asked and he raised a brow.

"She's okay. Why?" He asked as she shrugged.

"She was pretty upset the last time. I wonder if she has resolved things with Matt," Jade said and Harry nodded.

"Judging by the way she has been smiling lately, I believe they have," Harry said and Jade grinned.

"That's cool," she said and Harry looked at her with interest.

"So, how has things really been around here with everyone? How is your dad doing? He didn't look so good earlier," Harry asked and Jade sighed.

"Well, I suppose it's been an emotional whirlwind for him. Being on bad terms with his father, suddenly losing his father, learning his father was involved with a much younger lady and he has a three years old kid sister. That's a lot for anyone to take in," Jade said and Harry nodded.

"Have you tried speaking with him privately? Comforting him?" He asked and Jade shook her head.

"Not exactly. If he's not with the whole family eating or having a meeting, he usually wants to be left alone," she said and Harry nodded.

"That's understandable. Still, you should try to spend some time with him. I think having you around will make him feel better exactly the same way you make me feel better," he said and she grinned.

"Well, I have that effect on you because I'm your girlfriend. His wife is probably what he needs not me," she said and Harry smiled.

"He needs you too. You are his daughter. You have a special place in his heart," Harry said and Jade shrugged.

"I guess I can't help it that I'm so special to everyone," she said with a proud smile and Harry laughed as he focused his attention on his food.

Jade reached for her phone when it started ringing and she received the call when she saw it was from the store she had placed an online order.

She listened for a moment and then smiled as she hung up, "Give me a moment, Jonas. I need to take care of something downstairs," Jade said as she quickly rose and headed for the door.

Her orders had arrived and she needed to be as discreet as possible in picking it up. She didn't want anyone else receiving it on her behalf and bringing it to her in the presence of Harry since she definitely didn't want Harry seeing it yet.

Thankfully, even though it was still afternoon, the house was quiet and it seemed like everyone was in their bedrooms, so she hurried down the stairs and went outside to receive her package.

Immediately after receiving it, she went to the spare guest room downstairs and tore the box open. She grinned when she saw the vibrator as well as the sexy red lingerie set she had bought.

She had made sure the lingerie was revealing enough and left nothing to the imagination. She intended to see just how much self control Harry had, and how he would manage with her body pressed against his all night.

After contemplating for a minute she dialed Sonia's line, "Hey, Sony! Do you have a moment?" She asked immediately Sonia received the call.

"Sure. What's up?" Sonia asked, surprised that Jade was calling when they were under the same roof.

"I need your help with something. Can you meet me in the guest room downstairs? It won't take long," she promised.

"Sure. Be right there," Sonia said as she hung up and then turned to Bryan who had been sleeping beside her before the call woke him up.

"Jade wants to see me. I will be back soon," Sonia said as she kissed his cheek, and Bryan gave her a nod as he adjusted his pillow so he could go back to sleep as she left.

Two minutes later, Sonia knocked on the door and Jade opened it to let her in, and shut the door behind her.

"What is..." Sonia grinned when her eyes fell on the items on the bed.

"Don't tell me you got me that to spice up my sex life with Bryan," Sonia said as she drew closer to the bed and Jade rolled her eyes.

"It's for me, not for you," Jade said as they both sat on the bed.

"For you? Don't tell me you're planning to seduce Harry when he comes for the funeral," Sonia said and Jade raised a brow.

"You are not aware that Harry is here now? He arrived a while ago," Jade said, and Sonia looked at her with interest.

"Really? We were taking a nap. I guess that's why we didn't know. So, you plan to seduce him?" Sonia asked and Jade shrugged.

"Yeah. I called you over because I can't take this to the room. I'm going to go out with Harry soon, when we leave, I want you to help me plant this in my room," Jade said raising the vibrator.

"Not in the box. I don't want him to think it's new. I want it to be lying around somewhere he can easily see it," Jade said and Sonia giggled.

"Want to give him the impression you've been satisfying yourself?" She asked and Jade smiled.

"I don't see why not as long as it makes him jealous and causes him to take action. I just want to see his reaction," Jade said and Sonia nodded.

"Alright. I got you. So, all you want me to do is plant this somewhere he can see it," she said and Jade nodded.

"Yeah. And you can put the lingerie in my drawer," Jade said as she tore out the tag on it.

"You must be desperate to get Harry's D," Sonia said with a grin and Jade giggled.

"Well, it's not exactly about the sex. It's more about getting him to want to do it. I don't want him to have such a strong will when it comes to me. I should be able to have that much control over his body as his girlfriend," Jade said reasonably, and Sonia nodded.

"I get what you mean. You want to be irresistible to him. It makes sense," Sonia said and then Jade bit her lower lip when she recalled what Harry had said about her not divulging information about their bedroom activities to anyone.

"You've got to keep this between us, okay?" She said and Sonia nodded as she made a zip gesture on her lips.

"Sure. Give me a flash call ten minutes after you both leave the house so I can go do it," Sonia said as she picked up the items and placed them back in the box.

"Wait, you can't take it to your bedroom. Bryan is going to see it," Jade pointed out.

"Don't worry. He won't. It's safer I take it upstairs than I leave it here. Everyone is going to wonder what it is when they see me taking it from here to your room later. So it's best I take it upstairs now that everyone else seems occupied," Sonia said and Jade paused her lips.

"Why don't you wait here while I go get Harry out of the room right now? Then you can just head directly for my bedroom from here?" Jade suggested, and Sonia shrugged.

"That works too. Hurry up then before Bryan decides to come down to find me," Sonia said and Jade quickly left the room.

Harry raised a brow when Jade returned to the room, "For someone who didn't seem to want me out of her sight, I'm surprised you were away for so long," Harry said and she smiled.

"Sorry, I had to take care of a little business with Sonia. She was so excited to know Candace came with you. Since you're done eating, why don't we step out now?" Jade suggested and Harry shrugged as he rose and picked up the tray.

"Sure," he said and stepped aside when she reached for the tray.

"I will take it down myself. I know my way around here," he said as he looked her over.

"Why don't you change your clothes," he suggested, reminding Jade that she was still wearing the oversized tshirt she had slept in earlier.

"Oh, sure! Alright. I will be quick so I can meet you downstairs," Jade said and watched as he left with the tray.

Immediately he left, she called Sonia to come upstairs with the box and she quickly changed out of her clothes as she waited for Sonia to show up.

As Harry made his way down the stairs, Sonia who was coming up with the box, stopped and pretended to be surprised to see him, "Oh, my God! Harry! When did you get here?" Sonia asked and Harry raised a brow at her unusual excitement to see him since they weren't that close.

And why was she acting so surprised to see him when Jade had made it clear that Sonia was aware that he was around?

"A while ago. How are you doing?" Harry asked as he looked at the box she was carrying and saw something red and lacy hanging out at the side.

"I'm great! It's good to see you," Sonia said, and remained where she stood smiling at him while Harry wondered what he was supposed to say next.

"Same here. I should get going. Need to take these to the kitchen," Harry said and Sonia flashed him a smile as she watched him walk away before continuing up the stairs to go join Sonia.

Harry narrowed his eyes as he headed for the kitchen and he couldn't help wondering why Sonia had acted so suspiciously.

"Harry, I was just thinking about you," Evelyn said as she stepped out of the kitchen carrying a bowl of cookies for Dawn who was in the Den with Desmond.

"A pleasant thought I hope?" He said, and Evelyn smiled as she signalled to one of the housekeepers to take the tray from Harry.

"Of course. I was just wondering why your family had to stay at the hotel when they're here because of us. Why don't you have them come over? There is room for them here," Evelyn suggested.

"I don't think they would want to put you through that stress..."

"It's no stress at all. I know the girls would be happy to have Candace here with them before she leaves for Sogal. And I'd love nothing more than to have my Jamal here. Besides, Dawn could use the company of a kid like her, and your dad's company might be just what Desmond needs right now," Evelyn said reasonably, and although Harry wanted to argue, he could understand her reason.

And he knew very well that Jamal would be happy to spend some time with Tom and Lucy under the same roof before leaving since he had kept asking when he would get to see them.

"Are you sure about that? They will have to be here until after the funeral," Harry explained and Evelyn smiled.

"Your family is our family too. If it's okay with you, please speak with them about it so they can get ready to move. I will have the driver go pick them. I suppose they're at the reserved suite at the hotel?" Evelyn asked referring to I-Global hotel, since there was always a reserved suite for the family there.

"Alright, I will discuss with them and have the hotel chauffeur bring them over," Harry said and Evelyn patted his arm fondly.

"That's good. You have no idea how happy I am that you're here. I need to get back to the Den to see how Desmond and the kid are doing," Evelyn said before walking away, leaving Harry.

Once she left, Harry dialed his father's line to inform him of his discussion with Evelyn, and while Jamal was excited about the move, Candace wasn't.

She knew it was going to interfere with her plans with Matt.

Chapter 717 I Forgive You

"Mind if I join you beautiful ladies for dinner?" Cassidy asked when he walked into the house and saw Andy, Susan and Maribel seated for dinner.

Although it sounded like a general question, his gaze was on Andy since he wanted to be sure she didn't mind sharing the table with him.

Despite their discussion two days ago about not staying away from his house on her account, he still tried to minimize contact with her as much as he could.

"I don't know about the others, but we could use the presence of a handsome male around here," Andy said with a friendly smile since she had told him she would do her best to get along with him until she left.

Although Cassidy was slightly taken aback by this unusual show of friendliness, he smiled as he glanced at his daughter, "And you ma'am? Am I welcome to stay?" He asked with mock politeness and Maribel giggled.

"You are welcome to stay," she said and he sat down.

"It's nice to have you with us during dinner for a change," Susan said as she dished some food into his plate.

"It's nice to have dinner with y'all for a change," Cassidy said and Andy looked at him, noticing that he had shaved and gotten a haircut.

"Your haircut looks good on you," she said and he looked up at her, surprised that she had noticed his haircut and had even commented on it.

"Thanks," he said, feeling a bit awkward since he really didn't know how to act around her now that she was being so friendly.

"You know, there's a really nice hairdressing salon and spa in the island where you could get your hair washed and done," Susan told Andy, and Andy involuntarily raised a hand to touch her hair.

She couldn't even remember the last time she had walked into a salon to get her hair done. That had been weeks ago with Candace.

"Yeah, Alex pointed it out to me two days ago," she said as she returned her attention to her food.

There was no need to worry about getting her hair made or her nails done here when she wasn't even going anywhere. She could wait to do that after she left here in a couple of days.

"Would you like to make use of their services?" Cassidy asked, and she shook her head.

"No. I'm good," Andy said as she took a sip of water.

"How is work going by the way?" She asked, wanting to know if he was still putting things in order for her freedom.

"Everything is going smoothly. I would be leaving the island the day after tomorrow. But I should be back in two days," he said for the benefit of everyone on the table.

Although Andy was curious to know where he was going, she didn't ask since she doubted it was something he would want to say in front of Susan and Maribel.

"Will you get me pretty toys and books?" Maribel asked, and Cassidy smiled.

"Sure, I will, honey."

"I trust you to be safe," Susan said, knowing better than to ask him any questions about his trip.

"Can we talk privately after dinner?" Cassidy asked Andy, and she shrugged.

"Sure," she said and they all settled into comfortable silence.

A short while later when they were done with dinner, they both offered to do the dishes while Susan went to prepare Maribel for bed.

Neither of them said a word to each other as they stacked up the dishes and took them to the sink in the kitchen.

The moment they stepped into the kitchen, Andy turned to Cassidy as he put on the dishwashing gloves, "What did you want to talk about? And where are you traveling to? Did something happen? Did they find out you're life? Are we in danger?"

Cassidy couldn't help the smile that curved his lips when he heard the worry in her voice, "Calm down. Everything is okay. I'm traveling to secure a safe place for you to stay," he said calmly.

"Oh!"

"Yeah. Although I trust my men to do a good job, I still have to see it myself and be sure," he said as he started washing the dishes.

"Was that what you wanted to talk about?" She asked curiously and he shook his head.

"It's related but not entirely it. And I don't think it's a discussion I want to have with you in here. So, do you mind waiting a bit for us to finish? And maybe we can talk over a nightcap?" He asked, hoping she was still very much in her friendly mode even though they no longer had an audience.

"Alright," Andy said easily as she rinsed and dried the dishes.

Once they were done, they both retired to the living room, "Why don't you get us something to drink while I pick up something from my bedroom? I'd prefer whiskey," He said, and Andy nodded as she went to the wine cabinet while Cassidy headed for his bedroom.

By the time he joined her a couple of minutes later with two envelopes in hand, she had his glass of whiskey with ice in it chilling on the table, and was sipping from a glass of wine as she waited for him.

"It's a nice evening. Let's sit by the terrace outside," he suggested as he picked up his glass of whiskey and she followed him outside with her drink in hand.

"Why does it seem like you are stalling?" She asked the moment they were seated, before Cassidy could speak.

"Stalling?" He repeated and she nodded.

"Yes. First you didn't want to talk in the kitchen while doing dishes, and then just now in the living room you suddenly realized it's a nice evening and want to sit outside. Are you going to ask that we walk over to the waterside next?" She asked dryly, and Cassidy laughed despite himself.

Somehow hearing him laugh, took Andy by surprise and she blinked as she gazed at him.

"What?" Cassidy asked when he noticed the way she was staring at him as if he had sprouted another head.

Andy shook her head. Although he smiled a lot, he wasn't the type who laughed often. However, this wasn't the first time she was seeing him laugh since she knew him.

She was taken aback mostly because it was the first time she was hearing him laugh with no hint of bitterness or sarcasm in his laughter.

"What did you want to say?" She asked, and Cassidy cleared his throat.

"First of all, I wanted to give you this," Cassidy said as he handed one of the envelopes to her.

Andy set her glass aside as she took it from him, and without wasting any time she opened it, and her lips curved in a wide smile when the first picture her eyes fell on was that of Jamal and Aaron.

Cassidy watched as she ran her hands over his laughing face as if by doing that she could actually touch him, "He seems to have grown a bit taller," she said very softly as she pored over the picture taking in every detail.

In the picture Jamal was standing in front of Harry's building with Aaron and was laughing at something Aaron said as he looked up into his face.

"He looks happy," she observed and Cassidy nodded as he waited for her to look at the other pictures so he could answer her questions.

After spending over five minutes looking at Jamal, she moved to the next picture, and she saw Candace and Harry placing their bags in the trunk of a car, and in the next picture, Jamal and Aaron are getting into the same car with Harry and Candace standing by each door as they waited for to shut the doors.

"Who is the elderly man with them?" Andy asked curiously as she looked up to look at Cassidy.

"He is Harry's father. He is also your sister's father," Cassidy said as he watched her reaction, and Andy raised a brow.

"Candace's father? Did he adopt her?" She asked as she glanced down at the picture again.

"No. He is her biological father, and Harry is her twin brother," he said, and she frowned.

"How is that possible? That doesn't make any sense," she said as she looked at him.

"Yeah, that's what I thought too when my men first told me about it, but after they dug deeper they were able to confirm it. It also explains why her and her son has been living with them this whole time," Cassidy said, and Andy looked at him with a frown.

"Are you very sure about this?" She asked, and he gave her a nod.

"But I could also look into it when I leave here and find out exactly how it all happened," he said and her lips curved in a smile.

"It would be nice if that's true. I mean, Candace being with her family. They seem like really wonderful people, and both her and Jamal looks so happy," Andy said and Cassidy held her gaze.

"Would you want me to help you find your family?" He offered, and she shook her head.

"No. That's not necessary. I'm not interested," she said without hesitation.

"But Candace has her own family now," he pointed out and she smiled.

"That's where you're wrong. Candace is my sister, and her family is mine. I'm sure she didn't go searching for them. She met them because they must have been trying to find her. That makes them a worthy family. I'm not interested in finding a family that isn't interested in finding me," Andy said and Cassidy sighed.

"What if they are trying to find you?" He asked and she giggled.

"Then they would have to try harder cause I'm not going to make any effort to find them," Andy said before returning her attention to the pictures.

"Are they going back to Sogal?" She asked curiously.

"They left for Heden. I'm guessing it's because of Lawrence Hank's death," he said and when Andy raised a brow making it clear she wasn't following he explained who Lawrence Hank was and why they had to go there.

"I've asked my men in Heden to keep an eye on them," he said and she raised a brow.

"You seem to have men everywhere," she observed as she picked up her wineglass and sipped from it.

"So it seems," he said without expanding on it.

"Thanks for this. It's good to know they are doing so well," Andy said and he gave her a nod.

"Here," he said as he handed her the second envelope.

"What's this?" She asked as she took it from him and opened it.

"I wanted to give you this now because this might be the last time we get to sit this way. I won't be around for most of tomorrow and I will be leaving first time in the morning the day after tomorrow. By the time I get back to the island, there might not be any time left to talk to you since you'd be leaving immediately," he said as he watched her look through the contents of the envelope.

Andy's eyes widened slightly when she realized what she was holding. They were bank documents with her name on it which contained more money than she could ever imagine owning in her lifetime.

"What is this for?" She asked, looking up at him with disbelief.

"I may not be able to correct the past or the role I played in making it a night are for you, but I'm hoping your future will be better. You can do whatever you want with the money and become whoever you want to be. I hope you'd live a happier life and leave your past behind," he said, and tears gathered in her eyes.

"Is this your way of earning my forgiveness? Are you trying to buy it?" She asked, and he shook his head.

"Not at all. I thought about. I don't think there is anything I could ever do to earn it. What can I do? Hang around all day trying to crack jokes to make you laugh? Buy you stuff and take you out to fancy places? Cook you nice meals? Would any of that take it all back? What could I ever really do to make up for my crime against you? It's pointless. I don't think I deserve it either. So, I think it's best I let you go and we part ways for good so you wouldn't have to remember each time you see me. The money isn't for buying your forgiveness. I'm giving you that because I genuinely wish that you'd have better life and that's the least I can give to you. Please accept it. I assure you that there are no strings attached to it," he said and Andy looked down at the envelope.

The amount of money there was enough to set her up for life and she wouldn't need to lift a finger to work for money ever again in her life if she didn't want to.

"Thanks for this," Andy said, knowing that she would need the money.

Cassidy gave her a nod, "No. Thank you. I should let you get some rest now. Goodnight," he said as he rose abruptly to go inside.

"Alex?" She called before he could leave, and he looked her.

"It's good enough for me that you understand that nothing you could do would ever make up for what you did. That's all the apology I need. I forgive you," she said, and he smiled slightly.

"Thanks," he said with a slight bow before walking into the house.

Hello Everyone!

I welcomed my Babygirl on the 29th of September hence the break. We are both taking our time to recuperate. I can't say I'm fully back but I can assure you that I will write whenever and as much as I can.

Dearest privilege readers, you don't have to purchase privilege chapters as I don't want you to not get your money's worth and I don't want to have to feel guilty about you being cheated. I'm sorry if you've purchased some already as I've noticed some of you have done.

I will do my best to release a minimum of two chapters weekly. It could be more. But won't be less than two. Thanks for your understanding and patience. Much love from my baby and I.

Author's Note.

Thank you so much for the love and support this last month. Thanks for your patience too. I'm back now and updates will resume as usual. You can purchase privilege chapters if you wish to. And for those asking, Nicole and I are doing great. Much love.

Chapter 718 Fighting Over Harry

After taking a stroll around the neighborhood as planned, Harry and Jade were now seated on the swings at the porch in the cool of the evening just before dinner.

"You know, this reminds me of the first time we both sat down here," she said with a small smile as she glanced at Harry.

"Really? What do you remember about it?" Harry asked, and she grinned.

"I remember our mugs of warm chocolate, our conversations, and most importantly I remember thinking that you had the most gorgeous pair of brown eyes I've ever seen and I could look into them all night and not be satisfied," Jade said and Harry narrowed his eyes.

"Now that we are at it, I suppose I can trust you not to go about complimenting other men's eyes or spending long hours chatting with them and staring into their eyes in my absence, right?" Harry asked, and Jade glared at him as she slapped his arm.

"What do you mean by that?" Jade asked, and he shrugged.

"Just saying I wouldn't want my girlfriend to be gazing into another guy's eyes," Harry said and she scowled.

"You didn't seem to have a problem with me doing that to you when I had a boyfriend back then," Jade said and Harry nodded.

"Of course. That's because I know myself. If it were some other guy he could have taken advantage of you..."

"Taken advantage of me? Like force himself on me under my father's roof or what?" Jade asked irritably.

"Maybe you don't realize it yet, but we did a bit of flirting and it was mostly from your end..."

"Harmless flirting. Nothing happened, remember?" She cut in.

"Only because I kept trying to be a gentleman. Despite how I felt about you, I maintained my distance even though I wanted to kiss you each time you gazed into my eyes the way you did," Harry said and she smiled.

"You wanted to kiss me?" She asked and Harry shook his head.

"That isn't the point," Harry said and she rolled her eyes.

"It is, seeing how both ended up here together four years later," Jade said with a shrug.

"Esquire...."

"And this right here is the spot where that pet name was birthed," Jade said with a grin, not wanting Harry to say anything that might ruin the mood and get her upset since she didn't like what he was saying.

"What I'm trying to say is, when I'm with you, I'm with you hundred per cent. You have all of me. I want it to be the same for you. You won't see me sitting down and entertaining other females...."

"For Christ's sake, Jonas! For Christ's sake, can you stop? Are you trying to say I'm not trustworthy simply because I sat up conversing with you late at night when I had a boyfriend? Are you judging me now?" She asked in annoyance.

"If you're going to be so annoying, maybe you should go hang out with Tom and the others," Jade said as she rose to leave, but Harry grabbed her hand and pulled her back, without leaving his seat.

"I'm not judging you, and neither am I saying I don't trust you..."

"Then what are you saying?" Jade snapped angrily.

"I'm saying I love you too damned much and I want to be the only one whose arms you fall into when you trip on the stairs, and I want my eyes to be the only ones you admire that way, and I want to be the only one you sit up with late at night talking about everything and nothing, and I am too damned possessive of you to want to even see you smiling at a guy who is not family," Harry said as he nuzzled her neck, and Jade found herself smiling involuntarily.

"That's not how you sounded," she said with a pout as she placed her arms around his neck.

"Well, when it comes to you, I find it difficult saying the right things the right way," Harry said as he also wrapped his arms around her waist.

"So I guess if you were him you'd have reacted the same way he did that night?" Jade asked not wanting to mention Todd's name.

"I can't be him. If I were your boyfriend you'd have no reason to enjoy the company of another male in the first place because I'd make you so happy every other guy would look like clowns to you," Harry said and Jade giggled.

"Well, you're doing a good job of that already," Jade said as she let out a deep sigh.

"Well, I'm glad he slipped. That's the only way I could have gotten to spend that time with you anyway," Harry said and Jade grinned.

"You're a man of contradictions, Jonas. First you made me feel like I was a bitch for hanging out with you that night, and now you're making me feel like you're glad I did," she said and Harry smiled.

"I'm glad you did. He never deserved you. I always knew I was the man for you even though you were too blinded by love to see it then," he said with a scowl and she smiled.

"You almost got me really pissed, you know?" She asked, and he nodded.

"How would you feel about me complimenting a random lady about her pretty eyes or how beautiful she is?" Harry asked and she scowled.

"You wouldn't dare," she said, with her teeth bared and Harry chuckled.

"That's what I'm talking about. So, we only have one rule in our relationship. Don't do anything you wouldn't want me to do. It's cool that you complimented me that way since you felt drawn to me even if you didn't realize it then. But that's me. It should be a one off thing between us. You are the most beautiful lady in the world to me and that's that," Harry said, and Jade kissed him.

"And you are the most handsome man in the world to me, and you have the most beautiful pair of eyes I've ever seen," she said as she kissed his eyes, and Harry chuckled.

"What an eyesore. Enough of that already," Tom said as he joined them and Jade rolled her eyes.

"Shooo! Can you just leave us alone?" Jade asked with a scowl.

"Nope, I can't. You've had enough of Harry. It's my turn," Tom said and Harry chuckled earning him a glare from Jade.

"It's not funny. Tell him to leave," Jade said and Harry jerked his head towards the door.

"You heard her. Leave," Harry said and Tom raised a hand to his chest dramatically.

"You hurt my feelings Harry. I thought it was us both against the world," Tom asked and Harry chuckled while Jade scowled.

"No, it's not. You don't see me cutting into your time with Lucy..."

"Lucy isn't your best friend, and you didn't meet Lucy first. I'm the reason you ever got to know Harry," Tom said matter of factly.

"I can't believe you're fighting with me over my boyfriend," Jade said with a scoff of disbelief as she fanned herself with her hands.

"And I can't believe you're fighting with me over my best friend," Tom said, mimicking her gesture by fanning himself too, and Harry grinned as he watched them.

"Are you just going to sit there and smile? Say something!" Jade said and Harry chuckled.

"I feel like two ladies are fighting over me," Harry said and Jade shook her head as she turned to Tom.

"I hate you," she said, and he grinned.

"The feeling is mutual, Jadey," Tom said as he placed his arm around her shoulder and she pushed him away.

"Come find me after you are done with him," Jade said to Harry as she walked away, leaving them alone since Harry wasn't being helpful or taking her side.

Harry chuckled as he watched her leave, and once she disappeared he turned to see Tom watching him with a mocking expression and he chuckled.

"What?" Harry asked innocently and Tom shook his head.

"You're completely gone. She has you wrapped around her fingers," Tom said and Harry grinned.

"Very pretty fingers if you ask me. And you are one to talk," Harry said dryly.

"What do you mean?"

"Lucy has you wrapped around her toenails. The smallest one at that," Harry said with a smirk.

"I never said it was a bad thing to be wrapped around her fingers, you know? Anyway, I came to get you both because your dad and co just arrived. And everyone else is in the Den apart from you two," Tom informed Harry.

"Why didn't you just say so then instead of getting her so worked up?" Harry asked, and Tom shrugged.

"Because it's more fun this way I guess. That's what siblings are meant for."

"You need to grow up, Tom," Harry said as he rose and Tom grinned.

"Why should I? I don't want to," Tom said as he placed his arm around Harry and they both laughed as they headed for the house.

Chapter 719 Socks?

Earlier, after seeing a movie and chatting for some time, Tom and Lucy decided to go downstairs to see what the others were up to, and they met Evelyn, Desmond, Sonia, Bryan, and Dawn in the Den all playing a game of monopoly with Dawn managing the bank.

No sooner had they sat down before one of the housekeepers came in to inform them that they had visitors, so they had all gone out to greet Aaron and co.

"Lucy!" Jamal exclaimed excitedly the moment he sighted her, and ignored everyone else as he ran up to her.

Dawn who had been clinging to Lucy's hand as they walked into the living room, quickly took a step backward to get out of Jamal's way as he embraced Lucy.

Who was he? Dawn mused as she watched the interaction between Jamal and Lucy with a bit of jealousy.

"My dearest Jam," Lucy said with a wide smile as she crouched in front of him to embrace him, neither of them paid attention to the other adults as they conversed.

"I missed you. I'm happy I get to see you again," Jamal said and Lucy grinned.

"Me too," Lucy said, and Jamal's gaze shifted from Lucy to Dawn who was standing behind Lucy and staring at him.

"Who is she? Do you have a daughter now?" Jamal asked, whispering into Lucy's ears.

The little girl looked really pretty, and if she was Lucy's daughter, that meant she was going to be his girlfriend, Jamal thought.

Lucy turned and smiled when she saw Dawn, "Oh, this Dawn," Lucy said as she brought forward with one arm so that she was holding them both with each of her arms.

"Jamal, this is Dawn, my precious friend, and Dawn, meet Jamal, my darling cousin. I hope you both get along as my favorite little ones," Lucy said, introducing them both, and on hearing the introduction, the other adults looked down at the trio.

Jamal stared at Dawn with undisguised curiosity, and she hid her face in the crook of Lucy's neck shyly, amusing all the adults.

"I guess you don't want to say hello to me? You didn't miss me, did you?" Tom asked, and Jamal shook his head.

"Not at all. I only missed Lucy," Jamal said and everyone laughed while Tom scowled at him.

"I didn't miss you either," Tom said as he eyed Jamal with mock displeasure.

"You missed only Lucy? What about me?" Evelyn asked, and Jamal beamed a smile at her as he moved away from Lucy to embrace her.

"I missed you, grandma Evelyn, but not as much as I missed Lucy," he said as he embraced her and Dawn listened to them, feeling even more jealous now as she saw how well Jamal got along with everyone while she didn't.

"I can live with that. I missed you even more my darling. I'm so glad you're all here. Candace, if you don't mind, you'd be sharing a room with Dawn, and Jamal can share a room with his grandfather," Evelyn informed Candace, so that the housekeepers could take their bags to their rooms.

"Sure. Not a problem," Candace said with a nod and Evelyn signalled to the housekeepers to take the bags to the guest rooms.

"Why don't I see Harry and Jade anywhere around? Did they run off somewhere to mourn alone?" Aaron asked curiously and they all laughed.

"They're at the porch," one of the housekeepers informed them.

"I will go inform them you're here," Tom excused himself, while the others headed for the Den, apart from Sonia who chose to remain with Lucy and the kids.

"Why is she so shy?" Jamal asked Lucy when Dawn kept hiding her face away from him.

Lucy and Sonia grinned, "Probably because she doesn't know you so well yet," Lucy said and Jamal shook his head.

"I don't know her so well yet, but I'm not hiding. Maybe she is being that way because she is a kid," Jamal murmured making Lucy and Sonia giggle, and Dawn glared at him.

"Don't call me that!" Dawn hissed at him, and Jamal raised a brow as he had watched Harry and Tom do a lot of times in the past.

"Why not, kid?" Jamal asked, liking that she was no longer hiding and was talking to him now.

"Because I'm not a kid," Dawn said stomping her foot in a rare show of temper, and Lucy stuck her tongue in her cheek as she exchanged a look with Sonia.

"You are stomping you foot like a kid," Jamal pointed out with an amused shake of his head as he stuck his hand into his pocket, feeling like the adult between them.

Seeing that Dawn was fast losing her temper and might pounce on Jamal if he continued trying to rile her up the way he was doing, Lucy decided to step in.

"Jamal, you're being mean to Dawn, and that's not nice. I expect you both to get along," Lucy said and seeing the disapproval on her face, Jamal sighed.

"I'm sorry," Jamal said and Lucy shook her head.

"You should be apologizing to Dawn, not me," Lucy said, while Sonia continued to watch them all in amusement.

She always found it funny how easily Lucy got along with kids. And even now, she was more amused by the communication between the kids. They both seemed really interesting.

"Are you mad?" Jamal asked Dawn, and she eyed him with dislike.

She had thought he was cute when she first saw him, but after hearing him talk about her that way she had no doubt that she was way smarter than him even if he looked older than she was. This was why she didn't like associating with kids.

"Jam..." Lucy stopped when Sonia shook her head to stop her from speaking. Sonia was more interested in seeing how Jamal would go about his apology and whether or not Dawn would accept it without Lucy's interference.

"I guess you're mad. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have called you a kid when you didn't like it," Jamal said, looking genuinely remorseful, and Lucy nodded in approval.

"Can we be friends?" Jamal offered with a smile and held out his hand when Dawn said nothing but merely stared at him after his apology.

"Do you know about stocks?" Dawn asked, and Jamal looked at her with a confused expression while Sonia and Lucy also looked lost.

"Socks?" Jamal asked, and Dawn rolled her eyes as she had often watched her mother do.

"No. Stocks," she said, resisting the urge to call him a dummy.

"No. What's that?" Jamal asked and Dawn smiled as she folded her arms in front of her.

"Do you know about cryptocurrency or forex?" She asked again, and Sonia raised a brow, impressed by how brilliant she sounded.

Jamal frowned as he shook his head, "Are those cartoons? I've not seen them yet," Jamal said innocently, and both Sonia and Lucy pressed their lips together to stifle their laughter.

"How many languages can you speak?" Dawn asked and Jamal shook his head.

"Why do I need to learn other languages?" He asked cluelessly, and this time Dawn shook her head and gave him a look that said she thought he was dumb.

"I can't be friends with you. You don't know much of anything. I might be younger than you but I'm smarter," Dawn said, and with her chin raised high, and her shoulders held up, she looked at Lucy.

"Please excuse me," she said politely before walking away with the grace of a lady while Jamal stared at her in stunned disbelief.

"She's a little vixen! A vengeful bitch! I love her," Sonia said with a loud laugh and a clap of approval and Lucy glared at her to shut her up.

"Jam..."

"She said I'm not smart," Jamal told Lucy in disbelief.

It was the first time he had even been spoken to in such a manner. He was often referred to as a genius, yet Dawn had just said he didn't know much of anything. He didn't know if his feelings were hurt or if he was angry. But he was somewhere between both.

"I'm sure she doesn't mean that. You hurt her feelings and she was probably just trying to get back at you," Lucy said softly and Sonia rolled her eyes.

"But I apologized," Jamal said and Lucy nodded.

"Yeah. And I will make sure she also apologizes to you, alright? Let's go join the others," Lucy said as she took Jamal's hand and led him to the Den, while Sonia giggled as she followed them.

"I hope my daughter will be that vicious!" Sonia said, and Lucy turned to glare at her, making her grin.

She had been telling Bryan earlier that the house was too quiet, but she had no doubt that having the kids around was going to liven things up and make the house more fun for her now. She looked forward to watching them interact more often, Sonia thought with a grin.

Author's Note.

Thank you so much for the love and support this last month. Thanks for your patience too. I'm back now and updates will resume as usual. You can purchase privilege chapters if you wish to. And for those asking, Nicole and I are doing great. Much love.

Chapter 720 Regular Vs Smart Kid

Inside the house, Jade was fuming as she headed for her bedroom, but she stopped abruptly when she heard the sound of laughter coming from the Den and she headed there instead since she could tell Candace and the others had arrived.

The frown on her face was quickly replaced with a bright smile when she saw them, "You're here," she said as she went to embrace Aaron first.

"There's no reason to ask how you're doing. You look as fit as a fiddle," she said as she kissed his cheeks, and Aaron chuckled.

"I'm glad to see that you're fine yourself."

"Thanks for choosing to come here with Harry. I know that was the only way he could have left Ludus," Jade said and Aaron smiled but before he could speak, Candace speak.

"I'm the one you should be thanking since I suggested it first. Your wuss of a boyfriend didn't have the heart to say what he wanted and just went about carrying a long face..."

"I believe you're not talking about me," Harry cut in from the doorway, and they all laughed.

"Unless Jade has another boyfriend you know about," Candace said with a shrug.

"Please you both shouldn't start. Not now. Not here," Aaron said before Harry could speak again and Harry frowned.

"Why do you always ask us to stop just when it's my turn to respond? You make me feel like you're more on Candace's side than you're on mine," Harry complained

"Now you're whining. Are you sure this is what you want for yourself, Jade? Don't you want to date a real man?" Candace asked and the others laughed.

"Don't talk about my boyfriend like that," Jade said with a scowl as she went to stand beside Harry, and he grinned at her as he placed an arm around her, but she shrugged it off.

"I'm still mad at you for not sending Tom away," she hissed at him, and Harry looked at her incredulously.

"Are you on my side or not?" He asked, and she shrugged.

"It depends on whose side you take going forward," Jade said and then glanced at Sonia who just walked in with Lucy and Jamal.

The moment their gaze met, Jade raised a brow and Sonia gave her a nod, letting her know she had kept the items in the bedroom.

"What's wrong, Jam?" Candace asked when she noticed the frown on Jamal's face as they all sat down.

Sonia giggled, but before she could say anything Lucy shot her a look, and she rolled her eyes, "You're no fun," she muttered to Lucy as she remained quiet, leaving Jamal to answer the question.

Seeing that all eyes were on him now, Jamal sighed. He was at least thankful that Dawn wasn't here right now. It would have been more embarrassing for him, "What is a socks and crypcuncy and forest?" Jamal asked, and this time both Lucy and Sonia giggled as the others looked at him with a lost expression on their faces.

"What?" Harry and Candace asked in confusion.

"He means, stocks, cryptocurrency and forex," Lucy explained and they all laughed, making Jamal feel even worse seeing how it seemed like everyone else knew about it but him.

"Why are you suddenly asking about stuff like that?" Candace asked, looking to Lucy for an explanation.

"He had a little misunderstanding with Dawn..."

"She called me stupid for not knowing what those words mean," Jamal said, feeling annoyed.

"Dawn called you stupid?" Evelyn asked in disbelief and looked around for Dawn, but only then did she realize that Dawn wasn't with them.

"Where is Dawn?" Evelyn asked Lucy.

"First of all, she didn't exactly call him stupid..."

"Yes, she did. She called him stupid in the most politest of ways. She said he didn't know much of anything. And that is exactly what a stupid person is," Sonia cut in, and Lucy glared at her.

"So, where is Dawn?" Desmond asked with interest. For a kid who hardly said a word around them, she seemed to have said quite a lot to Jamal in the short time since he arrived.

"She left after delivering the blow," Sonia announced with a wide smile.

"She probably went to her bedroom because she didn't want to be in the same space with Jamal. For what it's worth, Jamal started it first by calling her a kid. She only returned the favor," Sonia quipped, making it clear she had enjoyed the show and whose side she was on.

"After I apologized," Jamal said defensively.

"I wish I was there," Jade said with a grin and Jamal looked from Sonia to Jade, taking note of his enemies.

"You are not stupid, Jam. You know most of the things that kids your age should know, and I bet if you asked her about most of the stuff you know she wouldn't know them either," Candace assured her son, seeing how hurt he was by Dawn's words.

"So, those things she asked me are adult stuff?" Jamal asked, and Candace nodded.

"Why does she know adult stuff and I don't when I'm older than her?" Jamal asked, and Candace looked at her father to step in.

"That is because she was raised to play less and study more. Would you rather spend all your day studying and being taught about adult stuff, than watching cartoons and doing things that kids of your age should do?" Tom asked before Aaron could speak, and Jamal's brows pulled together as he looked at Tom.

"What did you spend your time doing?" He asked, and Tom shrugged.

"I did everything. I studied when I should, and played when I should. As a kid your age I listened to my parents and let them guide me," Tom said, and Candace flashed him a smile of gratitude.

"And you turned out so wealthy, right? You know what all those words mean, don't you?" Jamal asked and Tom nodded.

"Sure. And I know a lot more too. But I had no idea what those words meant at her age or yours," Tom said, and Jamal thought her about it for a moment and then he smiled.

"Then I guess I'm not stupid for not knowing those things at my age. I want to be just like you when I grow up," Jamal said, and Tom grinned.

"Not like your uncle Harry?" Tom asked pleasantly and everyone laughed while Jade rolled her eyes.

"Say it, Jamal," Tom urged him with an eager smile, and Jamal smiled.

"Well, I'd like to be like him too, but more like you. I want a house like yours and lots of cars like you have. And I want my company to be as big as yours, and to have a girlfriend that is exactly like Lucy," Jamal said and everyone laughed.

"Exactly like Lucy?" Jade asked with a raised brow.

"Yes. Not like you and Sonia. Like Lucy," Jamal said in case they had missed what he meant. They had drawn the battle line after all by siding with his enemy.

"Well, I don't mind. I'd also want my son to have a girlfriend like Lucy," Sonia said with an agreeable smile that only annoyed Jamal even more.

"I should go find Dawn and see what she is up to," Lucy said as she rose.

"Can I come with you?" Jamal asked, and Lucy smiled as she shook her head, knowing that with Jamal's newfound confidence, it would be a mistake to let him meet Dawn. They would both argue again.

"No, Jam. I need to speak with Dawn alone. We will join you shortly," Lucy promised.

"Can I come?" Sonia asked with a grin, and Lucy scowled at her.

"No," Lucy said before walking away.

Tom turned to Harry, "You heard what Jamal said, right? He wants to be more like me," Tom said and Harry chuckled.

"Grow up, Tom," Harry said in amusement.

"Never," Tom said as he placed his arm around Harry's shoulder, while Jade scowled at them both.

"You seem excited," Bryan said as he watched Sonia, and she grinned.

"Dawn is exceptionally brilliant! And the interaction between her and Jamal was epic," Sonia confided, and Bryan chuckled.

"You love seeing people argue and fight?" He asked and she shook her head.

"Argue and fight? Nope. I don't. What I love is witty arguments and conversations," Sonia said as she went on to give Bryan a detailed narration of what had happened between Jamal and Dawn, making sure to mimic their action and tone.

Bryan grinned as he watched her speak and soon everyone else in the Den was drawn to Sonia's story and were now listening to her, apart from Jamal who was too busy thinking about possible questions to ask Dawn when next he got the chance.

He was determined to prove to her that she was the kid between them, and that he was smarter than her.

So what if he didn't know what socks and those other silly words meant? He could always learn them like Tom did. And what was the big deal about being able to speak multiple languages? He could learn those too as long as he put his mind to it.

Dawn wasn't smarter and he was going to prove it to her!

As if reading his mind, Candace looked at him, "Are you still upset by what she said?" Candace asked and Jamal shook his head.

"No. I know I am smart. She is a kid and she knows nothing. I'm going to prove it to her," Jamal said with a determined expression, and Candace grinned.

"I think having Jamal stay here was a good idea," Desmond whispered to Evelyn in amusement, and she giggled.

After listening to Sonia's narration, they were all curious and eager to watch more of the interactions between the two kids.

Away from there, Lucy met Dawn upstairs in her bedroom arranging her stuff and Lucy raised a brow, "What are you doing?"

"I'm making room for Jamal's mother. Evelyn said we are sharing the room," Dawn explained without looking up at Lucy.

"You don't mind sharing the room with her, do you?" Lucy asked since Evelyn had not asked Dawn before making the arrangement.

"I wish I was sharing the room with you instead," Dawn said honestly as she looked at Lucy this time, and Lucy giggled as she sat on the edge of the bed.

"If I share the room with you there will be no room for Candace," Lucy said and Dawn shook her head.

"She can share the other room with Tom," Dawn pointed out, and Lucy giggled at the thought of letting her boyfriend share a room with another lady. One as attractive as Candace whether or not they were cousins. No way.

"Tom wouldn't want that, and neither would I," Lucy said and Dawn pursed her lips.

"How about I share the room with you both?" Dawn suggested, and Lucy grinned.

"Is there a reason you don't want to share the room with Candace?" Lucy asked and Dawn shrugged as she went to sit beside Lucy.

"I don't know her. And she is his mom. I don't like him. He's a mean jerk," Dawn said and Lucy smiled.

"Why don't you like him? He already apologized to you for being mean. Jamal is a nice kid," Lucy pointed out.

"Nice people are not mean. He shouldn't have been mean in the first place if he was nice," Dawn said, and Lucy marveled at her intelligence.

"You were mean too. You called him stupid," Lucy pointed out, and Dawn shrugged.

"I never said I was nice, did I?" She asked, and this time Lucy laughed.

Lucy couldn't help but wonder the kind of conversations Dawn had with her mom or people around her back at home to make her so witty and smart.

"You should apologize to him," Lucy said and Dawn sighed.

"Why? I didn't insult him. I only stated facts. He doesn't know much of anything," Dawn said matter of factly.

"He also stated a fact..."

"No. I'm not a kid," Dawn stated before Lucy could finish, and Lucy sighed.

"You are smart, right?" Lucy asked and Dawn nodded.

"What do you call people who are around your age grade?" Lucy asked and Dawn gave her a pointed look.

"They can be called kids because they act like kids. I'm smarter than most of the people of my age grade so I'm not a kid. My mom always says I'm not a kid," Dawn said and Lucy nodded.

"Alright. Fine. You're not a kid. Still, you owe Jamal an apology. And I'd like you to be on your best behavior. No more arguing with him," Lucy said and Dawn raised her chin.

"Fine. I will apologize but I won't argue with him if he doesn't argue with me," Dawn said and Lucy nodded.

"That's fair. Let's go join the others now," Lucy said as she rose and took Dawn's hand.

"Why does everyone like him?" Dawn asked, since she had been thinking about it before Lucy came in.

"Because he's a good kid," Lucy said and Dawn nodded thoughtfully.

"I see. Do you like him more than me?" Dawn asked and Lucy's lips twitched.

"I love you both the same. That's why I'm hoping you'd both get along so I don't have to pick sides," Lucy said, and Dawn sighed since she had been hoping Lucy would say she loved her more.

Well, she was just going to make sure that everyone liked her too and even more than they liked Jamal.

There was nothing special about him after all. He was just a regular kid, and she was smarter. She was going to show them all just how smart she was.