



# The Rancher's Amnesia Bride

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My husband is tall, dark, and handsome. Life would be absolutely blissful...if only I could remember marrying him!

Charlee-Mae wakes up in a hospital with a ring on her finger...but her V-card intact. What in the world is going on?

Philippe DeRose agreed to be a mail-order groom under two conditions: a faithful husband he was not, and his mother was not to know that theirs was a temporary business arrangement.

Everything was supposed to be smooth sailing...until Philippe's new wife loses her memory and now imagines herself in love with him.

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## Prologue

Charlee-Mae Chastity "Cha-Cha" Carmichaels was no saint. She believed in the Lord Jesus, yes, but as a woman of substance from the Lone Star state, she also believed in the healing powers of cussing, cholesterol-rich food, and running a yellow light at max speed.

A woman of patience, she also never claimed to be, and this trait was most evident when Charlee-Mae had even managed to make her dear Mama prematurely deliver her on one cold February day.

Other babies might be fine with the usual thirty-six weeks, but for Charlee-Mae, seven months in Chi-Chi's womb were more than long enough, thank you very much. Waiting was the greatest invention of the Devil, and it was why, now that Charlee-Mae was about to turn thirty-two, she had finally come to a decision.

"Good morning, Charlotte!"

The CEO of Heart's Match returned her greeting with noticeable wariness, but Charlee-Mae simply took this in stride. Charlotte wouldn't be Charlotte if she wasn't overthinking one thing or the other.

Charlotte's wariness grew as she watched the curvaceous blonde advance into her office with her trademark mini-dress, thigh-high boots, and the usual mix of sass and grace. Ignorance was often bliss, and right now, she would have truly preferred she had no reason to dread what was to come.

But because she had known the other woman for years, Charlotte also knew that the expression on Charlee-Mae's heart-shaped face usually meant something crazy was about to happen.

"I'm back," her visitor declared gaily, "and oooh—" The other woman halted in her tracks to take a quick appreciative look of her surroundings. "You redecorated your office."

"I did, yes." Charlotte's office used to be all dark wood and manly, since the room was originally her husband's study. Now, however, the walls had been painted a matte shade of white, and the heavy antique furniture replaced with sleeker and more contemporary ones like a simple standing desk from IKEA, a custom-designed gaming chair, and lots and lots of flowers.

"I love it!"

"I love it, too," Charlotte said, "and as much as I wish to think that my renovated office is the reason for your visit—"

"It's not," Charlee-Mae said brightly.

"I thought so."

"Aaaaand...just like I told you the last time we spoke, I wouldn't change my mind, and I haven't, so..." Charlee-Mae threw her arms out. "Ta-da! I'm here, and I'm so ready to sign a contract!"

"I'll pretend I didn't hear that."

"Then I'll pretend you did," Charlee-Mae retaliated. "Because I mean it, Char. I've made up my mind—"

Charlotte bit back a sigh. "I think what you mean to say is that you've lost your mind."

But this only made the other woman laugh as she took a seat across Charlotte's desk. "You can say whatever you want, but it won't make a difference. I've made my choice, and I know in my heart God has my back with this."

Grrr. Charlotte absolutely hated it when Charlee-Mae included God in the equation, mostly because she knew for a fact that Charlee-Mae did pray a lot, and since God was supposed to work in mysterious ways—

"God wants a strong, independent woman like me to set an example—"

Charlotte was bewildered. "By signing-up for a mail-order marriage?"

"So unbecoming of you to grumble, Char."

"I was not—"

"And I know you think I'm not taking this seriously, but I am. Signing-up for a mail-order marriage shows that I'm willing to do what it takes to find my match—"

"But marriage isn't just any match," Charlotte protested. "It's a lifelong commitment, and you really, truly need to think this through—"

Charlee-Mae felt slightly offended. "And I did!"

"Really?" This was Charlee-Mae, after all. "Exactly how long did you think this through?"

Charlee-Mae tried to estimate the number of minutes she spent cooped up inside her

pickup because of rush-hour traffic. "About ninety minutes?"

"Cha-Cha!"

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"But it could be a hundred," Charlee-Mae quickly corrected herself, "if I also count the stopover at——"

"It can be two hundred or two thousand," Charlotte interrupted in exasperation, "and it still won't be enough. Marriage isn't something you think about for just minutes. Or even hours. This isn't like you're just choosing who will be your date to next year's Yuletide Ball——"

"You're using your judgmental tone again," Charlee-Mae accused the other woman with a hurt look. "Can't you just be flattered by how much I trust in your matchmaking abilities?"

"Not. At. All!" Charlotte tried her best to sound like a nasty bitch, but all this earned from Charlee-Mae was a pout.

"But I really believe this is what I'm destined for——"

"Oh, please." Charlotte was unimpressed by the way Charlee-Mae was suddenly clutching her chest like she had just been stabbed in the heart. "Stop being a drama queen."

"I'm not! I really mean it when I said God——"

Charlotte rolled her eyes. "Marrying a mail-order groom is not some higher calling——"

"It is! To me!" When Charlotte only looked at her, Charlee-Mae didn't hesitate to

resort to shameless begging. "Please, Char!" She also wasn't above using puppy eyes if she believed it would help her get her way. "Please, please, please——"

Charlotte had to fight against the urge to cover her eyes. Ugh. Why was Cha-Cha so good at tugging at people's heartstrings?

"Just help me with this, please? Every match you've worked on is a success," Charlee-Mae proclaimed passionately, "and that includes each and every member of San Antonio's Finest Eligibles. If you can get those guys down the aisle, why can't you do the same for me?"

Charlee-Mae could see that she was starting to get to Charlotte, but since the older woman had a tendency to think of herself as Charlee-Mae's second mother, maybe a change of tactics was called for?

"I'm just a girl, standing in front of a boy——"

Charlotte's features contorted into a frightening scowl.

Oops!

Obviously the wrong tactic, but that was fine. She could always try something different, like——

"You know how hard I've been searching for Mr. Right."

When in doubt, a dramatically-expressed truth would always work best.

"We all have our own goals," Charlee-Mae continued in her most heartfelt tone, "and mine has always been to walk down the aisle and marry a man I love and who loves me in return."

Charlotte knew when she was being manipulated, but the thing was...she also knew that not a single word from Charlee-Mae was a lie. Even as a little girl, Charlee-Mae would spend hours planning tea parties to celebrate Barbie and Ken's wedding, and on her way home from school, she would also stop by the chapel to drop another handwritten letter in the prayer request box. And of course, that request had to do with finding her Prince Charming in the future.

"I've been dating for years and years," Charlee-Mae went on to declare, "but all I've managed to do is kiss one frog after another. It's a miracle I haven't turned into one myself."

Charlotte could sense that she was fighting a losing battle, but...

"What about those dating apps—"

Charlee-Mae rolled her eyes. "Duh. Do you really think I haven't given those a try? I've tried every dating app there is, and all it gave me was a thumb injury for all the swipe-lefts I've done." Charlee-Mae couldn't help looking at Charlotte reproachfully when the other woman still appeared unconvinced. "The only reason you're hesitating is because you're overthinking things again. But since you've been doing this for ages," she pointed out cajolingly, "is there really something to worry about? You and Heart's Match are my last resort. I just want a grand romance—" Shit.

In Charlee-Mae's eagerness to make her point, she had almost slipped up and mentioned her brother, and guilt filled her upon seeing Charlotte suddenly pale. "I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to remind you—"

Charlotte raised a hand, and Charlee-Mae fell silent.

"There's no need to apologize since you said exactly what I needed to hear."



Her eyes widened. "I...did?"

Charlotte let out a sigh. "In other words - yes, I'll help——" She wasn't able to finish speaking, with her sister-in-law already jumping up and down with glee.

Charlee-Mae hurried around the desk to give Charlotte a hug. "I knew you'd see it my way eventually!"

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Charlotte felt just a little bit depressed upon hearing this. "I'm already starting to regret it, to be honest."

"O ye of little faith!" Charlee-Mae's tone was teasing and chiding at the same time. "Don't you know Family 101? Thou shalt always have trust in thy sister-in-law——"

"Thou certainly shalt not," Charlotte retorted, "when thy sister-in-law's name is Charlee-Mae Chastity Carmichaels."

"You should really stop overthinking," Charlee-Mae chastised. "It's going to give you wrinkles one day."

"If I do get wrinkles," Charlotte muttered, "it's all because——"

"You keep thinking like I'm about to be your agency's biggest headache——" Charlee-Mae gave her sister-in-law an innocent look. "——when I'm not, naturally. So just relax. It's all going to be fine and smooth sailing from here."

Charlotte's gaze momentarily flicked upwards. I'm sure you've heard what your sister just said, Landon. She thinks it's going to be fine and smooth sailing, she reported forlornly to her husband in heaven, when it never is. Crazy things always happen where your baby sister is concerned——

Charlee-Mae's gaze narrowed suspiciously at her sister-in-law. "Hey! I know that look. Are you tattling on me to my dead brother?"

Charlotte lifted her chin. "Don't be absurd, and anyway——" She made a shooping

gesture in the direction of the door. "It's time for you to go. I need peace and quiet if you want me to quickly find you a match."

"Then consider me gone." Charlee-Mae blew the other woman a goodbye kiss...which Charlotte took the time to catch just so she could make a show of crumpling it in her fist before throwing the invisible kiss into her wastebasket.

"Oh my goodness! Bless you, my darling sister-in-law," Charlee-Mae cooed. "You are such a bitch! I love it!"

Charlotte waited until the door closed behind Charlee-Mae before allowing herself a grudging little smile. Although her sister-in-law was the love-her-or-hate-her type, the other woman also had the most ridiculously optimistic outlook of life that Charlotte could only admire. Nothing ever fazed Charlee-Mae, and it reminded her of how an internationally renowned fashion designer had once described her sister-in-law upon watching Charlee-Mae sashay down the catwalk.

'Big hair, bigger boobs, and the biggest personality.'

That was Charlee-Mae in a nutshell, and in a way, that also perfectly summed up Charlotte's goal.

Most men in this world would likely be tempted to crush Charlee-Mae's spirit, and Charlotte's job, therefore, was to find the opposite. The ideal man for her sister-in-law was one who would appreciate the craziness that was Charlee-Mae, and while this might seem next to impossible...

How about a bet, Landon? Promise me you'll visit my dreams if I manage to find your sister her Mr. Right?

Charlotte knew it was the silliest of thoughts, but she didn't care. Years had already

passed since Landon's death, but not a day had gone by that she didn't miss him. Since Charlee-Mae lived her life doing one crazy thing after the other, surely it wouldn't hurt if Charlotte indulged herself with a moment of insanity as well?

Dear God, I'm sure You heard what I said. I'll do everything in my power to find my sister-in-law her Mr. Right, and in return, is it okay if I can have mine back, even just for one night?

Charlotte's secret deal with heaven gave her all the inspiration and motivation she needed, and what was supposed to have taken three weeks was accomplished in three days.

However...

## Chapter One

"I can't believe you've already found me a match," Charlee-Mae exclaimed giddily upon plopping herself in her usual seat across her sister-in-law's desk.

"Actually...I've found you two potential matches."

"Bless you!" Charlee-Mae was genuinely impressed. "I've been playing the dating game for almost eighteen years, and I haven't even come close to finding a .5 match."

In the act of retrieving two folders from her drawer, Charlotte paused with a frown upon hearing Charlee-Mae's words. "There's no such thing as a .5 match—"

"Of course there is," Charlee-Mae argued. "Basically, it's a woman who ticks all the boxes, which would've been perfect if I were bisexual. But since I'm not, that makes it a .5 match."

Charlotte had a slight headache by the time the other woman finished talking. Since Charlee-Mae wasn't bisexual in the first place, then that would have given the match zero percent of success instead of fifty. Didn't it?

"You get it, right?"

"No, I don't."

But Charlee-Mae only laughed this off, and Charlotte decided to set the issue aside. This wasn't the first time she did "not" get what her sister-in-law was saying, and anyway...

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She pushed the folders towards Charlee-Mae over her desk in a sliding motion. "All the information you need to know about both men is inside these folders. No pictures of their faces, per agency rules, but..." Charlotte couldn't help grimacing at this. "Just as you requested, I've asked both men for the most recent photos of their abs——"

Charlotte saw her sister-in-law fighting back a smile and knew all at once she had been had.

"Cha-Cha!"

The other woman burst into laughter, and Charlotte was torn between wanting to throttle Charlee-Mae for playing such a trick on her...and kicking herself in the head for actually falling for it.

Charlee-Mae was laughing so hard she could barely catch her breath as she sought to defend herself. "I'm sorry! I didn't know you'd take it seriously!"

"How can I not," Charlotte growled, "when the request is just so...so...you?"

"Well, what's done is done, and don't worry, Char——" Charlee-Mae flipped both folders open so she could compare the two photos side by side. "I'll make sure your efforts aren't in vain and——oooooh."

While the photo from the blue folder was of a guy in swimming trunks at the beach, the one that made her heart skip a beat was the photo from the red folder: the man in it was standing in front of his bathroom mirror, his white dress shirt unbuttoned to reveal his washboard abs. The awkward angle of the photo spoke volumes of how

much Mr. Red Folder (dis)liked selfies while its blurred edges told Charlee-Mae he had emailed Charlotte the first photo he had taken.

No vanity at all, Charlee-Mae thought in awe, and in today's image-conscious world, that was as rare as finding wasabi-flavored KitKat in a 7-Eleven store in Texas.

Charlee-Mae pointed to Mr. Red Folder. "I choose him."

The speed in which Charlee-Mae made up her mind had Charlotte's head spinning. "Don't treat this like it's no different from choosing your starter Pokémon."

"And I'm not," Charlee-Mae protested. "I'd have taken much longer to decide if I were choosing my starter Pokémon——"

"Oh my God, Cha-Cha!"

Charlee-Mae was genuinely bewildered. "I'm just being honest. Pokémon is a game of numbers. Finding my one true love is all about feelings. And my heart chooses——"

Charlotte, however, was already shaking her head before Charlee-Mae had even finished speaking. "Consider this at least." She pointed to the blue folder. "It's my personal opinion that this guy is a much safer bet——"

"Really?" Charlee-Mae dubiously cast a second glance on the guy in swimming trunks.

"Don't judge a man by his photo shoot."

"Oh. He's a model?"

"Doctor."

"And he did that?"

"Because he lost a bet...and he actually doesn't know you've asked for a photo of his abs. I grabbed this from the Internet."

"What about Mr. Red Folder?" Charlee-Mae held her breath. "How - where - did you get it?"

"Now that, I had to personally ask for..." Charlotte scowled as she was reminded of how mortifying it felt to ask the other party for a photo of his abs. It had made her feel like a brothel owner asking a sex worker for proof of goods—

Charlee-Mae, upon seeing Charlotte's expression turn darker by the second, knew right away what the other woman was thinking. Uh-oh. She started to lean back...but it was too late, and Charlee-Mae could only yelp in pain as Charlotte suddenly rolled a sheet of paper and started swatting her arm like it was covered by mosquitoes.

"I can't believe you made me ask for photos of their abs!"

Swat!

"I'm sorry—"

Swat!

"I really am—"

SWAT!



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"Ouch!"

SWAT! SWAT!

"You made Heart's Match seem like a sex-for-hire agency!"

SWAT! SWAT! SWAT!

"I said I'm sorry——"

Charlotte focused all of her energies to give her sister-in-law one last swat, and Charlee-Mae's subsequent yelp was music to her ears.

"Jesus, Char!"

"You deserve it," she said without pity.

Charlee-Mae rubbed her arm gingerly. "Are we okay now?"

Charlotte's pursed her lips. "I'm not sure. Ask me tomorrow."

Charlee-Mae rolled her eyes. For all of Charlotte's mature ways, one thing the other woman had not outgrown was her tendency to hold grudges.

"Now..." Charlotte felt so much calmer now, having found the proper outlet for her annoyance. "Where were we?"

"You were telling me about how perfect Mr. Red Folder is for me."

Charlotte's gaze bore through her sister-in-law. "Seriously?"

Charlee-Mae's expression turned innocent. "Did I remember wrong?"

Charlotte rolled her eyes. "Anyway..." She pointed back to Mr. Blue Folder. "You should really reconsider, you know. This guy will make you a good husband——"

"But why should I settle for good," Charlee-Mae asked, "when I can have someone great? You know me better than that, Char. I've never been the type to play it safe." She tapped the red folder in emphasis, saying, "It has to be him or no one else. I can already tell this early there'll be fireworks between us," she enthused. "I can just feel——"

"That a temporary marriage is all he wants?" Charlotte cut in dryly. "Did you feel that, too? Because that's the first thing he told me on our first meeting." She was hoping this would be enough for her sister-in-law to change her mind, but instead Charlee-Mae only appeared intrigued.

"Did he explain why?"

"His recently-retired mother will only turn over her shares to him if he marries——"

Charlee-Mae brightened. "Then——"

"But his mother also happens to disapprove of the woman he does want to marry."

Charlee-Mae refused to be discouraged. "Who's this woman trying to steal my man?"

"Oh, for heaven's sake. He's not your man yet——"

"He will be," Charlee-Mae said with a flip of her hair. "So tell me. Who is it?" She saw Charlotte's expression turn sly, and Charlee-Mae knew right away something was up. "You think I won't be able to steal him away from her, don't you?"

"You'll have a fight on your hands, yes."

Charlee-Mae's gaze narrowed. "What does she have that I don't? Is she super famous or something?"

"As far as I know, no."

Charlee-Mae suddenly looked fearful. "Is she super smart?"

Charlotte couldn't help laughing despite everything. "No, Cha-Cha. As far as I know, the other party isn't super smart."

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"Then...is she his first love? His forbidden love? His——"

"Possibly all of the above."

Charlee-Mae shot up in her seat. "Seriously?"

"Having second thoughts now?"

Charlee-Mae looked at her sister-in-law oddly. "Why should I? On the contrary, this is just going to make things more exci——"

"It's his sister-in-law."

"Holy motherfucking cow!"

Charlotte couldn't help but wince. "Cha-Cha."

"Sorry." Charlee-Mae was quick to apologize, having forgotten how prim and proper her sister-in-law could be. And speaking of sisters-in-law...

"How exactly are they related? Was he married before——"

"No. Not like that. She was his late older brother's wife."

Charlee-Mae's brows arched up. "Wow."

"The brother died seven years ago——"

"Did they hook up right after his death?"

"I have no idea how long they've been together, but he did mention she's now his mistress."

"Mistress, huh?" That was quite the label for one's sister-in-law. "And not girlfriend?"

"His words, not mine."

"Oh my."

Charlotte had been hoping Charlee-Mae would finally see the light about Mr. Red Folder, but instead the other woman actually sounded thrilled, and her amber eyes were actually sparkling with excitement.

"I can't believe how perfect this all is, Char!"

Charlotte wondered if it was too late to back out of her secret deal with heaven. She wanted to have Landon back, even in just her dreams, but was it worth risking Charlee-Mae's heartbreak? Her future mail-order groom did not see their marriage as a permanent thing.

"This is exactly what I was hoping for!"

And yet here Charlee-Mae was, acting like the hundreds of letters she had dropped in the prayer request box had finally been answered.

"There's just so much baggage, so much drama!"

Indeed, there was all of those, so why was Charlee-Mae speaking of these things like they were stuff that romantic dreams were made of?

"I love it, Char," Charlee-Mae said dreamily. "I absolutely love it." She beamed at Charlotte, adding, "You know I'm a huge fan of Dynasty, right?"

"Uh..." Wasn't that a soap from decades ago?

Charlee-Mae gave her a solemn look. "And the greatest lesson it's taught me is that every grand romance needs a grand obstacle——"

"What about a grand heartbreak?" Charlotte broke in. "Because another thing he told me was that he intends to keep seeing his sister-in-law-slash-mistress even while he's married."

"He only thinks that's what he wants right now," Charlee-Mae said breezily, "but I'll make sure to change his mind."

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"He wants it in writing, Cha-Cha."

"I'll sign whatever he wants, it's fine. Things always work out best for me when I just follow my heart and let God take over—"

Charlotte groaned. "Please stop making it sound like your crazy plans are God's plans."

"I'll stop," Charlee-Mae bargained, "if you promise to stop worrying."

"I can't help it," Charlotte grumbled, "since you're not worrying enough."

"It's going to be fine, Char. Really."

Charlotte was badly tempted to give the other woman a hard shake at this point. "I know I can't stop you from getting yourself a mail-order groom at this point, but are you at least absolutely sure it has to be him?"

"With all my heart."

"He'll want to know why you agreed to this type of arrangement," Charlotte warned.

"Then..." Inspiration struck, and Charlee-Mae's eyes sparkled with excitement. "You can tell him that in my line of work, being married to a man like him will be tremendously helpful. That should keep him from suspecting me of any ulterior motives," Charlee-Mae said impishly. "By the time he realizes I'm up to something, it will be too late, and I'd have stolen his heart for good."

Although Charlotte made a few more attempts to change her mind, Charlee-Mae was not to be dissuaded, and instead badgered the other woman to expedite the paperwork. In just five days, the final draft of her mail-order-marriage contract was approved, and another week after that, Charlee-Mae, with a lovely diamond ring on her finger, went on to board a plane as a newly-married woman.

The plan was for Charlee-Mae to meet her bridegroom at a luxurious resort-style theme park, but as soon as a limousine picked her up from Jackson Hole's airport, what Charlee-Mae met instead was a near-fatal accident.

## Chapter Two

All of the nurses at Stanhope Medical Center's surgical department started nudging each other behind the counter as soon as the elevator doors opened, and out came a tall, dazzlingly handsome man with dark blond hair and jade-green eyes.

He had 'billionaire' written all over him, but at the same time, there was also something intensely sexual about the newcomer's presence. It was almost primitive even, and when the nurses thought about how such a man was now married to their beloved Cha-Cha...

Philippe masked his puzzlement as the nurses at the station followed his every move with unusual interest. While he was no stranger to attention, neither was he some world-famous athlete or celebrity. His name was only familiar to those who followed society gossip and business news, and since he strongly doubted the nurses here fell in either category, Philippe could only surmise that all of these stares had to do with one Charlee-Mae Carmichaels.

Who knew a former beauty queen with a YouTube channel could be this popular?

The nurses nearly swooned when the man finally came up to their counter in order to



ask for the room number of his wife, and it was then they found out that Cha-Cha's impossibly gorgeous husband also happened to possess the sexiest French accent.

"Ms. Carmichaels—I mean, Mrs. DeRose—" Head Nurse Jennifer, who was usually teased for being schoolmarmish, was flustered to find herself stumbling over her words. "Your, um, wife, sir, is in Room 1408, the last door on the left."

"Thank you." As soon as Philippe turned away, he was disconcerted to hear some of the nurses actually squeal, but in the next moment he had dismissed the incident from his mind, having never been interested in gaining fame.

Right now, there were a lot more pressing concerns that deserved his attention, foremost of which was the woman Philippe had come to visit...and whom he still had trouble thinking of as his "wife".

Although both of them moved in the same social circles, their paths had never crossed before this, and her name hadn't rung a bell when he saw it on their wedding documents.

He could have looked her up at any point in time after that, but he never had. As far as Philippe was concerned, theirs was a business arrangement, and as long as his thirty-something bride from Texas wasn't entirely hideous to look at, her appearance was inconsequential.

All he had asked of Charlotte was that his temporary bride be the kind of woman his mother was most likely to approve of, and now that he was finally seeing his new "wife" in person—

What the hell had he gotten himself into?

The woman in bed looked like someone who had jumped out of a fifties pinup, and

try as he might, he could not see why the supposedly intuitive CEO of Heart's Match, whom Fleur de Konigh had sung praises of, would think that a woman with such overt sensuality could be an ideal daughter-in-law for his ultra-conservative mother.

Charlee-Mae started to stir as he crossed the room, and by the time Philippe came to stand next to her bed, his "wife" was already wide awake and watching him with amber-colored eyes filled with undisguised curiosity.

She pushed herself up gingerly, and he automatically reached down to help her even as he expected her to shrink from his touch.

But she didn't.

And it was how Philippe's disconcertment deepened into acute discomfort, with the way Charlee-Mae proved completely unresisting to his assistance. The way her amber eyes gobbled him up made him feel strangely restless, and as he adjusted the mountain of pillows behind her back, his fingers accidentally brushed over the back of her neck—

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Putain.

Her warm, satin-smooth skin almost felt sinful to touch, and he had a sudden and almost violent need to place as much distance as possible between them. It was as if a part of him recognized in her a destructive force that had the power to turn his entire world upside-down, and only pride alone kept him from getting the fuck out of her room.

Philippe gritted his teeth as he forced himself to move back at a careful and unhurried pace, all the while feeling Charlee-Mae continue to eat him up with unabashed curiosity. Fair's fair, Philippe thought, and so as soon as his dark gaze collided with hers, he indulged himself with his own scrutiny of her appearance.

Her long blonde locks were a wild, curly mess around her heart-shaped face, and aside from the layers of bandages wrapped around her head, another visible sign of her injury was the multitude of small but vividly red gashes that marred her from head to toe. None of these things, however, was enough to detract from the kittenish appeal of her looks...which Philippe was disturbed to find himself powerfully attracted to.

Merde.

"Hello."

Her voice was...sweet. It was the only word he could think of. Not thick, dark, and heavy like syrup, but more sweet like honey, which was as wholesome as it was addictive. A woman's voice was something he had never paid attention to, so why

then, Philippe wondered irritably, was her voice suddenly different? Why did hers sound so fuckable, even when all she had said was a simple bloody hello?

He could see that she was waiting for him to answer, and while the thought of engaging in small talk struck him as distastefully artificial, years of etiquette training were impossible to ignore. But just as he was about to force himself to say 'hello' in return, it was then Philippe noticed her wide-eyed gaze flicking back and forth between their hands.

It took him a moment to realize she was comparing their wedding rings, and since she was the one who had chosen its design in the first place—

"Is there a problem?" he asked politely. She would not be the first woman to have fickle taste in jewelry, and in some cases, it only turned out to be a woman's ploy to gain herself more jewelry.

His question appeared to make her nervous for some reason, and when he noticed the way her chest started to swiftly rise and fall under her hospital gown, Philippe just as swiftly tried to forget what he had seen.

His new "wife" - Mon Dieu, would he ever get used to calling her that? - might have the breasts of a blonde bombshell, but now was also the least appropriate time to indulge in such thoughts.

"I know this is going to sound silly—"

Philippe frowned at the way her fingers started interlocking and unlocking over her lap.

"But I just want to be sure—"

"Qu'est-ce que c'est?" What is it?

"Are you my husband?"

Fifteen minutes later, and Philippe had his worst fears confirmed in the private office of Dr. Konstantin Manolis. He had known the other man for years, and it was in light of his friendship with the Greek neurosurgeon that Philippe wasn't even thinking of getting a second opinion.

If Konstantin believed Charlee-Mae suffered from amnesia, then that was what it was, but what he did have a hard time accepting was what his new "wife" had no memories of.

"The E.R. had to sedate her when she first came in," Konstantin relayed, "since she started panicking and insisting that they had it wrong, and she wasn't married."

"I see."

"I took charge of her case when I found out she was your wife. We spoke briefly earlier, and from what I can tell, there is nothing your wife can recall from the past two weeks."

And now, Philippe did see why his new "wife" had forgotten him, since it was also only two weeks ago that they had become a part of each other's lives, contractually speaking.

"For now, my only advice is to make sure she has lots of rest. While it's not necessary, it's best to keep her here until we at least get the stitches out. It's always better to err on the side of caution with head wounds like hers."

"I'll defer to your expertise then." An image of Charlee-Mae suddenly intruded in his

mind, and Philippe found himself trying to imagine what it would be like to wake up with two weeks of his life suddenly missing. It would be hell for someone like him, and the realization made him feel...concerned.

And that was normal, Philippe told himself. His conscience wasn't completely dead, and for as long as she was his "wife", he also had a duty to take care of her.

Looking back at Konstantin, he asked, "Is there anything else I can do to make things easier for her?"

"Don't let anything upset her," was his friend's blunt reply. "Situations like this are extremely tricky, and it's imperative that your wife refrains from forcing herself to recall her memories. Placing herself under unnecessary mental stress will only make things worse."

The nurses still on duty started elbowing each other again when they saw the Frenchman and the broodingly handsome Dr. Manolis step out of the latter's office.

Thanks to their resident Google expert Nurse Mindy, they now knew that Philippe DeRose, aside from being the billionaire they had correctly assumed him to be, also possessed the reputation of a tough negotiator in the boardroom and a jet-setting playboy outside it.

*Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 5:04 am*

But because they also knew from Cha-Cha's vlogs that their favorite former beauty was silly and kind-hearted, carefree and incredibly down-to-earth in spite of her privileged upbringing—

No two persons could be any more different than Cha-Cha and her husband, and it became even harder to imagine how the couple had fallen in love when the nurses overheard Dr. Manolis and the French billionaire conversing entirely in French.

Oh dear.

Most of the nurses started giggling, all of them having recalled Cha-Cha's vlog about her first visit to Paris...and how she had consequently succeeded in murdering the names of several French fashion houses. She had pronounced Hermes with a not-silent H, spoke of Balmain like it rhymed with Maine, and as she ended her vlog with a tour of her hotel suite, she had showcased the toiletries provided by L'Occitane, which Cha-Cha had mistaken as another brand that included a long 'a' in its pronunciation.

The nurses were still giggling among themselves as both men entered the elevator, but as soon as the doors closed, and the two were finally out of everyone's earshot—

Konstantin raised a brow at his friend. "I seem to recall I had this friend in college who gave the cold shoulder to any girl who was unable to pronounce Lanvin correctly."

"I can't help it if their attempts at speaking French hurt my ears," Philippe answered without missing a beat, "but obviously, Charlee-Mae is the sole exception."

Konstantin smirked. "Is that the latest euphemism for being in love?"

"It is now." While Philippe trusted his friend implicitly, he also preferred to minimize his risks. The fewer people who knew about the true state of his marriage, the less likely his mother was to find out about Philippe's plans.

Since Charlee-Mae was still in session with the hospital's trauma specialist, Philippe agreed to have coffee with Konstantin and his wife, a shy brunette who apparently was yet another fan of his wife.

On his way back to Charlee-Mae's room, the nurses informed him that his wife was still in session, and left to his own devices, Philippe made use of one of the hospital's conference rooms and spent the next hour in communication with his security and I.T. teams.

It was only a matter of time before Charlee-Mae asked to have access to her phone or online accounts, and when she did, Philippe didn't want her to accidentally stumble upon any message, call, or document that could cause her to entertain doubts about their marriage.

Finally, Philippe had one last call to make, and this was to the only family member on his wife's side that he was in contact with.

Charlotte experienced a roller coaster of emotions upon hearing about Charlee-Mae's accident from Philippe and learning that her sister-in-law, albeit safe from any major injuries, had ended up suffering from partial memory loss.

"I was advised by her doctor not to have her upset," Philippe was now saying, "and since her parents are still in their couples' retreat...I wanted to ask if you'd like to fly up to Wyoming and keep Charlee-Mae company?"



Charlotte was unable to answer right away. Now that she knew for certain Charlee-Mae hadn't suffered any life-threatening injury, all she could think of at that moment was how her sister-in-law had been so confident about following her heart and letting God take over.

And so, if this accident was God's means of taking over, then——

"I'm sorry," Charlotte heard herself say apologetically, "but I don't think that's a good idea. If I fly up there, people might start to suspect something is seriously wrong. I know you're not familiar with Cha-Cha's——"

"Cha-Cha?"

"I mean, Charlee-Mae. But Cha-Cha is what most everyone calls her," Charlotte explained. "It's like her stage name. More or less."

"Ah." This was the first time Philippe had heard about people on YouTube having stage names, and it was starting to dawn on him how little he knew of his wife's occupation.

"Anyway, Cha-Cha has a pretty dedicated following——"

"I have been made aware of that just recently," Philippe remarked dryly. "The nurses here are huge fans of hers."

"As expected." Charlotte couldn't help the note of pride in her voice. Cha-Cha could be considered as a pioneer in her industry, having started her YouTube channel back when the term 'vlogging' hadn't yet been coined. "Her fanbase is mostly in the Western and Southern regions, and..." Charlotte needed another extra moment just to remind herself that what she was doing was simply letting God "take over".

Philippe frowned at the sudden silence. "Is there anything wrong?"

"I'm just worried about her fans." Charlotte finally managed to make herself utter the lie. "If any of them finds out she has amnesia, it's going to be huge news, and before you know it, everything about your lives could become public knowledge...including the truth about your marriage." Charlotte paused, but when Philippe remained silent on the other end, she knew this meant she still had more persuading to do.

"Isn't your mother also scheduled to join you in Wyoming? Having someone else look after Charlee-Mae could make her question your marriage."

"Je vois..."

Philippe had a hard time deciphering his own mood by the time the call ended. Everything in his life had always been clear-cut and precise. Well-planned and orderly. Even his marriage, albeit unorthodox, was supposed to follow along the same black-and-white lines, but with his "wife" now having forgotten everything they had agreed upon...

Charlee-Mae sat up the moment the door opened, and although the sound had her heart slamming against her chest, she no longer felt as anxious as before, and even the lovely ring on her finger didn't feel as heavy.

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Her first session with Dr. Bowles had been a huge help, and she now felt more like her old carefree, confident, and optimistic self. The past two weeks of her life might be a horrible blank, but she couldn't and mustn't let her mind dwell on this. As today's session had taught her, the key to coping was to focus on what she knew and ignore what was out of her control.

And so when her tall, dark, and handsome husband came striding in, and his jade-green eyes finally met hers—

Goodness gracious.

She had actually forgotten how breathtakingly handsome her husband was, and all she could do now was congratulate herself for having such amazing taste.

Well done, Cha-Cha of two weeks ago!

He was like sex on legs, and his looks were such that they could serve as a template for animated fairytale princes. He was just divine, dad gum it. Just oh so divine, and when Charlee-Mae recalled the delightful French accent that accompanied his speech earlier, it made her want to do a Camilla Cabello and ooh-la-la-la her way all over her husband's body, which she had no trouble imagining as mouth-wateringly hard even under his leather jacket and jeans.

Charlee-Mae tried to remember if she had ever seen him naked, but as soon as she did, pain struck her temples—

Her cry of pain had Philippe reacting instinctively, and he was seated on the edge of

her bed in the next instant. "Are you alright?" His fingers gently displaced hers as he touched one side of her head. "Does it hurt here?"

"It's my fault," she confessed. "I was told not to try to remember anything——"

"Oui."

Her husband's tone was disapproving, and he would probably be even more disapproving, Charlee-Mae thought ruefully, if he found out what she had been trying to remember.

Philippe could not help feeling wary when he saw a quirky smile form over Charlee-Mae's rosebud lips. Just seconds ago, she had appeared in great pain, and now all of a sudden she was in a mood to laugh?

Une folle.

That was what this "wife" of his was starting to shape up.

A madwoman.

He had a madwoman for a wife. Immensely fuckable, yes, but still. And when she looked fit to laugh, he finally had to ask, "What's so funny?"

"It might make you mad."

No, he almost said. She was the one who was mad, not him. But since good manners forbade him from saying such a thing, Philippe simply shook his head. "I do not get mad easily."

"Well...I just found it funny, when I remembered Dr. Manolis warning me about

forcing myself to remember anything from the past two weeks."

"And yet you did it anyway."

There was her husband's disapproving tone again, but crazily enough, Charlee-Mae found the sound so very sexy.

"Was the memory that you were trying to recall worth the headache?"

Charlee-Mae's shoulders started to shake.

"It is that funny?"

"Well..."

Philippe wondered if she was deliberately trying his patience.

"I was trying to remember..."

Why did she not simply spit it out?

"If I ever saw you naked?"

Her husband nearly choked, and Charlee-Mae couldn't help but giggle.

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"That...was really what you were thinking about?"

"Can you blame me? After all, it's not every day a woman wakes up with a ring on her finger——"

A slight frown creased Philippe's forehead as his wife pulled her drawer open to retrieve a set of papers.

"——while her medical report finds her hymen intact?"

### Chapter Three

Philippe's mind was reeling. A virgin? How the hell could a woman who looked like she was made for the bedroom be a virgin?

Charlee-Mae was amused at the way her husband was struggling to contain his shock. "Dr. Bowles was the one who gave me this." She handed over her medical report, but her husband simply put it back in the drawer, and she wasn't quite sure what to make of that.

"So I guess it's true?"

Fuck no, Philippe wanted to say. Because it was crazy as hell. How could she be a virgin? A virgin, for fuck's sake. Didn't everyone these days lose their virginity in their teens? He certainly had, even though technically, his first fuck had been when he was eleven.

"When Dr. Bowles first showed me my medical report, I really thought she was joking. But then, the more I thought about it, the more I realized it was just so...me? I mean..." Her tone turned impish, and Philippe found the tone strangely bewitching. "I may have lost a few memories here and there, but it doesn't change who I am, and I just know I'm the type of person who'd risk everything for a whirlwind romance...but just as quickly make a dramatic exit if we have a big fight."

Charlee-Mae glanced up at him expectantly, and Philippe cleared his throat to buy himself some time. What exactly was he supposed to say?

"That's how it happened between us, right? We fell in love at first sight, you proposed, I accepted, we had a fight, I ran away, then..." His "wife" suddenly paused. "Was it my fault or yours?"

Now, that at least he knew how best to answer, and he said quite simply, "Neither."

Charlee-Mae felt touched. "Oh, bless you, you're so sweet."

Philippe could not recall ever being described as 'sweet', and he wasn't certain how to feel about it.

"That probably means it's my fault, isn't it? And it kinda makes sense," she added musingly, "since you're here in Wyoming——"

There was another pause, and Philippe was beginning to understand that his "wife" was simply the type to speak her thoughts out loud.

"Do you live here? In Jackson Hole?"

"Non. I am here for my company's upcoming launch."

"Oh." Charlee-Mae frowned. She had thought they were here because they had made up, and this was where they had chosen to have their honeymoon, but maybe not?

"Am I supposed to be here, too?"

"Oui."

"Huh." Since she didn't want to risk another headache by forcing herself to remember, Charlee-Mae tried to imagine and recreate what could've generally happened between them. "If you're here for work, and I'm supposed to be here, too, then maybe...we did have a fight," she concluded, "and that's why you had to come up here alone. But when I realized I was wrong, I decided to go after you, and that's when I had my accident. Is that what happened?"

"It doesn't matter——"

Charlee-Mae's heart just melted. "I can't believe someone who looks as hot as you do can be so sweet."

Philippe was perplexed. How was he fucking sweet?

"You obviously don't want me to think it's my fault..."

Actually, Philippe was simply playing it safe with his answers, but if that was how she wanted to think of it, then who was he to stop her?

"But——" Charlee-Mae wrinkled her nose. "I definitely know how crazy I can get, which, by the way, you can totally blame on Dynasty——"

"Dynasty?"



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"It's my favorite show," Charlee-Mae shared excitedly. "I'm obsessed with it. Have I never told you that?"

"Not as I recall..."

Charlee-Mae sighed. That her husband was being so careful with his answers hadn't escaped her notice, and that really was just so sweet of him! He obviously didn't mind painting himself the bad guy, if that was what it took to keep her feeling from upset. No wonder he had been able to steal her heart and make her say yes to marrying him in just two weeks. After all—

Charlee-Mae suddenly remembered something. "Oh..."

Philippe stiffened. Quoi maintenant? What now?

"I don't remember your name," Charlee-Mae blurted out.

"Ah."

Charlee-Mae giggled. "Hello 'Ah'."

It was the lamest of jokes, but for some reason, it still made his lips twitch.

"Oh my." Charlee-Mae just wanted to die. "You really are perfect, aren't you? You really thought that was funny?"

"Now that you put it that way," he said dryly, "no, I don't any longer."

His wife laughed, and the sound was enough to give him a hard-on.

Putain.

"So..." Charlee-Mae was feeling quite excited. "Your name?"

"Philippe."

Charlee-Mae's heart skipped a beat.

Philippe.

Just the act of testing his name out in her mind was enough to make her toes curl.

Philippe.

She loved it, and she loved how her husband pronounced his name even more. It was so...French, and she just could not resist trying to imitate it as she said—

"Philippe." And Charlee-Mae's heart sang. It just felt so incredibly good to say her husband's name that she had to say it again. "Philippe."

Philippe had a hard time keeping his face expressionless. His wife's attempt at a French accent was the most horrible thing he had ever heard in his entire life, and while it should have been enough to completely turn him off...he actually found himself reacting the opposite.

Incroyable.

He found it adorable and funny, but more than that, he also found her painfully terrible accent hot as hell, and when his "wife" then added in her husky, honey-sweet

voice—

"Mon Philippe."

Philippe's jaw clenched. Her accent was still shitty, but it didn't seem to fucking matter. All he seemed capable of caring about was how his wife had just called him 'her Philippe', and instead of finding her display of possessiveness another major turn-off like he usually did, his body chose to surprise him yet again, with the way his cock was now fully erect and throbbing painfully behind his pants.

A frisson of sexual awareness snaked down Charlee-Mae's spine when she noticed the way her husband was now staring at her. The lust that glittered in his eyes was flagrant and fierce, its heat almost primal, but instead of scaring her off, his need for her sparked her own desire, and Charlee-Mae found herself slowly wetting her suddenly-dry lips.

Bordel de merde!

Seeing the pink tip of her tongue run over her rosebud lips had his entire body clenching in arousal. It was just fucking insane, how this "wife" of his had such an easy time destroying his self-control and reducing him into a mindless beast in heat.

"Philippe?"

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The breathless tone of her honey-sweet voice almost had him groaning.

"Oui?"

Charlee-Mae almost whimpered. Oh God, that was simply 'yes' in French, but it was just so, so sexy she could die at the sound of it.

Jade-green eyes met amber ones, and just as Charlee-Mae lost track of her thoughts, so did Philippe forget every rule he was supposed to stick to about their mail-order marriage.

He had meant to keep their relationship platonic and uncomplicated, but with Charlee-Mae turning out to be every fucking thing he had ever fantasized in a woman—

Charlee-Mae's heart started to race as Philippe slowly leaned close.

Lord, oh Lord.

His golden head bent down, and her breath caught.

"I want to kiss you."

Her head spun, and Charlee-Mae heard herself whisper, "Oui, s'il vous plaît." Yes, please.

Lust blazed in his loins, and even though her French accent was still frighteningly

horrible, Philippe could not remember hearing anything so fucking hot. This woman turned him on in a way that no other woman had ever done, and even as the logical part of his mind warned him against muddying the waters of his marriage—

It was too late.

Charlee-Mae's toes curled under the sheets as her husband's large, strong hands clasped her face. She trembled in his hold, and she could barely hear anything over the loud drumming of her heartbeat. His head continued to lower, and just as she tried to draw another breath to calm herself, it was then his mouth finally covered hers, and she ended up completely forgetting how to breathe.

Oh! My! Lord!

Her husband's mouth was simply divine. It was hot where it was supposed to be hot. Soft and firm where it was supposed to be soft and firm, and oh God, oh God, the way he was leisurely nibbling and nipping on her lips was fast making Charlee-Mae lose her mind.

She tried to keep her wits together, but when she felt his lips finally nudge hers open, the thought of what was going to happen next had her moaning as her lips parted—

Aaaaah.

The kiss deepened as his tongue stroked inside the moist cavern of her mouth, and all she could do was moan anew as her arms wrapped around his neck. His kiss was slow and gentle at first, but as the strokes of his tongue gradually changed into swift, hard thrusts that made her feel like he was fucking her mouth, something inside of her seemed to unfurl—

Putain.

One moment, she was like a shy, uncertain kitten in his arms, and then all of a sudden she had turned into something else and something more, with her arms tightening around his neck as she started kissing him back. Her tongue began to mate with his, and at the first feel of her tongue thrusting inside of his mouth—

Ah, fuck, fuck, fuck.

A groan escaped him as he felt his control start to break. He had never been the type to lose his mind over a kiss. Sex might be his favorite pastime, but he had never let it rule his life. He had always remained in command of himself even when fucking, and this had not changed no matter who he was fucking. Or at least it never did...until now. Until this. Until her.

And when he felt her start to move until he realized she was climbing into his lap—

Putain de bordel de merde!

The bed dipped as she straddled him, and he could no longer think. He cupped her nape while his other hand went under her hospital gown—

"Putain!"

He yanked back, and Charlee-Mae moaned in protest at the abrupt end of their kiss.

"You do not have any underwear," Philippe growled. "Pourquoi?"

"Uh..." Charlee-Mae had a hard time making her brain work. "Do you hate it?"

"Hate it?" A hoarse laugh escaped him. "It's more like..."

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He said something in French, and although Charlee-Mae's proficiency in his language had improved over the years, she was just so turned on, lust had killed all of her brain cells, and all she could do was look at him helplessly. "What?"

"I said," Philippe gritted out, "it's killing me." And before she could answer, her husband chose to further demonstrate his answer, with his hand starting to move again under her gown.

Oh God!

Philippe's hand covered her mound, and her nails dug hard into his shoulders. "Philippe!"

Her imploring tone was matched by the plea in her amber eyes, and the combination had the last of his control disintegrating. All hell broke loose, and the consequences of what he was about to do simply ceased to matter.

This woman was his wife.

It was suddenly easy to think of her in such a manner, suddenly important to know that this woman was his alone.

Charlee-Mae was his wife, and so if his wife was silently begging him to make her cum—

Mon Dieu!

His gaze took hers captive as he started kneading her pussy with just the heel of his palm, and not for a second did he allow his wife to look away. He wanted her to remember who it was giving her pleasure, wanted Charlee-Mae to be capable only of picturing his face every time her pussy started to tingle and quiver.

And tingle and quiver it did, and in every instance, his own hunger grew as he watched her face reveal her every thought and feeling. He had never met someone who was this unguarded with her feelings, and to see her own desires burn hotter and hotter, and know that it was all because of him—

Putain.

He finally gave them what they both wanted, and her moan filled the room as his fingers finally acquainted themselves with the silky, swollen thickness of her folds.

"Oh God."

His hand moved down, and she moaned anew as his fingers started tracing the moist, throbbing lines of her flesh.

"Philippe!"

Her cry was of aching need and pleasure, and it nearly had him groaning as well.

So...goddamn...hot!

This woman was so fucking hot, and to think that she was his wife—

Aaaaaaah!

Charlee-Mae couldn't stop herself from writhing, moaning, and rubbing herself



against her husband's fingers, which proved to be just as divine as his mouth. If he could make her feel this wild and crazy just by stroking her folds, then what more, oh God...what more—oh my, oh God, oh Lord!

His thumb had found its way to her little nub of flesh, and the way Philippe was using his thumb to stimulate her clit had her unable to last for more than a second. Pleasure consumed her out of nowhere, and all she could do was dig her nails into his shoulders and cry his name out as she started to cum...and...cum...and...cum.

"Philippe!"

Her orgasm seemed to last for an eternity, and by the time the shudders that rocked her body gradually faded, she felt so tired and sleepy she couldn't even utter a protest as Philippe laid her down on the bed.

He left her side briefly, and when he returned he had a wet washcloth in his hand, and butterflies in her stomach came to life as she felt him wipe her clean. She wondered if he had always been like this, and from there, she remembered yet again the question she had asked, and he had failed to answer.

"Philippe?" She waited until his jade-green eyes sought hers, and it was then she asked, "I got it right earlier, didn't I? We had a fight on our wedding day, and that's why I'm still a virgin?"

## Chapter Four

Charlee-Mae woke up the next day to a bedside note.

We'll talk when I get back.

~ P.

*Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 5:05 am*

She flipped the note around just to be sure there wasn't anything else written, and when she found out there was none, she settled back against the pillows with a sigh.

Huh.

Last night, Nurse Stella had come in before Philippe could answer her question, and after that, Dr. Manolis had also come to check on her, and before she knew it, the phone extension in her room had started to ring, and his sister-in-law Greta's call had ended up taking her husband away for good.

It was frustrating to say the least, but since Greta's call had been about work, Charlee-Mae had quickly assured her husband she was fine on her own.

Except she was not.

Her gaze flicked back to Philippe's handwritten note, and she wondered if she was being unreasonable to hope that there was an 'I love you' hidden somewhere in Philippe's note.

She had imagined Frenchmen in general to be romantic, but maybe her beautiful and sexy husband was the exception to the rule. He was super, super sweet after all, so maybe, he was simply being considerate. Since she had lost all memories of meeting and falling in love with him, her husband might've imagined telling her 'I love you' could make her feel pressured into saying the words back.

Charlee-Mae thought this over, and after a moment, she decided it was so. After all, Philippe didn't seem to be the type to let himself be caught up in a whirlwind

romance if his feelings weren't involved. Add to that their undeniable sexual chemistry, and voila: a couple in love was born.

Her positive outlook now fully restored, Charlee-Mae hummed happily as she swung her legs off the bed and headed to the en-suite for a much-needed shower.

It was a bummer that her head wound meant she wouldn't be able to wash her hair for almost a week, but at least the rest of her would feel fresh and clean.

Deliciously hot water warmed her skin as she soaped her body, and just like she always did every morning, Charlee-Mae started talking to God in her mind, and Lord, oh Lord, did she have a lot to say, like—

Thank You, God!

She had always dreamed of having a grand romance that would look like it was straight out of a Dynasty episode, and that was exactly what she had now, with Charlee-Mae having fallen in love, getting married, and losing all memories of her husband in the span of two weeks.

She was sure things would only get more exciting from here, and the thought had Charlee-Mae cheerfully singing Lady Marmalade as she finished her shower. After unpinning her hair and drying herself off, she wrapped the towel around her body...and bumped straight into a hard wall of muscles as soon as she walked out of the en-suite.

Charlee-Mae looked up, and her throat went dry as her mood changed lightning-quick from stunned to feverish.

The lust blazing in her husband's jade-green eyes made her remember how he had made her cum, and Charlee-Mae could only gulp and fidget as she struggled to

control the desire that was spreading fast through her bloodstream.

How amazing was it that this beautiful and oh-so-sexy man was her husband...but at the same time feel like a virtual stranger? Just looking at Philippe made her feel so hot, and the fact that she didn't remember marrying him just made things more exciting. It was like wanting something forbidden, except it wasn't really forbidden, and when she saw the way Philippe was staring at how half of her breasts swelled over her towel—

He wanted her as bad as she wanted him, Charlee-Mae realized dizzily, and the knowledge made her reach up, and before she could let herself think twice, the towel wrapped around her body had already fallen to the floor—

"Mon Dieu."

—just as both of them heard the door start to open.

Nurse Stella entered her patient's room while patting her pockets to see which one of it...ah, there it was. She fished her pen out of the pocket of her pants. "Good morning, Mrs. DeRose—" She looked up and belatedly noticed her patient's elegantly handsome fiancé, who remained to be the favorite topic of the entire hospital staff. "—and Mr. DeRose."

Charlee-Mae couldn't help beaming even though she was completely naked under the sheets. "Good morning." It was her first time to hear someone address her as Philippe's wife, and she loved it. No more Cha-Cha or Charlee-Mae! From now on, she wanted only to be known as Mrs. DeRose, for ever and ever!

"Good morning." Philippe's tone was stiff, just as the rest of him was. He could not remember having moved so fast in his life, but what stunned him more was how such a thing had happened in the first place. He had fucked literally countless women in

the past two decades, but not once had he ever been put in a situation where anyone could have caught him in flagrante delicto.

The only thing that made today different from all the other times he had sex was his wife...and that was definitely a problem.

His brooding gaze swung back to his wife, who remained under the covers while she answered Nurse Stella's questions in a voice that was still slightly breathless, and fuck, fuck, fuck—

The sound of it made him harder under his pants, and Philippe had to clench and unclench his fists in an effort to control himself.

"That's it then," Nurse Stella said cheerfully. "I'll be back in perhaps two...no, actually, I think I'll just come back after lunch."

"Thank you."

"Merci."

Nurse Stella smiled at the couple, and on her way out, she bent down to pick up a discarded towel off the floor and made sure to discreetly lock the door before seeing herself out.

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*Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 5:05 am*

Charlee-Mae burst into laughter. "Oh my God." They clearly hadn't fooled Nurse Stella at all, and when she looked up at her husband—

The faint grimace on his beautiful face was too precious by half, and she automatically thought of reaching for her phone to take a photo—oh!

Philippe immediately saw the way Charlee-Mae's forehead start to furrow. "Qu'est-ce que c'est?"

"I just remembered I don't have my phone."

"I am sorry to say that the old one is irreparable, but your replacement unit should be with you tomorrow at the latest." This was a lie, of course, but his I.T. team needed another half day at least to complete their tasks.

"I see..."

"If you're thinking of calling your parents, they're still in a couples' retreat that doesn't allow for outside communication. I thought I would let you decide if you wish them to know about your accident—"

"I'd rather not, to be honest. I love my parents, but they can be a bit over the top." She looked at him curiously. "Have you met them yet?"

"Non. They had already left for their retreat when we met." He paused. "Is there anyone else you'd like to call?"

"My sister-in-law," his wife said right away. "Just like you have Greta," she added with a smile, "I have Charlotte."

"Is that so?" Philippe's courteous tone effectively masked his discomfort. If Charlee-Mae hadn't lost her memories, she would've known it wasn't like that at all. She would've been aware that Greta was not just his sister-in-law but his mistress as well.

But because she had lost her memories—

Just hearing her say Greta's name already felt as if he was doing her a disservice, and so...

Philippe's jaw clenched as he came into a decision.

For as long as Charlee-Mae thought their marriage real, his honor required him to act similarly. And that was all there was to this, Philippe told himself forcefully. A matter of honor—

"Philippe?"

Merde.

He saw Charlee-Mae looking at him questioningly, and he realized he had been too busy thinking of Greta that he had missed whatever it was his wife said.

"Je suis désolé," he apologized. "I have much in my mind—"

"Because of work?"

Her words gave him the excuse he needed, and he took it without hesitation. "We are just busy with last-minute adjustments, but do not concern yourself about it. I will not

let myself be distracted again——

Charlee-Mae shook her head. "There's no need to apologize, and there's certainly no need to treat me like an invalid you need to look after. I only lost my memory," she reminded him, "and aside from this stupid head wound, and a few scratches here and there, nothing's really wrong with me."

"That stupid head wound," he said dryly, "required twenty-four stitches."

"Stitches," she emphasized, "not brain surgery."

His lips suddenly twitched, and Charlee-Mae's breath caught. How was it that her husband managed to look a thousand times hotter every time he had even the barest hint of a smile on his oh-so-lovely lips?

"What exactly are we arguing about here?"

His teasing words made her realize she hadn't an answer to that either, and she could only shake her head with a rueful smile. "No idea either."

"Then let's talk about something else, oui?"

His wife's expression brightened. "I'd love to know more about your launch, if that's okay?"

"Bien sûr, ma femme. We are in the winemaking business——"



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Charlee-Mae's heart was singing again. Philippe had said 'we', and that made her feel very much 'married', never mind if she still couldn't remember a thing about meeting him.

"But this year we have chosen to expand into luxury liquor chocolate. We want in particular to be associated with holidays and special occasions——"

"Like Tiffany's for engagement rings," Charlee-Mae guessed, "only you'd be the Tiffany's for chocolates?"

"That is correct."

"And the reason you're here in Jackson Hole is, mm..." Her eyes lit up. "Foxtown! It's fast becoming America's #1 tourist destination for adults, and you've tied up with them for——" It was now the first week of February. "——Valentine's?"

"Tout à fait." Exactly.

The approval in her husband's voice made Charlee-Mae feel like she was floating, but it also made her realize just how unlucky she had been at dating in the past. She was almost thirty-two, for God's sake, and yet this was the first time she had a man look at her approvingly because of her brains.

Philippe's phone suddenly rang, but the call only lasted for less than a minute. Afterwards, he turned to her, saying, "That was my assistant. I had asked him earlier to see if he could find a way to contact the organizers of your parents' retreat."

Charlee-Mae watched him scribble down her parents' contact details on the hospital's notepad. His handwriting was neat and masculine, and everything lined up so perfectly straight one would have thought he had used a ruler while writing.

Philippe handed her the note when he was done, and it was then she realized what her husband had written. "N.C. huh?"

He looked at her curiously. "Does that mean anything to you?"

Charlee-Mae sighed. "N.C. is their code for nudist camps." She saw Philippe's brows shoot up, and her lips twitched. "I told you, didn't I? My parents are over the top, and mm...I guess you can also say they're very liberal? More French," she teased, "than American."

"Then I'm sure your parents and I will get along perfectly."

"I wouldn't know about that." Her lips pursed. "You seem a bit more...proper than the average Frenchman?"

"How so?" Philippe's tone was extremely pleasant. "Have you considerable experience dating Frenchmen to make such a comparison?"

"Oh my." Amber eyes sparkled up at him. "Are you jealous?"

"Of course not." But this time, his voice was stiff, and even worse, Philippe suspected there was a trace of truth in her words. He had never been jealous. Not even once. But thinking of Charlee-Mae with any other man did bother the fuck out of him—

"Emily in Paris."

Philippe frowned. "Qui est-elle?" Who is she?

Charlee-Mae giggled. "Not who, but what. It's a show on Netflix," she explained, "and that's basically where I got all my knowledge of Frenchmen from."

"Ah."

Her husband now looked and sounded very relaxed, and that told her all she needed to know. He was jealous, and it was so, so cute!

Philippe's gaze narrowed at his wife. "I don't think I like how you are looking at me."

Charlee-Mae was all innocence as she asked, "How am I looking at you?"

"Like you think you already know everything there is to know about me."

"And is that not how it should be," she parried back, "between married couples like us?"

"Mm." Jade-green eyes gleamed down at her. "Does that mean you also believe I have you all figured out?"

"Well..." Charlee-Mae's eyes were once again filled with mischief. "That's the thing, monsieur."

Heat surged through his loins, but Philippe was no longer surprised by this. His wife's accent was still horrible as hell, and it was simply one of life's greatest mysteries that he nevertheless found such a sound incredibly arousing.

"There is nothing to figure out about me."

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Philippe's lips twisted in a devilish smile. "I have a hard time buying that. Women tend to take pride of how com...plex they are."

Charlee-Mae couldn't help grinning. "You were about to say 'complicated', weren't you?"

"See? You are now making things complicated."

His wife laughed. "Fine. Most women are complicated or, as you say, "complex", but..."

There was a pause, and when Charlee-Mae looked at him expectantly, Philippe played along and asked obediently, "But what?"

"But we become simple creatures the moment we fall in love."

This time, Philippe's expression only changed to one of blandness, and although it made Charlee-Mae nervous, she told herself that perhaps this was also the reason why he had not been the slightest bit romantic in last night's note. Maybe, she had been right the first time, and Philippe was different from the typical Frenchman, and he preferred not to speak of his feelings at all.

Even so——

"When a woman falls in love," she continued determinedly, "a man only has to do two things to make her happy. One: love her back, and two——"

"Buy her jewels?"

His sardonic tone made her look at him questioningly. "I won't say there aren't any female gold-diggers, but isn't it your choice to date them or not?"

"And I don't. I bed them, but I don't date them."

"Spoken like a true womanizer."

The muttered remark had Philippe studying his wife in amusement. "And are you the one jealous now, ma femme?"

"Yes, I am," she snapped.

Philippe's lips pressed together in a straight line. This was not the first time a woman had been jealous over him. And while such admissions - or even outbursts at times - used to irritate him, Charlee-Mae's jealousy was yet another different thing about her. He liked that she was jealous over him, and he could not think of a single fucking reason why that was.

"My amnesia has obviously made me forget everything about you," his wife was now saying in an adorably grumpy tone, "so could you kindly refresh my memory and tell me again exactly how many women have there been in your life?"

"Countless."

She didn't smile. "I'm not joking."

"Neither am I."

Her jaw dropped. "You've dated—"

"I've fucked countless women."

"And you never counted them——"

"Because I started pretty early," Philippe felt obliged to explain, "and in those years, fucking was my means to rebel. So I tried to fuck as many girls as I could. At least a different one each night."

Charlee-Mae was stunned speechless. A different one each night...at least? She had done a few wild things in her life as well, but...obviously, considering the fact that she was still a virgin at her age, she wasn't really that wild.

Even if she looked the part.

While Philippe, on the other hand——

He might look like a fairytale prince come to life, but obviously his past was more Pornhub than Disney, and yet, somehow...

"I know I'm not supposed to force myself to remember," Charlee-Mae heard herself say, "but is it okay if I take a guess?"

"On what?"

"How we fell in love?"

Philippe's gaze turned hooded. "If you wish."

"I'm thinking...we might have met somewhere we're mutually invited."

"We have a mutual acquaintance, yes."

"And then you seduced me, didn't you? Because I usually steer clear of Casanovas like you, but since we ended up married..."

He thought about how Charlee-Mae had asked for a photo of his abs via Charlotte, and his lips twitched. "I believe I was your type, yes."

"I knew it!" Charlee-Mae was feeling a little proud of herself. "So, let's see. We met, you seduced me, and while you were thinking I'm just another girl to add a notch to your bedpost, you didn't realize I was already getting under your skin, and before you knew what was happening..."

The prospect of voicing out her feelings and hearing him say 'I love you' back thrilled her so much that Charlee-Mae found herself quickly sitting up, and as the sheets fell away from her body, and cool air brushed against her breasts and teased her nipples into life—

She had forgotten she was still naked!

Charlee-Mae's gaze flew up to her husband's, and she could only gulp at the way he

was staring at her breasts.

Oh my.

And Charlee-Mae then heard herself say, "I haven't told you yet..."

"About what?"

The thickness of his voice made her head spin, and her own voice turned husky as she answered, "The s-second thing," Charlee-Mae stammered, "that a man should do to make a woman happy..."

"Je vois." Philippe was still staring at her breasts, and oh Lord, the hunger in his gaze was almost...savage.

"A-Aren't you going to ask me what it is?"

Philippe finally managed to wrench his gaze off his wife's breasts, which were the sweetest and plumpest pair of pink-tipped melons he had ever fucking seen. He looked at her, asking, "What is it?"

A rare, shy smile touched his wife's lips, and he couldn't recall seeing anything more enchanting.

"You make her cum."

FUCK.

He closed his eyes for control, but then he heard Charlee-Mae whisper, "Will you make me cum, mon Philippe?"



His eyes flew open, just in time to see his wife cup her tits—

Putain de bordel de merde.

Charlee-Mae moaned as her husband fell on her breasts like a starving beast, with his big, strong hands cupping each bountiful globe while his mouth nuzzled the valley of flesh between them. In the past, she had been attracted enough to a few men that they were able to make it to second base...but that was as far as they had made it. Their hands on her breasts, nothing else, and none of them—

None of them, oh God—

None of them made her go crazy and wild with desire the way Philippe was doing now, with just his fingers squeezing and kneading her already-swollen flesh, and oh my Lord—

He had finally plumped one breast to take her sensitive nipple into his mouth, and Charlee-Mae could no longer resist the temptation of driving her fingers through his hair. She had been dying to do this the "first" time she had seen him, with the way his thick, silky blond locks just seemed to be begging to be messed with by a woman's touch.

Make that her touch, Charlee-Mae was quick to correct herself in her mind, because even as out of her mind as she was with need, she realized that she was still very much possessive towards him, and the mere thought of any other woman pawing her Philippe was enough to make her see red.

Philippe was her husband, and only she had the right to touch him, just like he alone had to do what he was doing now to her nipple, with the way he was suckling on it so, so hard, pain and pleasure blended into each other, and she was left panting as she clutched his head—

"Mon Philippe..."

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She heard and felt him groan against her breast, and then he was suddenly straightening up and cupping her face between his hands.

Jade-green eyes captured hers, and the lust in it was now feral, and Charlee-Mae's breath caught.

"How do you do this?" he demanded savagely.

Charlee-Mae had no idea what this was, but before she could even open her mouth to ask, he had already swooped in, and her lips parted the moment their mouths touched.

Aaaah!

Her hands instantly reached up to his chest, Charlee-Mae blindly roaming his muscled form until she found something to grip: the woolen vest that was worn between his buttoned-up shirt and trench coat, and her fingers involuntarily tightened its hold when she felt his tongue dive into her mouth.

Ooooooh God.

His kiss was as divine as ever, and she could only kiss him back just as desperately, with every cell in her body starting to tingle and ache. They kissed and kissed and kissed, but just as she was about to run out of breath, it was suddenly over—

"Philippe!"

The outraged little cry his wife released had him laughing. He had never been

tempted to laugh while fucking, and he had never had a woman make such a sound at the abrupt end of a kiss. And when he looked down, and he saw the way Charlee-Mae was staring up at him with a mixture of confusion, outrage, and appeal—

Ah fuck, but this look of hers, this look that told him she wanted him to kiss her again—

It was too fucking hot, and Philippe instinctively reached up to run his thumb over her lips in soothing apology.

"I only want to be fair, ma femme," he murmured. "There is your other breast that requires my attention..."

Charlee-Mae could only moan. So that was what he meant to be fair!

"And after that, there is your sweet little pussy, too..."

Oh Lord.

She had always imagined that men who were detailed-oriented and methodical were too boring for her taste, but with Philippe's plan to lavish attention on every part of her body, she was obviously mistaken, and oh my, oh God, oh, oh...oh!

Charlee-Mae couldn't help but gasp as Philippe suddenly bit her nipple, not enough to make her bleed (or at least she didn't think so?), but enough to make her see stars, and whimper after whimper slipped past her trembling lips as her husband suckled away. It was just so good, so, so good that she once again found herself holding his head to her chest as tightly as she could.

She didn't want this to end either.

But it did.

Because this time, oh God, this time——

Charlee-Mae fell back against the pillows as Philippe gently parted her thighs open, and fire blazed through her body as she watched him stare at her womanhood like it was a feast for his eyes.

"I can see every inch of your flesh glistening with need..."

The words were uttered in the sexiest purr, and the sound had her moaning helplessly.

"And the scent of your desire is intoxicating..."

Oh God. Charlee-Mae could not stop herself from writhing at the erotic beauty of her husband's words. Were all Frenchmen like this? It didn't seem so in *Emily in Paris*, and——

"I want to taste your pussy, ma femme."

Desire consumed her, and all she could do was choke out——

"Yes, my God, yes!"

She saw her husband smirk at the way she had answered him, but she couldn't make herself care when already he was kneeling down on the floor, and oh God, oh Lord, oh Jeeeesus——

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Charlee-Mae barely managed to grab hold of the covers, and as soon as she felt his tongue run down her swollen, quivering folds, she bit hard into the thick layer of cotton...and screamed. It was all she could do, just scream and scream and scream as her husband did more than taste her pussy. He was practically devouring it, and oh God, oh God—

A convulsing wave of pleasure slammed into her body, and Charlee-Mae once again started to cum—

Oh my Lord.

—and keep cumming and cumming, with Philippe triggering another orgasm as he suddenly thrust his tongue in between the still-quivering folds of her flesh.

When Charlee-Mae woke, the first thing she noticed was how comfortably warm she felt...in a pair of velvet pajamas that she could not recall changing into. And when she turned to her side, it was to see her beautiful husband seated next to her bed, and a grimace twisting over his features as soon as their gazes met.

"Je suis navré," Philippe apologized stiffly. "I did not mean to make you pass out—" He broke off at his wife's soft laugh.

"If sex is always like that between us," she teased, "then please feel free to make me swoon every time."

Philippe's lips pressed together. "I am being serious, ma femme."

"So am I."

Her husband sighed. "No." But his voice was faintly humorous. "I can tell you are not."

His wife laughed, and Philippe, in spite of everything, could not keep his lips from twitching in response. What was it about this woman that made her so different?

"Philippe?"

His phone started to ring in his pocket just as she murmured his name. Since it was presently programmed to only allow certain calls, Philippe knew it was something he had to answer. But for the first time in years - the first time since his brother had died, actually - he chose to ignore the demands of work and focused...on his wife.

"Qu'est-ce que c'est?"

Her cheeks turned a becoming shade of pink, albeit curious as well, and then she was suddenly reaching for his hand, and Philippe's entire body clenched as Charlee-Mae's lips gently pressed against his knuckles.

"Je t'aime."

Her French, even when she was uttering one of the most commonly known phrases of his native language, was still as horrible as ever, and yet at the same fucking time—

The sound of it had somehow become precious, and it was why, even with his phone continuing to ring inside his pocket, Philippe heard himself say in return, "Je t'aime, mon coeur."

Chapter Five

Charlee-Mae was properly bundled up in several layers of winter clothing when she stepped out of the en-suite and caught the tail end of her husband's conversation. Concern filled her when she heard his grim tone, and she looked at him uncertainly as he ended the call. "Is everything okay?"

"Oui, bien sûr," he assured her. "Forgive the constant interruptions. Everyone in the company has been feeling the pressure of our launch."

"You don't look pressured, though."

He gave her a lazy smile. "It must be because of you."

She smiled back at him sweetly, saying, "I think so, too." The answer won her a laugh, and its sound was so, so sexy it made her toes curl hard. Thank You, Lord, for giving me the hottest husband ever!

Philippe turned to the balcony, and upon following his gaze, it was then she belatedly noticed that their lunch alfresco had already been set up.

"Oh my gosh!"

His wife's gleeful squeal could only be described as shrill, but strangely enough, Philippe found this adorable as well.

"I can't believe it!" Charlee-Mae was so excited, she was practically hopping from one foot to another. The weather outside was gorgeous, and the landscape even more so, with the snow-capped mountain peaks in the distance. "Can we go out now?"

"As long as you give me your word," he said strictly, "that you understand we can only be out for an hour."



"Um..." Charlee-Mae squirmed. Just an hour? Really?

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"I mean it, ma femme. Konstantin already made me feel like I know no better than a horny teenager," Philippe muttered in self-disgust, "when I was forced to tell him this morning why you had passed out." His wife giggled at this, but Philippe was still feeling slightly disgruntled. "And thanks to your alfresco request, my friend is now convinced I have lost all common sense since marrying you."

Charlee-Mae could no longer keep herself from grinning. Basically, what he was saying was that Dr. Manolis believed she had her husband wrapped around her finger. Wasn't he?

She saw Philippe's gaze start to narrow, and she quickly wiped the grin off her face and sought to distract him with a mournful shake of her head. "I'm so sorry, mon Philippe. I didn't mean to have you suffer a lecture from your friend." Inspiration struck, and she said, "But maybe I can make you feel better?"

Philippe was startled when his wife suddenly rushed towards him.

"I shall kiss your bad feelings away," Charlee-Mae announced.

And so she did...by suddenly bending down to press a quick little kiss to his trousers, and right on top of the telltale bulge of his manhood.

Nom de Dieu!

It was the simplest and cutest little thing, but it still aroused him...even as it also made Philippe throw his head back with a laugh.

His wife straightened up, her amber eyes aglow once again with mischief. "Feeling better now?"

Philippe shook his head "I think you need to do it again, but this time sans clothing?"

Charlee-Mae would have loved to say yes, oh yes...but with her stomach suddenly growling, all she could do was smile sheepishly. "Can I take a rain check?"

She expected him to laugh, but instead Philippe was swiftly urging her out to the balcony even as he scolded her for not informing him she was that hungry. The lecture continued as he started heaping food on her plate, but throughout it, all she could think about was how she would have hated every word if it were Landon or Charlotte doing the scolding.

But because this was her Philippe, and anything her husband did was adorable—

This only meant he loved her so very much, she thought happily, and she therefore didn't mind if he were to scold her every day of their lives.

When Philippe finally settled in his seat, it was Charlee-Mae's turn to talk, and Philippe surprised himself by answering his wife's seemingly endless stream of questions without feeling impatient or irritated.

No, his older brother did not work for the company, and it was because Pierre had passed away seven years ago.

No, Greta and Pierre had not met at work, but instead the three of them had grown up together.

No, she had not yet met his mother, but she would soon, since Sandra was also here in Jackson Hole.

In truth, most of the things she was asking about, she would have already known if she had not lost her memories, and if it had been anyone else asking these questions, Philippe would have long considered this a waste of time.

But he did not.

Because, truthfully, he could not remember having this much fun—

"Who's who?"

—and one of the reasons for this was her wonderfully horrible French accent, which Philippe still found strangely cute...and exquisitely arousing.

Charlee-Mae looked at her husband hopefully. "Did I get it right?" The word she was trying to pronounce was French for 'happy', and it was the name Philippe had chosen for his company's new line of liquor chocolate.

"Désolé, mais non." I'm sorry, but no.

"Then..." Charlee-Mae refused to feel defeated, and so she tried again, saying, "Who's whose?"

Philippe's lips twitched. "It's Heureuse."

"Ah!" Her eyes lit up. "Who wuss?"

"Ah, bien...I am sure you will get it in no time."

She made a face. "In other words, I still suck."

"Oui."

Charlee-Mae stuck her tongue out. "You just—" She stopped speaking when she saw Philippe's phone, which he had left screen up on the table, start vibrating, and the name Greta pop up on the display.

"Aren't you going to take that?"

"After lunch," he said firmly.

"Oh, so Emily in Paris got that right? French people never work during lunch hours?"

Actually, he had never been the type to have lunch hours, but Philippe decided it was best to simply shrug in response rather than have his wife realize he had no wish to speak to his mistress in her presence.

"I hope it's nothing serious," Charlee-Mae said worriedly.

"Even if it were serious, she should be able to handle it or let someone else take over as VP."

"Uh...wow." Charlee-Mae was more than a little surprised. "That's quite harsh."

"Just as my own father did not give me any special treatment when I started out in the company, neither can I treat my sister-in-law differently from any other employee just because of who she is."

"Your father sounds intimidating."

"He was." Philippe's tone was brief. "He passed away when I was still in college."

Charlee-Mae reached to give his hand a squeeze. "I'm so sorry, Philippe."

"It's fine, ma femme. We were not truly close to begin with."

"And...your mother?"

The chiseled edges of her husband's handsome face softened. "We are quite close."

"I hope she'll like me." Charlee-Mae couldn't help feeling a little nervous at the prospect of meeting her mother-in-law. She usually had a lot of confidence in making people like her, but none of those people happened to be Philippe's mother.

What if her mother-in-law ended up hating her because she was too American? What if—

His phone started to ring again, and she then heard Philippe say, "Maman?"

Charlee-Mae froze. Wasn't that French...for mother?

## Chapter Six

Philippe made himself smile as the elevator doors opened and out came his mother with her usual air of L'Air du Temps.

"Maman."

"Philippe." She lifted her cheek for her son's kiss before stepping back to study him.

"You appear surprised."

"Was that not your intention?" he asked dryly.

Sandra only smiled. "The woman you have been visiting here is your wife, n'est ce pas?"

"It seems you know everything."

"Oh, not everything," she denied airily. "I'd love to know, for instance, why you chose not to tell me about her."

"I didn't. I planned to," he said briefly, "but she had an accident on her way to Foxtown. It didn't result in any major injuries, but she did suffer a couple of bruised ribs, some gashes, and a scalp wound that required stitching."

"Mon Dieu. Is she okay?" Sandra was genuinely concerned, regardless of her suspicions of the unknown woman her son had married.

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"She is doing well, but..." Her son took on a warning tone. "I do not want her upset."

"Are you saying I could upset her?"

"My wife is...unlike any of the women you've been trying your hardest to marry me off to."

Sandra's curiosity had now turned into amazement. She had come here, thinking that there was a very good chance she would meet some gold-digger, but she knew now she was very much mistaken. Her son was not the type to sound fiercely protective of just any woman. Not even towards Greta. As far as Sandra knew, she, as his mother, had that privilege alone...until now.

"You have my word, mon fils. And so—" Sandra gestured towards the door. "May I finally go in and meet my daughter-in-law?"

Philippe was sorely tempted to say no. His mother had an extremely sharp tongue when it came to people she either disliked or disapproved of, and he could not help feeling on edge at the thought that Charlee-Mae could be classified as both.

Sandra was highly contemptuous of women of leisure, and would she not consider Charlee-Mae as one, if she were to find out that his wife's main job was basically making herself pretty in her YouTube videos?

If Charlee-Mae hadn't lost her memories, she would've been better equipped to handle his mother, and she wouldn't have been hurt if Sandra were to say anything cruel. After all, that Charlee-Mae knew their marriage was no love match.



But this Charlee-Mae who thought their marriage was real?

Not worth it, Philippe decided grimly, but just as he was about to ask his mother to visit another time, Sandra had also seemed to reach the end of her patience—

"I'm going in," Sandra told him.

Putain!

But his mother had already opened the door, and just as Philippe followed her inside, he heard both women burst into speech at the same time.

"Ça alors!"

"Oh, wow!"

Philippe halted in his tracks. Were both Sandra and Charlee-Mae being sarcastic or did the two women truly happen to compliment each other simultaneously?

Charlee-Mae couldn't remember seeing someone more posh than Philippe's mother, whose all-black attire was very much reminiscent of Audrey Hepburn's iconic outfit in *Funny Face*, only this time the older woman also had a silver trench coat folded over her arm.

Sandra, meanwhile, was ready to weep tears of joy. "C'est une miracle!" She turned to her son, now feeling so horribly guilty for ever doubting the truth of his marriage. "I am at a loss for words, mon fils."

Philippe didn't quite know how to answer this, and his incredulity grew when Sandra then turned to his wife and opened her arms wide. "Ma fille."

Charlee-Mae went to her mother-in-law hesitantly, and the older woman gave her a warm embrace before kissing each of her cheek, which Charlee-Mae automatically returned.

Sandra was still unable to stop smiling as she stepped back to study her beloved daughter-in-law. "God truly works in mysterious ways," she said feelingly, and turning to her son, she said enthusiastically, "I have been an avid viewer of Cha-Cha's YouTube videos for a few years now."

Charlee-Mae's eyes widened. "You know me?"

"Tu la connais?" Philippe demanded at the same time.

Sandra grinned at both of them. "Yes. Oui. My friend - do you remember Keanne Summers' maman, Philippe? She was the one who insisted I watch dear Cha-Cha's vlogs, and after just one time, I was hooked!"

Philippe was still incredulous. "So you truly know her?"

Sandra felt slightly affronted. "Why would I lie about this?" She turned to Charlee-Mae with a roll of her eyes. "He is being ridiculous, n'est ce pas?"

"Oh no, um——"

"Please call me Maman," Sandra said warmly.

Charlee-Mae couldn't help feeling touched. "You are too sweet...Maman."

Sandra gestured to her daughter-in-law's bandaged head. "Does it hurt?"

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"Only when I think too much."

"Then do not think," Philippe's mother said with a wink, "and just love."

"Why, Maman...I didn't think you'd be a hopeless romantic like me. I love it!"

As the two women laughed and chatted some more, Philippe started to wonder if perhaps he had somehow ended up in some alternate universe without being aware of it. Both women had nothing in common on the surface, and yet when one looked at the way the two now had their heads bent close as his mother showed Charlee-Mae something on her phone, it was as if they had known each other their entire lives.

He had wondered before why Charlotte considered Charlee-Mae a suitable match for him, and this, Philippe supposed, was the answer. How the CEO of Heart's Match had known of Sandra's fondness for his wife's videos, he could not even begin to imagine, but he now understood why Fleur spoke so highly of the other woman.

And now, speaking of Charlotte...

Charlee-Mae and Sandra glanced up upon his approach, and Philippe held his phone out to his wife. "It is your sister-in-law."

Charlee-Mae was surprised. "She knows your number?"

"You gave me her number in the past," he lied.

His wife turned to Sandra. "Is it alright—"

"Oh, of course," his mother was quick to say reassuringly, and the way Sandra continued to look fondly at his wife as Charlee-Mae walked away still struck Philippe as surreal.

Looking back at her son, Sandra could not help but smile when she found Philippe staring at her like she had grown a pair of horns (and probably a tail) in the past five minutes. "Is it that much of a shock that I actually like the woman you've married? In fact, I do believe your father would have also been charmed by her—" Her smile faded when she saw her son stiffen. "Oh, my dear."

"Now is not the time, Maman."

But Sandra only shook her head. "Your father is long gone, Philippe. You must move on and stop letting your anger rule your life."

Even merely hearing his mother mention his father was enough to make him remember all the memories of his miserable childhood. Bruno had been a cold and unloving man, a perfectionist who had not been able to accept that his younger son was dyslexic.

"Philippe..."

He shook his head. "I do not think I will ever stop hating him."

"Even if he ends up ruining your life?"

His lips twisted in a humorless life. "Au contraire, Maman - he was my sole motivation for making our business grow ten times more than he ever had in his lifetime."

"And Greta?"

Philippe stiffened.

"That his two sons have fallen for a woman he despises is certain to make your father turn over in his grave. Is that why your sister-in-law is now your mistress?"

Philippe's lips tightened. "I cannot believe you are bringing her up here——"

"You are feeling guilty," she observed. "Your wife does not know about her then?"

If Charlee-Mae had not lost her memories, such a question would've required him to lie, but because his wife now believed herself to be in love with him, Philippe was able to speak the truth to his mother.

"Non, Maman, she does not...and I have no plans of her ever finding out."

The fierceness of her son's tone told her everything she had to know, and a tremor of relief shook Sandra's slender frame. Oh, thank God, thank God.

Philippe was surprised when her mother suddenly gave him a warm embrace. "Maman?"

"I am just so happy for you, mon fils. I was worried at first, of course. I thought this marriage of yours was a sham. I thought you only meant to make me relinquish your shares, and you'd soon divorce your wife to marry Greta."

That had been his plan. Marrying Greta, in his mind, would've been his final act of revenge against a father capable of coldly rejecting his own flesh and blood on account of an imperfection.

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"But now that I have seen the two of you together, and because I cannot but think this is a work of God, to have Cha-Cha of all people become your wife..." Sandra reached up to cup her son's face. "Listen to me, Philippe. I know you hate being given advice, and I know that has much to do with your father, but if you are to ever listen to me just once, then let it be this moment. Get rid of Greta before it is too late."

Philippe was prevented from replying with Charlee-Mae walking back in, and Sandra quickly moved away before her daughter-in-law could be made to think something was amiss.

"I'm back!" Charlee-Mae sent an apologetic smile to Sandra. "I'm sorry I had to leave——"

"Non, non, I completely understand. All is well with your sister-in-law?"

"She thinks it's so me to have this kind of accident——"

Sandra laughed. "It is."

"Maman!"

"But I mean it in a good way, ma fille," the older woman reassured her. "No matter what trouble you run into, you always find a way to look at things positively. It is why I love watching your vlogs."

"Aww, Maman, you're making me blush——"

Sandra's shoulders started to shake as she suddenly remembered one of Cha-Cha's vlogs. "How can I do that when that man with a huge package——"

"Maman!" Philippe could not believe he had heard his mother - his church-going, ultra-conservative mother - had just uttered such a thing.

Sandra could not help laughing at her son's visible discomfort. "Oh, relax, mon fils."

His wife was laughing as well. "The package thing is an inside joke."

Philippe was starting to wonder whether he had married a stand-up comedienne.

"A few months ago, I went on a date with a guy from Tinder——"

"And the man's English was terrible," Sandra recalled.

"Very terrible," Charlee-Mae added, and as she and her mother-in-law looked at each other, it was as if their words called the same memory to mind, and both women started laughing again.

"The f-first thing he said——" Charlee-Mae was barely able to speak between giggles. "——was that he might make me blush because——"

"He had a huge package for you," Sandra cried out.

"But it really was just a package!"

Charlee-Mae and Sandra turned to Philippe, thinking that he would join in their laughter, but when they saw the all-too-pleasant expression on his handsome face——

Charlee-Mae quickly turned her laugh into a cough while Sandra checked her watch

and feigned shock at the time.

"Please." Philippe's voice was silky. "Don't stop at my expense. I'd love to know more about this other man my wife was dating."

Sandra pretended not to hear anything. "Oh dear. I'm late for my next appointment." She turned to Charlee-Mae. "I'm sorry, my dear. I have to go."

Charlee-Mae was starting to feel nervous at how Philippe was still looking at her. "Don't leave me, please?"

Sandra pretended not to hear this as well, and instead turned to her son. "Will you walk me to the lift, mon fils?"

"Bien sûr, Maman." Philippe turned to his wife. "And when I come back, we shall talk about packages——"

"But there's really no need," Charlee-Mae said earnestly. "It's only your package I care about! Your package is——"

Philippe swiftly ushered his mother out of the room and closed the door before Sandra could hear any other things about his package.

"Your wife is so adorable, Philippe."



"You make her sound like a pet."

Sandra let out a gasp. "I do not!" But then she saw her son's lips twitch, and she realized he had merely been joking. Joking!

Philippe turned to his mother and was startled to see the older woman looking so emotional. "Maman?"

"It has been so long since we've had such fun together like this."

"It has, hasn't it?"

"Every time we see each other, we often end up quarreling."

"It wasn't like that when I was growing up."

"No," Sandra said softly. "It wasn't." She left it at that, knowing that her son was no fool, and he would know without being told that their relationship as mother and son had only become difficult when he chose to make his sister-in-law his mistress.

Sandra's chauffeur-driven limousine was already waiting for her outside the hospital when they came out, and her mother kissed him on the cheek in goodbye. "All I wish is for your happiness, Philippe. But you won't ever have that if you do not let go of the past. Make things right while you still have the time."

Sandra's words remained with Philippe as he made his way back to Charlee-Mae's room. His father was long gone, but Philippe still had the rest of his life ahead of him.

Marrying Greta used to be so damn important because it had been the worst way he could think of to spite his father. But was that all his life could be?

It had been months since he had even taken Greta to bed, and did that not say a lot about how he saw her? When he had decided to marry Greta, he had thought he was killing two birds with one stone. He would have his revenge, and Greta would also make him a suitable wife.

But now that he had met Charlee-Mae..."suitable" suddenly did not seem enough, and he was starting to think it would never be so.

A heavy load seemed to have lifted off his shoulders, and although Philippe had no doubt ending things with Greta would not be easy, whatever trouble he ran into would be worth suffering if it meant keeping Charlee-Mae in his life, and preferably without her memories back.

His wife was standing by the balcony doors when he walked in, and she turned around as soon as she heard him enter. "Your Maman was such a surprise," she told him with a smile.

"I think that should be my line," he said dryly. "I would never have expected her to be a fan of your vlogs."

Charlee-Mae pouted. "Is that your way of saying you thought her too posh for my vlogs?"

"Oui."

His wife gasped. "How horrible! Don't you know Marriage 101? Thou shalt always be supportive of thy wife's vlogs!"

"Even if said vlogs are about the men she's dated?"

Charlee-Mae had actually forgotten about that part, and she realized too late she should have just kept her mouth shut.

"Well, ma femme? Should I watch your vlogs then?"

His tone was pleasant, but the glint in his eyes was not.

"You're jealous!"

"Oui."

She gasped yet again, not having expected to hear him easily admit this.

"And I've never been the type to be jealous before," Philippe muttered with self-disgust. "But somehow with you..."

"It's different?"

"Everything is different with you."

Charlee-Mae had a hard time keeping her face straight at her husband's chagrined tone.

"I used to find it extremely irritating," Philippe said moodily, "when women insisted on speaking French without bothering to learn the accent. But then you——"

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Charlee-Mae didn't know whether to feel sympathetic or insulted. "Is my accent that bad?"

"I do not think you can even call yours an accent."

"Ouch."

"It is just so terrible, it sounds no different from a witch running her nails against a chalkboard."

Charlee-Mae choked back a laugh.

"And there is the lunch hour you speak of."

"Oh dear."

"And then——" Philippe broke off when his wife suddenly rushed to his side and threw her arms around him.

"I get it," Charlee-Mae said, her voice muffled against his chest.

"You do?"

Looking up, she said softly, "'You're telling me you truly are in love with me...even if ours is a mail-order marriage."

Chapter Seven

Charlee-Mae's words had knocked him over with a feather, and Philippe struggled to find something to say. He felt her start to squirm, and he forced himself to let go even when a part of him wanted to keep her caged...in case she had decided to leave.

The silence stretched between them, and Philippe's tension grew. "Have you gotten your memories back?"

His wife shook her head, and the invisible noose around his neck eased the slightest bit. He knew he should be disappointed at her answer, but he was not. If Charlee-Mae had regained her memories, everything would have gone back to normal, and she would remember that their marriage was a business arrangement. He should have wanted that, but he didn't. And he no longer did...because everything had now changed

Philippe knew his sudden change of heart might make him appear fickle, but he didn't give a damn.

All he knew was that he wanted Charlee-Mae as she was now: a wife who believed herself in love with him. But was that even possible, when she had already figured out that both of them had not met under normal circumstances?

Philippe's gaze slid back to his wife. "How did you find out?"

"You said I gave you Charlotte's number, but earlier, when your phone lost its signal, and I had to call her back...that's when I realized you had Charlotte's work number."

Putain.

While he and Charlotte had done their best to eliminate every little thing that could trigger Charlee-Mae's memories, they had obviously ended up overlooking clues that could make Charlee-Mae realize the truth...even without gaining her memories back.

"If I had really given you her number like you said I did, I would've given you her other number. The one reserved for family and friends."

Her tone was more wry than furious, but this only made Philippe wonder if this was simply the calm before the storm. And when he saw Charlee-Mae take a deep breath, all he could do was prepare for the worst.

"I'd just like to know..."

No matter what Charlee-Mae would throw at him, he would simply take it and figure things out from there.

"Was it you or me?"

He would do whatever it took to keep her, and...what was that she had just asked?

Philippe blinked. "Pardon?"

His wife crossed her arms over her chest. "I want to know if it was you who wanted a mail-order bride or me who wanted a mail-order groom."

"Ah, bien..." Philippe struggled to overcome his bemusement. "Since I was not asked to pay any fees, I suppose it was you?"

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Charlee-Mae's face broke into a wide smile. "I knew it!"

That was the last reaction he had expected, and Philippe gave up trying to understand things on his own. "You are not...furious?"

Charlee-Mae laughed, and Philippe started to wonder if he had stumbled into another alternate universe.

"I might have lost my memories of the past two weeks," his wife told him with a wrinkle of her nose, "but it doesn't mean I no longer know myself." She shot him a chiding look. "Duh."

Philippe didn't know whether to feel amused or disgruntled. No one had ever said 'duh' to him, but considering that his wife had every right to say a lot worse—

Duh was good, Philippe decided privately, and a lot better than words like 'damn' and 'douchebag'.

"Ever since Charlotte got the S.A.F.E. men down the aisle," Charlee-Mae was now telling him, "I've been so, so tempted to sign up with her agency."

This was news to Philippe, but it was not enough reason to lower his guard. Hell hath no fury like a woman lied to, or so the saying more or less went.

"I've honestly lost count of the times I decided to go for it, only to back out at the very last minute because of pride. Or more like vanity. I was worried that if people were to find out I chose to become a mail-order bride, they'd think of me as this old

and desperate thirty-something chick and lose all respect——"

"Charlee-Mae?"

She immediately stopped talking. Philippe had probably called her that before, but this was the first time she remembered him doing it, and she loved how he made her name sound so...French.

"Vous pouvez répéter?"

Charlee-Mae's accent was still terrible, but for once Philippe had too many things in his mind to let it affect his libido. "Charlee-Mae," he began.

Butterflies started to flutter around the edges of her stomach. "One more time, please?"

Philippe felt as if he had suddenly lost track of their conversation. "One more time what?"

"My name."

"Ah...Charlee-Mae?"

His wife's entire face lit up, and Philippe, who had been meaning to ask if she truly was not angry, realized at that moment he already had his answer right there. And although he knew better than to look a gift horse in the mouth——

"Why aren't you furious?"

Charlee-Mae looked at him oddly. "Uh...duh."



Philippe's lips pressed together to keep himself from smiling. 'Duh' was very, very good.

"Why would you think I was furious?"

"Because I lied to you."

"Oh, that."

Philippe had never heard a woman dismiss a lie so easily.

"I'm sure Dr. Manolis told you to avoid doing anything that could upset me," Charlee-Mae said wryly, "and that's why you didn't tell me the truth."

"He did indeed," Philippe said slowly, "but..."

"It's not like it was that hard to figure out, you know. You've been so careful with your replies every time we talk. You were super protective of me, and I found it very sweet."

"Je vois..."

"Oh no."

He stiffened.

"I can already tell..."

Philippe's unease returned.

"You're another overthinker like Charlotte," Charlee-Mae teased.

Philippe's head was starting to ache. Just when he started to think he was out of the woods, Charlee-Mae would say something that made him feel like he was walking on the edge of a cliff, but just as he started thinking worst-case scenarios, she would say something to ease his worries.

LOOKING AT HER, AND seeing her amber eyes once again filled with mischief, Philippe heard himself ask, "Are we truly good, ma femme? You truly do not care—"

"That we started as a mail-order marriage, but ended up falling in love along the way?" Her lips curved in the prettiest smile, and Philippe forced himself to smile back even as her words made him feel like someone had just walked over his grave.

"It was really, really sweet of you to try and hide the truth."

Philippe knew this was his last chance to make things right and come clean.

"And I think that deserves a reward, so..."

"Charlee-Mae——"

"Don't you think it's time to make a woman out of me?"

Putain de bordel de merde.

And then his wife knelt down.

"But first..."

She reached for the buttons of his trousers, and Philippe's fists clenched against his sides. His conscience told him it wasn't right to let Charlee-Mae do this when he had yet to tell her about——

FUCK!

His trousers were now pooled around his ankles, and his wife's fingers were stroking gently over the bulge of his arousal.

"What a huge package you have..." Charlee-Mae only meant to tease, but when her words made her husband growl, the rawness of the sound made her entire body burn, and she suddenly had the most pressing need to see——

Oh my Lord!

After tugging his boxers down his legs, she found herself directly at eye level with Philippe's cock, which was definitely, absolutely, and wonderfully...huge. She wasn't even sure she could wrap her fingers completely around——oh.

Charlee-Mae couldn't help but stare in awe.

He really was huge, and just as she suspected, he really was too thick for her to fully hold, and when she thought about how long he was...

Philippe saw his wife gulp, and all he could think about was what she would gulp on next, and fuck, fuck, fuck—

Her amber eyes were now looking up to his, and the helpless desire he saw in her gaze destroyed whatever control and conscience he had left inside of him.

"Tu es très énorme, monsieur."

The whispered words, and oh fuck, that accent of hers which was still as shitty as it was lust-inducing - both were the last straw, and he could no longer stop himself from gently cupping her nape until he was slowly guiding her mouth to the swollen and slightly wet head of his arousal.

Aaaaah.

His eyes squeezed shut as the warm, moist heaven that was his wife's mouth took him in, slowly and tentatively at first, but because of the steady pressure that he was exerting as he continued to guide her movement, the rest of his cock gradually made it past her lips...

And then he was completely in, and he felt his wife slowly start to suck on his cock.

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"Charlee-Mae, mon Dieu..."

The sound of her husband's lust-roughened groan made Charlee-Mae want to moan herself, but with her mouth completely stuffed, all she could do was reach up to gently squeeze his balls while sucking harder on his cock, which was hotter, harder, and bigger than she could ever imagine.

It made her dizzy with pleasure, knowing that this unbelievably enormous cock was all hers and hers alone, and when her husband slowly started to move, the realization that something she had once secretly dreamed of—

The man she loved was now fucking her mouth—

Aaaah.

All she could suddenly think about was doing anything and everything she could to pleasure her husband. To suck and lick him endlessly. Caress his balls. And when she heard him growling her name and felt him try to pull out—

No!

Her hands tightened around the muscled cheeks of his ass, and she sucked his cock as hard as she could—

"Putain!"

His hand on her neck tightened a fraction, and then he was groaning, his cum

shooting out of his cock. It tasted hot, salty, and very much him, and all she could do was close her eyes as she drank and swallowed everything in.

Philippe carefully pulled out of his wife's mouth before drawing her gently up to her feet. Amber eyes looked up to him, and his chest clenched at the tenderness he saw in his wife's gaze.

"Mon coeur..."

He had used the endearment before. Just once. But now, he knew once was still more than enough, and that he should not have spoken such words before until he had meant them...like now.

His mother was right, after all.

A hopeless romantic he seemed to fucking be as well, having fallen in love with the wife who was only supposed to be his tool for revenge.

## Chapter Eight

Charlee-Mae's heart started thudding against her chest when her husband suddenly walked away...to check if their door was locked. It wasn't (oh my), but it was now, and by the time Philippe walked back to her side, the butterflies in her stomach had already started flying around like they had completely lost their minds...and they went even crazier when Philippe locked his gaze with hers just as he started removing the rest of his clothing.

Oh...my...Lord.

He was naked in mere moments, and Charlee-Mae's throat went dry. Philippe had always been gorgeous, but he was more so now, with every muscular inch of him

exposed. The light sprinkling of hair on his chest made her fingers itch, and they itched even more as her gaze trailed down and she saw his fully aroused cock visibly throbbing with need.

Philippe started walking towards her, and her heart nearly leapt out of her chest when he started unbuttoning her clothes. It also took only moments to have her naked, and when she saw the way her husband was staring so hungrily at her breasts—

She cupped her tits, and he groaned.

"Please," she whispered.

And she had no need to say anything else, with Philippe already bending his head to suckle her breast even as he lifted her up in his arms.

The feel of his mouth on her nipple had her throwing her head back with a moan, and all she could do was wrap her limbs around him as he carried her back to bed. His mouth continued to suckle on her breast as he laid her down, and she could only whimper and buckle as she felt him position himself between her legs.

He felt incredibly big and hard, and his mouth sweet and fierce at the same time as he moved on to suckle her other breast. It just felt so, so good, having his mouth sucking on her nipple, and she could only cry out when that same mouth moved all the way down—

Aaah!

She would've flown off the bed if not for his fingers clamping around her thighs to hold her down, and Charlee-Mae could only whimper as Philippe slowly ran his tongue against her swollen folds.

"I cannot get enough of your taste, mon coeur."

His whispered words had her buckling, but since it was also at that moment Philippe had chosen to drive his fingers inside of her—

Oh God!



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Charlee-Mae felt like she was losing her mind as Philippe's fingers went deep in her pussy, just as his mouth latched on to her clit. His fingers started to move, and her hips rose and fell in a seemingly frantic attempt to keep up with the pace of his thrusts.

And it was fast.

His fingers were plunging in and out of her pussy so, so fast it was making her struggle to catch her breath.

"Philippe, oh God..."

But what was truly making her go crazy was his mouth on her clit, his tongue teasing, circling, and lashing against the nub of flesh, and just when she felt like she could no longer take it—

Her husband nipped her clit ever so lightly with his teeth, and that was all it took, with Charlee-Mae gasping as she started to cum.

Oh my Lord!

Her orgasm turned her whole world upside down, and as wave after wave of pleasure pounded her body, she vaguely felt Philippe moving back and taking hold of her legs to spread them open, wider and wider oh God, until—

"Philippe!"

She could only whisper his name in shock as he entered her without warning, his cock driving hard and fast into her still-quivering pussy until it completely broke past her hymen.

She saw his jaw clench as he looked down at where their bodies were joined—

"You're bleeding, mon coeur."

The words had her pussy tightening around his cock, and Philippe groaned.

"You are so tight..."

Her inner muscles reacted to his words, and Philippe's features became strained.

"I need to move, ma femme."

Charlee-Mae could only manage a nod, and as soon as she did, oh Lord—

She moaned, and then she moaned again, with Philippe having started to move, and the feel of his cock pulling out and thrusting back inside of her—

"C'est magnifique," she whispered unthinkingly, and to her surprise, her husband suddenly cursed under his breath.

"Philippe?"

"You shouldn't have said that," he growled.

She wanted to ask what he meant, but she could no longer do so with Philippe suddenly kneeling up just as his fingers curled around her ankles. The next thing she knew, he was holding her legs wide open in the air—

"I'll try to be gentle," her husband said hoarsely.

Try?

Did he just say try——OH MY LORD!

He pulled out and rammed back into her, and no, oh God, this was not gentle, not gentle at all, but it was just, ah, just so, so good that all she could do was pant and hold on to the edges of the bed——

God, he was pounding into her so, so fast, and so, so hard, and oh God, she could feel it again, she could feel it building hotter and hotter and hotter——

Until something inside of her imploded, and Charlee-Mae cried out as her body shattered. It was her second orgasm in just under an hour, and as her body shuddered and shuddered, Philippe was still thrusting in and out of her pussy, his movements wilder and less controlled. Just seeing him so beautifully aroused, and knowing that it was all because of her, was enough to give her orgasm new life, and as another wave of pleasure threatened to carry her away, she heard herself whisper, "Je t'aime, mon bébé."

While the words completely caught Philippe off guard, and her French accent did him in, it was the look in his wife's eyes that made him careen off the edge, and as he felt himself explode inside of her and fill her insides with his cum——

He, too, could not stop himself from saying the truth.

"Je t'aime, ma moitié."

The words might seem too soon to be spoken for others, but he didn't give a damn. He had not gotten to where he was by doubting himself, and his gut told him what his heart had probably known from the start.

He loved her.

He loved his wife from the first moment he saw her, and he would not let anything or anyone take her away.

It was Philippe's last thought as he held his wife and rolled them over so she could sleep atop him, and it was also his first thought when he woke to the sound of his phone ringing, and he saw Greta's name once again popping up on the screen.

### Chapter Nine

Greta's call was answered on the fourth ring, and since Philippe had always been the type to answer or reject a call by the first ring, the fact that he hadn't now spoke volumes.

"Bonjour, Greta."

This, at least, was normal. Philippe had always been formal over the phone, and this hadn't changed when she became his lover. Even so, something still felt different, and this worried and angered her. Any change could only be attributed to his fat American wife, but because she also knew better than to start off with a rant—

"Bonjour, mon chéri," Greta cooed. "I've been calling you since last night."

"I'm sorry I missed it."

"And I tried calling you this morning, too."

"I was occupied."

"By something or someone?"

The words were out before she could stop herself, and she was made to pay the price when Philippe answered her in a tone that was distinctly stiff.

"It is unlike you to be snide."

Actually, she had always been snide, but another thing she had known better not to do was to show him this side of hers. Unlike his older brother, Philippe was not and would never be the type to suffer her bitchiness simply because he enjoyed having her in bed. It was why, even though she had always found Philippe more attractive, Greta had chosen to set her cap for Pierre. Not only had the latter been easier to manipulate, but Pierre, being the older and more favored brother, would've meant Greta enjoying a greater share of the DeRose fortune.

Life would have been so much easier if Pierre hadn't drunk himself to an early grave, but since there was no way to change the past—

"Please don't be mad, darling. I've just been missing you quite a lot."

Philippe was starting to realize that it wouldn't be easy to break things off with Greta. Although he had made it clear from the start that their relationship was merely based on mutual benefits, he also hadn't made the effort to discourage Greta when she

started acting more possessive.

"You know I'm not one to be emotional, but I didn't realize it would be this hard, living with the fact that you're married to someone else."

And now, he was suffering the consequences.

"I know your mother's been to see her, and since I'm sure Sandra loves your new wife just because she's not me..." Greta waited for Philippe to tell her that she had nothing to worry about. But he did not. And her temper, which she would be the first to admit had a much shorter fuse compared to most, began to boil.

"It would be nice," she said sharply, "if you could say something—" A beeping sound cut her off, and Greta bit back a curse. *Merde!*

"I'm sorry, Greta, but I have Damian on the other end—"

"I don't mind being put on hold." Since Damian owned Foxtown, and everything played second fiddle to business for Philippe, it would be pointless to ask him not to answer the call.

"This might take a while, and I wouldn't want you to waste your time waiting."

The coolness of Philippe's tone made Greta quickly change tactics. "*Je suis désolée, mon chéri.*" If she let their call end on a bad note, she might end up pushing him into his wife's arms. "I do not mean to take so much of your time. Will you call me back tonight at least?"

"I'll do my best."

Greta nearly swore in anger, but she managed to calm herself down and instead made

a kissing sound over the phone. "Don't be a stranger, mon chéri, or my pussy will start meowing. It also misses you, you know."

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Philippe knew what Greta was expecting, and what was most likely to happen if he failed to say what she wanted to hear. But while he knew words need not translate to action——

"I miss it, too."

Having to say such a thing to a woman other than his wife still left a bad taste in Philippe's mouth, and the sound of Greta's laugh made him want to punch something hard.

"Allez, bises." Greta kept her tone sweet, but as soon as the call ended, she flew into a rage and threw anything and everything within reach. Over an hour had passed before she finally stopped seeing red, and it was only because someone was knocking on her hotel room door.

"Good morning, Ms. Leroy." Winston, the hotel's day manager, was careful to keep his tone pleasant. "I received a call from the other guests, and I would just like to ask if everything's alright?"

Greta smiled dazzlingly. "Oh, yes, absolutely."

Being a head taller than his guest, Winston had no trouble seeing the state of her room over her shoulder, and what he saw was absolutely not alright. But since she had paid for her room in advance and her credit card would cover such incidentals, Winston simply smiled back and said, "I'm delighted to hear that, and I do apologize for the bother. If there's anything I may help you with——"



"Oh, actually, yes. Would you be a dear and book me a limousine to Foxtown?" Thanks to the company's group chat, she had found out earlier that Philippe's wife had been discharged, and the newlyweds were now booked in Foxtown's fucking honeymoon suite.

After giving Winston the details for her booking, Greta made sure to softly close the door behind her before getting rid of the fake smile on her face.

Merde!

It had taken her five long years of stoking Philippe's anger at his father to finally get him in her bed - five long years, dammit! - and no way would she let some overweight Texan hick ruin her plans just like that.

Walking back to her room, Greta belatedly noticed her phone on the floor, and her lips slowly formed a sneering smile. She bent down to retrieve it, whose screen showed a third-party app still running in the background.

In her anger earlier, she had forgotten that she still had a hidden ace up her sleeve. Recording people's phone calls had always proved handy in the past, and this time wouldn't be any different.

PHILIPPE CLOSED THE door to the study and walked back into the suite's living room. "Sorry about that—"

"Welcome back," his wife chirped. "Your mother's come to visit—"

Philippe stopped dead in his tracks when he saw his mother seated next to his wife. Something was definitely up, if the expression on Sandra's face was anything to go by.

"Bonjour." Sandra's pleasant tone was belied by the unsmiling look in her eyes, which were the same jade-green shade as her son's.

"—and we need you to settle our argument."

Philippe raised a brow. "That serious?"

"More like...you're the only one who can decide who's right."

"Je vois." Philippe took the armchair and reached for his wife so she could sit on his lap. "Tell me more then."

"We overheard you talking on the phone," Charlee-Mae said sheepishly. "I thought I heard you say 'I miss it, too', but Maman says what you actually said was 'I miss him, too'."

Merde.

Now he knew why his mother had been looking at him like he was more the devil than her flesh and blood.

"Well, mon fils?" Sandra's tone was still pleasant, while her gaze remained the opposite. "Which of us is correct?"

Philippe glanced up at his wife. "I'm afraid Maman wins this argument, ma moitié."

Charlee-Mae was shocked. "So you really did say 'him'? You're gay?"

Philippe nearly choked. "Ah, no."

"But I just don't see you as the type to miss a male friend—"

"I was talking to Greta about Pierre."

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Charlee-Mae's heart went out to Philippe, and she touched his cheek in sympathy. "I'm sorry, Philippe." She looked at his mother. "And you, too, Maman. I also have - had - an older brother, and I still miss him, every day. It hurts to think about him at times, but I force myself to, because I don't want to forget a thing about him."

Sandra was caught off guard by the wave of emotion that rose inside of her at Charlee-Mae's words. She, too, had avoided thinking of her older son because it hurt to remember he was no longer with them, but she realized now that Charlee-Mae was right. Having memories of Pierre, albeit painful, was better than forgetting him completely.

She glanced at Philippe, and the shuttered expression on his handsome face made her heart ache. "It is true, what your wife said, n'est ce pas? We should always do our best to remember."

"Oui."

"Maybe, on Pierre's birthday, we can have dinner as a family, and we can tell Cha-Cha about your brother."

"That would be wonderful," Charlee-Mae agreed right away. "And maybe...we can ask his wife - Greta - to join us? Or would it be too hard for her?"

Sandra managed a smile but could not make herself reply. It was not her style to talk badly of another woman's name, even if it was warranted, but neither was she capable of pretending any kind of fondness for her other daughter-in-law.

Philippe could feel his body turning rigid as Charlee-Mae looked at him expectantly. Hearing his wife utter the other woman's name still didn't feel right, and it was only fortuitous timing that a knock came at the door to keep him from replying.

"I'll get that!" Sandra was already walking towards the door as she spoke.

Philippe raised a brow when he heard the person outside the door mention having something for his wife. "Are you expecting something?"

Charlee-Mae was confused. "No, I'm not...oh."

Philippe's mother was now busy telling a pair of hotel attendants where to place what looked like an endless parade of elaborate Valentine bouquets, some of which included heart-shaped balloons, stuffed animals, and what looked like expensive chocolate.

One of the bouquets came with a massive card that said 'I love you, Cha-Cha! Will you be my date on Valentine's?', and everything instantly made sense.

"These are all so gorgeous, Cha-Cha." The attendants had left, and Sandra was now counting the bouquets that had been delivered. One...two...twenty...thirty...forty...

"Oh my!" Sandra looked at her daughter-in-law admiringly. "Fifty-six in all, and you've only been here for two hours." She glanced back at the bouquets, which all had lovely-looking cards that could only contain the most interesting messages.

The curiosity on her mother-in-law's face was more than evident, and Charlee-Mae said with a laugh, "You can read them if you want, Maman."

"Well, if you insist..."

Charlee-Mae couldn't help grinning. She hadn't actually insisted, but it was fun all the same to watch the older woman hurrying towards the bouquets and excitedly opening the sealed cards one by one. Sandra showed Charlee-Mae a card that had two girls on the cover. "This one is asking you to be her Galentine's date."

"Oh, I think that's possible——" Charlee-Mae saw Philippe look at her sharply. "I can't?"

"What the hell is a Galentine's date?"

"It's for two gals," she explained with a laugh. "So there's no need to be jealous, mon bébé."

"I was not jealous," Philippe denied even as the tension visibly eased from the rigid set of his broad shoulders.

"You might be with this one," his own mother told him cheerfully as she held out another card. "This man says your wife is the most beautiful woman he has ever seen in his life, and he would be absolutely honored to have her as his Valentine's."

"Aww, bless that man, whoever he is——"

His wife suddenly burst to her feet, and Philippe scowled. If she thought he would let her keep that fucking card just because a fan had sent it to her——

"I think I just saw my favorite plant," Charlee-Mae exclaimed.

"A plant?" Sandra's curiosity was piqued. "Not flowers?"

"Oui, Maman. Come see."

Philippe's lip curled as both women oohed and aahed over what only seemed like a bunch of leaves to him. How the fuck could his wife like—

"Oh my." Sandra's attention was caught by an intricately cut card peeking out from another bouquet. "This is so pretty, and oh, look, ma fille..." She showed the card to her daughter-in-law. "He even wrote you a poem!"

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Charlee-Mae was touched. "Bless him!"

Sandra suddenly spied a small card buried in Cha-Cha's favorite plant and fished it out. "This one says...Aishiteiru?"

"Aww!"

If his wife was going to bless another man one more time—

"Bless that dear, dear man."

Sandra happened to glance at her son at that moment, and a laugh escaped her when she saw him gnashing his teeth upon hearing his wife describe another man as 'dear'.  
"Are you alright, mon fils?"

The question startled Charlee-Mae into looking at her husband. "Is something wrong?"

"Tout va bien." Everything's fine. "I am just watching my wife enjoy other men's packages—"

Sandra choked back a laugh.

"And it is making me think my own package may also be enjoyed by other women—"  
Philippe had not yet finished speaking when Charlee-Mae suddenly dropped the bouquet she was holding like it had turned into a hot potato that could burn her hands.



"You are very mistaken, mon bébé," Charlee-Mae declared earnestly. "I'm only looking at their, err, packages because I think it's so silly!"

"Ah bon?" Is that so?

His wife nodded vehemently. "It is silly, that they could even think their packages could tempt me away from yours!"

"It seemed exactly the case earlier," he drawled.

"And I also told you earlier——"

His wife's tone was so convincingly pious, Philippe had to swiftly press his lips together in an effort to suppress his smile.

"You are mistaken. And to prove this, mon bébé——"

Philippe shifted in his seat. Even though he knew his wife was deliberately using all of these French endearments to sweet-talk her way out of trouble, her horrible accent was still the turn-on it always was, and he was now more aroused than jealous.

Charlee-Mae gestured to the bouquets that had now taken over their suite. "I'll leave it to you to deal with all of these as you wish."

"Gladly."

Her husband answered so promptly that it left her blinking, and she could only gape as Philippe began taking out all of the cards and tearing them into pieces before throwing everything into the trash bin.

Once done, her husband turned to her, saying generously, "You are free to enjoy

everything now, mon coeur. Just imagine that they are all from me."

The words made Sandra and Charlee-Mae laugh, and seeing the two most important women in his life having fun together had Philippe realizing a grim truth. This was how he wanted his future to look like, but there was still a chance he could lose his wife, if he continued to lie to her about how their marriage had begun.

It was sometime after lunch when Sandra excused herself to have a little nap, and as soon as Charlee-Mae found herself alone with her husband—

He raised a brow at her. "Any thoughts on what we shall do with ourselves?"

"Mm..."

"Would you like to play chess?" he deadpanned.

"I'd rather play with you, monsieur."

Philippe snatched her into his arms without another word, and Charlee-Mae's giggle was quickly stifled as his mouth took hers in a blatantly hungry kiss that had her instantly wet and writhing in his arms.

Clothes were removed in a hurry, and they didn't make it in the bedroom. Charlee-Mae, her body already crying out for her husband's possession, bent over the back of the couch and begged without shame. "Please, mon homme!"

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He had meant to take his time making love to her, but as always, his wife's terrible accent proved irresistible, and Philippe grabbed her hips from behind before shoving his cock into her pussy in one forceful thrust.

"Philippe!"

Hearing his wife cry his name out had Philippe involuntarily tightening his grip on her hips as he pounded into her harder and faster. He could feel her pussy already tightening with each thrust of his cock, and the sensation made his entire body clench and ache at the same time. He tried to make it last, but when he heard his wife pant out in French—

"Je t'aime, mon Dieu, je t'aime—"

A shudder rocked his powerful frame, and he heard Charlee-Mae gasp just as both of them started to cum. It was a feeling like no other, a feeling he knew he could never experience with anyone else, and as his wife's body continued to tremble under him, her pussy doing its best to take in all of his cum—

"I love you, Mrs. DeRose."

Charlee-Mae burst into tears, which had her husband laughing softly even as he gently lifted her off her feet. With their bodies still intimately joined, he carried her to their bedroom, but instead of going straight to bed, Philippe positioned them in front of the full-length mirror in the en-suite.

Oh my Lord!

It almost felt sinful to stare at how her pussy had swallowed the entire length of his cock, with her legs splayed so widely open in front of the mirror.

"Ready for Round 2, mon coeur?"

Charlee-Mae couldn't answer, with her husband already using his strength to have her bouncing up and down his engorged cock, and oh God, oh Lord, oh Jesus, this feeling of being repeatedly impaled by Philippe's enormous member was just too, too much—

She came with a cry, and she came even harder when she felt Philippe's mouth latch to the side of her neck and suck hungrily as he exploded inside of her.

Charlee-Mae had always imagined that once she became a married woman, she would want to have sex endlessly because she had over three decades to make up for. Philippe, however, taught her otherwise, and by the end of "Round 4", she was forced to beg for respite and was already asleep even before her head had hit the pillow.

It was a few minutes past seven in the evening when Charlee-Mae woke, and on the bedside table was a little package (the word had Charlee-Mae snickering), along with another handwritten note from her husband.

Call me when you wake. Je t'aime.

~ P

Charlee-Mae's face broke into a smile. She was right, after all. Philippe had just been a little reserved the first time, not wanting to make her feel pressured into expressing her own feelings. But because he now knew how much she loved him, this in turn allowed her husband to finally say those three little words.

The package contained what turned out to be her replacement phone, and she was surprised but pleased to see all of her data restored as well. All of the names in her contact list, the photos and videos she had taken - everything was there...and then some.

Her lips curved as she found Philippe's name listed as 'Mon Mari', which of course translated to 'my husband'. She was about to hit Call when a new email came in, and her brows shot up when she saw that it was from the sister-in-law she had yet to meet.

The email only contained an attachment, an audio file that she did not hesitate to play.

'Bonjour, Greta.'

She had no trouble recognizing her husband's voice, which she privately considered was the most beautiful voice in the world.

'Bonjour, mon chéri.'

By the time the recording ended, Charlee-Mae was pale and unsmiling, and her fingers shook as she made a call...to Charlotte.

## Chapter Ten

Greta could not believe when an hour had already passed, and she had yet to hear from Philippe's American wife. Was it possible that the other woman was so desperate to stay with the French billionaire, she would rather turn a blind eye to the fact that Philippe was having an affair with his own sister-in-law?

The thought made Greta furious and disgusted, and with her temper once again getting the best of her, Greta's plans for making a splashy grand entrance in

tomorrow's launch were all but forgotten.

She had tried to play nice, but it was now time to unsheathe her claws and teach the other woman her place.

The drive up to Foxtown took over an hour, and since the establishment also operated as a Regency-themed park, there were horse-drawn carriages waiting alongside expensive sports cars and chauffeur-driven limousines like the one she was in. A valet came up to open her door, and Greta took her time as she stepped out of the backseat, wanting to make sure that the people around her were able to have an eyeful of her long bare legs - Merde!

Greta's teeth started to chatter as soon as she was out, and her cheeks turned red with rage at the way some of the guests were silently laughing at her sparkling silver gown with thigh-high side-splits. Why the hell had no one told her that the stupid weather in Foxtown was a lot colder than the rest of Jackson Hole?

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Greta was used to having people fawn all over her wherever she went, but with the exception of hotel employees warmly welcoming her to Foxtown, the only ones who cared to look their way were people interested in her choice of outfit.

Foxtown's circular lobby was more palatial than she expected, and Greta was grudgingly impressed at how tastefully decorated the whole place was. A small crowd seemed to have gathered just outside one of the hotel's in-house boutiques, with both men and women clearly excited as they asked for selfies with whoever local celebrity—Merde!

Greta's jaw dropped as the small crowd gradually dispersed, and she found herself face to face with Philippe's American wife. Were locals here so desperate to rub elbows with someone famous they had settled for a former local beauty queen? That woman was not even from Wyoming, for God's sake!

So this was the infamous Greta, Charlee-Mae mused. The other woman was stunningly beautiful. Long, silky black hair. Olive skin. About a half foot taller than her, but likely several kilos lighter as well. She also had an air of icy sophistication about her, icy being the operative word since Greta was severely underdressed for Foxtown's sub-zero temps.

Philippe's sister-in-law suddenly stalked forward, and Charlee-Mae saw the other woman sneer as Charlee-Mae was forced to crane her neck all the way up to meet her gaze.

Greta struggled to give her ridiculously oversexed rival a frosty smile even as she was feeling frosty herself. "Bonjour."

Charlee-Mae smiled back. "Bonjour."

Greta's lip curled. Mon Dieu! She had never heard someone speak their language so horribly! How could Philippe bear listening to such a thing nearly every minute of the day?

Charlee-Mae couldn't help feeling bad as Greta's lips started turning a little blue. "Would you like to go somewhere warm?"

In minutes, they were inside the heated comfort of the hotel's cafe, and Charlee-Mae couldn't help but watch in silent fascination as Greta's beautiful face, originally pale and looking close to death's door, gradually gained color and consequently transformed into the catty features of a world-class...bitch.

"I thought we could have a little chat."

Charlee-Mae blinked. "But...I don't have anything to say to you."

Greta nearly sputtered in her anger. Cette salope! This bitch! Leaning forward, she hissed under her breath, "Philippe and I have been lovers for a long time."

"Two years," Charlee-Mae said gently, "isn't really that long, you know."

"Maybe not for other men," Greta sneered, "but for Philippe, it is his longest relationship——"

"So why then did he marry me?"

Enfin! Finally! Greta's lips slowly curved in a smirk. "Do you not know——"

"That his mother dislikes you so much——" Charlee-Mae silently thanked Charlotte



for being so thorough when it came to conducting background checks on prospective matches. "—she would rather donate her shares to charity?"

Greta could feel herself shaking in anger. This woman had let her think she knew nothing about Philippe's reasons for signing up for that stupid mail-order marriage, and now—

"If you think for one moment," she spat out, "you can play games with me and win—"

Charlee-Mae couldn't make herself lie. "I do, actually."

Greta struggled not to throw the mug of hot chocolate at the other woman's face. Fuck this bitch! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

Charlee-Mae was doing her best not to stare. Just like Ne-Yo, she had always believed that girls were sexier when they were mad, but the scary transformation of Greta's face as she went from annoyed to outraged was proof that there were also exceptions to the rule.

Greta took a deep breath. "Sandra—"

"Adores me, by the way."

Greta nearly screamed. Why was this woman so good at pushing her buttons?

"Are you okay?" Charlee-Mae couldn't help feeling concerned again. "You look a little..." Tomato-like? Frightening? Ugly? Oh dear Lord, Charlotte was right! She really did have the vocabulary of a sixth-grader.

"Stop faking things, you bitch!"

"Hypertensive," Charlee-Mae burst out at the same time, and she couldn't help but give herself a congratulatory little pat. 'Hypertensive' was a big word, and Charlotte would be so proud—wait! Did Greta just say she was what?

Charlee-Mae looked at the other woman reproachfully. "I'm genuinely concerned, you know. You look like you're suffering from hypertension, and—"

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"Do you really think we're playing a game here?"

"If we weren't, you wouldn't have sent me that email."

Greta could have cried at that point. Finally, dammit! Finally, she was getting somewhere with this fat American idiot that Philippe had been unlucky enough to have as a wife.

"It was to let you know your place, just that. Whatever Philippe has told you is a lie, and you'll soon know this for yourself. Once Sandra has transferred her shares to him, he will—" Greta was momentarily distracted when the other woman made a show of calling someone on her iPhone. "He will dump you and marry—"

"Bonjour, mon mari!"

Greta's eyes nearly bulged. Did this woman just call Philippe?

"I am here at the cafe...oui, that one, and oh, I'm also with Gretel—"

"Greta!"

"I mean, Gretchen—"

"Greta, you bitch!"

"Can we just call her your sister-in-law? I keep forgetting her name, and yes, please do join us. Salut!"

Greta burst into speech as soon as she saw the other woman ending the call. "What do you plan—you bitch!" The other woman was making a call! Again!

"Bonjour, Maman!"

Greta was so filled with rage she could barely breathe. Had this bitch really just called Sandra?

"I am so sorry to ask this out of the blue, but do you have time to come down to the lobby, Maman? There's this cafe...oui, that is the one. Your two daughters-in-law are here——"

Greta's teeth gnashed against each other when the other woman suddenly laughed. Oh, that laugh, that fucking, annoying laugh——

"You did not hear wrong, Maman. Both of us are indeed here. Me, your favorite daughter-in-law, and then there's your other daughter-in-law who is not your favorite, Grendel——"

"Pute! Salope! Garce!"

"Oh, wait. Je suis désolée, Maman. I forgot that Grendel happens to be a monster from Beowulf——"

There was that laugh again, and Greta could no longer help it.

Charlee-Mae gasped as the other woman suddenly snatched her iPhone out of her hand before smashing its screen into pieces with the heel of her boot.

"Hey! I just got that phone——" And because she just couldn't resist it, she then added, "From Philippe——"

"You bitch!"

"It takes one to know one, I hear."

"I fucked Philippe every day the first year we came together—" Greta finally had a chance to laugh when she saw the other woman flinch. "Oui, salope!" Yes, you bitch! "Every day, we would fuck and fuck and—"

"Qu'est-ce que tu fous là?" What the hell are you doing here?

Greta started to answer, but Philippe had already gone down on one knee and was reaching for his wife's hand like he was about to fucking propose marriage. Putain! Fuck!

Philippe grimly studied his wife's face, which for once perfectly concealed her thoughts. "Mon coeur?" His voice was low and taut, but the words could be heard throughout the cafe, with all the other guests having gone silent as soon as he had walked in.

"Talk to me. Please."

Charlee-Mae had never imagined her husband could look so desperate and haunted.

"Your wife, Philippe——"

Philippe didn't take his gaze off Charlee-Mae even as he cut his sister-in-law off.  
"Ferme ton clape-merde." Shut the fuck up.

"——is insane!"

Philippe stiffened, but before he could tell Greta to get lost, Charlee-Mae suddenly cupped his face, and Philippe froze in shock as his wife looked down at him with big, puppy-like eyes.

"Am I insane, Philippe?"

That she would ask such a thing made Philippe question his own sanity. Was she serious?

"Am I?"

"Non." No. "Of course you are not insane——" He broke off when he saw his wife lift her head...just so she could stick her tongue out at Greta. What the hell?

A pale-faced and slightly-out-of-breath Sandra arrived just in time to see her (favorite) daughter-in-law stick her tongue out, and she could only swallow back a nervous laugh at the way the adorably childish gesture had her other daughter-in-law looking like she had just been made to eat her own crotte.

While she had never imagined things would play out this way between all four of

them, Sandra probably should've expected this, given that her dear Cha-Cha was involved. But even so——

Charlee-Mae only came to notice her mother-in-law's presence when the other woman cleared her throat. "Maman!" She quickly closed her mouth, feeling a little self-conscious that Philippe's mother had seen her do such a thing.

"Should we take this somewhere private?" Sandra asked hesitantly.

Greta lifted her chin. "Why should we? I don't have anything to hide."

"Neither do I," Charlee-Mae didn't hesitate to declare.

Philippe saw Greta and his wife look at him, and his jaw clenched. "Charlee-Mae——"

"Do you have something to hide?" she asked softly.

Philippe could feel himself whiten, and although a part of him was terrified of losing her, he also knew the time of lying was over, and the only thing that could save their marriage now was the truth.

"Greta is my mistress."

Charlee-Mae fought to keep her face blank. She had already known that, of course, and she had also expected him to admit this. But even so...it still hurt to hear and know for certain that Greta had intimate knowledge of her husband's body.

"I'm sorry, mon coeur..." Philippe's voice was hoarse. "I never expected to fall for you——"

"Stop lying!" Greta turned to her mother-in-law wildly. "Your precious son agreed to

a fake marriage with that bitch so he could persuade you to transfer your shares to him! Their marriage is nothing but a sham," she spat, "and Philippe had always meant to dump her and marry me——"

Sandra wanted to believe Greta was lying, but wasn't that what she had feared in the first place?

"It's okay, Maman."

Cha-Cha's reassuring tone had Sandra turning to Philippe's wife in relief. "It's not true, isn't it?"

"It was true——"

Sandra didn't know what to think anymore. "Was?" Did that mean her son had meant to deceive her but had since changed his mind?

"Because it is just like Philippe said." Charlee-Mae gently retrieved her hands from Philippe's hold and rose to her feet so she could go to her mother-in-law's side. "Philippe and I fell in love," she said softly, "and I think Gretchen sensed——"

"Greta! It's fucking Greta, you——" Greta had been about to call the other woman a dumb bitch, but the way Philippe's gaze had suddenly turned deadly made her swallow the words back.

"I am so sorry, Maman..."

Sandra didn't know whether to laugh or cry in relief. The twinkle in Cha-Cha's pretty amber eyes was familiar, and she knew at that moment everything would be alright. One of the reasons she enjoyed watching Cha-Cha's vlogs was how the younger woman had always been so candid in sharing the ups and downs of her life. The dear



girl just had this gift for turning every moment of her life into something nice and funny—

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"I seem to have such a hard time remembering my sister-in-law's name. Is it Gremlin? Goblin?"

—like now.

"But anyway, what was I saying again earlier?"

"You were saying something about, er, Greta sensing something?"

"Oh, yes." Charlee-Mae brightened. "As I was saying, it did seem that Greta had sensed Philippe and I are soulmates, and so naturally, she decided to create some trouble between us."

Philippe was staring hard at Greta. "What kind of trouble?"

"Well—"

Greta stared incredulously at Philippe's wife. Surely the idiot wouldn't admit the truth? Surely she wouldn't want the whole world to know about Philippe—

"She recorded your call earlier, Philippe."

Philippe blanched while Greta raised her chin and looked defiantly at everyone staring her way with blatant dislike.

"She emailed me a copy of it," Charlee-Mae went on, "because she wanted me to hear you say you missed her pussy."

Philippe swore, Sandra flinched, while everyone else in the cafe seemed to squirm and fidget in discomfort.

"And it's true," Greta said loudly. "He does miss my——"

Charlee-Mae shot the other woman a frown. "Please keep quiet, Godzilla!"

The words were exactly what everyone needed to hear, and Sandra couldn't keep her lips from twitching as she saw everyone's discomfort turn into good-natured amusement.

Philippe found himself inhaling sharply as his wife slowly walked up to him. "I'm sorry," he said harshly. "It's been months since I last touched her, and I would never——" Philippe broke off when Charlee-Mae suddenly wound her arms around his neck.

"It's okay," she said softly. "I won't say it didn't hurt to hear you say those words, but I also know you only said them to humor Goofy——"

"Salope!" You bitch!

"You knew she was likely to cause more trouble, so you told her what she wanted to hear...even if it was a lie."

Philippe searched his wife's face for any sign of anger or hurt, anything that would give him a clue on just how hard he would need to grovel and beg for her forgiveness——

But instead, all he saw was love...and a good amount of mischief.

"Because the truth is..."

Charlee-Mae looked at him expectantly, and Philippe did not hesitate to throw out of the window decades' worth of lessons on etiquette and propriety. He knew exactly what she was asking for, knew exactly what was the one thing he could do to make up for his stupidity, and Philippe heard himself say, "The truth is that it is your pussy alone that I would ever want to fuck, your pussy alone that I would ever miss—"

"Mon Dieu." Sandra couldn't help laughing even as her cheeks burned in embarrassment.

"Your pussy alone that I would ever want to taste with my tongue and—"

Charlee-Mae was starting to feel a little self-conscious herself, and she quickly placed a hand over her husband's mouth. "That is more than enough—"

Philippe gently took her hand off his mouth and asked, "Are you certain? Because there is also much more I can say about your beautiful tits and your wonderful ass—"

Charlee-Mae hastily covered his mouth again. "Yes, I am sure, and..." She smiled up at him. "I love you, too."

## Epilogue

The launch of Heureuse was wildly successful, especially since the showdown between Charlee-Mae and Greta had gone viral on every social media platform, and everyone wanted to buy just about anything and everything Philippe's wife was endorsing.

*Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 5:05 am*

Greta was now back in France and no longer a part of his company. His lawyers and hers had managed to come to an agreement, and Greta stood to lose millions of euros if she were stupid enough to cause them trouble in any way.

And now that it was Valentine's...

Philippe could only roll his eyes as Charlee-Mae made a show of spraying alcohol on his engorged cock. "How many times must we do this, mon coeur?"

"For as long as I feel your beautiful cock needs disinfecting," his wife retorted, "after having dove into the depths of your sister-in-law's pussy."

Even though her tone was light, and her gaze filled with laughter, it still killed him every time he heard her speak of his ill-advised affair, and Philippe could not help yanking his wife close and caging her in his embrace.

"Je suis désolé, ma moitié."

"Forgiven." Charlee-Mae rubbed her cheek against the soft, warm hair of her husband's powerfully muscular chest. "Just promise me, though..."

"Anything." Philippe meant it.

She looked up, and the uncertainty in her smile made his chest clench. "No more secrets?"

Her husband was silent.

"Philippe?"

"I have a confession, ma femme."

Charlee-Mae looked at him suspiciously. "Please don't tell me you have another sister-in-law——"

"Non." His lips twitched. "Rather, it is about you."

Her eyes widened. "Me?"

"I have told you before that your accent is the ugliest sound in the world..."

Charlee-Mae scowled. "Okaaaaay..."

"But what I have never told you until now——"

Charlee-Mae held her breath.

"——is how much it also happens to turn me on."

His wife looked at him blankly. "Is this a joke?"

"J'adore ton accent." I love your accent.

"So..." Her confusion turned to wariness. "Not a joke?"

"Non."

"Oh. Um. Wow." Charlee-Mae couldn't help feeling giddy. It just seemed so crazy that her less-than-ideal French accent could be a turn on for a man as perfect as her

husband.

"And you, mon coeur? Do you have any last secrets you wish to share?"

"Well..."

Philippe raised a brow.

"Charlotte's convinced that I was either lying about losing my memory or that I must've gained them back somewhere along the way, and that's why I didn't freak out when you told me we had a mail-order marriage."

Philippe's gaze narrowed. "Did you? Have you?"

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Amber eyes sparkled up at him. "Who knows?"

"Charlee-Mae..."

But his wife only laughed and sang, "Voulez vous coucher avec moi ce soir?"

Philippe groaned. Her accent was still fucking terrible and at the same time so fucking hot—

Charlee-Mae could only laugh as her husband suddenly lifted her up in his arms, but this quickly turned into a gasp as he thrust into her without warning, and he started fucking her up against the wall.

Even though his every thrust made her see stars, it was when her husband growled into her ear—

"Je t'aime, mon coeur."

Her pussy tightened around his cock as her heart felt like it was about to explode. She loved him this man so very much, and now that she knew what his secret was—

"Plus fort!" Harder!

"Plus vite!" Stronger!

Her husband went wild, and oh God, he was fucking her like an animal in heat, and she loved it, she loved it so much that just as the first wave of her orgasm pounded



through her body, Charlee-Mae cupped Philippe's face and looked into his beautiful jade-green eyes as she cried out, "Je jouis!" I'm cumming!

## TOKYO, JAPAN

For as long as Sano could remember, he would occasionally have this strange sense of déjà vu when visiting a certain place or hearing a certain song. There was even that time when he was but seven years old, and he had come across a woman who seemed incredibly familiar to him. None of it ever made sense, but what really made him question his sanity at times were his dreams.

Almost every night, he would dream of a girl. Other times, she would be a woman. The age in which she appeared in his dreams varied, but it was always her, and no one else. In those dreams, they would sometimes talk. Other times they would be making love. And then there were those rare times when she would just cry, and the sound of her sobs would break his heart.

Sano had been able to consult with the best doctors to seek an explanation for what he was going through, but none of them had an answer. He had lost count of all the tests he had undergone to see if he was suffering from some unknown illness, but the results were all the same. There was nothing wrong with him. But even so...Sano believed otherwise.

There had to be something more about his dreams and those fake memories that plagued his mind. There just had to be.

And one day, he suddenly woke up—

And he remembered everything.

Charlotte.

The End