

## Love the Second Time Around Chapter 56 - 60

### Chapter 56 Freeing Louis

"These are my legs, and I can go wherever I please. It's none of your business."

Dominic's greeting sounded about as friendly as a bullet.

I was taken aback by his aggressive reply. I was just curious.

Too tired to bicker with him, I ignored Dominic and turned to Benjamin to ask, "My brother's in the police station nearby. Do you want to go over now? They wouldn't let me bail him out."

To my surprise, Mitch spoke up instead.

"Let's go, then. I have a few questions myself."

I did not know why Mitch had come along, but anything was fine as long as they got my brother out.

We set off for the police station.

I was just here a couple of hours ago. This visit marked my third time meeting Xavier that day.

The policemen looked at the line of men behind me in shock.

"They're my friends, and they're lawyers. Could you let us in to meet my brother again? Just them is fine too."

Xavier was easily convinced and let us in without further questions.

Outside the interrogation room, Mitch pushed the door open and went in. I had planned to join the discussion, but I was stopped by Benjamin.

"Let Mitch go in alone. You might hinder his interrogation."

I clenched my fists in concern, though I reluctantly took Benjamin's advice.

Xavier brought Dominic, Benjamin, and me to an adjacent waiting room and served us three cups of water.

I paced the room in worry.

Though I was well aware of Benjamin's capabilities, I knew next to nothing about Mitch. I did not doubt his ability; I merely trusted Benjamin more.

My incessant pacing must have annoyed Dominic, who pulled me down onto the seat next to his.

"Stop walking around. You may not be tired from pacing, but you're making my head spin."

His manhandling ways, coupled with his rudeness from earlier, pissed me off.

I didn't ask him to fly all the way here. He came without informing me, and now he's complaining? He needs to get his head checked.

I tossed his earlier words back at him angrily. "These are my legs, and I can pace around as much as I want to. Leave me alone."

Benjamin, who had been standing beside Dominic, burst into laughter. Both of us turned to glare at him.

I guessed that Dominic was glaring at him out of embarrassment.

Meanwhile, I was glaring at him for his audacity to laugh in such a nerve-wracking situation.

Why couldn't he have gone in with Mitch to talk to my brother?

My anxiety was making my brain go haywire. It completely skipped my mind that having two lawyers question him at once could lead to more confusion down the road.

Our twin glares sent Benjamin into a placating gesture. "Please, carry on. Just pretend I'm not here."

I glared daggers at him again. Continue what? Continue bickering?

Sitting still was beyond me. I stood up barely a couple of minutes later and began pacing around the room again.

"What on earth can you achieve by pacing mindlessly in circles? Can't you sit down and wait?" Dominic complained.

"My brother's the one in trouble. It's fine for you to relax, but I can't!" Exasperated, I wondered why he tagged along in the first place.

"Liliana, don't worry. Mitch's family is in Jadeborough. If your brother is innocent, nothing will happen to him. Even if he's guilty, we'll figure something out," Benjamin cajoled.

I knew he had nothing but good intentions, but the sheer thought of my brother being guilty had me launching into another tirade.

"That's nonsense! Lou would never do such a thing!"

Benjamin must have had the patience of a saint, after all. After getting a scolding on the phone and in this room, he could still smile in response.

“How can you throw a tantrum when he flew all the way here to help you?” Dominic asked coldly.

My heart twisted, unable to deny the truth in his words.

He’s probably referring to Benjamin and Mitch. What is he here for, then? A good show?

Ignoring Dominic, I left the waiting room and stood outside the interrogation room anxiously.

About ten minutes later, Mitch came out. I rushed to him.

While I desperately wanted to see Louis, I needed to know more urgently if Mitch could help him.

“My brother told you everything, right? You have to believe him; he would never commit such a crime. I met that girl this afternoon, and she-”

Mitch cut in, “Hold on, I need to make a call. We’ll get your brother out soon. Let’s talk about the rest at the hotel.”

I fell silent for a brief moment before exclaiming, “You can get Lou out? But they told me he’s not on bail.”

“I can get him out. Could you call the other two and wait for me in the lobby? Give me twenty minutes.” Mitch sounded confident.

All the tension from earlier left my body. Benjamin had been telling the truth; Mitch’s presence made wonders.

Knowing I could bail Louis out, I forgot all about my anger at Dominic. I ran back to the waiting room and repeated what Mitch had told me.

After twenty minutes or so in the lobby, Mitch showed up as promised with Louis in tow.

I ran forward and hugged Louis tightly before checking to see if he was alright.

He looked pale as if he had spent the entire night awake.

We returned to the hotel after leaving the police station.

I had planned to book three rooms for them, only to find out they had already gotten their rooms earlier.

“That’s great. I’m heading up with Lou so he can rest now. We can discuss everything later.”

Dominic stopped us from leaving in that annoying fashion of his.

Irritated, I asked, "What are you doing? Lou's tired, and he needs to catch up on his sleep."

"Where is he sleeping?" Dominic demanded.

Dumbfounded by his question, I replied, "In my room, silly. Now get out of my way."

"Get him his own room." Dominic refused to budge.

Any other time, I would have gotten Louis a room of his own. He was, after all, a grown man, and it was indeed inappropriate for us to be sharing a room.

However, things were different now. I was worried about him being alone. If anything, I could stay up instead.

"No, I've got to stay with him. Dominic, what are you worried about? We're siblings, for God's sake."

The man's excessive concern seemed ridiculous, and I had no idea how these thoughts came about in the first place.

Dominic shot back, "Liliana, what's wrong with your head? You and your brother are both adults. How can it be appropriate to share a room?"

## **Love the Second Time Around Chapter 57**

### **Chapter 57 A Wonderful Dream**

I was speechless at his excessively nosey behavior.

Louis tugged at my hand from behind. "Lili, I can sleep alone. It's fine."

I glared at Dominic as I led Louis to the reception to get another room. Some arguments were just not worth my time.

When we returned, I asked Dominic pointedly, "Happy?"

He smirked and nodded. "Of course. Your brother would've been sleeping now if you took my advice earlier."

Hmph! Jerk!

While Dominic had his back turned to me, I waved my fists at him before accompanying Louis to his room.

I was still nagging my brother by the time we got to his room. "Take a shower and have a good rest. Don't worry about anything else. Are you hungry? I can pop down to get you something."

He replied, "I can't stomach anything right now. Lili, you should get some rest too. Mitch promised he would get me out of this mess."

I was surprised that Louis was already referring to Mitch by his first name.

Still, if anyone could get my brother out of this mess, it was most likely Mitch who had easily managed to get him out on bail.

I returned to my room once Louis settled in his.

Having woken up early this morning as well, I was exhausted.

My anxiety of Louis kept me running on overdrive the entire day. Now that things were starting to look up, the tiredness had caught up to me, and my eyelids drooped dangerously.

I could not even be bothered to wash up and immediately lay starfished on the bed.

Just as I was about to enter dreamland, I heard a knock on the door. Thinking it was Louis, I opened the door without asking who was outside.

Instead of my brother, Dominic was standing outside my door with two carrier bags in his hand.

He walked in like it was his own home.

I closed the door and asked, "Why are you here?"

"Benjamin bought some food; I'm just the delivery guy," he stated.

Once he placed the bags on the table, I sat down and got ready to dig in.

There were two containers in the bag. One held clam chowder and the other, a generous serving of sweet potato casserole.

I blinked several times, pleasantly surprised that Benjamin had bought me some of my favorite foods.

The delicious aroma of the food tantalized my senses. I did not realize how hungry I had been until I took my first bite of food.

I suddenly thought of Louis. Wondering if he had eaten anything, I stood up, about to head to his room with the container of chowder.

“Hey, what are you doing? Can’t you sit still while you’re eating? What are you, a kid?” Dominic grabbed the container from my hands and placed it back on the table.

“|-|-”

“Your brother has his share. Just dig in.” He must have realized what I was thinking and mollified me before I needed to explain myself.

I enjoyed my food in peace after knowing that Louis had a share too.

Meanwhile, Dominic sat opposite me and crossed his legs, staring intently at me.

It would have been difficult to concentrate on eating if not for our intimate past.

Once I finished eating, I asked, “Have you eaten? You have gastric problems. Don’t starve yourself.”

My timing may have been a little late, but that did not invalidate my concern. Still, Dominic found fault with my question.

“I don’t care for your faux concern. If you were truly worried, why didn’t you share your chowder with me?”

His statement silenced me for a moment, and I could only mumble, “My saliva is in it. Wouldn’t you mind?”

“I don’t mind at all. I’ve tasted more than that, wouldn’t you agree?” said Dominic provocatively as he scooted closer to me.

I blushed furiously at his words.

I can’t let him stay here any longer. The memory of his words remained fresh in my mind. I would not be able to resist his advances now that he was physically able again.

Clumsily, I stuffed the empty food containers into the bags and pushed them into his hand. In the next instant, I was shoving him toward the door.

“Go back to your room. I want to get some sleep.”

Alas, I was no match for his strength. Dominic tossed the items into the trash can and dragged me to the bed.

He pulled me down so that we were sitting side-by-side before pressing me into the bed with his weight.

“Dominic, don’t play around. My brother’s still in a lot of trouble, and I’m not in the mood for any of this with you,” I said seriously and tried to block him with my hands.

“Oh? So what you’re saying is that you’ll be in the mood once your brother’s matters are settled?”

I choked at his inference, wishing I could grab those stupid words and stuff them back into my mouth.

Excuses tumbled out of my mouth carelessly. “No, no. I’ll never be in the mood regardless of the state of his affairs. We’re not in a romantic relationship anymore, and we shouldn’t engage in silly affairs.”

“Making love is a silly affair? And anyway, whoever came up with a rule that people should only sleep together if they’re in a relationship? I’m sure there are plenty of couples out there banging their way to happily-ever-after.”

The man’s confusing logic left me slack-jawed. I could not come up with a suitable retort.

Instead, I chose to keep quiet, deciding that the less I spoke, the fewer chances I had of putting my foot in my mouth.

Hmm, that’s not right, though; he’ll take my silence as tacit agreement.

I deeply regretted my decision to let him into my room.

The two of us remained silent for a good long while. To his credit, he kept his hands to himself the entire time.

I whined, “You should head back. I got up at five this morning, and I’m exhausted. I barely got three hours of sleep last night.”

“Sleep then. Can’t sleep if I’m here?” Dominic raised a brow teasingly.

Resigned, I turned to the other side and brought the sheets up and over my head. Out of sight, out of mind.

Somehow, this grated on his nerves. He pulled my sheets down to look at my face.

Stubbornly, I held on to my sheets, scared that he would try to pull something on me.

“Are you trying to suffocate yourself to death? Don’t sabotage me. There’s only two of us here, and I’ll have a lot of defending to do.”

Damn it! You annoying jerk!

His bright smile irked me. I closed my eyes and attempted to shut him out.

My exhaustion must have caught up to me then as I fell asleep like a log shortly after that.

When I woke up, it was already well into the night. A lamp shone dimly in the doorway, and Dominic was gone.

I got up in a daze, staring at my phone for what seemed like an eternity.

I felt like I had been dreaming for the past few hours of a hand clasping mine.

It was a warm and comfortable grasp, and it made me feel safe.

I must be dreaming. There was only Dominic around, and he wouldn’t hold my hand while I slept, right?

Chucking those thoughts to the back of my mind, I checked my phone and realized that it was past nine.

I had slept for about four hours. Now that I felt slightly recharged, I wondered how Louis was feeling. The urge to check on him weighed on my mind, though I was worried that I would disturb him.

I freshened up in the restroom before leaving my room.

I had decided to seek out Mitch first since I had yet to inform him of my encounter with Queenie in the afternoon.

Once I located the room, I rapped twice on the door, which opened quickly.

Instead of Mitch, I stood face-to-face with Dominic. Did I confuse the room numbers?

## **Love the Second Time Around Chapter 58**

### **Chapter 58 Dying Of Embarrassment**

Mischief danced in Dominic’s eyes as he moved to make room. “Not coming in?” I stepped back and said, “No, I must’ve gotten mixed up. I’m looking for Mitch.”

I was about to turn away and knock on the adjacent door when Dominic pulled me into his room.



His tug threw me off balance as I tripped on the thick carpeting in the hallway. I would have fallen facedown on the floor if I did not reach out and steady myself on the doorframe.

“What the heck are you doing? I already said I wasn’t looking for you.”

“Are you dying to see Mitch or something?”

Still annoyed, the words were out of my mouth before I could think better of them. “Yes. You got a problem with that?”

I only wanted to find Mitch for my brother’s sake, and here Dominic was, sticking his foot into every piece of my business. Hmph! I spun on my heels to leave, irritated.

“Liliana.”

At the sound of my name, I turned instinctively to face him, only to feel his lips firmly on mine.

Disconcerted, I made a feeble attempt to push him away. His hand was, however, locked tightly around the back of my neck, rendering escape futile.

The most outrageous part of it all was his other hand that had snaked around my waist, holding me tightly against the door.

He’s mad! We’re in the hallway, for God’s sake!

My brain stuttered, and I made a last-ditch attempt to knee him in the guts.

Dominic seemed to anticipate my every move. Nimbly, he avoided my attack and wedged a muscular thigh between my legs.

The intensity of his kiss seemed to suck all the oxygen out of my head. I felt like I was suffocating on passion, ready to keel over at a moment’s notice.

“Ahem, couldn’t the two of you, erm, do this behind closed doors?”

Benjamin’s voice turned out to be the perfect mood-killer. My brain jolted awake in an instant.

Humiliation washed over me in waves. Oh God, there are surveillance cameras in the hotel too!

Dominic released me but kept an arm around my waist. My legs were about as firm as jelly, and I held on to him for support.

My brother's voice sounded, "Er, Lili. Are y-you two-" Well, I guess Lou saw the whole thing too.

I felt like crying at the absurdity of the situation. Being caught by one's brother in a PDA was a different level of humiliation.

Louis probably had no idea about my impending divorce with Julius either. Oh God, is he going to think I'm cheating?

Since Benjamin and Louis were both here, I did not need to turn around to know that Mitch was here as well.

How will I discuss Louis' case with him now? This is all stupid Dominic's fault!

I bit down on Dominic's shoulder spitefully.

Soon, I heard a low growl beside my ear. "Try me."

That immediately got me to back off.

I did not wish to see what his "try me" entailed.

"I mean, the two of you can carry on. We can always come back later. Mitch and I can take Louis out for a stroll."

Benjamin's penchant for stirring the pot was infuriating.

I desperately wanted to shove Dominic away and go back to my room. However, his iron grip on my hand meant I could only stumble after him as he dragged me to his room.

He even invited the rest of them in.

Once the door closed, Dominic released me immediately.

I scuttled to the farthest corner away from him.

Alas, given the small size of the room, I could only hide near the windows.

The man stared at me meaningfully with the ghost of a smile on his face.

His smile stoked my anger. This is all his fault!

I sensed Louis' gaze on me as well, though I could not tell his feelings on the matter.

Benjamin and Mitch, on the other hand, had nothing but amusement in their gazes.

Why must they all stare at me?

“Hey! If you keep staring at me like that, I’m going to gouge your eyes out!” I shouted.

“There, there. Let’s talk about serious business now.” Mitch tried very hard to hold back his laughter and put on a stern expression.

I forced myself to take a deep breath and divert the topic.

I recounted my meeting with Queenie to the four of them. No one was still laughing once I was done.

I calmed down considerably, though I still could not bring myself to look Louis in the eye.

Instead, I forced myself to stare at Mitch the whole time.

“It’s getting late. Maybe you can talk to Queenie tomorrow? She kicked me out earlier and even called the police on me.”

In truth, I did not know if Mitch and the others would be able to get anything out of Queenie. Her aggression was still fresh in my mind.

“You’re a woman, so she probably couldn’t care less. I’m sure she’ll be chirping like a bird if any of us goes. Hey, Dominic, you could give it a try.”

The carelessness in Benjamin’s tone made me uncomfortable. Plus, even if they’re going with seduction, why do they need to send Dominic?

Dominic’s reaction, however, pleased me.

He shot Benjamin a vicious glance that had the latter chuckling in mock surrender.

“I’m just kidding. Geez, can’t even take a bit of humor.”

Mitch seemed a lot more serious as he said thoughtfully, “We’ll try to meet her tomorrow. If she refuses a discussion, we’ll come up with another plan. By the way, you two should remain in Jadeborough before this incident is solved. The police might summon Lou for questioning anytime.”

Louis and I nodded, though I fretted about the excuses I would have to feed our parents about my prolonged stay in Jadeborough. It would be National Day soon, and they would notice that something was amiss if neither of us came home.

“Lou, which bar were you at that night?” Dominic asked out-of-the-blue.

“The Happy Hour Karaoke Bar,” Louis replied quickly.

“Ok, let’s head over there right now. We should check out where the incident took place. Something’s definitely wrong with that karaoke bar. Mitch, pull the surveillance tapes of the place.”

I felt like the path on what to do seemed clear after they took charge.

At Dominic’s suggestion, we took a cab to the Happy Hour Karaoke Bar that Louis had mentioned.

It seemed like a pretty spiffy bar from the outside.

“Lou, when did you visit this place? Who suggested this bar?” I asked.

Louis wore a baseball cap on his head, pulled down to hide his face. Dominic advised him to keep a low profile, lest someone recognized Louis and ruined our covert investigation.

Their cautionary words reinforced my belief that something was up with this karaoke bar.

“One of my classmates. He bunks with me in the university, and we’re pretty close. Lili, are you actually suspecting him?”

I did not know what was going through Dominic and the other’s heads, but I was beginning to think that someone had sabotaged Louis.

One thing niggled at my mind, though. Louis was a freshman who had been in university for less than a month.

Who on earth would resent my brother so much that they would sabotage him in such a horrifying way?

We were standing in the hallway, so it was difficult to express my thoughts to Louis. I shook my head at him instead.

Whatever Dominic and the others had told the staff at the karaoke bar, it was convincing enough to get us access to the alleged crime scene.

Now that we stood in the room where Louis’ life had been turned upside-down, I was at a loss of what to do next.

## **Love the Second Time Around Chapter 59**

### **Chapter 59 The Problem Is Solved**

As soon as we entered the private room, Dominic and the others immediately started ordering food and drinks while I walked around by myself and checked out the room. The room looked like a regular private room in any other karaoke bar. There was nothing remarkable about it.

After the waiter had left the room, I turned to look at the others sitting on the couch and said, "I've checked out the room. There doesn't seem to be anything peculiar about it. I don't think there's any problem here."

Benjamin chuckled and said in a rather patronizing tone, "There's nothing wrong with this room, but when I casually asked them for a room, they immediately brought us here. Isn't that a tad bit suspicious?"

I was speechless at his remark. For God's sake, what are we doing here then? Are we really going to eat, drink, and sing ourselves silly?

"Patience is a virtue. Do you understand what I'm saying? Go and chill out with Louis. Relax, okay? We'll talk more when Mitch gets back."

I only realized that Mitch was not in the room when Benjamin said that. I did not even know when he had left.

I recalled that Dominic had mentioned something about surveillance footage. He probably went to get those... The police should've been able to get the footage though, right? So, what if something had really been caught on camera? Wouldn't somebody have noticed it earlier? Ah, there's no use for me to think about it now! I'll just wait until Mitch gets back!

Dominic and Benjamin were lounging casually on one end of the couch while I sat next to Louis on the other end. My brother was very anxious.

Half an hour later, Mitch returned.

Without needing us to ask, he immediately announced that there was no surveillance footage available. The cameras in that particular area had been damaged.

What a coincidence. This sounds exactly like a scene from a TV show. I thought secretly to myself.

Although I had already expected it to go this way, I still felt a little disappointed, and Louis, too, looked upset by the news.

At that moment, a knock sounded from the door. Mitch stood up and walked over to open it.

I leaned over to peek outside. The man at the door was unfamiliar, and from the way he was dressed, he did not seem like a waiter.

I was beginning to wonder if the man had walked into the wrong room when he began to speak to Mitch. His tone was exceedingly courteous.

“Mr. Lucas, please accept my sincerest apologies! I was not aware that you were here. Otherwise, I would have welcomed you personally.”

“It’s fine. You came just in time. I happen to have something to ask you,” Mitch said casually as he walked back to the couch to plop down next to Louis.

The man nodded earnestly. “Of course, of course! Please ask away. As long as it is within my knowledge, I’ll tell you everything I know.”

Mitch motioned the man to come closer, then he pointed at Louis and asked, “Do you know this guy?”

I was sitting across the man, and from the expression on his face, even the blind could see that something was wrong.

When he caught sight of Louis, a look of surprise flashed across his face. Then, after a few seconds, he shook his head and said in a panicked voice, “I have never met him before.” The guilt in his tone was obvious.

I wanted to question him further but stopped myself after glancing at Mitch. Mitch will know how to deal with this man.

Mitch stared unblinkingly at the man for a long time. In a deliberately slow voice, he said, “I came here today to resolve a problem. It’ll be all right if you are honest with me and tell me everything you know. Otherwise, you may find that your karaoke bar will have to be closed for inspection.”

The man’s eyes widened in fear. He rubbed his forehead nervously as if wiping away his sweat. His anxiety was palpable.

“M-Mr. Lucas, I’m genuinely trying to carry out a business here. How can you simply close down my premises for inspection on a whim? A-Anyway, I don’t know what you want me to say...”

“You don’t know? Let me jog your memory a little. What happened on the night before the last?” Mitch asked in a deceptively calm tone. The man was really starting to sweat from fear.

“Oh, and,” Mitch gestured at Louis before continuing, “I forgot to mention to you that this is my brother.”

The man had already been struggling to answer Mitch earlier, but when he heard the second half of Mitch's remark, his face completely collapsed. He looked as if he were about to break down and cry.

"I was only following a certain Mr. Stone's orders! He wanted to check out the surveillance cameras, so I sent a few of my staff with him to help him out. That's all I know! I swear!"

The man had nothing else to say after that, but he confirmed that Queenie was among the few staff he had sent to help him out.

"Are you talking about that punk, Hayden Stone?" Mitch asked, frowning.

The man nodded vigorously and said bitterly, "You understand my dilemma, don't you, Mr. Lucas? You know Mr. Stone's family background... I couldn't say no to him. I had no choice!"

From their conversation, it was clear that Hayden came from an influential family.

I nudged Louis and asked him, "How did you manage to cross a brat like that?"

Louis looked puzzled before he replied in a rather disgusted tone, "He's my classmate at university. A real cocky fellow. I've never even given him a rat's ass. I don't know how I could've possibly offended him."

My head was starting to hurt. Perhaps this was all because of Louis' attitude.

If Hayden Stone was really the spoiled brat they had described him to be, he must be used to being worshipped wherever he went. Meeting someone like Louis, who had not immediately tried to kiss his feet, must have seemed like a slight to him.

Still, there was no need to accuse Louis of such a crime over it.

Since we had already learned what we came to find out, Mitch sent the man on his way. All of us then left the Happy Hour Karaoke Bar and returned to our hotel.

Upon arriving at the hotel, Mitch ordered all of us to go to bed early.

"Everything else can wait until tomorrow when we speak to Queenie. It doesn't matter that the man at the karaoke bar had witnessed Hayden setting Louis up. It's more important that Queenie confesses the truth. As long as she drops the charges, Louis will be fine."

After listening to Mitch's rational plan of action, I exhaled a sigh of relief.

All of us woke up late the next day. After lunch, I brought them to Queenie's house.

Mitch wanted to meet her alone. So, the rest of us went to the café across the road to wait for him.

I stabbed the smoothie bowl in front of me with a spoon absent-mindedly as I thought about the way Queenie had treated me. I wonder how Mitch will be able to get through to her...

"If you keep stabbing the smoothie like that, the bowl will break, and we'll have to compensate the café." Dominic's voice sounded in my ear, pulling me away from my thoughts.

This man will never miss an opportunity to poke fun at me! Benjamin is much more of a gentleman; he senses my anxiety and tries to comfort me.

"Queenie is just a girl. Mitch will be able to handle her," Benjamin said in a reassuring tone.

In truth, I had faith in Mitch, too. I had seen the way he had acted at the Happy Hour Karaoke Bar; he was both clever and perceptive.

Yet, it was my beloved brother who was at stake. I could not help but worry.

At that moment, I was more concerned about Hayden. Even if we manage to bail Louis out this time, won't Hayden try to attack him again by some other means?

## **Love the Second Time Around Chapter 60**

### **Chapter 60 House Guests**

I turned to look at Louis, who was seated next to me, and asked, "Have you ever had any head-on conflict with that Hayden fellow?"

My brother looked surprised by my question. He thought for a minute, then he answered, "Well, the girl he has set his eyes on confessed her feelings to me. Does that count? I told her I don't feel the same way, though. Anyway, I only found out Hayden was into her when my roommate told me about it a few days later. I'm usually out of Hayden's radar."

I closed my eyes and rubbed my temples in slow circles. My head hurts! What is all this childish nonsense? I don't know what to say about Hayden Stone! So what if the girl he likes doesn't like him back? It isn't that big a deal! When I was in school, countless girls were into Dominic. If every single one of them had come after me, I would have been murdered a long time ago!

Dominic and Benjamin listened gleefully to Louis' account of the love drama.



I ignored them and said solemnly to Louis, "People like Hayden are usually impulsive and quick-tempered. You must be more careful in school. Don't let yourself be bullied, but don't go starting any trouble either! Do you hear me?"

Frankly, Louis himself is at fault too. He's only a freshman. Yet, he goes out and parties so hard... He even got himself black-out drunk! If he had not been so reckless, he wouldn't have gotten into trouble!

"Yes, I understand. From now on, I'll avoid him at all costs, okay? I've never wanted to be around him much anyway," Louis promised.

This incident had scarred my brother deeply; it was a lesson that he would not be forgetting so quickly.

We sat at the café waiting for about twenty minutes before Mitch could be seen crossing the road to join us.

"So, how was it? Did you manage to meet her? Was she willing to speak to you?" I asked anxiously as soon as Mitch had sat down.

"Don't worry about it. It's settled. She was only in it for the money. I told her what was at stake, so she knows what she should do now," Mitch replied in a reassuring tone.

I stared at him in disbelief. Was it really so easy to deal with that girl?

I was about to ask him about Hayden when my phone rang. It was Xavier from the police station calling.

"Queenie has dropped the charges against Louis. Apparently, there was a misunderstanding. Anyway, please bring Louis over to the police station for us to go through the proper procedures and clear him of the charges. The matter will be settled after that," Xavier's voice sounded through the phone.

I was overjoyed when I heard those words and immediately dragged Louis to the police station.

Mitch took the lead and dealt with the police officers on all the administrative matters. No trace of this accusation will be left on Louis' record.

I felt a rush of gratitude for all of them. If they had not hurried over to help, I may not have been able to get Louis out of trouble so quickly.

In fact, I may not have been able to save my brother at all.

Now that the problem was resolved, I felt my entire self, both physically and emotionally, relax. Looks like I won't have to delay going home for National Day!

After dinner that night, I suddenly began to talk about the past.

I planned to accompany Louis back to school and help him explain his absence. After all, he had missed two days of classes without asking for any leave of absence. I was afraid he might be punished because of that.

I would then wait for his holidays to start and go back to Dellmoor with him. His holidays will start in two days anyway. It's not too long a wait.

Dominic and the rest also decided to stay with us. We would all fly back to Dellmoor together.

"I can help you explain this matter to your school," Mitch offered to Louis. "Anyway, don't you both worry about Hayden Stone. I'll make sure he won't bother you anymore."

I looked admiringly at Mitch, who looked as if he had a halo over his head. He really went above and beyond for Louis! He resolved this entire problem by himself! The other two men really did nothing much at all.

The next day, we sent Louis to school, explained the circumstances of the past few days to his teachers, and after that, we enjoyed ourselves around the city.

I was not sure if Dominic had ever been to Jadeborough, but it was my first time there. I had a great time exploring.

When we finally got off the plane at Dellmoor, I was ready to leave them behind. Those three grown men will be fine without me. I need my me-time!

Unfortunately, before I could stop him, Louis had already innocently invited them over to our house for a chat and a meal.

If I were in their shoes, I wouldn't have wanted to impose on Louis' hospitality, but these three men just said yes without thinking twice! They really have no shame at all!

I was shocked speechless. I was fine with Benjamin and Mitch coming over, but Dominic was a different story.

How am I supposed to explain Dominic to my parents?

I had been prone to headaches recently, and at that moment, looking at the four men walking ahead of me without a care in the world, my head felt as if it was going to explode.

I suddenly ran and stood in front of the four men with my arms outstretched, blocking their way. The people walking by us threw me curious looks, but I ignored them.

I cleared my throat and pulled Dominic aside, saying, "I have to tell you something."

I glanced at Louis and the others to make sure they had not followed us. Then, I turned to look at Dominic with a solemn expression on my face.

"You can't come over to my parents' house. I don't want there to be a misunderstanding about us."

Dominic feigned ignorance. "What misunderstanding could there possibly be about us?"

I can't believe how thick-skinned he is!

Once upon a time, my parents had loved him like their own son. It was only natural that they would jump to their own hopeful conclusions if I brought him home so soon after my divorce.

I had spent the past few days trying to save Louis; I definitely did not want any more trouble right then.

"Dominic, don't play dumb with me. It really isn't appropriate for you to come over to my house at such a time."

"How is it inappropriate? Are you afraid of your parents finding out about us?" Dominic brought his face closer to mine and nudged me playfully.

I took a step back instinctively and scoffed, "What are you talking about? There's nothing going on between us!"

At that, he straightened up and beamed down at me. "Well then, since there's nothing between us, there shouldn't be any problem with me going over to your house!"

He did not wait for me to say another word before dragging me back to where Louis and the rest were standing.

"Dominic, you—"

"Let's go! We're going over to Liliana's house. We must buy some gifts to bring with us!" Dominic stated, talking excitedly over my protest.

Benjamin and Mitch agreed with him, and the three of them immediately started discussing what they should buy and which mall they should go to.

Louis was talking on his phone at that moment, and I heard him say "Mom" loudly.

I can't believe it! The four of them just made all the decisions themselves without asking my opinion!

Dominic was still holding onto me. I tried to tug my hand free but only managed to hurt myself.

“Let me go!” I hissed at him sharply, but he merely pretended to have not heard me.

Ugh! Fine! Forget it! You better hold on tightly then if you want to hold my hand so badly.

The men mentioned their desire to buy a gift, but from the way they were acting, it seemed as though they were planning to buy the entire mall.

If I had not restrained them, they would have even bought large household appliances to bring along with them.

Although I had reluctantly allowed Dominic to hold onto my hand the entire time, I still felt anxious when we finally arrived at the doorstep of my parents' house.

Should I tell my parents that Dominic and I are just friends or that we are more?