



# Sophie's Second Chance

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**Category:** Romance, Mystery

**Description:** Sophie Spencer thought she had it all figured out, a steady job, a loyal best friend, and a loving fiancé. But her world shatters when her fiancé coldly ends their engagement, revealing he found someone else. Reeling from heartbreak, Sophie seeks escape in a night out... and ends up in the arms of Liam Whitmore, a wealthy, elusive businessman known for his charm and his vow never to fall in love.

One night. One mistake. One heartbeat that changes everything. When Sophie discovers she's pregnant, she's forced to confront the arrogant man she barely knows, only to find him emotionally unavailable and unwilling to take responsibility. But Liam's world is turned upside down as he slowly realizes the depth of what he's about to lose.

As secrets unravel, tensions rise, and unexpected bonds form, Sophie must decide if she's ready to let someone new in — someone who once walked away but might now be the only one fighting to stay.

Can love grow from chaos? Or is Sophie destined to face motherhood alone?

**Total Pages (Source):** 32

# Page 1

*Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:14 am*

From Sophie's point of view

Not an issue. After Alley, my sole friend and the owner of the restaurant where I work informed me she couldn't come today and left the restaurant in my care, I texted her back.

I was still in bed and preparing to get up when I texted my fiancé. Ryan, we have to call off our date tonight. Because Alley isn't coming, I won't be able to get free early.

I put the phone down on the bed and waited for him to call back. We had to cancel six dates in the last two weeks.

It's not just because of me; it's also because of him. Sometimes I'm busy, and sometimes he is.

I picked up my phone when it buzzed. It's fine. I also have a lot to do tonight. He answered.

Hmm...okay. I answered before I got up.

I looked down at the simple gold band on my ring finger with the little diamond on it and smiled.

I wonder what my life would be like with Ryan as my husband.

Will we be able to make time for each other even though we're busy?

I can worry about it all later because we still have a few months till we are married. I need to go to the restaurant right now.

I took a big breath and walked into the restaurant after looking at the sign.

The Saffrons

I said hello to everyone and told them that I would be in charge today because Alley wasn't coming.

One of my coworkers asked me, "How's everything?"

While I washed my hands, I grinned. "Everything's good, Lila. What about you?"

She let out a sorrowful sigh. "Not much. In my dream, I went on a romantic date with Liam Whitmore."

I shook my head and laughed. "You and your Liam Whitmore obsession."

"Come on! He's so hot! I'd give my life for him."

I put the apron on my waist. "Yeah, yeah, of course. But I keep telling you that he doesn't date. He never did."

She made a face. "Don't say that. He might do it one day."

"Why don't you ask Alley to set up a meeting for you with him since he is her brother-in-law?"

"You're right, but I don't know. I'll ask her when she gets here." I hummed and got the plates ready.

Customers started to arrive as time went on.

While I was making the curry, one of our waitresses came in and said, “There’s someone out there to meet you.”

My eyebrows came together. “Who?”

She shrugged. “I don’t know. He didn’t say his name. He just asked for you. He’s at table number five.”

“Oh, okay,” I responded as I went by her to go. She remarked, “A bit handsome fellow,” and winked.

I laughed at her; all of my coworkers are nuts.

I moved out and headed to table number 5, but when I saw the person seated there, my movements slowed, and my face turned pale.

The person I hated the most was sitting there in black trousers, a white T-shirt, and a jacket.

He grinned when he spotted me and waved softly with his hand as if we were old friends reconnecting after years apart.

I sat across from him, gritting my teeth. He looked me up and down.

He licked his lips. “You’ve gotten more beautiful over the years, haven’t you?” I remarked coldly, “What do you want, Blake?”

“I see...you are still mad.

I got up and left. I can’t handle him.

“Wait, Sophie!” He stopped me. “Please, just five minutes. I need to talk to you.”

I rolled my eyes and sat back down. “Only five minutes. Your time starts now.”

“Hey, I’ve been looking for you for a long time, and now I’ve finally found you.”

“How did you get to me?”

“Your friend Alley is pretty famous right now. I saw your picture with her on Instagram. And by the way, I even have sources now,” he said.

“What do you want now?” “You.”

I gave him a dirty look. “Not going to happen. I’m already engaged, and even if I weren’t, I would never be with you.”

He put his hand over his heart in a dramatic way. “Ouch.”

I rolled my eyes, and he replied, “Sophie, I started my own business. I’m rich.”

I lost it. “Do you think I care how rich you are?” “Then what?”

“Go away, Blake.”

He took my hand. “Are you still mad at me for that?”

I pulled my hand out of his clutches. “Don’t touch me, and yes, I’m still mad at you and will be forever.”

I looked at his hands on the table, and they were trembling, like really. I had to ask. “Why are your hands shaking?”

He stared at his hands for a second and added, “I have a nerve problem. Sometimes, they shake on their own.”

I hummed back.

He let out a sigh and said. “Look, it’s been eight years, and it was a mistake.” “That you didn’t regret!”

“But I feel bad now.”

“It’s over, Blake. I don’t care if you regret it or not; the damage is done.”

“I want to make it up to you for that. I’m sorry for what I did.”

I stood up furiously and went to go, but he jumped up and grabbed my wrist. “Pay attention to me, Sophie.”

Other customers noticed us, and all turned to stare at us. I once again pulled my hand away from his clutches and glared at him.

I clenched my teeth and whispered softly. “Blake, don’t make a scene here. Please leave.”

He was about to say something, but I stopped him. “No. The talk is over. Now leave me alone.”

I turned around right away and headed back inside, disregarding the looks I was getting from the customers.

I put my hand on my forehead and leaned my back against the wall once I was inside. What the heck does he want after all these years?

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A few hours later, Lila came racing in. Her face was pallid, and her eyes were as wide as they could be.

I asked in a funny way, “What happened to you?”

She opened and closed her lips, but she couldn’t say anything.

That made me a little nervous, so I moved closer to her and grasped her forearm. “What’s the matter?”

She pointed to the entrance that led to the restaurant. “Li-Liam.” That simply made me more confused. “What?”

Then she screamed, which scared me. “Liam Whitmore is out there!”

“Oh, really?”

“He wants to see Alley.”

“Did you tell him she’s not here?”

She grinned shyly. “No. I was too shocked to say anything.” I hit myself in the face. “You’ve got to be kidding me.”

She stood up for herself. “I can’t help it. He looks so hot, handsome, and sexy. When he asked me about Alley, I almost passed out, so I ran back inside.”

I grumbled, and she pushed me towards the door. “Please go and tell him Alley isn’t here.”

I was going to say anything, but she pushed me ahead, and before I knew it, I was out of the kitchen.

He was standing next to the booth that was closest to the kitchen. I almost ran into him if he hadn't grabbed my hand. "Be careful there," he cautioned quietly.

I looked up at him and laughed shyly, and my breath caught. Right now, he looks really gorgeous.

He wore navy blue trousers and a white shirt with the sleeves pulled up to the elbow and his muscles sticking out. His navy blue coat hung over his forearm.

His thick beard was cut down to stubble, and his hair and a pair of beautiful glasses finished off the image.

He cleared his throat, which brought me out of my stupor. I saw I was still holding onto his arm, so I stepped back right away.

I said, "Hi."

"Hi," he said, and then it seemed like he was studying my face. "Is it Sophie?"

"Yes..."

He looked behind me towards the kitchen door and added, "I really wanted to meet Alley."

"Oh, umm...she didn't come today." His lips made an "O."

"Is there anything else you want, Mr. Whitmore?"

"Oh, please call me Liam," I said, "and no, I don't want anything else." "Okay,



Liam.”

He said, “There’s something in your hair, Sophie,” and then asked if he might take it out. “Can I?”

I nodded.

He ran his fingers through my hair and then snapped his fingers. When he pulled his hand back, he had a little red rose between his fingers.

What the.

He held out the rose and said, “For you.”

## Page 2

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I was surprised and exclaimed, “How did you do that?” as I took the rose. “I know a few tricks, Sophie,” he said with a cheeky smirk.

Damn. He’s very sexy. I suppose I’m going to pass out, too.

I spun the rose around in my hands and whispered. “Uh, my coworker really likes you chap. Would you mind meeting her?”

He smiled. “Of course.”

I smiled and stepped inside. Lila was leaning against the door and trying to hear what we were saying.

“This is your chance, Lila.” I took her hand and pulled her out.

“What if.” She couldn’t finish her sentence when she saw Liam.

He smiled at her in a way that took her breath away. “Hi,” she said in a high-pitched voice. “Oh my God! Hello!”

Thank God there weren’t any customers in the restaurant at the time. “What’s your name, miss?” He reached out his hand for a shake.

She shook his hand slowly. “L-Lila.” “Lila,” he said, “that’s a nice name.” She blushed and stuttered. “Th-thanks.”

“I would have loved to talk to you more, but I have to go to work,” he added with a

shy smile.

“It’s okay,” she said quietly.

He moved in closer and kissed her cheek, which surprised both of us.

“Bye,” he said as he walked away.

Lila’s jaw fell, and she cautiously raised her hand to touch her face where he had kissed her.

I caught her arm just before she fell. “He kissed me,” she said in a low voice.

And then she screamed. I rolled my eyes and said, “He kissed me!” “Yes, I saw that.”

But he didn’t kiss mine.

For God’s sake, you have a fiancée. Yeah, right.

She was so happy that she was bouncing about, but then she remembered something and stopped and hit her face.

“I am so dumb,” she remarked. “What happened?”

“I didn’t get a picture with him. How can I forget it?!”

“Next time, you can have it.”

“Next time?”

“Yeah. Don’t forget that he is still Alley’s brother-in-law,” I told her, and she smiled big.

And for the rest of the day, she kept saying how hot he looked, which drove me crazy.

I have to agree with it.

I smiled when I gazed down at the rose in my palm.

Sophie's point of view:

Alley remarked to Lila in a nice way, "I'll see what I can do about it." "He's a workaholic; he never stops working."

"Yes," Lila remarked as she washed the dishes. "I've read that he's a workaholic."

Alley and I hummed back.

"Blake is back," I said softly as Alley stirred the sauce next to me. She hesitated for a second, then turned to me and said, "What?"

I let out a sigh. "He came to see me yesterday, here in the restaurant." She gasped. "How did he get to you?"

I told her how he found me, and I even repeated what he said. He even told her everything else he had said.

She softly put her hand on my cheek. "Are you okay?" I grinned. "Yes, I'm fine. I won't let him get to me."

She touched my cheek. "That's the way to do it."

I laughed quietly, and then my phone rang, which broke off our talk.

I pulled my phone out of my handbag, which was on a nearby counter, and grinned when I saw Ryan's name on the caller ID.

"Hi," I said to him.

He spoke back in a dry voice, "Hey." "Can we get together tonight?"

"A date?"

"Uh, not really. I just need to talk to you." "Is everything okay?"

He laughed uncomfortably. "Yes, of course." "As you say. So, where are we meeting?"

He seemed like he was in a rush when he said, "I'll text you the time and place." "Okay. Bye."

He whispered "bye" and hung up the phone.

Strange.

I walked back to the stove and kept working on the bread dough. "Can I go home early today?" I asked Alley.

She moved her eyebrows. "A date?"

I let out a sigh and a laugh at the same moment. "No. He just needs to say something."

"Okay. You can go early." "Thanks," I said quietly.

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Ryan told me to meet him in the Maple Bean Cafe, so I went inside.

I saw him seated at a table in the corner and smiling, so I went up to him. An oval face, light blonde hair, and a light beard. A white shirt with flowers on it and blue pants. He looked nice.

I sat down across from him, leaned over, and kissed his lips, but his eyes told me he didn't enjoy it.

"So," I said. "What do you want to talk about?"

My hands were on the table, and he kept looking at my left hand, where the engagement ring was.

"Ryan," I yelled. "What happened?"

At that moment, a server came up to us, and Ryan anxiously said, "Coffee?" I nodded, and he ordered for us.

I said right away as the waiter left. "You look nervous." He cleared his throat. "Look. I don't think the marriage can—"

"Does this happen this early?" I cut him off. "It's fine if you're busy. We can wait a few more months."

He let out a sigh. "No. What I mean is."

"I understand. We don't have enough money for all the planning. That's fine. I don't want a big wedding with a lot of guests."

At that time, the waiter came back with our coffees, set them down, and left.

Ryan's jaw got tight. "I can't marry you, Sophie. Not now, not ever. We just can't."

My voice got quite quiet. "Why?"

He wouldn't look me in the eye. "I think we should end this engagement and whatever else we had going on."

My lips opened a little. "W-what?"

"I'm breaking things off. We're done."

I leaned in closer, my eyes got bigger, and my jaw fell. "We're engaged, Ryan. You asked me to marry you. What happened next?"

He didn't say anything and looked down.

I figured something out. "Did you find someone else to take my place?" He tightened his fists and didn't speak.

My voice broke. "Y-you found someone else, didn't you?" He raised his head. "I can explain."

"What do you mean? How long has this been going on?" He stroked his beard. "A month?"

I started to cry. "You've been lying to me the whole time. You're a liar. I thought you loved me. I even loved you back."

"I did love you, Sophie, but things changed."

“Someone else came into your life, and now you don’t love me anymore?”

He tapped his finger on his forehead. “Kind of.” I hit the table with my fist. “Unbelievable.”

He muttered, “I’m sorry.”

I laughed without any humor. “Sorry? Do you think that will change the fact that you cheated on me?”

A tear fell from my eye. “I loved you, but right now, I hate you.” I wiped away the tear with the back of my hand.

He really looked guilty, but I didn’t believe him. I remarked in a mocking tone, “Who’s the lucky girl, by the way?”

I asked him again when he didn’t answer. “Who’s she?” “She started working in our office a month and a half ago. I met her then.”

I scoffed, stood up, and angrily took the ring off my finger and hurled it at him. “I hope you both have a great future together.”

He yelled for me when I turned around and walked towards the door, but I ignored him and hurried out the door, quickly wiping away the tears that were streaming down my face.

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I had stopped sobbing. I won’t cry for that jerk.

I am delighted I finally saw his genuine face. I thought he loved me, and I loved him back. That’s all there is. Not anymore.



I chose one of the nicest dresses from my collection, but I never got to wear it. It was silver with sparkles all over it and had a deep plunging neck. It went all the way to my mid-thighs.

I let my hair down over my shoulder and grabbed my purse. Then I dialed for a cab.

Let's get this party started.

The lights were low, the music was blaring from the speakers, and everyone in the club was dancing like mad. That is exactly what I need tonight.

## Page 3

*Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:14 am*

I got up from my seat at the bar and ordered a Martini.

After drinking a couple of glasses of alcohol, I went to the dance floor and swayed my hips while dancing alone, without caring about anything.

I danced with a stranger for a while. I don't know who he was, but I kissed his cheek and then exited the dance floor.

"I need another drink," I remarked to no one and went back to the bar. When I bumped against someone's chest, I felt a little woozy.

The hit made me stagger back, and the person's hand on my forearm forced me to stand up straight.

"You're always bumping into me," the individual said with a laugh. I finally spotted him as I raised my head.

Liam.

He had a little smile on his face as he looked me over from head to toe.

He had on a basic black shirt with the sleeves pushed up to his elbows, a pair of black pants, and no glasses.

Always looking hot.

I took a big breath and moved back, and he said hello. "Hello, Sophie." I bit my lips, and for a moment, his eyes moved over them. "Hey."

He looked behind me and said, “All alone?” while putting his hands in his pants pockets.

I pushed a piece of hair behind my ear because his focused look made me anxious. “Yes.”

He grinned and made an offer. “Want to get some drinks?” I smiled back at him. “Of course.”

I followed him to the bar, marveling at his back and the way his big shoulders moved as he walked.

I can’t blame myself for looking at him because I’m about to receive my period.

And that jerk is the reason I’m single right now.

He sat next to me on another stool, and I sat down on the barstool. “What do you want to drink?”

“Uh...whiskey.”

He got a whisky for both of us.

“Are you alone, too?” I questioned the barman as he handed us our drinks. “Yes, I’m here for a random inspection,” I said.

I frowned. “Inspection?” He grinned. “I own this club.”

“Oh, I’m sorry. I didn’t know that.”

He shrugged and took a drink of his whisky. “It’s okay.”

I took up the glass with my left hand, and he looked at my empty ring finger.

“Where’s your ring? Did the engagement break or what?” he joked. “Yes,” I said with a sour tone.

“Are you serious?” His eyes were on my face.

“Yes. That f\*\*\*\*\*g bastard found someone better to take my place, so he broke the engagement.”

He was drinking when he heard me curse Ryan, and he coughed on his drink. He promptly got a glass of water from the barman and drank it.

“But he just asked you to marry him a few months ago, didn’t he?” he remarked in disbelief.

I made my lips into a narrow line. “He did. He said he loved me, but now he doesn’t. He got interested in some girl who joined his office. He is a f\*\*\*\*\*g cheater.”

“So, you’re not seeing anyone right now?”

“Why? Are you going to ask me out?” I said in a funny way. He laughed a little bit. “Of course not. I don’t go out with anyone.”

I rolled my eyes and said, “Does Alley know?” while I ordered another drink.

I drank the liquid quickly. “No. I don’t want to tell her yet. And you, mister, are not going to tell her either, or you will not like what happens.” I pointed my finger at him and cautioned him.

He gave up and lifted his hands. “I won’t say a word to anyone.” “Good.”

“Are you paying for the drinks?” I questioned him while I ordered another drink for myself.

“Drink as much as you want. It’s free for you tonight,” he said with a wink. I winked back and smiled. “Thanks.”

This time, his eyes weren’t so subtle as they looked at my body. “Sophie, you look amazing.”

“Beautiful enough to make you want me?” I said with a wink.

He appeared a little surprised by what I said, but he immediately got over it and smiled. “Beautiful enough to easily seduce me.”

I leaned in closer and murmured in his ear while batting my eyelashes at him.

“Thanks for telling me. I was going to do that.”

I ran my fingertips down his arm and then sat up straight in my seat.

He laughed in a sensual way and ran his tongue over his lips, which made me mentally sigh since they looked so nice.

Then I drank and drank till my knees gave out and my feet were staggering. But my brain was still operating fine. I understood everything.

Liam put his arm around my shoulder to save me from falling, and I laughed at him.

“I’ll take you home,” he offered, and I laughed again and nodded.

He led me to his car, made me get in the passenger seat, and put on my seatbelt. Then he sat in the driver’s seat and revved the engine while asking for my address. And he left the club in his car.

I couldn't stop swooning over him all the way home. He saw it but didn't say anything, which made me happy.

The automobile stopped in front of my modest apartment block, and the driver turned to me and turned off the engine.

He questioned, "Can you get back to your flat?"

I didn't say anything and just laughed again while looking at his lips. "Hey, Sophie, are you listening?"

I nodded.

He let out a sigh. "Can you go up to your."

I didn't let him finish. Instead, I grabbed his collar and kissed him hungrily.

He hesitated, and I waited for him to kiss me again, but he softly pulled me away, so I pouted.

"It's not a good idea," he said in a hoarse voice.

I held onto his collar with my hands and turned my head. "Why?" "Sophie..."

I moved in closer. "You just said that I could easily seduce you. What happened? What changed?"

He didn't answer, so I continued, "You can stay for one night, Liam."

He looked me in the eye for a few seconds, then swore under his breath and kissed me hard.

The rest was a haze.

I remember falling down on my bed with him on top of me.

Sophie's point of view:

I felt like my brain was about to burst any second as I woke up. How much did I drink last night?

I looked around the room in confusion and then down at myself, recognizing that I was n\*\*e under the covers that were covering me.

What the f\*\*k?

I put my hands on my head and tried to remember everything that happened last night. After about five minutes of attempting to focus, I started to remember things.

I ran into Liam at the bar. He bought me drinks. I flirting with him. He is taking me home. I kissed him. And him on top of me in bed. Awesome!

What did I do?

There were no clothes on the floor, so he must have left before I woke up. I saw a tiny plate on the nightstand with a pill on it that I consume to get rid of hangovers. There was a small round disk-like thing on the plate next to it that covered a glass of water. And a piece of paper on top of it.

I took the paper and read it.

I hope you had a good time last night. Have a good day, Sophie.

-Liam

Who in the world would leave a note like that?

I took the pill with the water and went inside the bathroom to get ready, still not being able to believe I had s\*x with Liam. Liam Whitmore.

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When I met Alley this morning, I felt strange, like I had done something wrong by sleeping with her brother-in-law. But it wasn't wrong at all.

I can sleep with whoever I want, and I know Alley doesn't care, but I still feel weird.

Especially when she talks about how sweet, funny, or annoying he is all the time.

I didn't tell her anything about Ryan. I didn't want to tell anyone yet. So, I attempted to hide my empty ring finger from her all day.

It was evening when she spoke. "So, what did Ryan want to talk about?" "Umm..." I thought of a lie. "He didn't want to talk, actually--"

"It turned out to be a date?"

"Y-yes." I fakely laughed. "Yes. It turned out to be a date. He...wanted to...umm... surprise me, actually."

She grinned. "That's so sweet of him."

I offered her a phony grin. "Yes. Of course."

I grabbed up the water bottle to sip some water when Alley pointed towards my hand and stated. "Where's your ring?"

I hurriedly put the bottle down and placed my left hand behind my back. "It's at home." I lied again.



Her eyebrows came together. “But you never take it off.”

I thought about it a lot and said. “I take it off every time I shower, so I took it off this morning and forgot to put it back on.”

“Oh,” she murmured gently and kept cooking the chicken. And I let out a sigh of relief. When she finds out I lied to her, she’s going to murder me. Aargh!

## Page 4

*Source Creation Date: July 3, 2025, 7:14 am*

I bid goodbye to Alley and left the restaurant, but I paused when I saw Blake resting against his car in front of the restaurant.

I pushed my lips together tightly. Why can't he leave me alone? I walked up to him. "What the hell do you want now?"

He stopped leaning and stood up straight. "I believe I made it very clear what I want."

I laughed. "I think I made it clear that you won't get that." He ran his fingers through his hair. "Please, Sophie."

I rolled my eyes and walked away from him.

"Come on, it was a mistake," he yelled to me. "I wasn't grown up." I stopped and turned around to go back to him. I crossed my arms and halted in front of him. "Even if I forgive you, you still won't get me."

"Why?" he said in a panicked voice.

"Are you deaf? I told you clearly yesterday that I am engaged, and I don't want you!"

He looked down at my hand and smiled a little. "I don't see a ring on your finger."

The damn ring!

"That's because..." I took a long breath. "We don't want to tell anyone about our engagement yet."

He lifted his eyebrow in a funny way. “Are you engaged to the President or a billionaire?”

I fought the temptation to strangle him and clenched my teeth. “Blake, you don’t need to know who I’m engaged to.”

He smiled. “You are lying.”

“Please, Blake, leave me alone. I’m begging you. You’re not going to get me. Get this through your f\*\*\*\*\*g head.”

“At least I can try to win you.” “You will waste your time.” He winked at me, which made me sick. “I’ll make it worth it,” I said with a forced smile. “Good luck with your work.”

I went away again, but when I thought he was following me, I put my hand up. “Do you dare to follow me?” I replied without turning back.

I heard him laugh softly. “Of course, Sophie.”

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A WEEK LATER

I’m very tired.

Why?

I just woke up.

I felt very exhausted even yesterday. I don’t know what’s wrong with me. Everything hurts: my stomach, my brain, my muscles, everything. I can get myself to the

bathroom and take a hot shower to ease the pain in my muscles.

I recognized how bad I looked as I stood in front of the mirror and dried my hair.

My face was so pale. It seemed like my eyes were a little crimson. People who see me will believe I haven't eaten or slept well in days.

I think this entire thing with Blake turning up and breaking off the engagement really hurt me.

I shook my mind and threw those thoughts aside. Then I got ready to go to the restaurant.

Alley's eyes became big, and her jaw dropped open when I walked into the kitchen.

"Wow, you look..." She looked at me and tried to find a term to describe me. "Ugh."

I said, "Thanks," quietly while holding my purse over the counter. "Did Blake come back again or what?"

"He did come back here a week ago, but luckily, he found something better to do with his time," I told her everything he said to me.

"Next time, just tell me, and I'll take care of him." "Sure," I answered with a hint of sarcasm. After that, she gave me a troubled look. "But... what's wrong with you? You look sick."

I shrugged. "I don't know either."

"Are you on your period?"

"No, it's late this time. I don't know why."

“Your periods are pretty regular, so what happened? Are you stressed?”

“No, Alley. I’m fine,” I lied.

She hummed and put her hand on my forehead. “I think you have a fever, but it’s not too high.”

“Oh.”

“I think you should take the day off.”

I shook my head. “I’ll be okay. I can still work.”

She put her hands on her hips. “Who’s in charge here?” I rolled my eyes. “You.”

“Ms. Spencer, your boss tells you to get out of here and see a doctor, or she will do it herself.” She stared at me.

“Doctor? Really?” I replied in anger. “Alley, it’s just a fever.”

“Yes! You only have a mild fever, but you look like you were hit by a truck. That’s why you need to see a doctor.”

Sometimes, she acts like a mum. And that genuinely warms my heart.

She gave me my purse, shoved me out of the kitchen, and closed the door.

Come on! It’s merely a high temperature.

I hit the door. “Alley, I promise I’ll go to the doctor first thing in the morning. Just let me work today.”

When the door opened, she stood there with her arms crossed and a serious look on her face. “You promise?”

I nodded fast. “Yes. I swear.”

She let me in after a long sigh.

After I told the lady doctor that my period was late, she collected samples of my blood and urine.

But it wasn’t needed. I don’t think so; I am pregnant. It’s not feasible. I remember Liam used protection.

Or did he not?

No. He did.

Or he didn’t.

He did.

He didn’t.

He did.

He didn’t.

He did.

The doctor came back with the results and a big smile on her face, which broke my train of thought.

What the hell is she excited about?

She sat down at her desk, and the smile on her face made me anxious. “Um...is everything okay?” I said.

She laughed. “Everything’s fine.” “I don’t get it.”

She said, “It’s clear, Ms. Spencer. You’re pregnant.” I am—  
“What?!”

He lost some of his smile as I said it. “You are pregnant. A week pregnant.” I laughed without any humor. “You’re kidding, right?”

She said no. “Ms. Spencer, no. The reports say you are clearly pregnant.”

“I...I can’t believe this. It can’t be!”

She was quite surprised. “Yes, it’s true. I’m not lying. Do you need an ultrasound report to prove it?”

“Yes,” I answered right away. “Okay.”

“Look, that’s your baby,” she said, pointing to the little creature within my stomach.

To calm myself down, I took deep breaths. I’m going to have a baby. That f\*\*\*\*\*g Liam Whitmore made me pregnant.

I thanked the doctor, picked up the reports, and left the hospital. I strolled down the street for a few minutes without knowing where I was going.

I gazed at my stomach. I’m shocked that I’m pregnant.

There was a cab on the other side of the street, and I waved it down. “Where to,

ma'am?" the driver enquired.

I said, "Whitmore Holdings," while glancing out the window.

Liam's point of view:

I was working on my laptop when the intercom rang. I clicked the button and heard Jason, my assistant, answer. "Sir, there is a woman named Sophie Spencer at the front desk who wants to see you. She says she is a friend."

Sophie?

"And she says it's urgent and that she will burn down this whole building if you don't see her." He said this in a funny way.

What?

"Um...send her up. She's a...um...friend." "Okay, sir."

What the hell is wrong with her?

Why does she want to meet me all of a sudden?

Two minutes later, the door to my office burst open, scaring me. I saw Sophie storming in, and before I knew it, a tiny file of documents was thrown at my face.

I stood up because I was surprised by her scream. "What's wrong with you?"

I was confused as I looked down at the papers that had fallen on my desk. "And what is this?"

She grinned fiercely and crossed her arms across her chest. "That, Mr. Whitmore, is



the ultrasound report of your child growing inside me.”

My mouth fell open. “Sorry, what?” My kid? Is it growing within her? Is this a joke?

“Y-you have my...child growing inside you?” I said, pointing at her. “Did I stutter?”

“Are you kidding me? Are you playing a joke on me? Did Alley send you?”

“Do I look like I’m in the mood to prank you?!” she shouted. I was startled by the way she spoke. Damn. She scares me.

She stepped closer to me and grabbed my collar, forcing my face closer to hers when I didn’t say anything.

She gritted her teeth. “What could you do?” “What do you mean?”

“Get me pregnant! What else?”

I pulled myself free of her grip. “Do you think I did it on purpose?”

She pushed me on the shoulder. “You didn’t use protection! How could you be so careless?”

“I used protection!” I said. “How did this happen, then?”

“How can I know? And how do you know it’s my child? It could be someone else’s!”

She didn’t like what I said at all. Her cheeks became red with rage. “You think I’m lying? I’m a week pregnant, and I slept with you exactly a week ago. I already told you my engagement with Ryan ended, and the last time I slept with him was a month ago. Do you really think I slept with other people besides you?”

I huffed. “I know for sure that I used protection. I don’t know how you got pregnant.”

She hit me on the shoulder. “You didn’t use protection!”

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“I did! It must have broken or something. And stop hitting me,” I replied, clutching my shoulder.

She was breathing deeply and staring at me, lost in thought. She said, “You will be responsible for this child,” after a minute. Right now, I don’t want a child at all.

I said, “No.”

“What do you mean no?” “I don’t want this child.” She went from being angry to being confused. “Why?”

“That’s why I don’t want a child.”

She stepped back. “So...you don’t want it? What if I get rid of it?” I asked her. “Do what you want. I don’t care.”

She had a poker face, but her eyes spoke a lot. When I said those words, her expression became blank, yet a maelstrom of feelings started to build up in her eyes.

I wish I hadn’t said anything, but I can’t take it back. I shouldn’t have said it.

She spoke something sarcastically. “Thanks for your time, Mr. Whitmore. Have a great day.”

She left after that, slamming the door behind her.

I sat down in my chair and looked at the ultrasound reports that were still on my desk.

I pulled on the tie around my neck and let it go, simply to keep my hands busy.

I cautiously picked up the ultrasound results and looked at them. I could see the small baby developing inside her like a seed.

There is a baby developing inside her.

I didn't want to have a kid. Not right now.

But something strange happened as I ran my finger over the report. My heart felt better. And it skipped a few beats.

This is my kid.

How can I not care?

I put on my coat and went out of my office with it over my shoulder.

Is everyone still in bed? I thought as I walked inside Nathan's house, as I had a backup key.

I was hungry all of a sudden, so I walked to the kitchen, got a bowl, put some cereal into it, and then leaned against the counter and started eating.

Nat stepped into the kitchen a minute later, not knowing I was there. When he saw me, he stopped.

He raised an eyebrow at me, and I smiled. "How are you doing, brother?" He looked at me with suspicion. "Better."

I ate the grains. "Good. Good." "Why are you here?" I set the dish down. "I just

wanted to check on you.”

He looked at the clock on the wall. “No. You’d rather be at work right now than here, even if I die.”

I laughed uncomfortably. “Oh, brother... I’m just checking on you. You know how much I care about you.”

“And...” He crossed his arms. “You would never admit your love for me.” Vincenzo opened his mouth to respond, but I stopped him. He got closer to him. And I laughed nervously again and moved closer. “Even if I never told you I loved you, I’m doing it now. I’m changing.”

“I don’t want you to change,” he said.

“Of course, of course...”

He looked at my tie. “You’re nervous.”

My eyebrows came together. “Ner-vous? W-why will I be nervous?”

“Everything is great when you dress up for work, but when you’re nervous, your tie gets crooked.” He pointed to my tie.

I glanced down and repaired it right away. “I was...um...in a hurry.” “Hurry to go where?”

“I want to see you,” I murmured in a weak voice.

He rolled his eyes. “I’m not buying this excuse. What are you doing?”

“Nothing, brother!” I said right away and a little too loudly. Then I grinned shyly and whispered gently. “Nothing. Nothing. Everything is fine.”

He walked over to the fridge. “Talk about it, or I’ll find out on my own.”

He unlocked the fridge, pulled out a bottle of water, and opened it while looking at me. When I abruptly spoke, he took a sip.

“I made someone pregnant.”

He immediately spewed all the water out of my mouth over my face. “What did you say?”

He closed the bottle and put it back inside before turning to me. I frowned because he spewed water all over my face, but I didn’t say anything. I simply picked up the kitchen towel and wiped it off.

He took hold of both of my shoulders. His mouth fell, and his eyes got so big. “Say it again.”

I closed my eyes and rubbed my temples hard. “I made someone pregnant.”

And then he laughed in a strange, awkward, anxious, and I don’t know what type of way. “Are you kidding me?”

I let out a long sigh. “I wish I was.”

He shook my shoulders. “What did you do?!” I looked down. “Sorry.”

“Sorry? Sorry? A f\*\*\*\*\*g sorry won’t fix this, and why are you saying sorry to me?”

I ran my fingers through my hair. “I don’t know,” he said. “Who is she?”

Again, I laughed uncomfortably. “Who is she?!” he yelled. “What will you do by knowing her... it’s not—”

I trembled at the way he spoke and swallowed. “Sophie.”

“Okay...Sophie...Sophie.” He stopped for a moment. “What’s her last name? What the f\*\*k? Sophie, who?”

I was so scared that I wanted to cry. “Spencer. Sophie Spencer. A friend of Alley’s.”

“Do you want to die? What the hell did you do? Didn’t you use protection?”

“I did, brother, I did... it just happened.”

“She is engaged, Liam! She is f\*\*\*\*\*g engaged! She has a f\*\*\*\*\*g fiancé!”

“No! She isn’t!”

He got a little calmer. “What?” “Her engagement broke.” “How?”

“I don’t know. She told me all of this. I don’t remember much. I was drunk. She was... drunk.” I groaned.

He put his hand on my forehead. “I’m going to faint,” I said as I grasped his shoulder. “Are you okay, brother?”

“Okay?! How can I be okay?! And why didn’t Alley tell me about her broken engagement?”

“I remember her saying that... she hasn’t told Alley yet.”

“Oh, oh, and when did she tell you she was pregnant?” “This morning, in my office, with the ultrasound reports.” “What did you say to her?”

I questioned anxiously, “Does it matter?” “Yes!”

“That to deal with it herself. I don’t care. Then I left.” His lips were thin, and he hit me. Difficult.

I didn’t say anything; I simply looked down. I earned that. “How can you say that, Liam? How can you not care? It’s your child too!”

I didn’t say anything. “Did mother teach us to tell the woman who is pregnant with your child to f\*\*k off?!”

“I swear to God, Liam. I swear to God, if anything happens to her or the child, you will die by my hands.”

I didn’t try to move or say anything.

“Go. What are you waiting for? Go, say you’re sorry, and tell her you care. Make sure she’s okay. She’s safe. She’s healthy. Just go find her.”

“Well.”

“Go!”

I nodded and departed without looking him in the eye.

Sophie’s point of view

I put my hand on my stomach, and my eyes filled with tears. No. I won’t weep.

I’ve made up my mind.

I sat up straight in the chair and waited for my time to see the doctor. I can’t raise this child since my money and mental health aren’t good enough. It’s better to abort this



kid than to bring it into the world and let it suffer because of my lack of money or my incapacity to be a decent mother.

Also, the child's father doesn't care about it either.

"I don't care." "Do what you want." His words replayed in my thoughts, breaking my heart over and over again.

It seems like history is repeating itself.

Did I really think he would be delighted about this? No. But he could have at least tried...

No.

Don't think about him.

I don't care about him or the child. That's it; I'm having an abortion.  
But...

Is it ethical to murder someone who is innocent and hasn't even had a chance to open their eyes?

I killed someone.

I cried as a tear fell down my face. I brushed it away with the back of my hand.

You can accomplish this.

No. I can't do it. I can't murder my child. So what if its dad doesn't want it? You can accomplish this. Thank goodness the hallway was empty, so no one could see the

tears streaming down my face.

I stood up from the chair. I can do this. It's not right. I get to choose! I can do whatever I want with this kid.

I heard footsteps coming down the hallway behind me, and as I turned around, I saw Liam running towards me. His hair was a mess, his tie was hanging loose around his neck, and the sleeves of his shirt were pulled up to his elbows. He looked like a wreck.

He slowed down and stopped a ways away from me, breathing deeply, and looked at me hard.

Then, he immediately crossed the space between us and grasped my shoulders. "Please tell me you didn't have an abortion." His eyes sought me for a response.

She opened the door to the doctor's cottage and walked out. "Ms. Spencer, it's your turn now."

He looked relieved when he saw that I hadn't had an abortion yet. But why?

I looked to the doctor to answer, and her eyes landed on Liam, who seemed surprised.

"Sophie." He carefully moved my head towards him. "Please don't abort it." His eyes seemed like they were begging me.

"I've already made up my mind," I said.

"I'm sorry." I'm so sorry. I shouldn't have spoken all that. "Please don't kill it," he implored.

“I’m sorry, Mr. Whitmore, but...” The doctor cut us off. “But you can’t make her keep this child.” It’s up to her.

Liam’s jaw tightened. “Can you please leave us alone for a few minutes?” “

She nodded and went back inside her cabin, leaving us alone.

I stepped back from him. “You told me to do what I want.” And I am doing what I think is right.

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He reached out to take my hand, but I stepped back again. “You won’t touch me.”

He pulled his hand back. “Okay. But let me clarify. “Please.”

As he stated, I crossed my arms across my chest to give him a chance to explain.

“I really am sorry for what I said to you in my office this morning. I wish I hadn’t done it. I knew I desired this after you went. I want this kid. I am ready to be its parent and take care of all that comes with it. “Please don’t let me lose it,” he begged.

“But I don’t want it anymore,” I said.

More than anything else in the world, I want this child.

He rubbed his face with his fingers to attempt to come up with anything. “Please, Sophie.” I’ll do everything for it, but just don’t end it. Please! “I’m sorry.”

The door to the doctor’s office opened, and she stepped out again, appearing angry and saying, “Ms. Have you made up your mind, Spencer? Do you want to end it? “

I looked at Liam, who seemed like he was dreading my response, and then I looked at the doctor.

I stared down at my tummy. I have a chance to bring this kid into the world, and if I miss it, I will feel so guilty.

I glanced up at the doctor and said, “No.” I gave my tummy one more look.

Liam let out a big breath of relief and relaxed his shoulders. “Thank God,” he said.

I hope I’m not doing something wrong.

The doctor didn’t seem happy with my response. “Okay,” she said, but Liam interrupted her and said, “Excuse me?” “Yes?” she said to Liam. “

“Ms...” He looked down at the name tag on her chest and replied, “Kara.”

He moved closer to her and suddenly appeared scary. “I hope this doesn’t come out to the press. Or I have other means to make sure of that.

She was definitely scared of him because she stuttered. “Y-yes, Mr. Whitmore.” He grinned and said, “Thank you.” The doctor quickly ran back into her cabin, and when he looked at me, his face softened.

“Let’s go,” he muttered, trying to keep his hand on my lower back, but he didn’t when I scowled at him, and he recalled what I had said about not touching me.

He strolled next to me, yet there was space between us.

“I’m sorry, Sophie,” he said quietly as we left the hospital. “How many times are you going to say that?” “I snapped.

“You didn’t say you were sorry.” And I won’t. He looked down. “I understand.” Can I take you home, please? “

I rolled my eyes and sat in the car he had parked in front of the hospital. He locked the door for me and then got in the driver’s seat.

He started the engine and drove off.

A few minutes later, he stopped the car at a red light. I was lost in concentration and looked out the window, but I could feel him looking at me.

“Sophie? “Hey,” he whispered gently. I turned to him and said, “What?” Hey, “You really don’t want this kid?” “

I peered out the window again. “No,” I said again, lying.

He only groaned unhappily and switched the car back on when the lights turned green.

He proceeded straight instead of choosing the route to the right, which would have taken him to my flat.

“That’s not the way to get to my flat!” “

“That’s the way to get to my house.”

“Why are you bringing me to your house?” “

“Cause that’s where you’ll live from now on,” he said, looking at the road.

“No! Take me back to my place! “I won’t live with you,” he said, and then he sped up the automobile. “Why do you want me to live with you?” “

“Because I don’t trust you enough to let you live by yourself.” “Under my care, in my house, you will live.” He stated it in a stern voice.

I fiercely crossed my arms and said, “That doesn’t make sense!” “

“You are pregnant with my child, Sophie.” I won’t let you hurt it.

I couldn't believe what I heard. "Do you really think I'm going to hurt my own child?" He said, "Yes," after a time. Then he stopped and said, "Maybe."

"I hate you!" "

"Well...good. "Thanks," he muttered, turning his attention back to driving. Aargh! I don't want to live with him.

I would never damage my own child, but it looks like my falsehoods made him think I was lying. I'm the only one to blame for this.

"Did you...tell Alley? "Why?" I questioned.

He looked at me and said, "And die?" No.

I rolled my eyes at what he said, but I was glad he didn't tell her anything.

"Does anyone else know?" "Brother does," I questioned again.

"And how did he...um...respond? "

"He slapped me," he said.

I was shocked and said, "You didn't need to slap me."

"He didn't hit me for getting you pregnant, but he did tell you that I don't care."  
"Then it was definitely necessary."

He didn't say anything or do anything, and he drove in silence.

I was worried about a question. "Did you say sorry to me just because he hit you?"

And instructed you to say sorry to me? “

He looked at me, and I knew we were at his house because he stopped the car. “I said sorry to you because I knew what I said was wrong. And now I want this kid. I am ready to be its dad. Brother didn’t tell me to do it. I’m really doing this. “Keep that in mind.”

He stared me in the eyes for a few more seconds before stepping out of the car.

I was still sitting inside, thinking about what he had said, when he opened the door and said, “Come.”

I stepped out of the car gently and took a minute to examine the beautiful house in front of me. It was simple yet beautiful.

He went through the gates and up the marble walk to the mansion.

“Welcome to the LW Estate,” he stated with a big smile as we walked into the mansion.

“LW?” “I asked in a confused way.

He rolled his eyes as his smile faded. “LW.” Liam Whitmore. “Of course,” I said, glancing at the beautiful inside of the mansion.

As we got closer, a woman in her mid-forties came out of the kitchen and looked at me in shock.

He smiled and said, “This is Helen, my housekeeper. She is like a second mother to me.”



“And this is Sophie,” he said, pointing to me.

Helen looked me over from head to toe with a blank face, which made me feel strange.

“And she is your what?” “She enquired Liam, lifting her brow.

He seemed anxious as he looked back and forth between me and her. “She...um... she’s my...”

“Is she your girlfriend?” “Helen asked.

He opened and kissed his lips, not knowing what to say, and tried his best to think.

Then he grinned a lot and moved closer to me, wrapping his arms over my shoulders. That’s what it seemed like, but in reality, his arms didn’t contact my shoulders; he made sure they were hanging in the air.

“Yes, of course.” This is my girlfriend, Sophie. Helen, meet her. “

A little while after...

“Yes, of course.” This is my girlfriend, Sophie. Helen, meet her. “

What the hell did I just say?

Helen’s eyes got bigger, and Sophie turned her head to look at me. “What?!” Sophie whispered loudly.

Damn!

“You have a girlfriend?” “Helen enquired.

“Well...yes. Friend of a girl. You can tell that she is a female and a friend; thus, she is a girlfriend. “I said meekly, “There’s room between those two words.”

Helen didn’t seem convinced at all. Come on! “She’ll be here for a few months?” “I said.

Helen squinted. “Months? And why is that? “

I looked to Sophie, who was frowning at me, and said, “I guess Sophie can explain that.”

“Why the hell are you making up stories?” Sophie yelled. Why don’t you just tell her that I’m pregnant? “

Helen screamed loudly when I shoved my face into the ground. “You weren’t supposed to say that!” “I hissed.

But it was too late.

“Liam!” “Helen yelled, “What did you do?!” “

I got closer to Helen. “Listen, I can explain. “Please don’t tell it to Mom,” I said.

“No.” I’m telling Margaret right now! “

I put my hands together and implored her, “Please, Helen.” Don’t tell Mom, otherwise she’ll kill me. “Please.”

I gazed at her with puppy eyes, begging her not to tell her mother what I had said.

She grumbled and marched by me, then gently put her hand on Sophie's lower back and led her to the kitchen. "Are you hungry, dear?" "She requested in a nice voice.

"Umm...not really."

"Come on. If you're pregnant, you should eat healthily. "Come, I'll make you something." She led her into the kitchen.

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I was confused as I watched them walk away. What the hell happened?

After a minute, I went into the kitchen after them. Helen was making pancakes, and Sophie was standing next to her.

“How many weeks pregnant are you, dear?” Helen said, “A...week?” Sophie replied gently.

“When did you learn about it?” “This morning.”

“Are you two going out?” “No.”

I cleared my throat before she could ask me any more questions. “Helen, can I talk to her for a minute?” “

Helen glared at me and walked away, leaving us alone. “Are you really that afraid of your mum?” “

I leaned closer to Sophie and said, “Not really, but she tends to overreact, which makes her scary.”

“I just hope she doesn’t tell Mother,” I said under my breath. “She won’t.” She claimed she wouldn’t if you treated me well. I rolled my eyes and answered, “Sure.”

“I’m going back to the office. You can relax.” If you need anything, ask Helen. “I’ll see you in the evening,” I said.

“What about my clothes?” And what about my other things? “

I put my hands in my trousers pockets and said, “What if I buy you a whole new wardrobe?” “

“No, thanks.” “Okay,” I responded. “You will get your stuff in a few hours.”

I looked down at her tummy and smiled a little. I could feel the thrill flowing through my veins. “Stop smiling like a fool,” she said, and I snapped out of my thoughts.

I scratched the back of my neck and turned to go.

I didn’t go home at night since I was busy working on a new project at the office, and I even fell asleep at my desk.

When I woke up in the morning at work, I recognized I didn’t have much time to go home, get dressed, and come back since I had an important meeting today. So, I had my clothes delivered and didn’t go home. Today is Saturday, but I work on Saturdays.

I went to Nat’s place instead of coming home after the job was done in the evening.

“How long do you plan to keep her?” “Nat questioned me as he leaned against his desk in his study.

I sat back in the chair and said, “What do you mean by how long I plan to keep her?” She is going to stay with me till she has the baby.

He massaged his beard and said, “Good.”

“Have you told Alley yet? “

“Do you want me to die?!” “

I let out a heavy sigh. “Sophie didn’t tell her anything either.”

Nat hit the tabletop with his fist. “I still can’t believe you got her pregnant, Liam!” “

The door blasted open, and we both stared at the entry in horror. Alley was standing there, staring at me.

She marched over to me and grabbed my collar, her expression full of disbelief. “You did what?!” “

“Alley—” Nat attempted to say something, but she gave him a look that made him stop. Her hold got tighter. “What the f\*\*k did you do?!” “

“I—”

“She is getting married!” Do you want her to break off her engagement? “

“Did you take advantage of her?” she said in a low, deadly voice. My eyes became bigger. “No!” I would never do that! “

“You are lying!” She would never betray anyone.

Nat put his hand on her shoulder and said, “Leave him first.” And let him have a chance to say what he wants to say.

She withdrew her hands off my collar and stepped back, still gazing at me. “Now, tell me!” “

I stood up and said, “First of all, she is not engaged.”

Alley opened her lips to stop me, but I kept on. “She got engaged. I met her at my

club that night. She was inebriated, and she

Said everything to me. Later, I dropped her off at her flat and, well... I wiped my throat in an unpleasant way. "You know what happened next." Alley's mouth fell. "Why didn't I know about her engagement?"

"Because she didn't tell you." I said, "Duh," in a mocking tone and rolled my eyes.

Nat, who was next to me, murmured, "Don't make it worse, brother."

Alley put her hand over her head and said, "She lied to me." She said nothing to me... she said to herself.

I told her, "She didn't want to worry you." She became angry and yelled, "Shut up!"

She was still in astonishment and exited the study without saying anything further. That's it? I was already preparing for my funeral.

Nat groaned and said, "Don't worry about her." I read that women get mood swings while they are pregnant.

I hummed in response to his agreement, but as I comprehended what he said, I turned to him and exclaimed, "Pregnancy? Is she pregnant?"

"Um...yes. Didn't I tell you? "Tell me?" You never told me! He grinned sheepishly and said, "Oh, I thought I did." "Seriously?"

"When? How? Why? "What do you mean 'how?'" I asked. "

I shook my head. "That's not what I meant. How many weeks pregnant is she? He

said, “A week.”

“Sophie is also a week along in her pregnancy. “Did we both decide to have s—”  
“Shut up, Liam.” He glanced at me blankly. “I was just wondering...”

He rolled his eyes, and Alley came back to the study and stood in front of me, angry.

“Where is she?” “At my house,” she said.

“Bring me to her,” she said.

“Okay...” I looked across at Nat, who merely shrugged his shoulders. “Do you want to go to her now? “

“Yes!””

“Fine.” I picked up my vehicle keys from the desk and headed downstairs. She followed me, moaning to herself.

“Welcome to the LW Estate!” “I proudly said as I walked into the home.

I lost my smile when she didn’t even look at the inside. Of course, Nat’s house is much nicer.

I rolled my eyes in my head.

“Sophie!” “She cried, and I had to muffle my ears. “Oh my gosh!” Don’t yell. “Let me call her,” I said. I peered into the kitchen. “Helen?” “No, she’s not here. I was about to go up the stairs when I spotted Helen coming down. “Where’s Sophie?” “

“She doesn’t feel good. She threw up. “By the way, she’s in your bedroom.” “Okay.” I turned to Alley and motioned for her to follow me. “She’s upstairs.” I walked



upstairs with Alley behind me and opened the door to my bedroom.

Sophie was lying on the bed with the blankets over her. “Um...Sophie—”

Alley came in before I could finish my statement. “Sophie, how could you do this to me? “

Sophie’s mouth dropped open, and she sat up straight and glared at me.

“I didn’t say anything to her!” “I stood up for myself. “She merely heard me talking to Nat.”

Alley sat on the bed, and Sophie didn’t look at me. “Why?” “I’m sorry, Alley,” Sophie whispered quietly. “I was so worried about you, and you were lying to me all this time.” She looked down. “I’m so sorry.”

“Your engagement is over, and you’re pregnant! And you didn’t even tell me. Are you mad at me? Did I damage you? “

Sophie instantly took her hand in hers and said, “No.” You didn’t harm me, and I’m not mad at you. I just needed some time to think about everything, and I didn’t want to bother you.

“I told you,” I said.

They both looked at me like they wanted to kill me, and I murmured a quick “sorry” before they went back to talking.

After a minute more of saying sorry and pointing fingers, Alley hugged her tightly, and I moved outside to give them some space, which I should have done a few minutes before.

Forget it.

I walked down to the kitchen and got two slices of bread and butter.

I put a lot of butter on one piece of bread, then put the second piece on top of it. Just as I was about to take a bite, Alley came down.

I saw her march up to me with the buttered bread sandwich halfway to my lips.

Her stare told me she was still mad at me. “If she gets even one scratch on her, you will be torn to pieces,” she said.

My brows wrinkled. “What do you think I’m going to do with her? Hurt her or something? Or turn her into my slave? “

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Her jaw tightened. “Don’t even think about touching her.” She cautioned me again, took my sandwich from my hand, and proceeded to the front door while eating it.

I cooked that sandwich! Do they think I’m a monster? I thought to myself.

Hold on.

How is Alley expected to get back? I rushed after her. “Alley, wait!””

Sophie’s point of view:

I was wandering around his house after Alley was gone. Luckily, she didn’t murder me and even forgave me, making me pledge not to lie to her again.

And I can’t believe we’re both having babies at the same time!

As I walked down the hall, I saw a big picture frame. The background looked like a palace, and Mr. and Mrs. Whitmore and Liam and Nathan were sitting on royal chairs in the middle of the frame. They were all smiling and had their arms around each other’s shoulders. I smiled when I saw the family picture. It was so cute.

As I walked down the corridor, I stopped at a door. When I opened it and went inside, I gasped at how magnificent the library and study were.

I don’t read books, but I was still interested in it. I strolled over to the bookcases and ran my fingertips over the volumes.

There were a few books on business, but most of the books were romance novels, which was shocking.

I can't believe it. There was a soft knock on the door, and I saw Helen standing there. "Dinner is ready."

I nodded and then went downstairs after her.

I helped Helen set the table and then went down to eat. As I loaded my plate with the numerous items she had made, Liam came in through the front door, looking tired.

His light blue shirt sleeves were pulled up to his elbows, his tie was loose around his neck, his hair was a tangle, and his beard was thicker than it had been a week ago.

As I heard him walk upstairs, he looked at me as he walked by the dining room and then left.

He strolled into the dining room two minutes later, wearing a t-shirt and grey sweatpants.

He sat down across from me, served himself, and then ate in silence. None of us said anything or even looked at each other as we ate.

I asked Helen if I could assist her after I ate, but she said no and instructed me to relax instead. I think it was a good idea.

When I got upstairs, I noticed Liam heading down the hall to the end and entering into his study and library.

I don't know why I'm paying so much attention to him today. Aargh!

I walked inside the room and looked at my phone for a while, but I felt bored, so I

decided to take a book from his library, even though I don't like to read.

He won't mind, will he?

I went to his library and knocked on the door.

"Come in," he said. I carefully opened the door and stuck my head inside.

He was sitting in front of his desk with a few papers on it. His glasses were resting on his nose, and he had a frown on his forehead as if he were thinking about something. His lips were in a pout, and a pencil was between his upper lip and his nose. His eyes were focused on the paper in front of him.

He gently raised his eyes from the page and looked at me as I walked in. He took the pencil from above his lips and held it between his fingers.

He tilted his head to the side and pushed his glasses up with his finger as they fell down. "Yes?" "

Why does he have to be so attractive?

I really forgot why I came here.

I scratched my head and said, "Oh." I was wondering whether I could... Can I borrow a book from here? "

He frowned and narrowed his eyes at me. He easily spun the pencil between his fingers.

Come on! They're just books. What do you have to think about them?

He wasted two minutes to make a choice that might have been made in two seconds.

I sighed in frustration and looked at the bookcase. I don't need his permission to borrow a book.

"Don't," he murmured in a low, calm, cold, and menacing voice as I was about to pick up a book.

Really?

For the millionth time, they are just books! I turned to him in frustration and said, "What?" "

He took off his glasses, put them on the desk, pushed back his swivel chair, and stood up. He walked up to me with a few smooth steps and asked, "Which one do you want?" "

"I haven't made up my mind yet," I said.

He groaned. "What kind of book do you want to read? I wondered for a second, "A thriller?"

He nodded and walked over to the bookshelf in the corner. After looking it over, he took out a book and gave it to me.

I read what it was about, and I wasn't interested. "Nope." Not really fascinating.

I threw the book in the air and caught it. Liam looked scared when I did that.

He took the book from me and looked at all of its sides to see whether it was damaged.

"Are you crazy?" "He yelled at him.

“What?” “

“Never do that again. What if it had fallen? “I would have picked it up,” I responded without thinking.

He tightened his teeth and said, “You will not do that again.” Then he carefully put the book back on the shelf, making sure it was straight.

Is he crazy?

When I saw a title that fascinated me, like “The Silent Patient,” I rolled my eyes and glanced at the other books.

I pointed to it and said, “That one.”

“That’s one of my favorites,” he remarked, not wanting to give it to me. “So?” He exhaled softly, picked it up, and gave it to me. “Not a single scratch on it.” There isn’t a single scratch or damaged page. “Give it back to me just the way it is.”

“It’s just a book.”

He frowned. “There are only books for you.” But to me, they mean more than that. I’m quite protective of them and won’t let anybody else borrow them. “Just read it carefully.”

I shoved my forehead into the wall. “Oh my gosh! Okay, if something occurs, I’ll purchase you the same book again. “

“No.” You can purchase it again, but you can’t buy the memories that go with it. “Memories?” Are you serious? “

He told me to “Go” and didn’t answer me. “I am busy,” I said, rolling my eyes.

“Whatever,” I said and departed.

He is completely insane!

Later that night, as I was reading the book in my room, I saw a line I loved and wanted to underline it. So I went to his study to ask for a pencil. When I told him what I wanted to do with it, his eyes widened, and he seemed irritated.

He told me that I couldn’t underline anything or let a pencil touch it, even a little bit.

So he told me to go away and snap a photo of the line I liked without providing me with a pencil.

I huffed, closed the book, and put it on the nightstand. I’ve never seen somebody so fascinated with reading before.

Liam stepped in through the door just as I was ready to go to sleep. “What are you doing here?” “Why?” I questioned.

“Going to sleep,” he responded in a “duh” voice. “Why will you sleep here? “

He rolled his eyes and said, “Because it’s my room.” “What?!” Is this your room? “

“Yes.”

I looked around the room and got out of bed. “So why am I here?” “

“Because you will only be staying in my room. You can’t sleep alone.

“Why?” Is he crazy? “



“I told you I don’t trust you enough to leave you alone.” So, I’ll be keeping an eye on you.

I couldn’t believe it. “That’s not fair!” “Plus, I slept by myself last night anyway.” “I know.” Helen was watching after you while I was gone. “That’s creepy!” “

He shrugged and said, “You will have to earn the trust.” Before I could say anything, he went into the washroom.

I grumbled since I knew I would have to share the room with him. It’s his room, so it’s no surprise that it’s so nice.

I was so angry with myself and, of course, at him.

He strolled in with no shirt on and only sweatpants on, which made me gasp.

“You can’t sleep that way!” “I pointed at him.

He looked down at himself and said, “Is there a problem?” “

“Would you enjoy it if I walked around your room in my pants?” “I said in anger.”

His lips turned up in a little smile. “I don’t think you’ll like the answer to that.”

It took my dumb brain 10 seconds to figure out what he meant, and when I did, I gasped and flung a pillow at him, which he caught. “You are so shameless!” “

He laughed and said, “Can’t help it.”

I shouted, “You won’t sleep on the bed!” as he got closer. “Why?” he said, his brows furrowing. “

“I’m not going to sleep with you!” “Sleep on the couch or something.” He glanced around and said, “There is no couch in the room.”

“Then sleep on the floor; I don’t care. But you can’t sleep on the bed! “Or you can sleep in a different room.”

He clenched his jaw. “No.” I’m only going to sleep here.

He took a cushion and a duvet and put them on the floor next to the bed, on the side where I was lying down.

I smiled because I knew I had won and turned out the lights.

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“I can’t believe she wouldn’t let me sleep in my own bed,” I heard him say to himself.

And my lips turned into a sneer. “Get used to it.”

He growled, “That’s very funny.”

There was stillness after that, but we were both awake. The moonlight flowing in through the window lit up the room.

I observed him as he stared at the ceiling with both hands beneath his head.

“Stop staring,” he whispered sternly, still glancing at the ceiling.

I rolled my eyes and replied, “You have a lot of romance novels in your library, so I thought you didn’t believe in love.”

He looked at me and replied, “Who said I don’t believe in love, honey?” “I opted to disregard the affection. “Well, you don’t date, so...”

He let out a sigh. “Just because I don’t date doesn’t mean I don’t believe in love. More than anything else, I believe in it.

“Then why don’t you go out?” “

He took his hands out from behind his head and looked at me. “My business won’t run itself.” It needs me. And I don’t want to spend my time going on dumb dates.

“You are not the sole head of a company. Your brother also manages the business, right?”

“My brother worked hard enough. He worked day and night. It was his hard work that got the company this far. I didn’t do much.” Now, I want to let him rest and remove some of his obligations off his shoulders so that he is pleased. Do you get it?  
“

I nodded because I didn’t know what to say. I didn’t realize he loved his brother that much.

It seemed strange that we just lay there staring at each other, and no one broke eye contact.

Then I said, “Do you want this child?” “Yes,” he said right away. “But that day in your office.”

“Okay, I freaked out.” It was a big surprise when you came and told me you were pregnant with my child. I really panicked, and I’m sorry for that. But after you went, I looked over the ultrasound findings and understood I had made a mistake.

I answered gently, “I understand.” “You forgive me?” “

“Maybe...”

He smiled a little. “It’s okay if you don’t forgive me.” I want you to stay here with me, though.

I hummed and nodded. “Goodnight,” he said softly.

I said back, “Goodnight.”

Sophie's point of view:

When I woke up, Liam wasn't there. His duvet was already folded, and his pillow was carefully placed back on the bed.

I got up in the morning and performed my morning ritual. Then, I walked downstairs for breakfast. Helen put a dish of food in front of me, and I ate.

A few minutes later, Liam came in wearing jeans and a t-shirt. "Breakfast?" "Helen asked him nicely.

"No need," he said in a harsh way. "Why?" "

He said in the same tone, "Not that hungry."

I felt awful for Helen, but she didn't seem to care.

He passed by her and opened the fridge. He took out two slices of bread and scowled because he couldn't locate what he was searching for.

"Where the hell is the butter?" He slammed the refrigerator door shut and muttered in a voice that was both angry and annoyed,"

Helen gave him the box of butter that was on the counter. "It's here."

He made a sandwich with butter and bread and ate it while he was outside.

"Geez," Helen said, rolling her eyes. "Did he not sleep well last night?" "

"I don't know," I responded, feeling bad about making him sleep on the floor. "Why?" "

“He is grumpy all day when he doesn’t sleep well.”

“Thank goodness he doesn’t have to go to work today.” “Or his workers would have had a hard day,” she said.

And I smiled tightly at her because I didn’t know what to say.

She looked at me over her shoulder while she washed the dishes and said, “Don’t you have to go to the restaurant today?” “

“No.” Alley encouraged me to take a few days off and relax.

She hummed back and kept washing the dishes. I gave her my empty plate and was ready to leave the kitchen when my eyesight got blurry. I blinked a few times to attempt to clear it.

My mind swirled, and I felt dizzy. My legs gave out, and I fell on the floor. I heard Helen shout, “Sophie!” “

I put my palm on my forehead and said, “What is going on with me?”

Liam came dashing into the kitchen and grimaced when he saw me on the floor.

“What are you looking at?” “Helen asked him what he was doing while he merely stood there. “Call a doctor!” “

“No.” “I’m fine.” I tried to stand up, but my feet wobbled. Before I could collapse, Helen grabbed my arm and supported me.

Liam had already contacted the doctor. Helen frowned at him and told him to hold me.

He rolled his eyes in a way that wasn't obvious. "I was told not to touch her."

Helen stared at me, and I smiled shyly. She rolled her eyes and helped me walk to the living room, where she had me sit on the couch.

Then she gave me a glass of water, which I drank. They both remained there, looking at me and studying my face as if I had just had a heart attack.

"I'm fine!" "Stop looking at me like that," I replied in a frustrated voice.

Helen told me to lie down on the couch, and Liam departed for who knows where. That guy doesn't care.

Not that it's bothering me. I rolled my eyes at what he did and shut my eyes.

I could have fallen asleep because when I opened my eyes, I saw an old guy looming over me and staring at me closely.

When he saw that I was awake, he leaned back and smiled at me, and I sat up straight.

Helen was at the door, and Liam was standing a little way away with his arms crossed over his chest.

The doctor looked at my eyes for who knows what drew my blood, performed a few other things, and asked me questions. Blah, blah, blah.

Liam opened his hands and moved closer. "Doctor, is the baby okay? "Of course. That's the only thing that matters to you.

"Yes. The infant is okay. Her hemoglobin level is lower. When the blood test results come back, we'll know exactly how much. "Make sure she gets enough iron in her food," he said.

Liam nodded, and the doctor left.

Helen sat next to me and admonished me, “I told you to eat right.” “I’ll be fine.” I smiled and said, “Don’t worry, Helen.” After that, I went to my room, or Liam’s room, as Helen had instructed me to do.

I was sitting on the bed with my back against the headboard, attempting to read the book I had borrowed from Liam.

It’s intriguing, but I haven’t been able to finish half of it yet. I wonder how someone can read a six-hundred-page book in a day.

I folded the book in half so that I only needed one hand to handle it.

Liam didn’t knock on the door because it was his room before he went in.

I looked up from the book and saw him frowning. “What the hell?” He screams and points at the book.

His shout of “What?” shocked me. “

He clenched his teeth and said, “Why the f\*\*k did you fold the book like that?” “

I looked down at the book and then back at him. “What’s wrong with it?” “First, hold it right!” “My hands knew what he wanted me to do faster than my head did, so I closed the book and glared at him.

“I instructed you not to mess up the book in any manner. Why don’t you pay attention to me?” He raised his voice, and I could feel wrath building up inside me.

I rose up and tossed the book square at his face without knowing why. “Keep your



bloody book with you!” I don’t want it right now.

The book hit him in the face, and he dropped to the floor with a bang. I guess I shouldn’t have done that.

He bent down, picked up the book, and looked at it. His jaw clenched even more as he noticed that a page was ripped at the corner.

He took a long breath and gently put the book down on the bed. When he raised his head and stared right into my eyes, I was afraid. His eyes seemed like they wanted to kill me.

As he stepped towards me, I reflexively stepped back.

This went on till my back hit a door that led to a little store area or something.

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He kept his distance from me and stared at me without saying a word.

I reached for the doorknob with my hands, turned it, and opened the door. I then walked back into the store room to get away from him.

He moved forward, forcing me to walk farther into the room. Then he smirked slightly.

He left the room and shut the door behind him in a second.

I was shocked when I noticed he had just locked me in there, and I hammered on the door. "Liam, open the door!" "

He didn't say anything, but I could hear his footsteps getting quieter as he left the room.

He really locked me up here? For what? For ruining his book? He's insane! I banged on the door a few more times, but nothing happened. He will pay for this. I looked around the dimly lit room and saw a few boxes lying around. They had stacks of A4-sized papers in them, some of which were old and used. There were also some files and a few other things.

I saw something when I walked around the room. There was a door, but it wasn't the one I came through. There were some boxes placed in front of it.

I took the boxes off the door and looked at it, wondering where it led. When I twisted the handle, it opened.

He is particularly bad at keeping people inside.

For God's sake, there's another door here that isn't locked. He would be a terrible kidnapper.

I opened the door all the way and saw that it went to his study and library. I laughed and got away in two minutes.

I strolled up to his desk and saw the paper there. It was a drawing of a room, namely a nursery.

Is he an architect?

And someone tells him that I'm just a month pregnant. He's already making plans for the nursery.

I took up the paper and put it in a drawer. It's too nice to throw away. I chuckled as I looked around the library.

He is going to wish he had locked me in there.

I leaned on his desk with my arms crossed and faced the door fifteen minutes later.

I heard Dad yell for me, "Sophie?" so he must have opened the door to the store room. "

Then he unlocked the door to the study and stepped in. His eyes fell on me immediately.

"Hi," I said with a stiff smile.

His gaze moved across the room, getting wider as he took in the state of his study.

He took all of his books off the shelves and threw them on the floor, where they were in horrible shape.

There were also a lot of paper planes on the floor and on his desk.

His jaw was hard, his hands were in tight fists, and his eyes were getting darker with rage.

And to my amazement, his eyes filled with tears. He couldn't be sobbing for his books, could he?

This might not have been a smart idea.

"Get out," he said in a voice that was icy and piercing enough to make me tremble. He closed his eyes.

I was scared of his tone and was about to say something when he opened his eyes.

"Get out, Sophie," he said between tight teeth, trying not to murder me. "Now!" "So I fled away from there to avoid his anger.

I really made him mad.

Liam's point of view:

I don't like her.

No one has ever touched my books in all these years, yet it only took her a few days to make a mess in my library.

I don't allow anyone to borrow my books or touch them. I'm quite protective of them.

I don't even know why I let her borrow the book, which was one of my favorites, and she f\*\*\*\*\*g ripped it up.

I scratched my temples as I looked at the books and paper planes strewn over the floor.

First, I scribbled a caution on a clean, new piece of paper.

A caution for Ms. Sophie Spencer:

From now on, you are not allowed to visit my study. If I catch you here, you won't like what happens.

If you ever touch my books again, I swear to make your life a living nightmare.

-Liam

I wrote the warning on a piece of paper and then taped it to the door.

Then I proceeded to carefully take up each book one at a time and put it back on the shelf exactly where it had been before.

It took me an hour to put the books back in their right places and pick up the paper aircraft. I kept my desk tidy by putting everything back in its right location.

I let out a sigh of relief after cleaning up the mess.

Someone knocked on the door in a steady rhythm, and I knew it was Sophie since Helen doesn't knock like that.

What does she want now?

I opened the door a little and looked at her. She smiled shyly as I glanced at her coldly.

“Hi,” she said softly.

“Can’t you see the warning?” “I pointed to the notice I had put on the door.

She rolled her eyes and said, “I did.” I simply wanted to say I’m sorry for what I did. “I’m sorry.”

“Your apologies have been turned down. “Have a nice day, Ms. Spencer.” I shut the door in her face and heard her curse under her breath.

You can’t trust her at all.

I walked down the stairs to the front door, fixing my tie. I didn’t have breakfast because I didn’t want to see her face. I’ve been avoiding her since yesterday.

The doorbell rang just as I was about to open the door. I wondered who it might be and opened the door. All the color went from my cheeks.

“M-m-mother? “I stammered when I saw my mother waiting at the entrance, looking as happy as ever.

She opened her lips to say something, but I slammed the door right away. What the hell?

What is she doing here? Did Helen instruct her to come?

Liam! Mother knocked on the door. What does this mean? Let me in! “

Damn!

I answered the door and put on a phony smile. “Mother! It’s very nice to see you.

She scowled and crossed her arms. “Why did you close the door on me?” “

“Did I?” “I laughed uncomfortably. “I thought I could be dreaming when I closed the door because I couldn’t believe you were here.”

I whispered to myself, “Unfortunately, it isn’t.” “Are you okay?” “She asked.

“Of course, Mom!” By the way, why are you here? “Please let me in first.” “

“Sure,” I said under my breath as I stepped aside to let her in.

God, please don’t let her see Sophie. I’m so doomed. She looked about the home as if she were seeking a threat.

“Umm... Mom. You must know that it’s Monday and I am going to work. Why did you come? “

“I wanted to see my son. Is it not okay for me to? “She squinted her eyes.

“Oh... Okay...

“Oh my God,” she said. “Alley is pregnant!” Did you hear that? “Yes, I did.” “Brother told me.”

“I am so happy, Liam,” she said with a big smile. “You have no idea,” I said with a smile. “Me too, mother.”

“By the way, where’s Helen?” “She enquired, looking about for her. “I’ll call her,” I responded, and then I yelled for her. “Helen?” “

Sophie strolled down the stairs instead of Helen. She must have heard me scream for Helen because she stated dryly, “Helen took a day off,” not seeing that her mother was there. She informed me that you weren’t there for supper last night.

1...

2...

3...

“And you are?” “Mother asked her query to Sophie, and that’s when she spotted her mother, and her eyes grew wide.

Sophie’s lips opened and closed, but she couldn’t say anything. Mother scowled and walked over to her. “Have we met before?” Sophie grinned uneasily. “At Nathan and Alley’s wedding?”

“Yes, but I don’t remember you very well.”

“Sophie. A friend of Alley’s.”

“Oh, yes, Sophie! How are you, sweetheart?”

“I’m fine, Mrs. Whitmore,” she answered gently without looking her in the eye.

“Don’t be so formal, kid. Just call me Margaret.” “Okay, Margaret.”

“Don’t you work with Alley?” Mom launched her question-and-answer session.



“Yes, I do work with Alley.”

Don’t ask what she’s doing here!

“Why are you here?” Mother said in a kind voice, but I knew she had a million questions for me and her.

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Sophie looked at me for aid since her mother was behind her. I shook my head because I didn't know what to say.

If I tell my mum that she's my girlfriend, she'll know I'm lying.

I took a step back, already thinking about how to get away. I grabbed for the door's doorknob with my hand.

But my mother's inquiry was enough to keep me there. "Who is she to you, Liam?"

I checked the time on my watch. "Mom, I'm going to be late for a meeting. I'll see you later. Why don't you go stay with Alley until then?"

"Get your a\*s here right now and sit down. Answer my questions!"

She responded, "You too," and Sophie nodded and sat down on the couch. I did the same and sat next to her but at a distance. Mom sat down across from us.

I sent Nat a brief text. Mom is here. Help!

Nat was online and answered right away. What? Why?

I don't have a clue! She is asking us questions! Quickly help! I wrote back.

"Put down your phone, Liam," Mom said, and I did it right away. "Who's she again?" Mom stared back and forth between us. "Alley's friend, Sophie," I answered with as little guilt as possible and a stiff grin.

Mother's lips were tiny and tight. "That I know. Why is she here? What does she have to do with you?"

"Would you believe me if I said she's my girlfriend?" "No," Mother said.

"Well, I can't lie about that..."

"Why are you lying to me?" Mother shouted.

I noticed Nat's name displayed on the caller ID when my phone rang.

"Mom, this is a very important business call. Please give me two minutes, and then I will answer all of your questions."

Mom rolled her eyes. "Okay. Hurry up."

I got up and went to the kitchen so she wouldn't hear me. "Brother!" I exclaimed as I answered the phone.

"What's going on, Liam?"

"I don't know! She just showed up out of the blue, and now she won't stop asking who Sophie is to me." I said in a worried voice. "I can't tell her that she's going to have my baby."

He murmured, "I don't know what to do."

"I have an idea, brother." "What do you mean?"

"Okay, listen," I told him my proposal, and even though he felt it was stupid, he agreed.

I went back to the living room and sat next to Sophie.

I told my mom, “Okay, I’m ready to tell you everything.” “But while I’m talking, no one, not even you, Sophie, will interrupt me. There will be time for questions later.”

Mother nodded warmly, but Sophie just stared at me blankly.

I leaned forward and put my elbows on my thighs, then I crossed my fingers. My voice got low. “Sophie was engaged to a man. They were happy, of course. Everything was going well until Sophie got pregnant with his child. When she told him, he said he didn’t want it, so the engagement ended.”

Mother gasped gently, and her face softened with sorrow for Sophie. She looked down at her tummy. And Sophie looked at me with a grimace that screamed, “What the hell are you talking about?”

Thank goodness she doesn’t say anything.

I kept going. “So...Sophie was having money problems. The landlord of the flat she was living in kept bothering her for rent. She could have asked Alley for help, but she didn’t. She didn’t want to worry her, so she didn’t tell her anything and decided to deal with it herself.”

I looked for any trace of suspicion on my mother’s face, but there wasn’t any.

Thank God.

I spoke when it was time for the main section of my perfectly planned deception. “Eventually, her landlord pushes her out, and she has nowhere to go. That night, I

I saw her sitting on the street outside her flat. I had seen her a few times before, so I

knew her. I asked her what was wrong, and being the gentleman I am, I offered to assist. When I said “gentleman,” Sophie sneered, and I glared at her.

And went on anyhow. “So, to sum up, I took her to my house, and she asked me not to tell Alley anything, which I did. But for some reason, Alley now knows everything and could come here at any moment to take her away.”

I smiled and felt good about my story when I was done.

Mother went to Sophie and enquired in a quiet voice. Sophie looked down as she heard, “What about your family?” “I have been an orphan since I was born.” What?! Why didn’t I know that? Is she a child without parents? “Oh, dear,” Mother said with sympathy. “I’m so sorry,” Sophie said with a little grin. “It’s okay.” The front door sprang open, and Alley, Nat, and Saffron, Alley’s 12-year-old adopted daughter, all walked in.

Alley walked over to Sophie and said, “There you are!” Saffron was behind her while Nat stood at the door. “How could you not tell me about your problem? You lied to me.”

I got up and went to see Nat. “Thanks, brother,” I said quietly. “Mother probably believed what you said.”

“Yes, she did. I’m clearly a better liar than you.”

He rolled his eyes. “Lying is not something to be proud of.”

“I could either lie or die, and I still have a lot to do in my life.”

“She’ll find out someday. She always does.” I groaned. “I know...” I looked up and saw Alley pulling Sophie towards us by the hand.

“Thank you, Liam, for keeping her with you.” She spoke loudly enough for her mother to hear.

I grinned. “Not a problem, sister.”

“Yes, thank you, uncle,” Saffron said with a smile, glanced at me, and I winked back.

“From now on, you will stay with me, Sophie,” Alley said as she pulled her out. Saffron and Nat followed.

I looked at my mom and sighed with relief. “Mother, I’m going to work now. I’ll see you later.”

“No. I’m going.” “Why?”

“Why? I don’t want to stay here.”

“Because your house doesn’t feel like home.”

I scowled sadly. “Don’t say that, Mom. I worked really hard on the design.”

“I’m not talking about the design; I’m talking about how homely it is. Nathan has a wife and a child, and another one is on the way. That’s what makes his house feel like home.”

I grumbled in frustration and said something to myself. “I am having a child too.” I don’t know how Mother heard it.

She turned her head to me and said, “What?”

“What?” I said back in a naive way. “You said something?”

“What? Me? No.” I laughed uncomfortably. “I didn’t say anything.”

“Anyway, I’m going home. You can go to work now.” She kissed me on the forehead and told me to stoop down because I was much taller than her.

Sophie’s point of view:

Saffron came over and sat down next to me on the couch. “Are you okay, Sophie?” “Yes, I’m fine, Saffron.” Her eyes sparkled with delight. “Isn’t it great that you’ll be my aunt?”

“What?”

“My aunt...when will you marry Uncle Liam?” she said. “Who the hell said I was going to marry that stupid jerk?” She was really upset to hear that. “Umm...you won’t marry him? But you are having his baby, right?”

“I don’t have to marry him just because he said that.”

She frowned unhappily. “But he is so nice. He is smart, cute, and a little annoying, but...”

“He’s an asshole, and I’m not going to marry him, Saffron. Don’t get your hopes up,” I said firmly, rolling my eyes.

Saffron fiercely crossed her arms. “You have no idea what you’ll lose if you lose him.”

I said playfully, “How old are you again, Saffron?” “You have no idea how this world works,” I said. “Twelve, right?”

“But I do know how a typical romance story goes. You two will fall in love and then get married.”

“You’re only twelve, Saffron...” I said in a frustrated voice.

She said with a little pride, “Age doesn’t make you mature; experience does.”

I rolled my eyes. “And what experience do you have with romance?” I questioned, stressing the term “experience.”

“I don’t. But what I said about Mom and Dad came true. Look how much they love each other.” She pointed to the kitchen door, where Nathan and Alley were standing. Nathan softly pushed a strand of hair behind her ear and then kissed her forehead for a long time.

“Whatever,” I said quietly.

“Also, I never really liked your ex-fiance. I never said it, but I had a feeling it wouldn’t work out between you two.”

“But you were so happy when I told you I was getting married.”



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She responded in a theatrical voice with an accent that made me laugh, “That’s because you were happy. I couldn’t ruin your happiness by saying, ‘Oh, Sophie, I’m so happy for you, but I’m afraid your engagement might not work.’”

“So...” Alley started as she sat down next to me on the couch. “Are you still mad at me?” I asked. “No. You will be happy to know that I forgave you a long time ago.”

I let out a sigh. “Thank you, Alley.”

In answer, Alley hummed and leaned back.

“Where’s your husband?” I questioned her, and she answered. “Left for work.” “Oh.”

I somehow got Alley to allow me to come to her restaurant later in the morning to help her after she departed for her restaurant. I was becoming bored at her house.

So I called a cab and went to the restaurant. I was happy to be working there and not just lying around all day.

Alley informed me, “You can go now, Sophie. I’ll take care of things from here.” I was getting ready to make the sauce for Burmese Khow Suey.

“But why?”

“Because you need to rest, Sophie. I don’t want you to faint. Go home.” She whispered this quietly as she took the spatula from my hand.

I pouted bitterly, and she frowned at me. It lasted for a few seconds, and I sighed. “Okay, I’m going.”

I stopped to ask her, “What if Liam’s mom is still there?” She shook her head. “She isn’t. I talked to him, and then she left.”

“Okay, bye, Alley. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Bye, Sophie,” she said, and then she blew me a kiss that I caught with a laugh.

I walked down the street to get a cab after I left the restaurant when someone phoned me. A voice that sounds a little familiar. “Is that you, Sophie?”

I looked back. There was a man standing a few ways away. His brown hair was carefully brushed back a few inches above his shoulder. Two grey eyes looked at me. He had both hands in his pockets. He had on a military green t-shirt and khaki shorts.

I looked at him for a few seconds before racing up to him and giving him a strong hug.

He embraced me back, and I was very happy. “Levi!” I pulled back, and he said. “Finally! I found you.” “How are you, best friend?” he enquired.

“I’m great! I’m so happy to see you here!”

He gave my forehead a soft kiss. “Where do you live?” I said. “I’m also very happy to see you, Sophie.”

“I live and work in Tampa, Florida. I just flew here to see you after I found out this is where you are,” he said.

“Thanks for coming, Levi. I didn’t think I’d ever see you again.”

He rolled his eyes and said, “That’s what happens when you leave your best friend behind and run away from the orphanage.”

“I am sorry,” I said quietly. “You know what happened; I just didn’t want to stay there.”

He put his hand on my shoulder and spoke quietly. “Hey, I get it. You made the best choice for you.”

I nodded before I spoke. “Where are you staying, then?”

“I guess I’m in a hotel. I just got back from the airport.”

“Oh...you can stay with me. I—” I stopped suddenly as I remembered that I was now living with Liam, and it wasn’t my place.

“Is everything all right?”

“Um...yeah...I...um...I need to tell you something.” “What is it, Sophie?”

His initial reaction when I told him everything about my predicament, the baby, Liam, and everything else was, “Oh my God.”

We were in a park, sitting on a bench and eating ice cream. “I can’t believe it,” he said in a low voice. “Yeah...” I said in a low voice, gazing down at my lap.

He said, “You can come stay with me in Tampa if you want.”

I smiled at him a little to say I’m sorry. “I can’t leave, Levi. I can’t leave my job or Alley. She was always there for me. And Liam wants me to stay with him, so I can’t leave.”

He hummed, and I said. “But you can stay with me at Liam’s house. I’m sure I can get him to agree.”

He grinned and pushed a piece of hair behind my ear. “It’s fine, Sophie. I can stay in a hotel.”

“No,” I said. “You are staying with me. I have a lot to tell you.”

He tried to stop me by opening his lips, but I didn’t listen and called Liam.

I called him, and a few rings later, he picked up. “Yes?” His rich voice made me shudder.

“Can I bring a close friend of mine to your house?” “Yes, you can,” he answered right away.

“Actually...” “Anything else?”

I said in a kind voice, “Would you mind if they stayed at your house for a day or two? Please?”

There was a gap, and then he stopped talking. I waited for him to decide.

Fifteen seconds later, he spoke. “Fine, they can stay. I’ll have Helen show them the guest room. But you and your so-called friend can’t go into my library.”

“Thank you! Thank you! Thank you so much!” I shouted with excitement.

He chuckled a little at how excited I was. “Is there anything else now?”

“No. That’s all. And did you say, Helen? Isn’t she supposed to have today off?”

“It was, but she said she finished her work early and came back.” “Okay, thanks, and goodbye.”

“Bye,” he said quietly before ending the phone. I remarked to Levi with a big smile. “He said yes!”

“That’s great,” he said under his breath. “Should we go?” I nodded.

I informed Levi as we walked in, “This is the LW Estate, Liam’s home.”

Levi looked around. “It’s great.”

“Sophie,” I heard Helen say, and we both turned to look at her standing at the stairs.

“Hey, Helen,” I said to her. “This is Levi Harry, my best friend from when I was a kid.”

“Hello, Mr. Harry. I’m Helen, the housekeeper.” “Nice to meet you, Miss. Please call me Levi.”

Helen nodded and grinned. “The guest room is only on the first floor.”

Helen unlocked the door to one of the guest rooms, and we both followed her. I advised Levi to calm down, get some rest, and have supper with me later. He nodded and smiled.

Helen said, “You look very happy to meet him,” as we walked away from his room. “You must really like him.”

“Yes. He has been my best friend since birth. We lived in the same orphanage, but for some reason, I lost touch with him, and now I’m seeing him again after eight years.”

“Eight years?” There was a note of shock in her voice. “That’s a long time.”

“Yeah,” I said in a low voice.

I made the decision to shift the subject. “What’s for dinner?” “I’m making chicken schnitzel.”

“Great. Do you need any help?”

She softly touched my arm. “You rest, child. I can handle it.” I smiled at her and walked upstairs to rest.

I phoned Levi for supper an hour later, and Helen served us.

Liam’s voice rang out as we were eating. “Who is this?”

Sophie’s point of view:

Liam’s voice boomed as we were eating. “Who is this?”

We all turned our heads to him. He stood at the kitchen door with his hands in his pockets, and his eyes glared at Levi.

I got up and walked up to Levi, giving him an apologetic look.

I murmured to him, “What do you mean by who’s this?” “I told you my friend would be here.”

He frowned and looked at Levi and then at me. “Is it a he?” My eyes became bigger. “Yes, he is! Can’t you see?”

He looked at him again and didn't seem particularly happy to see him. Thank goodness Levi's back was to us, so he couldn't see how Liam reacted.

Liam rolled his eyes. "Fine." He smiled and walked over to him.

He reached out his hand to Levi. "Sorry for how I acted before. By the way, I'm Liam."

Levi got up and shook his hand. "Levi."

I groaned, sat down across from Levi, and started eating again, motioning for Levi to do the same.

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Helen asked Liam, “Do you want to eat now or later?” as I quietly talked to Levi.

I could see him looking back and forth between us with gritted teeth from the corner of my eye. “I’m not very hungry.”

He then walked over to the fridge, pulled out two pieces of bread, and put butter on one of them. He then put the second piece of bread on top of it to make a breadbutter sandwich.

Helen questioned him with a trace of enjoyment in his voice as he was cooking it. “Do you want some jelly with that butter?”

That appeared to scare him. “W-what?”

Helen said again, this time in a much more serious tone, “Do you need some jelly?”

“No,” he said, and with the sandwich in his hand, he went out without looking at us again. I shrugged and kept eating.

I asked Levi, “Do you want to watch some films together?” after we were done eating.

He grinned. “Of course.”

A minute later, we both sat down on the couch in front of the TV in the living room. Levi moved closer, put his arm over my shoulder, and I put my head on his shoulder as we hugged. And I watched the movie.



It was a funny movie, and Levi and I both laughed a lot during the whole thing.

I heard someone come down the stairs in the middle of the movie, and my laughing started to fade.

I turned my head to the side to look behind us and noticed Liam standing there with his hands in his pockets, observing us. His face was twisted into a grimace, and his jaw was tight.

When he spotted me gazing at him, his frown went away. At the same time, Levi looked at him and smiled, which Liam did too.

“Don’t you think the movie and your laughter are a little too loud, Sophie?” Liam asked in a kind voice.

He doesn’t say nice things to me. What’s wrong with him? Is he simply playing with Levi?

“Oh...” I said. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to bother you.”

“It’s okay.” He said it in the same lovely voice, smiled at me one final time, and then went back upstairs.

I frowned at his strange behavior and turned down the volume on the TV. We both kept watching.

After the movie, Levi kissed my forehead and went to bed. I also went upstairs to Liam’s room with a grin on my face.

Liam was already lying down on the couch c\*m bed he got because I didn’t let him share the bed with me when I walked into the room.

He had both of his hands under his head and was staring at the ceiling, lost in meditation.

I got dressed in the bathroom and then lay down to sleep with my back to Liam.

It made me very pleased to see Levi again after so long. My thoughts went back to all the memories of us as kids.

Liam's words brought me back to reality: "He looks like a very close friend of yours."

When I heard him, I turned around and looked at him. He was still in the same place, staring at the ceiling.

I said, "He's been my best friend since birth. We're meeting after eight years."

He took his hands out from behind his head and turned his body towards me, leaning on his elbow for support. "Why now, after eight years?"

I looked down and nervously started doodling strange shapes on the bedsheet. "Um...I...because I left the orphanage when I was seventeen and never talked to those people again."

I looked up, and he was staring at my face. "Why?"

"Why do you want to know all this?" I questioned in a loud voice. "Just curious."

"Don't be. Some stories shouldn't be told."

He rolled his eyes as I said it. He made fun of me by saying, "Not all stories are meant to be told."

I looked down at my stomach and rubbed little circles on it with my palm. Liam's eyes fell on it, too.

"After I have the baby..." I whispered quietly as I looked at my tummy. "Are you going to kick me out of your house?"

He tilted his head in doubt and slowly got up and moved closer to the bed. I realized he was virtually n\*\*e, and the heat raced up my neck.

He sat next to me on the bed and put both of his hands on each side of my head. His body was above mine but not touching.

His eyes were fixed on mine, which made me flush. "I'm not kicking you out, Sophie, even after you have the baby. It's up to you. You can leave if you want to, but you are welcome to stay."

"And the... child? What will happen to it if I leave?"

He let out a sigh. "It stays with you. If you don't want it to, that's a different story. A child needs a mother more than a father. It stays with you, but I get to see it every day."

"Okay," I said gently.

He glanced at my face and then at my tummy and remarked in a sad voice. "Are you sure you don't want this child?"

I told him the truth since there was no use in lying to him. "I do. I want this child, Liam."

He seemed shocked. "But you said you didn't want it."

“I was just really angry with you. I said all of that in anger. I always wanted a child, but not like this.”

I could feel tears coming to my eyes. “I don’t want to,” I said in a whisper.

“Sophie, it’s okay. Everything will be fine. I’m here with you. I know you don’t like me being here, but I’m not going to leave you in the middle of all this.”

I sighed and held back my emotions. “Thanks.” I smiled at him tightly. He winked in a fun way. “You’re welcome.”

I giggled quietly, my eyes going down his body, and my cheeks got heated again.

I swallowed hard and looked away.

He said in a smug voice, “You do know you’re blushing, right?”

I clenched my teeth to disguise how embarrassed I was. “Get lost, Liam.”

He laughed hard at that and stood up. He said, “Goodnight, honey,” as he walked back to his sofa bed.

The endearment made me blush even more. “Goodnight,” I muttered.

Levi said, “Good morning, Sophie,” as he walked into the kitchen and softly kissed my forehead.

“Levi, good morning.”

Helen wasn’t there, and the breakfast was already on the table.

We both sat down to eat, and Levi’s eyes went to the dish on the side of the table that

had a buttered bread sandwich on it. “Can I have that?”

I thought it was for no one in particular because it was left on the table. “Okay. You can have that.”

Levi has always liked the bread and butter sandwich.

We started eating breakfast. Levi gladly ate the sandwich, and I ate the eggs and bacon.

Liam came in wearing his professional uniform just as we were about to finish eating. And looked around the kitchen for something and scowled in perplexity.

He called her, “Helen?”

Helen came in a few seconds later. “Yes?”

“Where’s my buttered bread sandwich? I left it on the table...” Oh no! Sophie, you are so dumb! So, so, so dumb.

Levi and I stared at each other with embarrassment. “Umm...Liam?” I said.

He looked at me and said, “Yes?”

I rubbed my neck in a shy way. “I’m sorry. I didn’t know that sandwich was yours. Levi ate it.”

Liam gazed at Levi and tightened his jaw. Levi said, “Sorry, Liam.”

“It’s okay,” Liam replied in a frigid voice as he left the kitchen. Helen responded to him, “It’s okay.” “At least eat something before you go.”

“I’m not hungry!” The front door banged shut. Helen left the kitchen, shaking her

head.

“He obviously doesn’t like me,” Levi stated to me. “What? Why would you say that?”

“Anyone can see it. I should go.”

“No,” I moaned. “You can’t leave. Besides, you have to come back tomorrow night. It’s only one more day. Please don’t listen to him.”

He hummed in answer and completed his meal.

Levi told me he had some work to do and would be back in a few hours. I took a day off from work because I wanted to hang out with Levi.

I felt horrible when Liam departed without eating breakfast, so I cooked two buttered bread sandwiches, wrapped them in aluminum foil, and put them in a little plastic bag. Then, I called a cab to take them to Liam’s workplace.

I took a minute this time to observe the tower in front of me. The sun made it glow.

I already knew where his office was, so I took the lift to the 40th floor.

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I strolled by his assistant's desk, and she noticed me and nodded quickly to say hello. "Miss Spencer."

I grinned a little. "Hey."

"Should I tell Mr. Whitmore?" "No, thanks."

He nodded and went back to work as I walked up to Liam's office and tapped on the door.

"Come in," he murmured in a loud voice.

I opened the door and walked in. He was sitting at his desk, typing on his laptop with a stack of paperwork next to him. He wrinkled his brows in concentration.

He kept looking at his laptop and said, "What is it, Jason?" "Hey..." I remarked in a hushed voice.

He slowly raised his head and was shocked to see me. "Sophie..."

I walked up to his desk and held the plastic bag in my hand. "I brought you your sandwich. I'm sorry Levi ate it earlier. I didn't know it was yours."

He groaned, pulled his chair back, and stood up. "It's fine, Sophie. You didn't have to come all this way to give me this."

"Well...I felt a little bad, so..." I stopped talking.

He took the bag from me and put it on his desk. He smiled, and that grin was worth billions. It made my heart skip a beat, and butterflies flew about in my stomach. “Thanks. Really.”

I tried not to stare at him by moving my gaze around his office. “I like your office,” I said.

“Thanks...”

“Okay, I’ll be going now. Bye.” I turned around and walked away. “Hold on. I can have my driver take you home.”

“No, thanks...” I was almost at the door. “I can handle it. Goodbye, Mr. Whitmore,” I murmured over my shoulder.

He chuckled gently. “Bye, Sophie.” His eyes burned into my back as I went out the door.

Sophie’s point of view:

As Levi took his suitcase out of the room to depart for the airport, I questioned him, “Are you ready?”

“Yeah.”

We got to the front door, and Liam came up behind us and glanced at Levi’s luggage and him.

“He’s leaving?” He sounded so thrilled and relieved. He had a big smile on his face. I frowned at him, and his smile went away. He remarked in a sorrowful voice. “Oh, he’s going. You could have stayed a little longer.”



“Thanks, but I have to get back to work,” Levi responded, holding out his hand for him to shake. “It was nice to meet you, Liam.”

Liam shook his hand firmly. “Same, Levi.” “Let’s go,” I murmured, and Levi grimaced.

“Where are you going?”

“To take you to the airport, duh.”

Levi put his hand on my shoulder. “You don’t have to come to the airport, Sophie. It’s fine.”

“But—”

Liam stopped me. “He’s right. You don’t have to go to the airport.”

I yelled at him, “I don’t need your opinion.” “Levi murmured gently, “Sophie...” “Please, you need to rest.” I pouted bitterly. “Fine,” I said with a sigh.

Levi grinned and gave me a loving, strong embrace. I hugged him back. “I’ll miss you, Levi,” I said in a whisper as tears sprang to my eyes.

“I’ll miss you too, Sophie.” He pulled away and kissed my forehead before departing.

Liam rolled his eyes and laughed to himself as he went, which I heard. “An acquaintance.”

I said sharply, “What?” “What?” he asked in return.

I crossed my arms and said, “What do you mean by ‘a friend’?”

“He obviously likes you, and you think of him as a friend.” He rolled his eyes again.

“Feelings? For me? He’s my best friend; he doesn’t have any feelings for me other than platonic love,” I said.

“Try taking out the word platonic. I’m not blind, Sophie. Anyone can see how he looks at you and how he flirts and all that.” He sounded a little angry.

“What are you? An expert on love?”

He said, “I’ve read enough romance novels to know how someone acts when they like someone.” He was pleased with his ability.

“Novels? They’re just books! What happens in them isn’t real life.”

“Isn’t that what everyone thinks?” “Just shut up!” I moved past him. He stated it in a frustrated way. “He’s crazy about you, Sophie. I’m sure of it.”

I paused and turned to face him. “Really? Why does it bother you so much that he likes me?” I said back.

He was shocked by what I said; his mouth opened and closed, but no words came out. I laughed and went back upstairs, leaving him standing there.

Does Levi like me? Are you serious? Please don’t, Levi. Please don’t let Liam be correct. I don’t want to hurt our friendship.

Levi has been gone for two weeks. I talked to him on the phone virtually every day, but happily, he never said anything that made me think he liked me.

Since that day, Liam hasn’t said much to me. He tries to stay away from me and only

talks to me when he really needs to, and even then, it's only a word or two. I had to say something since he looks so great with his beard coming back.

Helen did realize that we were not getting along, but she didn't say anything. I don't know what's wrong with him.

The cab came to a stop on the road that led to Liam's house. I don't want everyone to know that I'm staying with Liam Whitmore.

After paying the fare, I got out and started heading to the home. It was about 10:30 p.m.

I was going down the side of the road when I heard a noise and turned around to see a car driving down the road towards me.

I didn't pay any attention to it and kept walking till I got to Liam's house. Then, that same automobile parked next to me.

When I saw Blake get out of the car, anger rose up inside me. "Sophie!" "What the f\*\*k do you want now, Blake?" I yelled at him.

"You really did disappear again, Sophie," he murmured as he searched about. "So, this is where you live now?"

"Blake, leave me alone. Can't you get that?"

He didn't listen to what I said again. "I had to follow you all the way from that restaurant to here. Can't we just talk for a minute?"

"Please leave me alone!" I yelled. "Sophie—"

"She clearly told you to leave her alone, Mr. Theo." A strong, hard voice cut him

short.

Liam was standing at the front door of the home with his arms crossed over his chest and a serious look on his face as I turned to my left. A look of anger at Blake.

For the first time, I was glad to see him.

Blake's eyes became wide with astonishment, but then he calmed himself and grinned. "Mr. Whitmore...how nice to see you," he replied in a mocking tone.

Do they know each other?

"Leave, Blake," Liam stated again in a hard voice that left no room for dispute. Blake asked me, "So, this is the guy you're going to marry? Really, Sophie?"

I was about to say something when Blake stopped me. "You could have done better."

I stated instead of denying that we are engaged. "At least he's better than you."

He smiled. "You'll regret this, Sophie."

"Just f\*\*\*\*\*g go, Blake," Liam said again.

He gritted his teeth, got in his car, and drove away. I exhaled in relief and went inside the home.

Liam shut the door, and I enquired right away. "How do you know him?" "Shouldn't I be the one to ask you that?"

"I told you to tell me first."

He looked away. “He was younger than me in college. One day, I saw him verbally harassing a girl and punched him. We’ve been enemies ever since, especially since he started his own company two years ago.” “How about you?”

He raised his eyebrow and said, “We grew up in the same orphanage. That’s all I know about him.” “There’s more to the story...what is it?”

“You don’t need to know everything, Liam. I don’t want to tell you everything. Please.”

“Okay, okay. But what did he mean by that thing about getting engaged?”

I let some air out of my mouth. “Ryan came to see me before my engagement broke up, and I told him I was engaged to someone. I didn’t say who, so he just thought it was you.”

I questioned Liam why he banged his face. “Is that a bad thing?”

“Don’t be shocked if the paparazzi are outside your house tomorrow morning.”

“What? Why?”

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He smiled tightly and mumbled something caustic. “Congratulations, Sophie. You are now Liam Whitmore’s fiancée.”

I frowned in perplexity. “What the hell are you talking about, Liam?”

“Blake thinks you and I are getting married, and it won’t take long for him to tell the press.”

I couldn’t believe it. “What the hell? You need to stop him, Liam!” “It’s not possible...” He ran his fingers through his hair.

“Come on! Do something!”

He snapped, “What do you want me to do?” “Go and threaten him? So he can tell the media that I threatened him, too?”

His tone made me wince, and I ran my fingers over his face in anger and whispered. “I’m sorry, but I just can’t do anything.”

“So, what’s next?”

He thought for a minute and chewed his lips. “Now that the world knows we’re engaged, we put on a show for them.”

“How?”

“We act like we’re engaged. Make the world think we are.” “Can’t you just deny it?”

I said.

He tilted his head and thought of something. “No. I mean, it’s possible, but I don’t want to.”

“Why?”

He let out a sigh. “The media bothers me almost every day about my relationship status...”

“So now they won’t?”

“They will, but only for a few weeks. After that, everything will be fine.” “Oh...are you sure about this?”

“Yes, Sophie. I’m sure about this. Don’t worry; it’s not a big deal.”

I was already scared. “It’s not a big deal for you because this is all normal for you, but it’s not for me.”

“Sophie, listen to me. Just calm down. Everything will be alright.” “Calm down? How can I calm down?”

We heard Helen say, “What’s going on?” as she walked into the living room.

“Helen, please tell her to relax, get her some food, and put her to bed,” Liam said to Helen.

“I don’t need anyone to feed me. I can take care of myself,” he said, rolling his eyes.  
“Yeah, I can see that.”

Helen grabbed my hand and pulled me away before I could say anything further. “What is going on?” she asked me, and I told her everything.

I woke up and noticed Liam was still sleeping, so I quickly performed my morning routine, grabbed my purse, and went downstairs. I wondered why he was still sleeping since he had to go to work.

I heard some noise outside as I was coming down the stairs, so I carefully opened the front door. When I saw how many photographers were in front of the home, my eyes dilated, and I dropped my purse.

“F\*\*k,” I said.

Liam’s point of view:

“I heard someone yell, “It’s all over social media!” I groaned and cuddled with my pillow to attempt to sleep.

“How can you sleep so peacefully? Wake up!” A pillow hit me in the face. I put the covers over my head to keep her out.

“Don’t you have to go to work? What happened to your workaholic a\*s?” she questioned in a dramatic way. My lips involuntarily turned into a little grin.

“I need to go to the restaurant, but there are so many people outside. Liam, do something!”

“No one’s going anywhere today,” I murmured.

“What?” Someone yanked the blanket off of me. When she saw that I was virtually n\*\*e under it, she screamed and dropped the blanket over me again.



I eventually sat up straight and ran my fingers through my hair after rubbing my eyes. “You can’t leave the house today, or they’ll eat you.”

“But...”

“Please just listen to me once, Sophie.”

She huffed. “Fine.” Then she left the room, muttering to herself.

I grabbed my phone from the nightstand, which was ringing and vibrating with alerts.

Oh God. I can see how Nat may have felt when I posted about his wedding.

I put the phone down. I’ll deal with it later. I got up and headed to the toilet to do my morning ritual.

I could hear the noise outside as I headed down the stairs after using the restroom. I picked up the tiny package in the living room that I ordered last night without thinking about it.

I opened it and sang to myself in happiness. Then I brought the little jewelry box to the kitchen, where Sophie was having breakfast that Helen had made.

I sat down across from her and pushed the box down the table towards her. She glanced at it in perplexity.

“What’s this?” she said, her mouth full of pancakes. “Your ring for your engagement.”

Helen screamed, “Let me see!” as she picked up the box and opened it. She admired the ring. “It’s so pretty.”

Helen set the package down in front of Sophie and went back to her work.

Sophie took up the package and gazed at the ring. Her eyes got a little bigger. “How much does this cost?”

I shrugged my shoulders. “Liam, it doesn’t matter.” “Liam, it’s...”

I cut her off and said, “Do you like it or not?” She nodded. “Of course. It’s beautiful.” “Then wear it. No arguments.”

She bit her lips, nodded, and carefully took the ring out of the box. She slipped it down her ring finger and put her hand in front of her face to view it. Her mouth opened a little in amazement. She tucked a piece of hair behind her ear as it brushed against her forehead.

She smiled at me and said, “Thanks.” Her eyes sparkled. I forget how pretty she is sometimes.

I was able to grin back. “Thanks... I mean, welcome.”

She chuckled a little and shook her head, then went back to eating her meal.

I put my elbow on the table and tilted my head, cupping my cheek to admire the beauty in front of me.

Hold on...what?

What the hell am I doing? Stop looking at her! But I couldn’t look away from her. Please hit me.

The sound of glass breaking brought me back to reality. I turned to my left and noticed a glass of water that Helen had dropped on the floor. Helen’s eyes were

fixated on me, and she looked horrified.

She gasped and leaned down to pick up the bits of glass once she calmed down. I went up and bent down to help her, too.

Sophie tried to get up, but I scowled at her. “Stay seated.” She rolled her eyes and sat down.

Helen and I cleaned up the broken glass and threw it away.

I questioned Helen, “Are you okay?” She nodded and then left the kitchen to get a broom. She swept up the smaller bits of glass.

She instructed me to sit down and eat my breakfast, and I did what she said.

Sophie got up and departed quietly once she was done eating. I watched her go.

Helen cleared her throat, and I looked at her.

Helen smiled. “So, you’re in love with her?”

“What? No!”

She laughed and clapped me on the back. “It’s okay. There’s nothing wrong with loving her.”

“Helen, no. I’m not falling in love with her. Please don’t say that,” I said firmly.

She looked dejected and pouted. “One day, you will admit it, child.” She messed up my hair and then left the kitchen.

In love? I laughed to myself. Never.

Three seconds after the doorbell rang, I heard my mother scream from the living room. “What’s going on, Liam?!”

I took a big breath to be ready and headed outside. Mother stood in the middle of the room with her hands on her hips, looking angry.

I turned around and saw Nat at the entrance, with Alley and Saffron next to him. Nat shook his head in sadness. Alley looked bewildered, and Saffron’s face was blank.

Awesome! Let’s put on a show for everyone.

“Right now, I need an explanation!” Mother said.

I remarked in a mocking tone, “I’m surprised you didn’t come here sooner. Were you busy, Mom?”

And Nat hit himself in the face because I was so brazen.

Sophie heard her mother yelling and came down the stairs. Seeing Sophie made Mom’s face soften.

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She stepped up to her. “Sophie, how are you doing, dear?”

Sophie looked around the room before she answered. “I’m... I’m fine.”

“Come, you should sit.” Mother took her hand and led her to the couch. “Alley, you too.” She told Alley, and they both sat down next to each other.

I would want to become pregnant if this is how you treat me when I do.

“And you!” Mother said, pointing at me. “I need an explanation. A real one.”

I let out a sigh. “Mom...I...”

I lied, as usual. “I’m sorry I didn’t tell you. We just got engaged, and then there’s a friend of Sophie’s named Blake. They grew up in the same orphanage. He was bothering her a lot lately because he wanted to date her even though she said no a thousand times. So she just blurted out that she was engaged, and he told the media about it. That’s it.” I said it all in one breath.

I took a big breath to calm down. What I said was believable, but...

Mother looked like she was in pain. “You could have at least told me that you wanted to marry her. It’s not like I would have stopped you from doing it.”

This is getting serious now.

I gently put both of my hands on her shoulder and told her to sit down on the couch.

Then I knelt in front of her.

“Mom,” I whispered gently.

Nat stepped over and sat next to her, and she started to cry. “Why do you both keep lying to me? Nathan lied to me about his marriage, and you lied to me about your relationship. Why? Why don’t you just tell me the truth?”

She cried and put my hand over hers, then gripped it gently and said nothing.

I felt guilty since I still hadn’t told her the truth, and I looked down with remorse.

I saw that Sophie looked guilty, too.

“Liam...” Mom began, trying to hold back her emotions. I stared at her. “Are you hiding something else? Just tell me now.”

I closed my eyes hard and thought about whether or not to tell her. I opened my eyes and glanced to Nat for aid. He nodded his head, telling me to tell her the truth.

I clutched my mother’s hand hard. “Mom, I don’t want to scare you, but Sophie is having my baby.”

Mom’s mouth fell open. “Your child?! But you said it was her ex-fiancee’s!” “Yes, I lied. I’m sorry.”

“How? How did it happen?” she said.

My face twisted in pain. “How did it happen? Do you want to know more?”

Nat sighed loudly in anger. “She isn’t asking for details, you jerk! She wants to know when and why it happened.”

“Oh...” I grinned shyly. “Um...it was a mistake. I mean, it was a one-night stand, and she got pregnant. I don’t know how to explain this.” I then went on to tell her everything about Blake, including that our engagement was phony.

“Then why did you tell me a lie?”

“I was just too scared to tell you. I’m sorry, Mom. I promise to be honest with you from now on.” I softly kissed her hand as she lifted it to my mouth.

“Am I really that scary?” she questioned, her voice breaking. “Nathan lied about his marriage, and you lied about her pregnancy. What would I have done if you had just told me the truth? I know I get mad, but I will always support you both.”

I put my head on her lap and murmured. “Please forgive me, mother.”

Nat put his head on her shoulder and placed his hand around her. “Me too, Mom.”

Mom smiled gently and ran one hand over Nat’s hair and the other over mine. “I forgive you both.”

I smiled at her, got up, and sat next to her before holding her passionately.

At the same time, Nat and I kissed her cheek, and she kissed our foreheads.

Mom told Alley, Sophie, and Saffron to come closer, and when they did, she kissed their foreheads as well.

Sophie’s point of view:

This was nice.

When Liam's mom kissed my forehead, it felt like I finally had a family. I grinned and let out a sigh of happiness.

She looked back and forth between Liam and myself and said. "So, when are you two really getting engaged?"

Liam and I looked at each other with a perplexed gaze. Liam couldn't believe what he saw as he glanced at his mom. "Mom...we...um..."

His mum laughed. "I'm just kidding. You don't have to be so scared." Liam let out a breath of relief, and so did I.

Liam said that we should all spend the afternoon here and have lunch together, and everyone agreed.

Liam took Saffron's hand and showed her around his house. First, he showed her the main level, and then he brought her upstairs.

Alley and I sat next to each other on the couch and talked while Nathan sat with his mom.

A minute later, we heard Saffron scream from above. A second later, she came sprinting down the stairs with a book in her hand, and Liam was right behind her. "Saffron! Get my book back!"

"I just want to read it, uncle!" She ran to Nathan, sat next to him on the couch, and hid the book behind her back.

"Brother..." Liam said with a heavy sigh. "Tell her to give me back my book." Nathan didn't say anything and simply rolled his eyes.

Saffron stuck her tongue out. "No."



He told her, “I swear, Saffron, if anything happens to it, you will regret it.”

Saffron rolled her eyes. “It’s just a book.” That’s right!

Saffron stood on the couch with the book behind her back. Just as she was going to leap off the couch to the back, Liam grabbed her by the waist and carried her up in his arms. She screamed and held her hand up to keep the book away from him.

Liam, who was taller than her, easily took the book from her and dumped her on the couch. Then he looked at the book to see whether it was damaged. Saffron crossed her arms across her chest and pouted bitterly.

As Liam kissed the cover of the book, which was lovely, I couldn’t help but laugh at how much he loved reading. Alley cocked an eyebrow at me.

I cleared my throat in a way that made me feel bad and glanced away from him and down at my lap. My cheeks got hot as I realized I had just said he was cute.

Alley pushed my shoulder, and I turned to look at her. “Y-yes?”

“Why are you blushing?” She raised her eyebrows in a seductive way.

“Oh, um, I’m feeling a little hot, you know…”

“The air conditioner is on, Sophie. I don’t know why you’re so hot.” She grinned.

I noticed Liam walk back upstairs to get the book out of the corner of my eye and look at him.

She smiled wickedly and said, “Can’t take your eyes off him, can you?” “Shut up. That’s not it.”

“So what is it?”

“Nothing, Alley. It’s nothing.” “I beg to differ.”

I grumbled. “Stop making fun of me!”

Liam walked back down and sat next to Saffron on the opposite couch. He told her that he was protective of his books and apologized to her.

“Isn’t he cute?”

I hummed in agreement, but as I realized what had just happened, my eyes became big, and my head turned to Alley, who was grinning.

“Stop messing with my head!” I smacked her shoulder, and she laughed loudly, which made everyone glance at us.

Liam looked back and forth between us and said, “What mind games?”

Alley began to talk. “I was just saying that—” I yelled and put my hand over her lips to stop her from talking.

“I’m very interested now,” Nathan replied in a funny way. I stared at him and carefully took my hand away from Alley’s mouth.

“Yes, Aunt, do tell us,” Saffron replied, and I stared at her. “Are you and uncle getting married?” she said.

At the same time, Liam and I yelled, “We’re not getting married!” Oh no! Please get me out of here. Please.

Liam and I were too ashamed to say anything, but everyone else chuckled.

“Oh... I’ll make sure it happens,” Saffron said quietly. Liam and I scowled at her,

which made her smile.

“Liam,” remarked Margaret, Liam’s mother. “The media is going crazy. You need to make your engagement public.”

“Yes, brother,” Nathan said.

Liam let out a sigh. “What should I do? Throw a party or something?”

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“Yes,” Nathan said.

“Yay! A party!” Saffron chirped, already getting delighted.

Liam ran his fingers through his hair while he thought about it. “I’ll see what needs to be done.”

“Do it soon,” Nathan said, and Liam hummed back.

“By the way, can we all eat lunch now? I’m getting hungry,” Alley remarked. “I can make something to eat,” I said.

“No. Stay where you are,” Liam said, making me frown. After that, he yelled. “Helen?”

Helen came out of the kitchen. She said, “Lunch is ready,” and Liam grinned at her. “Thanks.”

Everyone got up and went to the kitchen, where Helen was laying the table, and Liam and Saffron were helping her as we all sat down.

Liam sat next to me at the table, and we all started to eat. I always wanted to know what it was like to have lunch with my family, and now I do. It’s a great feeling.

One that can’t be replaced.

I looked down and attempted to hold back the tears that were welling up in my eyes.

These tears were both happy and sad. I'm sad because I never had a family, but I'm happy because I'm finally feeling this.

Liam muttered, "Sophie?"

I quickly wiped my tears away and turned to him with a faint grin. "Y-yes?"

"Are you okay?" he questioned in a low voice so that no one else could hear him. His tone showed that he was worried. And my dumb heart missed a beat.

"Yes, I'm fine. Why?"

"You looked lost. Is everything okay?"

I shook my head. "Everything is fine. I was just thinking about something."

He nodded, but he didn't appear persuaded. "Okay." And they kept eating as Nathan and Alley talked.

Everyone departed quickly after lunch, leaving me alone with him again.

He enquired a few minutes later, when everyone had departed, "What do you think about me throwing a party this Saturday to announce our so-called engagement?" I was sitting on the couch in front of the TV and changing stations.

I turned off the TV. He stood with his hands in his pockets in front of the couch. "I don't know... do what you want."

He let out a sigh. "I'll do what I want, and you won't like it, honey." I rolled my eyes.

"Don't call me honey; my name is Sophie."

"I know your name is Sophie, but honey sounds better," he said with a smile. I told them, "If you keep calling me that, I'll hit you."

He smiled. “You said I couldn’t touch, and I think the same goes for you. If you touch me, then I’m touching you, so…”

“That’s a terrible way to say it, but it’s true.”

“Whatever…”

“Anyway.” He sat down next to me, but not too close. “Is Saturday a good day for the party?”

“Any day will do. I’ll have to take a leave from the restaurant anyway.” “Fine. And yes, just so you know, Blake will be there.”

“Why?”

He frowned. “It’s necessary. I don’t want to invite him, but I have to. No matter what happened between you two, just don’t cause any drama.”

“I never cause any trouble. It’s always him!” I yelled. “Don’t go near him. He’s not a good person.”

“I know,” I murmured under my breath.

“Okay, then… buy yourself a nice dress for the party.” He took out his wallet, opened it, and handed me his card.

I was about to say something, but he stopped me. “Don’t say you don’t need my money. I know you don’t. But please take this.”

I looked at the card and thought about whether or not to take it. It’s not that I don’t have enough money to buy a nice outfit that meets his standards.

I sighed and took the card. “Thanks.”

He hummed as he walked back up the stairs, perhaps to his study.

It was night, and I felt hot, so I took a shower before bed.

Liam went in to change his clothing or to get out of them when I came out. As I dried my hair with a towel and stood in front of the mirror, I rolled my eyes at that idea.

He looked at me briefly as he left the restroom and then stretched out his duvet.

He was talking to me with his back to me. “What were you thinking so hard about during lunch?”

“Nothing important...”

“Was it about mum?” He turned around. “Did she scare you or something?”

“No, she’s nice, actually.”

“Then what is it, Sophie? Please don’t worry,” he added in a calm voice. “You can tell me things if you want.”

“Thanks... it’s just...”

He walked a few steps towards me, and I turned around to face him.

I smiled at him a little. “I was just thinking about how I got the family I never had. You know, I never saw my parents or had any family. Alley was the only family and support I ever had.”

“Having lunch with everyone today just felt good,” I said in a whisper.

He got closer and closer, and since he was taller than me, I had to crane my head a little to see him. A little grin on his lips.

“I’m glad you think of us as family,” he remarked in a hushed voice. I bit my lips and gave a little nod.

He bent down, and his voice became deep and taunting. “But what kind of family do I belong to with you?”

I expressed it in a fun way. “Just a jerk who messed with me.”

“I was just being a gentleman and dropping you off. You told me to.”

“You could have kept being that gentleman and pushed me out of your car and driven away,” I said back.

“Well...that wouldn’t be very gentlemanly of me, would it?” He grinned.

His smile was so infectious that my lips turned up into a smile, and his gaze slid down to my lips.

He replied in a low voice, “You kissed me first.” “I know,” I muttered back.

He leaned in even further, and his lips were almost next to mine, yet none of our bodies touched.

His kisses were so close to mine that night... how sweet they had been.

For a moment, I closed my eyes, and memories from that night came rushing back. For a moment, I wanted to forget everything and do that night again. For a second, I wanted to kiss him like I did that night.



For a second—

His phone ringing woke us up from our daze. Making me know what I was about to do.

I cursed under my breath and stepped back. He awkwardly turned around to his bed, where his phone was ringing, and exited the room without looking at me.

Sophie's point of view:

I hurriedly lay down on the bed and covered my face with the covers to attempt to sleep before he came back.

What the hell was I thinking?

Was I really going to kiss him? Really?

I slowed my heart down, which was thumping like crazy. This is bad. This is not good at all.

I can't start to like him.

I am only here because I am having his baby. Nothing else. I'll be leaving in eight months. Eight more months. I made sure of it.

But can I keep my heart safe for these eight months?

The door to the room opened, and I froze, pretending to be asleep.

I heard his footsteps stop close to my bed, and I could feel him peering down at me. He stayed in that posture for a few seconds before letting out a long sigh. "Don't

make it hard for me, Sophie,” he said in a quiet voice. After that, he went back to bed.  
What did I even do?  
What do you want to make hard?

With these ideas in my head, I fell asleep quickly.

He departed for work early the next morning. So, he’s back to ignoring me. That’s great.

I even went to work early, with Alley’s permission, to buy a frock for the party. I even asked if I could take Saffron with me, and she said yes.

Saffron came to the restaurant in the evening and looked thrilled to go shopping with me.

Nathan’s car was already outside with a driver, so we got in and began looking for a dress.

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Saffron pointed to a frock and asked, “How’s this?” I shook my head.

We were at one of the city’s major stores, but I wanted to go to a cheaper one. Saffron objected.

I felt incredibly strange when the proprietor of the store knew who I was as Liam’s fiancée. I never thought I would be famous. But I was here.

“Come on, Sophie. Pick at least one dress.” Saffron was unhappy.

I ran my fingertips over the garments that were hanging there. “I don’t seem to like any of them.”

She said, “I have a better idea. Let’s call Uncle on video and let him decide.”

“Don’t call him! He must be busy.”

“Oh, don’t worry. He can spare some time for his fiancée.” She raised her eyebrows.

I hit her on the shoulder. “Shut up. I don’t want to bother him,” she said. “I’m getting tired now... you are not choosing—”

“That one,” I said, pointing to a mannequin in the corner that was wearing a light peach-colored dress with no sleeves and a floor-length skirt.

I looked closely at the outfit, but when I saw the price tag, I said no. “Uh...not this one. It’s too pricey.”

Saffron shook her head a little. “Oh, Sophie. Uncle is a billionaire! You can buy whatever you want; he won’t mind.”

“No, Saffron—”

“Can she try this dress?” Saffron yelled at the store owner and didn’t listen to me.

The owner smiled and approved, then requested one of her staff to help me put on the outfit.

Saffron gasped as I came out with that outfit. “Uncle is going to love you!”

I became red. “Thanks.”

Finally, we got the outfit because Saffron wouldn’t give up.

I was apprehensive about the party since Saturday came sooner than I thought it would.

I didn’t see Liam much all week. The only time I did was at dinner, and even then, not all the time. Not that I was upset about it.

Levi phoned the other day to ask what all the hoopla was about the engagement. I told him that it was all just a lie. And informed him about Blake since he knew him, too.

I asked him if he could come to the party, but he respectfully said no, stating he couldn’t take time off just now.

Liam may have heard me talking to Levi on the phone that day because he told me not to tell anyone that our engagement was phony.

“I justified him by saying, “He’s my best buddy.”

He rolled his eyes and said. “Trust is a weak thing. You can’t expect everyone to be able to handle it.”

I wanted to roll my eyes at what he said, but I didn’t say anything else since I didn’t want to dispute with him.

The makeup artist exclaimed, “All done,” as she finished putting the finishing touches on me.

I said, “Thank you,” and then I glanced in the mirror. I made careful to put on the engagement ring Liam gave me.

The makeup artist exited the room, leaving me alone and wearing the stilettos. Someone banged on the door. “Yes?”

Liam enquired from the other side, “Are you ready?” “Y-yes...you can come in.”

Liam went inside through the slowly opening door. He was wearing a black suit and a bow tie.

He didn’t wear his glasses, and his hair and beard were both cut short.

I bit my lips as he looked me over from head to toe and opened his mouth a little. His eyes became a little bigger. My neck got hot, and my cheeks and the tips of my ears burned.

He blinked a few times to attempt to escape the spell he was under and then cleared his throat. A little bit of color showed up on his cheeks.

“Should we go?” he said, and I scowled. You jerk, at least say something nice about

me.

“Yes...” he responded as I went forward. “We’ll have to hold hands and stuff, so the no-touching rule will have to go away for tonight.”

I thought about it for a second, and I couldn’t say no. Or it will make people suspicious.

“Only for tonight, as long as we’re at the party,” I said yes, and he nodded. “Very well.”

He waved his hand at me to go ahead, then locked the door and followed me out of the room.

When we left the home, a limousine was waiting for us. Liam unlocked the door for me, and I slid inside. He followed.

There was a partition between us and the driver so we could have some privacy, but we didn’t need it.

The car moved, and I glanced out the window, lost in my thoughts. I could feel his eyes boring into my head, but I chose to ignore them.

“You look beautiful, Sophie,” he said softly a minute later.

I turned my head quickly to look at him, and he gazed at me hard.

I was embarrassed by the praise and said. “At least you figured it out. I thought you were blind.”

His lips turned up into a grin. “I kind of got blinded by your beauty earlier,” he said with a smile.

I was even more embarrassed and turned my head away from him so he couldn't see it. My lips made a big grin.

He responded, "Just let me know if you don't feel well. We'll leave earlier."

And my heart stopped for a second.

"Isn't it rude to leave before the guests?" I asked him.

He gave a shrug. "My fiancé is pregnant, so she's more important than the guests."

His comments made a tiny knot rise in my throat. He could be lying, but I didn't care.

At that moment, I simply wanted to hug and kiss him.

When I didn't say anything, he snapped his fingers in front of my face. "Are you okay?"

I bowed my head because I didn't trust what I was saying and thought I would start sobbing. But nevertheless, I was able to whisper. "Thanks, Liam."

He seemed to be bewildered. "For what?" "Just thank you. For everything."

He grinned. "No. Thank you for not ending this child's life and agreeing to have it. I'm sorry again for that day when I freaked out and said I didn't care."

"I already forgave you," he said with a smile. "Thanks."

I nodded, and the remainder of the voyage was quiet.

The car is parked in front of the banquet hall. Liam got out first and opened the door

for me. He then offered me his hand to grasp.

I put my hand in his slowly, and my skin tingled. I got out of the car with my hand in his, and he kissed my hand softly. That's when I knew that we were surrounded by photographers and that we had to put on a show for them.

He took his hand away from mine and put it around my waist instead. Then he leaned down and murmured in my ear. "Don't listen to them."

I nodded and went slowly down the red carpet next to him while a million questions were shouted at us.

Thank goodness the commotion stopped as soon as we got inside the hall and saw how gorgeous the decorations were.

Liam's hand fell from my waist, and he moved away from me.

"Here you are!" I heard Alley say as she walked up to us with Nathan and Saffron next to her.

Alley said, "You look so beautiful, Sophie."

"Me too, Alley," I answered with a smile. I looked at Saffron, who was spinning about in her outfit to show Liam.

Next, Saffron came up to me as Nathan chatted to Liam.

Saffron exclaimed with excitement, "You know uncle said you look so beautiful that you almost took his breath away. I told you this dress would be perfect."

I got red in the face. "Did he really say that?"



She nodded. “Yes. He did. Just don’t tell him.” “I won’t,” I said with a laugh.

I questioned Alley, “Isn’t Margaret here too?”

“Oh, she is. But right now, she’s with her husband and the guest,” Alley said. I hummed in response.

Liam walked up to me and said, “It’s time for the announcement.” “Already? We just got here.”

“I want to get over it fast.” “Okay...”

Alley wished me luck, and Liam put his hand on my lower back and led me to the stage.

We passed by Margaret on the way, and I smiled at her, and she smiled back.

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Liam held my hand and helped me ascend the few stairs to the stage. There were hundreds of cameras and reporters in front of the stage.

A woman on stage gave Liam a wireless mike, and we moved to the middle of the stage.

He cleared his throat, which got everyone's attention.

I stood there awkwardly as he smiled and talked to everyone. "Thank you all for coming to this party, even though you are all very busy."

He looked at me for a second before moving on. "Since word got out earlier this week about my engagement, I want to make it official tonight."

He put his hand around my waist and pulled me closer. "Please meet my fiancée, Sophie Spencer."

People in the hall started clapping and talking.

The press went nuts and asked us questions that I couldn't answer.

"Where did you meet her, Mr. Whitmore?" one person questioned.

Liam answered. "My sister-in-law's friend is her. I met her at my brother's wedding."

Someone else enquired, "When did you two get engaged?" "Two weeks ago," Liam said again. Some people asked me questions, but Liam made sure I didn't have to answer them.

He calmly told everyone, “I’m sorry, but my fiancé isn’t feeling well tonight, so please excuse us.” He then led me off the stage and away from the ruckus.

Alley met me halfway and brought me to a table full of food, where we tried a little bit of everything.

I spotted someone I knew out of the corner of my eye.

I turned to my right and saw Blake leaning against the wall with a drink in his hand and looking at me. A little smile on his lips.

I turned away from him and gritted my teeth.

I spent the remainder of my time with Alley and Saffron. Nathan came back later and took Alley away to dance.

Saffron asked Liam to dance, and he joyfully consented.

Liam had to lean down a little because he was taller than Saffron, but they looked so lovely dancing together.

I looked for a bathroom around the hall since my lipstick was fading, and I wanted to put it back on.

A waiter strolled by me, and I asked him where the toilet was. He said it was upstairs, so I thanked him and went upstairs.

When I got to the top of the stairs, I saw a long hallway with the bathroom at the end.

When I got out of the bathroom after putting on lipstick, I saw a door that led to the balcony. I stepped outside on the balcony.

There was a light wind, and the view from here was gorgeous and quiet. As soon as I heard Blake speak, though, the serenity was gone. “Sophie, you look great tonight.”

Liam’s point of view:

“Hope you had fun dancing, my lady.” I kissed Saffron’s hand, and she laughed.

“I did. Thank you for the dance, Mr. Whitmore.” I took her off the dance floor to where Nathan and Alley were waiting, but I frowned when I didn’t see Sophie there.

“Alley, where’s Sophie?” I asked her, and she looked about.

“I left her there, but I don’t know where she went,” she said, pointing to the table where food was being served.

“Oh, okay. I’ll look for her,” I responded before heading in the direction Alley had directed.

I was becoming concerned because I couldn’t find her. I really wanted to see her. I looked for her furiously and asked a few waiters along the way. “Excuse me,” I said to a passing waiter. “Have you seen my fiancée?” “Oh, she went to the toilet upstairs. She asked me where it was.” “Thanks,” I answered before running upstairs.

I was only worried that she might run into Blake.

I hurried down the hall to the toilet, but I stopped when I heard voices coming from the balcony.

I heard Blake say, “You don’t deserve it, Sophie.” “He’ll leave you too. No one wants to have to take care of a child so soon.”

What the hell does he think he is to say that?

I opened the door to the balcony, and he had her backed up against the railing.

“Can’t you just leave her alone?” I yelled.

Sophie groaned loudly and peered over his shoulder. Blake turned to me and said, “Liam...”

I looked at him with anger. “Please go, Blake, before I lose it.”

He passed by me while glaring at me, and I grabbed him by the bicep. “Stay the f\*\*k away from her. This is your last warning,” I said in a quiet voice.

I took my hand away, and he left, muttering to himself.

I moved closer to Sophie, who was breathing heavily. “Sophie, are you all right?”

She nodded her head slowly and dropped her head. Her eyes were filled with tears as she glanced up.

I had to use all my strength not to draw her closer and hold her hard. To give her a kiss.

“Can we go back home?” she pleaded, her voice breaking.

“Sure,” I answered, taking her hand and walking back down the steps. Nathan, Saffron, and Alley met us at the bottom of the steps. “Brother,” I murmured to Nat. “Please take care of it while we’re gone.”

“Of course,” he said, and I smiled at him before leading Sophie out to the limousine, opening the door for her, and sliding in next to her.

I didn't say anything or ask her anything, so the journey home was quiet, and she just looked out the window.

Seeing her like this hurts.

I'm afraid of the strange sensations that are building inside me. Feelings that I had never had before. But I wasn't dumb for not knowing what they were after reading so many Romance Novels.

But I was afraid.

I made a fist with my hand and held it tightly, hoping to halt these emotions. It didn't help, of course.

I put my head back on the seat and watched her out of the corner of my eye.

We got home quickly, and before I could open the door for her, she unlocked it from her side and stepped out, quickly heading into the house.

I sighed and went behind her, thinking I should give her some space. I slept in the guest room below.

My phone ringing disrupted my blissful slumber.

I groaned and took it up to answer it. "Yes?" I asked in a rough voice.

"Sir, are you going to the meeting or not?" my assistant said.

I grumbled again. "Who the hell has a meeting on a Sunday?"

"Sir, you only fixed it on Friday and said Sunday would do." He stated this with a note of humor in his voice.

“Whatever... I’m coming,” I said, and then I hung up.

I didn’t want to go for the first time in my life. I wanted to remain home with Sophie today.

That made me moan.

Sophie. Sophie. Sophie. She is the beginning and end of everything.

I moaned for the hundredth time before eventually getting up and getting dressed.

I sat down across from her for breakfast, and she asked. “Where were you last night?”

“I...slept in the guest room.”

She frowned. “Why?”

“Because...I...um...” I responded, feeling ashamed. “Because I was missing that room.” “What kind of excuse is that? Missing a room?”

“An idiotic excuse?”

She smiled and then laughed gently, which made me laugh too. Helen put the meal in front of us, and we began to eat.

“That day I came here first...the day I went into your study and saw a paper with you designing the nursery...” She mentioned this as she was eating.

I got a little red in the face. “Yeah...”

“So...you are an architect?”

I assumed she would question me about the nursery, not this.

I said, “Not an architect. A structural engineer.” “I learned about business after I learned about engineering.”

“Oh...well...did you make this house too?” she said with a laugh. “Yes,” I said honestly, which made her seem deadpan.

“Really?”

I grinned. “Yes. I designed this house. It didn’t sound good for one structural engineer to ask another structural engineer to design his house.”



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“Wow, this house is really beautiful.”

“Not many people say nice things about it, but designing my own house means a lot to me. I’m very proud of it. Thank you.”

I cursed when I saw the clock. “Shit! I’m going to be late for the meeting!”

I got up quickly and went out without eating breakfast when she yelled. “Who the hell makes plans for a meeting on a Sunday?”

“Me!” I yelled before fleeing out of the home.

The meeting took longer than I thought it would, so I had to remain for a few more hours to do some vital work.

When I got home, it was almost dark.

When I walked in, I spotted Sophie seated on the couch with her back to me. She had pulled her legs closer together and rested her chin on her knees.

As I got closer, I gently said, “Sophie?”

She turned her head towards me, and although her nose was red and her eyes were swollen, she still managed to smile at me, which crushed my heart.

I sat next to her. “What happened? Did you see Blake again?” She shook her head. “N-no...”

“Then? What’s wrong, sweetheart?”

She tilted her head, glanced at me, and pondered about something. Very profoundly.

I was confused and didn’t know what to say or do. “Sophie, say something. You’re making me scared.”

She was about to cry, and then she suddenly wrapped her arms around my neck and gripped me hard.

I was shocked and exclaimed, “Sophie...” with my hands in the air, thinking about what to do. And my body got stiff.

As she wailed, she put her head in the crook of my neck.

I threw away all of my silly ideas and hugged her fiercely, wrapping my arms around her body.

Her tears made my heart hurt even more.

I wanted to take away all of her agony, and I vowed that if Blake did anything, I would murder him with my bare hands.

I kissed the top of her head and held her arms tightly.

We stayed like that for a few minutes while she wept her heart out.

Her cries eventually faded away, and she sniffled and carefully pulled her head away from my neck. I carefully wiped away the last of her tears and kissed her forehead softly while holding her cheek.

“I’m sorry...I...” She attempted to talk but couldn’t. With my finger, I raised her

chin. “What’s wrong, sweetheart?”

“I’m tired,” she eventually said in a low voice. “I’m scared, Liam. I’m tired. This is too much for me.” More tears dropped from her eyes.

I put her head on my chest and wrapped my arms around her again.

“I will always be there for you, Sophie,” I told her. “Tell me, Sophie, and I’ll take away your pain.”

She raised her head. “Blake...he said...t-that...you will leave me, Liam.” “And you believe him?”

“He—”

I put my finger on her lips to shut her up. “Don’t care what he says. He’s trying to break you, so don’t let him.”

“He...”

“What else did he say?”

She took a big breath and dried her eyes. “When we were in the orphanage...he...”

“That’s fine, Sophie. You don’t have to tell me.” She shook her head. “No. I want to.”

I nodded my head to tell her to keep going.

“We grew up in the same orphanage. When I was seventeen, he asked me to be his girlfriend, and I said yes.

He used to be nice and loving, but then he “took away my virginity.” My jaw clamped shut. “Did he do that against his will?”

Right away, she shook her head. “No, I let him... but... I... um...”

She took a big breath. “I got pregnant, and even though I was only seventeen, I wanted that child. I had always wanted a child. But when I told him about it...”

I softly stroked her face with my thumb. “What did he say?”

“I found out I was pregnant a month later. We were standing at the top of the stairs when I told him about the baby. Of course, he didn’t want it. I tried to convince him, but he got angry and pushed me hard without realizing we were near the stairs. I fell down the stairs.”

I don’t like how this tale is heading.

She went on. “I passed out. When I woke up, I was in the hospital, and the doctor told me I had a miscarriage. I lost my kid. It was a mistake; I know when he pushed me, but he didn’t regret it. He wasn’t sorry at all.

He insisted it was for the best. I couldn’t handle it all, so I went away from that area and those people.

“I...I...” She broke down again and put her head on my chest.

I was so angry with Blake that I couldn’t even begin to describe it. My body was shivering with rage.

She grabbed my shirt with her fists. “Please, Liam... don’t go. Please... I need you...”

“I promise I’m not leaving you, honey. Not now, not in a million years.” “Pinky promise?” She raised her hand and held out her pinky finger.

I giggled quietly and crossed our pinky fingers. “Promise me,” she said, and she smiled through her tears. “Thanks.”

I kissed her on the forehead. “Anything for you, sweetheart.”

She put her palm on her belly and glanced down at it. “Do you think I can do this?”

“I believe in you, Sophie. You are a strong woman. You can do this.”

“Thanks,” she said with a smile.

I slowly raised my hand to put it on her stomach. She realized that I was unsure, so she took my hand and put it on her tummy.

I smiled when I realized that our child was developing within.

“Can I...k-kiss it?” I said, pointing to her stomach.

She paused for a second, then nodded and carefully lowered her shirt to show that I could.

I bent down and softly kissed her stomach. She took a quick gasp. For a long time, I wanted to accomplish this.

I wanted to kiss her passionately, but I held back. Instead, I kissed her forehead again.

We both heard a glass break and as we turned to look, we saw Helen standing in the kitchen doorway, shocked. A dish had fallen from her hand and broken on the floor.

I shook my head at her and got up to aid her.

As I went down to pick up the bits of glass, I told her, “You need to stop getting so shocked so easily.”

“And you need to stop shocking me,” she replied in a fun way.

I laughed, and she kept asking me in a hushed voice. “What happened to the rule about not touching?”

I said, “What rule?” as if I didn’t know what they were talking about. She shook her head and smiled, saying to herself. “Very much in love.”

Liam’s point of view:

I saw “The Silent Patient” on my bookcase and recalled that Sophie was reading it but didn’t complete it since I was so obsessed.

I sighed and took it from the shelf. I went out of the study, but not before taking down the caution I had put on the door.

Sophie was downstairs late at night, and I put the book on the nightstand for her to read.

I left the room and went down the stairs to the kitchen to eat. I hope Helen doesn’t shatter any more dishes or glasses.

“I love you so much,” I remembered her saying. That made me sigh. Do I adore her?

If I do, wouldn’t it be too early for it?

It’s never too early to adore someone.

I thought of something out of the blue and shook my head to try to clear my brain.

When I walked into the kitchen, I found Sophie sitting there and talking to someone on the phone. After she broke down this evening, it was nice to see her smiling.

I walked past her to Helen, who was cooking something on the stove. I questioned her, “What are you making?” as I looked over her shoulder. “Chicken Palava,” she said.

I hummed back, and she replied in a whisper. “You’d better do something if you don’t want to lose her.”

I frowned. I murmured back, “What do you mean?”

“She’s talking to Levi, and he’s been flirting with her since they started talking. Either she’s too innocent to see it, or she likes it.”

My jaw tightened, and I looked back at her to see her laughing at something he said. My jaw was becoming tighter and tighter.

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“He’s her best friend, so she can do whatever she wants. Why should I care?”

Helen squeezed her lips together and hit me on the shoulder. “Both of us know that it’s hurting you. You care about her a lot. Would you like it if she started dating someone else?”

Helen flashed me a deathly gaze, and I eventually said, “It’s okay if she...d-dates... someone...” “Okay! Of course, I won’t like it if she dates someone.”

“Then do something!” “But what should I do?”

“Think about it. How can I know everything?” she asked, turning her attention back to the sauce.

I groaned and looked at Sophie, who was still chatting to Levi.

I really didn’t like that guy. He ate the sandwich I made with bread and butter! And he attempted to take my Sophie.

Wait...

Did I just say she was mine?

Awesome! I’m officially going mad now.

I heard him ask her, “So, where will you go after you give birth?” “Um...” She paused. “I still don’t know.”



“Oh. You can come to stay with me in Tampa,” Sophie said with a smile. “I’ll see.”

No way am I letting her go anywhere!

Helen said, “Dinner is ready, Sophie!” cutting off her talk with Levi.

She said farewell to him before ending the call.

I exhaled in relief and sat down across from her. Helen put the plates of spaghetti in front of us, and I started eating right away since I was so hungry.

I was thinking about what Helen had just said. What should I do? Does she even care about me? I have been mean to her.

Will she kiss me back if I kiss her?

No. She let me touch her, but that doesn’t imply I can kiss her. Take charge.

What if Levi takes her away from me? I tightened my grasp on the fork at that notion.

“Liam...why do you look so mad?” Her words brought me back to reality.

“Y-yeah?”

“What happened?”

Your goddamn best friend occurred! Who the hell told him to come back?

“Nothing.” I smiled tightly at her. “Then why aren’t you eating?”

“Sure,” I answered as I started eating. I could hear Helen chuckling softly behind me.

I ate swiftly and quietly for the rest of supper. After I finished, I washed my dish and

put it away before leaving the kitchen.

Am I attempting to stay away from her? Maybe... Aargh! Please assist me!

I don't know why, but I thought of Nat's name. I was ready to leave when Sophie stopped me and said, "Are you going somewhere?"

"Uh...yeah... I'm going to see Nat. Do you want to come?"

She grinned and said yes. "Yes. Just give me a minute." She raced back up the stairs.

A few seconds later, she came back with her hair in a ponytail. "Let's go."

We went outside to my Mercedes, got in, and then I cranked the engine and sped away.

... "Brother!" I collapsed on the floor in his study in a dramatic way. "Help me!" He stepped back in shock, his eyes getting bigger as he realized what I had done. "Why the hell are you doing this?" he said.

I knelt down in front of him and put my hands together. "Please help me. Do something. I don't want to lose her."

(A/N: Don't worry, Liam, I'll marry you if you lose her. \*grins\*)

"Help you with what? And lose who? And first of all, get up!" he said.

I got up with a sorrowful look on my face and wiped away the artificial tears that had formed in my eyes.

Nat put his arms over his desk and leaned on it. "Exactly what happened?" I asked. "I

don't know either."

He looked at me with a blank gaze, which made me laugh. "Well, I...Sophie...she...um..."

He yawned. "Are you going to say it or not?"

"I don't want to lose Sophie," I said.

"Who says you're going to lose her?"

"She has a guy best friend who keeps flirting with her. I think he likes her, and he might take her away too."

"Where do you want to take her?"

I moaned. "Take her away" means "make her fall for him, and then she will leave me."

He hummed back. "What do you want me to do?"

"Are you getting back at me for all the times I bothered you?" I whimpered again in despair.

He laughed and shook his head. "It's funny that you're so confused for the first time."

I frowned. "Stop making fun of me. It's not funny at all." He laughed again. "Of course."

I attempted to bribe him. "I'll send you on vacation with Alley if you help me. I'll pay for everything and won't bother you for a whole month."

He said, "Bribing me won't work." I complained. "Please help me!"

He raised his voice in anger and said, "You are not telling me what you want!"

"Get Sophie to fall in love with me..."

He arched an eyebrow at me and asked, "What happened to the playboy now?" "He died a long time ago."

"Did you sleep with anyone while Sophie was at your house?" "No," I said honestly.

"Is that true?"

"Yes." I clenched my teeth. "I swear I didn't." He nodded. "Good."

I groaned and ran my fingers through my hair, running my hair back. "I think...um...I...I think...I am falling in...love...with her." I closed my eyes hard and scratched my temples, recognizing that I had finally said how I felt.

"Tell me something I don't know." I thought he would be startled, but he already knew it.

"What?"

He looked up at the sky. "It's clear you love her, Liam." "Oh..." I said softly, not knowing what else to say.

This feeling is so strange... it's sinking inside me. Being in love. It's really strange.

What if she never feels the same way about me? What if she goes away? What if I truly screw up, and she starts to despise me?

I sat down in the chair in front of the desk and put my head in my hands.

“Are you really crying?” Nat asked. “No,” I said softly. “I’m just scared.”

He took my head out of my hands and forced me to look at him. “Don’t be so scared. Trust yourself. And if she leaves you, we’ll kidnap her and make her marry you, okay?”

I laughed and hit his hand. “I’m not making her marry me or anything.”

He grinned and messed up my hair. “Don’t worry, brother. She won’t be able to resist your charms...unless you start acting like a jerk like you did when she told you she was pregnant.” He rolled his eyes.

“Oh, for God’s sake, I freaked out!” I said. “You even hit me.” “You deserved it.”

“Yeah... whatever.”

I stood up to depart, and he said. “Don’t be scared, brother. Just be yourself.”

I hugged him with a smile, which surprised him. Before he could respond, I drew back and softly kissed his cheek, which made him wrinkle up his nose in disgust. “Eww...” He wiped his cheek, yet there was a faint grin on his lips.

I said farewell to him with a laugh and went.

Sophie’s point of view:

Liam stood at the door of Alley’s bedroom and asked, “Do you want to stay a little longer? I’m leaving, by the way.”

“No. It’s fine.” I said goodbye to Alley and Saffron, who were seated on the bed, and

then I followed Liam out of the room.

He held my hand as we walked together, and a faint grin spread across my face. He was staring ahead so happily that he didn't see me blushing.

This guy made my heart race. And I wasn't unhappy.

He opened the door for me, got in, and then closed it before getting in the driver's seat.

"Liam..."

He looked at me and said, "Yes?"

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“I want ice cream,” I responded with a shy smile. He grinned gently. “Of course, honey.”

He pulled over to the side of the road a few minutes later, and there was an ice cream truck not far away.

“Which flavor?” he enquired as he took off his seatbelt.

I said, “All three flavors in a cone: strawberry, vanilla, and chocolate.” He didn’t understand what I wanted. “Do they even sell that?”

“Yes, they do! Just ask them.”

“OK...” He mumbled as he walked towards the truck, and I could hear him say it. “I don’t want to be embarrassed.”

I shook my head and laughed at him.

He’s adorable.

He came back with two cones two minutes later. In one cone, strawberry ice cream, and in the other, what I asked for.

He sat back down and gave me my cone, appearing shocked. “They do sell this just for you. That guy knew you.”

I shrugged my shoulders. “Yeah, I always buy from him. And I always buy this, and

I'm the only one who asks for it, so yeah, he knows me." I licked the ice cream.

"Nice..." he said quietly as he took a piece of his ice cream. I inquired, "Have you come up with any names for this child?"

"You are only a month pregnant, Sophie. We still have eight months." He rolled his eyes.

I made a face. "I was just thinking."

"Don't worry, I'll name the child," he added casually.

"No. I will name it! You won't!" "I am the father," he said.

I said, "And I am the mother!" "I'll name it, that's all!"

"No," I said in a whiny voice. "I will!" "I will."

"I will."

"I will."

"I will."

"I will!"

I turned my head towards the window and huffed furiously. "I hate you!" and then she licked the ice cream a lot.

He stopped talking right away and took a long breath. "Sophie?" he murmured in the lowest voice he could.

When I didn't answer, he softly caressed my hand. "Hey? I'm sorry." I puffed again



and didn't say anything.

He let out a long sigh. "OK. You get to name the baby. Are you happy?" I looked at him with a smile. "Thanks!"

He grinned, but when he saw something, he laughed, and I grimaced. "What?" "There's some ice cream on your nose," he said.

He went forward and cleaned it off with his thumb before I could do it myself. Then he sucked it off his thumb.

Damn.

Being that hot should be a sin. The heat climbed up my neck and made my cheeks crimson.

He winked at me in a funny way before going back to eating his ice cream.

I turned my head away from him so he couldn't see how upset I was with what he did. I didn't even glance at him again.

He finished his ice cream before I did since I eat ice cream slowly. Then he cranked the motor and drove away while I was still licking my ice cream.

When I asked him about the book sitting on the nightstand, he told me to finish it. I was astonished. But yeah, he told me to do it right, and this time, I was happy to cooperate.

Liam came out of the restroom and moved up to me when I was lying on the bed later that night. He leaned down and kissed my forehead slowly. "Goodnight, sweetheart."

I was able to mutter, "Goodnight."

He smiled, bent down, kissed my tummy, and then walked back to his bed, making my heart skip a beat.

I can't believe I used to detest this guy.

He was being a jerk to me, but... He's a great guy. I think I have to agree with Saffron.

I gazed at him calmly with my back to him.

My heart raced, warmed, and skipped a few beats, and a beautiful feeling settled in me.

I love him.

Oh, no!

Damn! Oh no! Damn!

What the hell? I smashed my face. I can't believe I fell in love with him. Oh God.

OK, I'm going too far now. But—

I love him!

Stop it! Stop it!

Relax! It's fine... It's OK.

All of a sudden, my hands wanted to hold him fiercely. I tried to control it, but I couldn't. I simply wanted to hold him. One embrace is all.

I carefully sat up straight on the bed and thought about whether or not it was a good idea.

I bit my lips and softly got off the bed, and moved up to him. You will terrify him. Oh, get lost!

I carefully slid myself into his bed and embraced him passionately from behind. He tensed right away because he was shocked by what I did.

“Wow, Sophie?” he replied in shock.

I gripped him tighter, praying he wouldn’t push me away. He gently turned towards me instead, which made me fall back lightly onto the bed.

He stroked my cheek with his thumb in a gentle way. “Are you OK?” I nodded, feeling embarrassed. “Yeah...I just...I...umm...I...”

He grinned like he knew what I was trying to express. “It’s all right.”

He put his arm around my waist and pulled me closer before I could say anything further. I placed my head on his chest and cuddled with him.

He kissed my forehead and said something. “Goodnight, Sophie,” he said, and then he closed his eyes.

I sighed gently in contentment and fell asleep peacefully.

. . . When I woke up in the morning, Liam was nowhere to be found, and my bed was empty. I was upset that he wasn’t there with me.

He may be downstairs.

I took a shower, brushed my teeth, and walked down to the kitchen, but I was unhappy that he wasn't there.

I questioned Helen, who was doing the dishes, "Where's Liam?" "He went to work," she said.

I muttered, "Oh..."

Is he trying to avoid me? Again?

He usually leaves for work considerably earlier when he wants to avoid me. Please don't stay away from me, Liam. It aches.

Helen asked, "Why are you still standing there?" "Come. Sit down."

I sat down for breakfast, but I wasn't hungry, but she served me anyhow.

I somehow ate enough to get Helen to allow me to go to the restaurant.

When I got to the restaurant, I hurried up to Alley and hugged her firmly. "Is everything OK?" she questioned, seeming frightened as I backed away.

I shook my head. "I love him!"

At first, she frowned, but when she understood what I meant, she grinned. "So, what's wrong with it?"

"I am so scared! You don't get it!"

She laughed. "Calm down, Sophie. It's OK that you love him." "But I think he's avoiding me..."

“Why?”

“I don’t know... he used to leave for work much earlier than usual when he didn’t want to see me,” I informed her, and she started giggling.

“Come on, Sophie. You’re overreacting. Nat told me they had a very important meeting this morning. That’s why he left so early; Nat left too.”

So I didn’t need to worry? I grinned shyly. “Oh...”

Someone behind me said, “Sophie?” I turned around and saw Lila.

Oh my God! I basically ruined all of her dreams about Liam.

I thought Mom would yell at me, but instead, she hugged me and said, “I am so happy for you, Sophie.”

She said, “Congratulations,” and then hit me on the hand. “But you could have at least told me you were seeing him!”

I said I was sorry. “I’m sorry...I wasn’t supposed to tell you.”

She rolled her eyes. “Yeah, of course. I have to say, you are a great actor.”

“But now I want to know everything!” she said with excitement. I grinned. “Of course.”

When I got home, I put my purse on the couch and sat down on the couch. It was late at night, and I worked a little longer, even though Alley said she would fire me if I didn’t leave.

I didn't see Liam all day, so I couldn't eat supper with him.

I heard some commotion in the kitchen, so I quietly walked in and found Liam standing there with his back to me, drinking water.

He must have heard me coming because he turned around to look at me, and my pulse raced as I saw him. His hair was a mess, which made my heart skip a beat.

He looked tired and spoke gently. "Hey..."

I got closer. "Hey..."

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He enquired, “Did you have dinner?” and I nodded. “Yes, I did.” “And you?” “Yes, I did, too.”

I bent my head down and whispered. “Are you avoiding me?” “No, honey. Why would I avoid you?” he answered right away. “Oh...” I said, feeling uncomfortable.

A few seconds went by, and then he gripped my chin between his thumb and index finger and gently lifted it. This was the last thing I expected him to do.

He kissed me on the lips.

My eyes got bigger in astonishment, and his closed. He is kissing me!

He drew back right away as I was going to kiss him back. The kiss hardly lasted for three seconds.

He started to yell uncomfortably. “I’m sorry...I didn’t...I...”

I dragged him down by the fist of his t-shirt and put my lips on his, which made him stop talking. Butterflies are flying about in my tummy.

I took my hand off of his shirt and slipped it up to his neck as we kissed passionately.

He held my cheeks in his hands and tilted my head to intensify the kiss. My pulse raced as I kissed him back with the same passion.

He gently backed away, breathing fiercely, and peered deeply into my eyes. His gaze slid down to my lips.

“F\*\*k it,” he said, and this time our lips connected in a violent kiss.

He took his hands off my cheeks, and one of them got caught in my hair as the other one slid around my waist, drawing me closer.

I sighed into the kiss as our tongues moved against each other and slowly entangled. Then he touched my bottom lip with his tongue. He sucked on my lower lip, then pulled back and put his forehead to mine.

He uttered it with his eyes still closed and out of breath. “I could never get away from you, Sophie. You’re a big part of my life.”

We both opened our eyes at the same time, and I put my arms around his torso and buried my head in his chest with a smile on my face.

I care about him so much!

Sophie’s point of view:

Alley came into the kitchen and said, “Your best friend is here.” “Wait, Levi is here?”

She nodded. “Yes. He’s waiting outside.”

I hurriedly washed my hands and dried them off before leaving the kitchen.

When I hurried to the booth where he was seated, he got up, and I hugged him fiercely, which caught the attention of other diners.

I exclaimed, “What are you doing here?” and he kissed my forehead.

He told me to sit down, and I did, across from him. “I came here because I missed



you.”

I grinned. “I can’t believe you came all the way from Tampa just to see me.”

“Anything for you, Sophie.” He smirked, and I thought of what Liam had said. “He likes you.”

No. Stop talking.

I asked him, “Do you want to eat something?” and he shook his head, respectfully saying no.

He spoke more quietly. “So, what does it feel like to be Liam Whitmore’s fiancée?”

“Well, it feels a little strange because I’m getting so much attention. After the party, my Instagram followers went up a lot.”

But then my eyes lit up as I realized how much I adore Liam. “And…”

“And?” He raised his eyebrows. “Well…I fell in love with him.” “What?”

“Uh, I love him, Levi. I fell in love with him, and he even kissed me yesterday.” I said this in a quiet voice so that no one else could hear it.

He looked sad and afraid, hoping that what Liam said about him wasn’t true. “Levi, why do you look so shocked?”

He shook his head and looked down. “Are you happy, Sophie?”

“I am very happy,” I murmured, and he raised his head. “Then I guess I got late.” “Why?”

He said, “I like you, Sophie,” and my heart sank. “I really do.” I didn’t know what to say.

“Levi...I...”

“It’s fine, Sophie. I understand that you don’t like me anymore because you fell in love with him.”

“Levi, I’m really sorry. I just never saw you that way. I’m so sorry. I never thought you would...”

He smiled sadly and said, “It’s OK, Sophie. It’s OK.” “I’m so sorry,” I muttered again.

He held my hand and squeezed it softly. “Don’t be sorry, Sophie. It’s not your fault.”

Then he took my hand and kissed it. “Is this going to end our friendship?” I asked.

He grinned and shook his head. “No way. We’re best friends. Always.” I nodded, and he stood up to leave. “Are you not going to stay?”

“I just came to see you. I’m leaving tomorrow night.”

“Oh, you can stay—”

“No,” he said with a laugh. “I’m not going to Liam’s house because he doesn’t like me.”

“But...”

“It’s OK, Sophie. I’ll see you again tomorrow before I leave, OK?” “OK,” I said and nodded.

I followed him out of the restaurant, and he gave me a loving embrace. I responded. He walked along the street after kissing my cheek and waved goodbye.

I glanced back and saw Liam standing at the restaurant's door. He had his hands in his pockets and seemed quite unhappy. He was glaring at Levi as he walked away.

"L-Liam..." I said as I got closer to him. "What are you doing here?"

He turned away from him and glanced at me. The coldness crept into his gaze. "I came to get you." He clenched his teeth.

"OK, I'll just grab my purse and come."

He nodded coldly in return, and I walked inside, got my purse, and said goodbye to Alley before coming back outside.

I walked with Liam to his car, and when he opened the door for me, he motioned for me to get in. Then he closed the door.

He drove silently towards his house, and that worried me. "Liam?" I murmured gently.

"What was he doing there?" he yelled. "Who?" I said in a naive way.

Not a good question.

"Levi." He almost spat out his name. "What was he doing there, Sophie?" "Um...he just came to see me."

"And?"

I anxiously messed with my fingers and looked down. “He...um...he...told me that...um...he likes me.”

Liam’s jaw tightened as his hold on the driving wheel got stronger. “What did you say?”

“I... rejected him?” I couldn’t declare that I love you, so I turned him down. “Why?”

My mouth opened a little. “Why do you want to know? I didn’t feel the same way he did, that’s all.”

“What did he do?”

“He said... it’s fine...”

He didn’t say anything else, and his brows came together as if he were thinking.

I didn’t say anything either, and for the remainder of the journey, the only sound was the motor of the automobile.

He parked the car in front of the home, and after looking at him for a long time, I got out and went inside. I said hello to Helen and then went up to his room.

As I was going to put my purse away and close the door, it opened behind me and slammed shut.

Liam grabbed my arm, turned me around, and pressed his lips against mine, cupping my cheeks.

I was shocked by what he did, and my purse fell from my grasp. I gasped quietly, and he kissed me more deeply, with such passion, desire, and wrath that it made my toes

curl in ecstasy.

My legs gave way, and I held on to his biceps for strength as I kissed him back. He pushed me back with his lips still on mine, and we kept going till my legs reached the bed. Then he pushed me gently, and I fell back on the bed with him on top of me.

He kissed my lips and then my jaw, and then he kissed my neck, which made me gasp. My fingers got stuck in his hair.

He suddenly halted at the base of my neck and buried his head in the crook of my neck, breathing deeply.

He muttered huskily into my ear, “You’re mine, Sophie. I won’t let him take you away from me.”

I muttered back, “No one’s taking me away from you, Liam,” to attempt to calm him down.

He raised his head, his pupils got bigger, and he put his forehead on mine. “Please don’t ever leave me. I won’t make it. I’ll break.”

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His comments made my stomach flip, and my heart expanded with love for him. I ran my hand across his cheek. “I will never leave you, Liam.”

“Promise?” he muttered against my lips.

“Promise.” He kissed me tenderly and carefully this time, with his lips back on mine. I ran my hands over his back and felt his muscles move under my fingertips.

This time, he pulled back too quickly. “I was... wondering... if you would like to go on a...a...d-date with me?”

“A date?”

He nodded, but he was uneasy. “With me...”

“Of course I will!” I said, and he sighed in relief. Did he honestly believe I would say no?

“Thank goodness,” he said quietly, which made me laugh since he was so sweet.

He kept talking anxiously. “Look, I haven’t been on a date in years, so I don’t know how to do it. Um...”

I stopped him from talking by kissing him for a few seconds. “It’s OK, Liam. I get it.”

“Oh... OK...” He chewed his lips.

I laughed and kissed him again as I took off his suit jacket.

He drew away from me, his body lingering over mine, just as I took off his jacket. I frowned. "Are you really going to stop now? Leave me so hot and bothered?"

"Are you sure about this, Sophie?" I said, "I...um..." "Yes!"

"But...you are pregnant...and..."

"What does being pregnant have to do with this?"

"I'll hurt you and the...b-baby," he added in a way that made me laugh.

"Oh, Liam. It's not going to hurt the baby. It has nothing to do with it. I'm only a month pregnant."

He answered shyly, "A little bit of pink on his cheeks." "I had no idea that..."

I kissed him on the cheek after pulling it. "You are so cute."

He rolled his eyes and was even more embarrassed. "Stop making fun of me."

"Then you can make me quiet," I smirked at him, and he was shocked by how brave I was.

He bent down and kissed my neck, then sucked on it to create a hickey that made me groan.

As I carefully unbuttoned his shirt, I played with the buttons with my fingers. Then I slipped it off his body and threw it on the floor.

I ran my fingers over his shoulders and down to his stomach, teasing him till he

groaned. Then he kissed me passionately.

He pulled back to get some breath and murmured in my ear, sending a shudder down my spine. “Oh, I’m going to make you scream, sweetie.”

Sophie’s Point of View:

I woke up to find Liam’s arm around my waist and my head on his chest. He was sleeping comfortably and seemed a lot younger than he was.

All of a sudden, memories from last night came rushing back, and I turned bright red.

I lifted my hand and stroked his face. He screwed up his nose as his sleep was disturbed, which made me grin at him.

I saw the time on the wall clock and decided to wake him awake by kissing him on both cheeks. Then she kissed him lightly on the lips and even kissed him down the neck a few times.

He muttered in a raspy voice and wrinkled his brows, keeping his eyes closed. His grasp on my waist got tighter. “You’d better stop, Sophie.”

I smiled at his neck. “And what if I don’t?”

He flipped me over quickly, with him on top of me, and I let out a tiny shriek.

He bit my neck. “Because...if I start, you’ll beg me to stop.”

I bit my lips while I softly rubbed his head. “Is that true?”

“Ugh...” He bit down on the base of my neck, making me partly gasp and moan.



“Are you going to be late for work?” “I’m the CEO, honey. I can be late.”

“Am I dreaming, or is your workaholic a\*s not so workaholic anymore?” I joked.

He laughed heartily and kissed my neck one final time before looking at me. “I can blame you for that.”

“What did I do?”

He gently rubbed the tip of his nose against mine and remarked, “You are doing a lot more than you know, honey.”

“Am I?”

He kissed me on the lips. “Um...so, when’s the date?”

“Tonight, sweetie.” “Hmm...where are we going?”

“That...” He stopped for a long time. “Is a surprise.”

I hit him on the arm. “Tell me... I’ll have to dress accordingly.” “Wear something comfortable. That’s all.”

“OK...”

His phone rang, and he groaned as he slid off of me to answer it. “Yes?”

He got up immediately away, his eyes wide open, and worried since he didn’t realize he was n\*\*e. “Yes. Yes. Yes. I’m coming.”

He stopped for a moment and then spoke. “Stop threatening me, brother. I’m coming! Don’t start the meeting without me!”

I laughed when I saw that he was late for a crucial meeting. He frowned at me, which made me laugh even more.

He hung up the phone and kissed my lips. "It's your fault I forgot about the meeting." Before I could respond, he ran to the toilet.

I hugged Alley from behind as soon as I walked into the kitchen and said, "He asked me out on a date!"

"Oh my God!" Alley said when I took my arms away from her. "When?"

"Tonight!"

We both yelled with excitement and gave each other a high five.

We looked at each other awkwardly, and the other workers looked at us strangely. We calmed down our enthusiasm.

"What else happened?" Alley enquired in a low voice. I bit my lips and turned red. "Well, you know..."

She got it as her eyes became bigger. "I need the details!"

I shook my head and made fun of her. "Nope. I'm not telling you anything."

She complained. "Please!" But her face twisted in pain as she understood something. "Um...let it go. He's like a brother to me, and I don't want to know the details."

"Oh..." I smiled wickedly. "Now, I really want to tell you all about it."

"No!" Alley screamed, covering her ears with her hands, and ran away from me as I

pursued her around.

I put out a dress in front of Helen, who was sitting on the side of the bed, and asked, “What do you think of this one?”

She shook her head.

I thought it would be a good idea to ask Helen what outfit I should wear. I shouldn’t have informed her out of the blue that he was taking me out on a date since she dropped the plate in astonishment.

“And this one?” I held out another frock, and she shook her head again, which made me angry.

“I can’t pick out a dress because he’s coming to get me in half an hour!” I complained.

Helen stood up. “Let me see,” she said, and then she looked through my closet and selected a simple white dress with bell sleeves. “Why aren’t you wearing this one?”

“I don’t want to because I wore that on a date with my ex-fiancé.”

She put one hand on her waist. “Who cares if you wore it before? It’s pretty. Wear it again tonight. The next time you wear it, you’ll remember it as the dress you wore on your first date with Liam.”

I smiled at what she said and grabbed the garment from her. “Thanks.” I ran into the restroom to get ready.

I put on the least amount of makeup and let my hair down over my shoulder.

When Liam walked in, he didn’t even look at me or say anything. “I’ll just need ten

minutes,” he said before going into the restroom.

He stated he came out ten minutes later wearing a simple black t-shirt with full sleeves and light blue pants. He looked attractive since he had shaved his face clean.

He took his time looking me over and smiling sweetly. Then he lifted my hand and kissed my knuckles for a long time. “Sweetheart, you look great.”

I told Liam, “You look good, too,” and he kissed my forehead. “Thanks. Let’s go.”

He took my hand and led me out of the room and down the stairs.

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Liam escorted me to his car and opened the door for me. I waved farewell to Helen.

I thanked him, climbed in, and he drove away in the driver's seat.

I remarked, "You do know this looks scary? There's not a single person here." Liam took my hand and led me up the narrow path to the hill.

"There are usually a lot of people here, but I wanted us to have some privacy, so I made sure no one came today."

"How did you even do that?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Don't worry, I have my ways."

We walked for five minutes till we got to a clearing where everything was ready for a picnic. A bedsheet was stretched out on the ground.

"This is so beautiful!" I said as I looked about in admiration. He grinned with pleasure. "I'm happy you liked it."

I gave him a kiss on the cheek. "Thanks! It's great!"

He told me to sit down, so I took off my sandals and sat down. Then I picked up a chocolate-covered strawberry and ate it.

He sat down next to me and fed me a strawberry as I finished the first one.

"So...you weren't born in Houston, were you?" I asked to try to get the discussion

going.

“Nope. I was born in Austin. That’s where we used to live, in a small colony, and that’s where Nat and Alley met.”

“Then your uncle called you all here?”

He looked straightforward. “Well, we used to be poor. We didn’t have much to eat, and sometimes we went to bed hungry. I wasn’t old enough to understand everything, but Nat always made sure I had more to eat than he did.”

He looked at nothing in particular and smiled gently at the recollections. “I was seven when our uncle called us here. He didn’t pay much attention to us before because he was busy starting his business. But when his business did well, he felt bad about it. So, the first thing he did was call us all here and promise to make our lives better.”

He looked at me and said, “I remember Nat arguing with our parents about how we could trust him. What if he doesn’t do what he promised? What if he leaves us?”

But his father trusted him, and he still loved his brother and stated he trusted him, so we all went.

I put my hand over his and gently squeezed it. “He did make your lives better.”

“He did. He made sure we had the right clothes to wear and the right food to eat. He made us live with him and paid for Nat’s and my education. He even used to teach Nat and me business in the evenings.”

He constantly told us that we could do great things. He wanted us to create our own business, and with his guidance, we did. Here we are.

Hearing his narrative let me understand why Nathan and he are never boastful about themselves. They are modest because they have witnessed poverty and hunger.

“People don’t talk about your past much in public. I mean, you guys never talk about it. Are you ashamed of your past?” I asked.

He giggled quietly and kissed the back of my hand lightly. “I am not ashamed of it at all. I don’t want to delete that part of my life because when I look back on it and then at what we have become, I feel proud. I feel happy and at peace.”

“The past is a part of me, and I’m not ashamed of it. I never will be. It’s just that we don’t think it’s necessary to tell everyone.” He then put his arm over my shoulder.

“I was just curious. I didn’t mean to offend.”

“It’s OK,” he murmured, kissing the top of my head. “You can ask me anything.”

He let go of my shoulder and moved his hand down to my stomach, where he softly massaged circles over it.

I tilted my head and observed him. My eyes sparkled with love for him. He bent down and kissed me, which made me stop breathing.

We kissed slowly and passionately, and his other hand rested softly on my face as his tongue sought access, which I gladly provided.

After a few seconds, when his tongue had made me breathless, he pulled his lips away from mine. I put my head on his shoulder to relax as I attempted to regain my breath.

“Do you remember your parents?” he enquired in a quiet voice.

“No. I never saw them, and I don’t know their name. I was told that my mother died during birth, and no one knows where my parents are.”

“I’m sorry,” he said in a low voice.

“It’s OK...I think I found a family already.” I smiled at him, and he smiled back and kissed my lips.

“I’m sorry for how I acted when you told me you were pregnant, Sophie. It must have really hurt you because you went through something similar with Blake...”

I kissed him, and he was surprised. He kissed me back. “You know you talk nonsense,” I responded, drawing back and making him laugh. “I already told you I forgave you. Stop saying you’re sorry.”

“Got it.”

I touched him on the chest. “Better.”

He leaned back and pulled me with him as he lay down on the ground, putting my head on his chest and wrapping his arm around my waist. My hand was on his chest as we looked up at the sky in silence.

Liam’s point of view:

This week has been the best of my life. Every day is thrilling when you’re in love.

I took her out on a couple more occasions and gave her all the love and care I could. Every night, we made love, and every morning, I woke up with her in my arms.

But I still had to tell them how I felt. And I was still being a coward about it. I was



still too terrified to say I loved her. I want her to adore me, too.

Maybe she does, maybe...

I let out a sigh. I care for her. More than I could ever fathom. I...

“Liam.” Nat’s strong voice brought me back to reality, and I looked around and saw that we were in the middle of an important meeting. Everyone in the conference room was looking at me in shock.

Yes. Yeah, I never lose focus in a meeting. It must be a surprise. You idiots, I’m in love! What do you want from me?

Nat was looking at me and didn’t seem happy at all. I smiled at everyone to say sorry.

I cleared my throat in a way that made me feel bad. “So...um...what were we talking about?”

Nat was about to kick me out of the meeting, and he did.

“Sorry, gentlemen, but my brother doesn’t seem well today. Please excuse him.” Nat said this and gave me a look that screamed, “Get the f\*\*k out of here before I throw you out myself.”

“I’m sorry,” I said quietly as I left the room, feeling ashamed. Jason, my assistant, followed me. “Sir, are you OK?”

“For the millionth time, Jason, you can call me Liam. Yes, I’m fine. Thank you for asking.” I started heading back to my office, and he followed me.

“But sir—” I threw him a look that might kill. “I mean...L-Liam...you weren’t always like this. You never missed meetings, never zoned out between them, and you

were always very excited to be here and work.”

“Yeah, I know.”

“You look like you’re in love, Liam.” He was joking, but when he saw how serious I was, he stopped. “Are you...in love, Liam?”

“Yes. Don’t say you didn’t hear about my engagement. You were at the party, right?” I asked.

“Yes, I was, but I never really thought your engagement was real.” I arched an eyebrow at him as we got into the elevator. “Why is that?”

“You see...well...you never dated. Of course. And then, one day, this woman threatens to burn down the whole building if you don’t see her. And just a month later, we hear that you are already engaged to her.”

“That still doesn’t make sense...”

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“Yes, I was getting to that. I’ve worked for you for more than three years, so I think I know you well enough to know that it will take you more than a month to fall in love with someone, let alone get engaged to her...”

“You’re talking nonsense, Jason. It only took me a month to fall in love with her...”

“But your engagement isn’t real, is it?”

We got out of the lift when it opened on my floor. “Are you going to tell the press about this?”

“No way, sir! I would never do that!” “Hmm...you better...”

“And it was Blake Theo who spread the rumor that you were engaged. Since I know you two are rivals, I thought your engagement was fake.” He went on to prove his argument.

I went into my office. “Yes. The engagement is fake, but I really do love her.”

“What made you love her?”

I sat down in my chair and leaned back. “Jason, are you interviewing me?”

“Oh, no, no... I’m just really curious, and I’ve been wanting to ask you all this for a long time. I just never had the time. I’m sorry if you don’t want to tell me.” He went on and on.

“Calm down...and it’s OK. You can sit down.” I pointed to the chair in front of my

desk, and he slowly sat down.

“To be honest, I don’t know why I fell for her. At first, she made me hate her and almost ruined my library, but then I don’t know why I started to care for her. If she was sad, I was sad too. Her smiles and happiness made me happy, too. And over time, I became afraid of losing her.

Nat told me I was falling in love with her, and I was, but I didn’t want to admit it. That is until I saw her with her closest friend, who embraced her and even kissed her cheeks, which made me very angry.

I kept going. “I know I love her, and I’m too scared to let her go. Ever.”

I saw that Jason’s head was bent down, and he looked like he was typing on his phone when I was done.

I questioned Jason sternly, “What are you typing on your phone?” He was surprised and put his phone down, giving me a guilty look.

“Why the hell are you writing what I’m saying?” I tightened my teeth.

He put his hands up to protect himself, and his eyes got bigger. “I’m sorry, sir. I’m sorry. It’s not what you think.”

“Then what is it?” “Um...this...I...”

“Show me your phone,” I said, and he stood still. “Right now!”

He gave me his phone with quivering hands, and I frowned when I saw how he had written down what we talked about. “Why are you writing this down as a story?”

I handed him his phone back and asked him why. “Sir... I was actually writing a romance story. I was thinking about writing a romance story, and I thought I could get some ideas from your love story.”

“So you’re really writing down my story?”

“Just an idea, sir. I love to write, and when Ms. Spencer came into your office that day, it gave me an idea. But I still can’t decide what to write about why she came here,” he said.

I chose to help her since I love books. “To tell me that she’s having my baby.”

His eyes brightened up. “That’s a great idea. Thanks, sir!”

“I was telling you the truth,” I said in a serious voice.

“Yes, she is.” “What? You mean...she is pregnant with your...child?”

“Oh my goodness!” he said, putting his hand over his mouth in shock. He soon added when he saw that I was serious. “Of course, I’m not telling anyone. And congratulations.”

“Thanks.”

“Thanks for telling me all this.” He stood up to leave, but I stopped him. “What do you call it? Your story?”

He seemed happy to talk about it. “Somebody To Love” is the name of it. “And why?”

“Because you were just a playboy and never dated,” he said, clearing his throat. “I

mean, you never dated, and you were always busy with work, and then you found someone to love in the middle of all that.”

“I know it doesn’t make sense, but it sounds good,” he said right away. “And where are you putting it?”

“There’s a platform on the internet.”

I nodded and grinned. He smiled confidently and said, “It better be a hit, Jason.”

“Yes, it will, sir.”

“Good evening, Helen.” I came back from work and strolled into the kitchen. I took a white rose out of my pocket and gave it to her. “For you, my lady.”

She smiled as she took the rose and put her palm on my cheek, which made me feel good. “It’s great to see you so happy, Liam.”

“Wasn’t I like this before? Wasn’t I happy?”

She touched my cheek and pulled her arm back. “You were, but you used to feel lonely, right?”

“No...why would I?”

I stopped lying when she looked at me. “OK...maybe...yes...”

“And it really hurt me to see you like that, but now look at you—you’re almost dancing around the house. I’m so happy for you.”

I gave her a quick kiss on the forehead. “Thank you, Helen, for everything.”

“Now, go away. Let me work.” She went back to work as I exited the kitchen.

I changed my clothes and headed to my study because Sophie hadn’t come home from the restaurant yet. I smiled when I saw that the book Sophie was reading was back on the shelf where it belonged.

I sat down in my chair, took out the nursery design, and made some adjustments to it. I have no clue when I fell asleep while working on it.

I woke up to the feeling of fingers sliding through my hair. I slowly opened my eyes and found Sophie in front of me, softly rubbing my head.

I smiled at her and kissed her hand. I sat up straight, extended my hands, and yawned. She came down on my lap, put her head on my shoulder, and wrapped her arms around my neck.

I ran my fingers through her hair. “What’s wrong, sweetie?”

“Nothing,” she said softly.

“Very nice try at lying.” I rolled my eyes. “Now, tell me what’s wrong.”

I talked, but she didn’t say anything. “Did...Blake, come back?” She didn’t say anything for a few seconds before shaking her head. “Sophie, please tell me what’s wrong.”

She held me tighter and said, “I will tell you, Liam. Not right now.” “Is it about the baby? Is something wrong with it?”

“No.” She raised her head and looked at me, putting her hand on her stomach. “Don’t worry. It’s OK.”

“Then what’s the problem?” “

She didn’t answer; instead, she pressed her lips against mine, which made me quiet. I kissed her back gently.

The kiss ended too abruptly, which made me sad. She smiled at me and said, “Shall we have dinner now?” “

“Sure,” I said, although I wasn’t sure she was alright.

From the point of view of the third person:

Liam kissed Sophie’s forehead and stayed there for a while. “If something happens, call me, OK?” “

Sophie shook her head in agreement, and he kissed her on the lips before going to work.

For the past several days, she’s been acting peculiar, and Liam can’t escape the idea that something is wrong and she’s not telling him.

He even told her not to go to work for a few days, but she said no since she gets bored at home.

He couldn’t stop thinking about Sophie and what may be wrong all the way to work.

Either she’s not feeling well since she’s pregnant, or that jerk Blake came back, and she won’t tell him.

He has made up his mind to tell her how he feels tonight. He will tell her how much he loves her. He was apprehensive about it, but maybe she would tell him what was



wrong then.

He parked his car, got out, and proceeded inside the building. People greeted him, and he smiled and nodded to each one.

Jason greeted him at the registration desk and handed him a file. “Liam, your brother wants you to sign this.” It’s really important.

Liam nodded, quickly looked over the page, signed his name at the bottom, and then got into the lift with Jason next to him.

“Are you OK, sir?” Jason said after clearing his voice. “

“Yes, Jason,” Liam said with a big sigh. What do you want to know? “You look like you’re worried about something...”

“Sophie looks worried about something, but she won’t tell me what it is.”

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“Oh... Jason said, “Maybe she’s thinking about telling you how she feels and is scared.”

“No... Liam thought about something else and said again, his jaw tightening. “Call Blake Theo’s office.” I want to talk to him.

The lift doors opened, and they got out. “OK, sir,” Jason said, and then he went to his little office while Liam went to his office.

He took off his suit jacket and slung it over the back of his chair. Then he sat down, rolled up the sleeves of his shirt to his elbows, and unfastened his tie while running his fingers through his hair.

A minute later, his intercom chimed, and he pushed the button. “Yes, Jason?” “

“Sir, I called Mr. Theo’s office, but his assistant told me that he left for New Zealand yesterday for a business meeting.”

He clenched his jaw. “OK.” Thanks.

He put both hands behind his head and reclined back in his chair. He put one knee on top of the other on his desk.

What is bothering her if Blake isn’t here?

As he rubbed his temples, he began to get a headache.

He could feel that something was really wrong.

He studied a file for an hour but couldn't focus on it since his mind kept drifting to Sophie.

He was so angry that he shoved the file away and contacted Sophie on his phone.

It was turned off.

He started to become nervous and called Helen right away. She picked up a few rings later. "Yes, Liam?" "

"Where is Sophie?" "

"She left for work about an hour ago."

"OK." He hung up and dialed Alley next. "Alley, is Sophie with you?" "

"No." She didn't show up today. I was phoning her, but her phone was off. I was just going to call you.

"Damn it."

"Liam... Where is she?" "

"I'll tell you later, Alley." "OK." "Just let me know if she comes."

He threw his phone down on the desk after hanging up. "Where the hell are you, Sophie?" "

He attempted to contact her again, but it didn't work. Instead, he called Jason and

asked him to find Sophie's phone.

Jason found her phone's position around half an hour later, near Alley's restaurant. That's all there was to it.

He told Jason to go, and his phone buzzed, and a notice went off. When he opened it, he saw a message from an unknown number.

Not many people know his cell phone number. He opened the message, and his face turned white when he read it. Liam,  
I don't think I can keep doing this with you. It's too much for me. I'm sorry, but I'm going. Thank you for everything you did for me, but now I'm leaving.

See you later.

~Sophie

For a minute, he couldn't move, talk, think, or even breathe. He was stuck in place.

She left him?!

He gripped the phone tighter and tighter as the message played over and over in his brain. He slammed the phone against the wall, where it broke into pieces.

He pondered, "After all the love I gave her, she left me? Did she never feel anything for me? Was everything a lie?"

He thought about every moment he spent with her: her smile, her voice, her face, her touches, her kisses, her embraces, and her words.

No, this can't be right.

He made a fist with his hand and clenched and unclenched it, hoping to calm the tempest inside him.

He pulled his chair back and quickly swept everything off his desk when it was too much for him to handle. His laptop and other stuff fell to the floor.

He flipped over his desk and held on to it. His eyes were full of wrath as he kept breaking everything.

Jason heard the ruckus and walked in. When he saw the state of the office, his mouth fell. Liam is a highly organized guy who likes everything to be in its place all the time. He never gets upset, not like this.

Jason realized something had caused him to go crazy when he saw him like this. He wasn't sure what to do, so he contacted Nathan. "S-sir...your brother is very angry." He is flinging things all over the place; he nearly broke his office. "Please come down here."

"I'm coming." He said this quickly and picked up the phone, leaving Jason standing there, not knowing what to do next.

Why was he so angry?

As I mentioned, Nathan got down there in less than half a minute and marched to his brother's office. He was shocked to see him like that.

He cried, "Liam, what the hell is wrong with you?"

Liam was standing with his back to him, his head down, his hands at his sides, and his palms folded into fists.

He cautiously turned around when he heard Nathan's voice, his jaw tight and his eyes blazing with anger.

Nathan carefully moved closer to him. "Brother, what happened?" "She left me," he said angrily. "That's what happened: she left me."

"What?" Nathan moved further closer and put his hands on his shoulders. "What do you mean by she left?"

Liam's lower lip shook, and he started to cry. His voice broke. Not as angry as it used to be. But a voice that was cracked and gentle. "She left me, brother." He embraced Nathan closely as he cried and put his head on his brother's shoulder. Nathan's heart sank when he saw him like that, and he embraced him back.

"She left me, brother," he cried. "She said she would never...but she left me. She left me..."

Nathan didn't know what to say to comfort his brother since he was wondering why she would abandon him when she loved him.

His tears soaked Nathan's shirt as he wailed, "I loved her." "I was happy. I fell in love with her. I finally found someone to love, and then she left me. She promised she wouldn't."

Nathan pushed back and grasped his shoulders tightly. "Listen to me, brother."

Liam had his head down and was crying. He wouldn't listen to Nathan. His legs shook, and he sank to his knees, cradling his head in his hands, which broke Nathan's heart even more.

Nathan bent down in front of him. "Liam, just for a second, think. She loved you."

Why would she leave you?"

"She d-didn't..." His voice broke. "She didn't...she never said she loved me..."

"Did she say why she left you?"

Liam sniffed. "She... she sent me a message... she said... it's too much for her... and she's leaving... she left..."

This didn't sound right. She really loved him, didn't she? How can she go? And why?

Nathan grabbed Liam's arm and pulled him up and over to the sofa, which was lucky since he didn't break it.

He forced him to sit on the couch, and Nathan kept crying while he got out his phone and called Alley.

"Alley..." He spoke right away when she picked up. "Can you come to our office right now?"

"What happened?" "Please, just come here..."

"Okay, I'm on my way."

Liam put his head on Nathan's shoulder and cried as Nathan wrapped his arm over Liam's shoulder to comfort him.

When Alley got to the building, Nathan directed her to go to the 40th floor. It had been twenty minutes.

When they got to that floor, Jason led her to Liam's office, and she gasped when she saw how messy it was. Nathan put his finger over his lips to tell her to stay quiet

since Liam had fallen asleep with his head on Nathan's shoulder. He had streaks of tears on his cheeks, a scowl on his brow, and he continued murmuring Sophie's name in his sleep.

Alley sat down next to Nathan, worried about what was going on.

"Nat..." she said softly. "What's wrong with him and Sophie? She seemed to have vanished. Do you know where she is?"

"Liam got her message earlier..." He whispered back and told her everything, even calling Jason in to tell them how worried Liam was about her.

After he was done talking, Alley spoke right away with confidence. "She would never leave him, Nat. She loved him. She would never do that. I believe her."

Nathan looked at his brother and kissed him lightly on the head. "Where is she now? And what did that message mean?"

"She is in danger no matter where she is," Alley said, horror growing inside her. "Sophie..." Liam muttered, still asleep, as a tear fell from his eye.



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Nathan's jaw tightened and he gritted his teeth. "I swear, Alley, if she did it on purpose, I won't spare her. I don't care if she is your friend."

"And I swear, Nat, she didn't do it on purpose. Someone is behind this."

"Someone either made her do it or she has been kidnapped," Alley said, praying Sophie was well.

Why would someone want to kidnap her? Who doesn't like her? And why?

Third Person's Point of View:

"So, she didn't...leave me?" Liam leaned against the desk, which he had tidied up himself because he knew he had created a mess. His eyes were swollen, and his nose was red from sobbing, but he had stopped.

"Trust me, Liam. She loves you," Alley said, and Liam's heart skipped a beat when he heard that.

Saffron had come to join Alley and Nathan by now, and they were all worried about Sophie.

Liam ran his fingers over his face. "Then where is she?"

Nathan replied, "Do you have any ideas?" Liam was going to say no because Blake wasn't even there, but then he realized something. "Levi..."

Nathan asked, “Levi?” “Who is he?”

“Her best friend,” Alley said, which made Nathan grimace. “Don’t you want to be her best friend?”

Alley rolled her eyes. “Yes, I am. But he is her best friend from childhood.” She asked Liam. “But why Levi? He’s her best friend and doesn’t mean any harm. Why would he hurt her?”

“He likes her. He told her recently, but she turned him down. Maybe...just maybe...he might have kidnapped her,” Liam said.

“Jason!” Liam yelled, and Jason came sprinting in right away. “Yes, sir?”

“Get me Levi Harry’s phone number. He lives in Tampa, Florida. I need it right away.”

“Okay, sir.” He said, and then he ran out again to work on it.

He perched on the edge of his desk and stroked his temples. All he could think about was Sophie and where she was.

Saffron whispered to Alley, “Mama, I’m hungry.” When Nathan heard this, he stated he would order something for them.

Nathan ordered them some dinner, but he knew Liam wouldn’t eat it. So he went to the little fridge in the corner of his office and found a packet of bread and a block of butter, just like he thought he would.

He made Liam a sandwich with butter and bread and gave it to him. At first, Liam didn’t know what it was and refused it, but he eventually accepted it and ate it with a scowl on his face.

Nathan put his hand on Nathan's shoulder. "Brother, we'll find her. She'll be fine."  
"She's even pregnant," Liam said in a low voice.

Nathan told him in a quiet voice, "She will be okay, brother. She will be okay." But he wasn't sure/my.....

Later, Jason ran in and said he had Levi Harry's number, and Liam contacted him right away.

Later, he picked up several rings. "Yes? Who is this?" "Levi, this is Liam Whitmore."

"Liam, what do you want now?"

"Where is Sophie?" He got right to the subject, and his voice was chilly.

"What do you mean, where is she? Isn't she supposed to be with you?" "She disappeared," he said. "Where is she?"

"She vanished?! And you think I had something to do with it?"

"I think you're guilty, Levi." He clenched his teeth. "Didn't she turn you down after you told her how you felt? Maybe that hurt your ego."

"Listen, Mr. Whitmore, yes, she turned me down, but she is my best friend. I've known her since I was a baby. I would never hurt her. NEVER. You need to find her soon; she needs to be safe."

Liam's face was blank; he never thought this would happen.

He cleared his throat in a way that made him feel bad. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be rude."

Levi let out a sigh. "I'm sorry too, but please...find her, Liam." "I will," he said, and then he hung up.

Jason was the first to enquire. "Have you made any progress, sir?"

Liam said no. "No..." He scratched his temples as he thought of a way out. Something that may assist.

No one said anything since Liam seemed like he was deep in contemplation. And all of a sudden, his eyes got bigger, and he turned his head to Jason. "Call Ruby Garrison." He gave him his phone since he didn't want to look up her number.

Nathan said, "What?" "Why him?"

"Jason, just call him. Now." Jason quickly nodded and looked for his contact.

"Why are you calling him? What does he have to do with all of this? He lives in New Zealand, for God's sake," Nathan said.

"Yes, brother. He lives in New Zealand, which is where Blake is. He can help."

"You can't just call him up and ask for help."

"He's a friend," Liam said. "I know him. He will help."

"Sir." Jason gave the phone back to Jason after calling Ruby.

Liam waited patiently for him to answer the phone, which he did after a few rings. "Hey, Liam! How's it going, buddy?"

Liam sighed as he heard his voice. "Ruby, I need a favor." "A favor? What can I do to help?"

“She’s missing, my fiancée.”

“Oh, I see...”

“Just keep an eye on Blake Theo. He’s only in Sydney, and I’m sure she’s with him.”

“Blake Theo...I just had a meeting with him a few hours ago.” “Yes, please, Ruby.”

“Sure, buddy. I’ll keep an eye on him and let you know if I see anything strange. What are you going to do?”

“I’m going to New Zealand. I’ll see you there. Thanks.” “No problem. See you soon.” The phone was terminated.

“Have you lost your mind? You’re going to New Zealand. What if she isn’t there? What if Blake isn’t guilty?” Nathan asked him.

“Yes, brother. Blake is guilty. Who else would take her?”

Nathan said firmly, “I’m coming with you.” Alley said, “I’m coming too.”

“Me too,” Saffron said.

“No one is coming with me. I am going alone.” “Like hell, I will let you,” Nathan said.

“Brother...”

“I am going with you, Liam. That’s it. If not, you aren’t going.” Liam grumbled loudly. “Fine! Let’s go on a f\*\*\*\*\*g picnic to New Zealand.” “There’s a kid in here!” Alley yelled at Saffron.

Liam said, “Sorry.”

“Jason, tell them to get the jet ready,” Liam said. Jason went out to do what Liam said.

“We are going to New Zealand.”

She had a headache when she gently opened her eyes. The light in the room was too strong for her. She rubbed her temples and eventually sat up straight.

Her brows knitted together in perplexity. This room doesn’t belong to Liam. Where is she?

She threw the blankets off her body and got up, gazing around in a panic. She looked at the glass door that led to the little balcony.

She hurried towards it, but it was locked. Looking through it, she saw one thing that was true. She isn’t in Houston since Houston doesn’t have a Sydney Opera House.

What the hell? She thought. What is she doing in New Zealand? Where is Liam?

When she heard the door to the room open, her heart started to race. Her hand was covering her belly without her knowing it.

She didn’t know what to do, so she simply stood there like a statue. When the door opened, her face turned pale.

“Sophie. You’re finally here.”

She cried, “What the f\*\*k does all this mean, Blake?!”

Blake grinned and moved closer to her. “I told you I would be with you soon. And

here you are.”

Sophie remembered the talks they had a few days before he showed up outside the restaurant. She didn’t inform Liam since she didn’t want to worry him.

“Let me go, Blake!”

He made a clicking sound with his tongue. “Not so easily.”

“Liam must already be looking for me. Do you think you can get away with this?”

He casually sat down on the side of the bed. “Is he? Is he looking for you? Or is he too busy hating you?”

“Why will he hate me?”

“Well, you see, he got a short message from you saying you were leaving him.”

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Sophie couldn't believe what she heard. "What?"

Blake shook his head in a mocking way. "Liam is so sad."

Sophie's heart sank. She told him she wouldn't leave him, so now he must assume she did for some dumb reason. She started to cry. No. She has to see him.

Blake got up and walked up to her. "Now that you're finally here, let's talk about what I want."

Sophie swallowed hard to keep from crying. "Blake, why are you doing this? What do you want from me?"

"I was getting there. I just want you, Sophie. That's all. I tried to ask you nicely before, but you said no, so I had to do it this way."

"No. I love Liam. I will never leave a gem for you. You are a f\*\*\*\*\*g asshole."

Blake put one hand on either side of her head, blocking her from getting to the entrance to the balcony. He got closer. "Quit being stubborn, Sophie. You will give in to me."

"I will never give in to you!"

He clenched his teeth. "I want you, Sophie. I won't stop until I get you to give in to me."



“Then keep trying for the rest of your life,” she said angrily.

“Is all this anger because you lost your child eight years ago?”

“I loved that child more than you can imagine. I wanted it, and I was happy to have it. But you ruined my dream in seconds.”

“It was a mistake!” he snarled.

“If you had felt bad about it, Blake, and even said a small sorry, I would have forgiven you, but you didn’t. You never cared about me.” A tear came from her eye.

“I regret it now!” “I don’t care now! Go f\*\*k yourself!”

Blake held her jaw securely. “What’s he got that I don’t?” “A heart,” she said with a hiss. “And you, Blake Theo, are a monster.”

He grinned as he stared down at her belly. “I’ll show you how bad I am.”

“I swear, Blake, if anything happens to this child, I will kill myself along with it. I swear. Dare you to touch it!” She said, her eyes filling with tears.

Blake’s expression went blank. Sophie was what he desired. He will lose her if something happens to her that he can’t pay for.

He didn’t say anything else and just turned around and went out of the room, slamming the door behind him.

Sophie collapsed to the floor and cried.

Third Person’s Point of View:

Sophie pulled her legs closer to her and hugged her body, resting her chin on her knees and her back against the headboard of the bed. At least he didn't put her in a warehouse or anything. She could see outside from here, but she couldn't ask for aid because the door was shut, and she knew they were on a very high floor.

It looks like a penthouse, yet it's not a hotel.

She felt quite weak because she hadn't eaten anything and had sobbed a lot. Blake brought her food, but she wouldn't eat it, which made him upset, so he took it away.

She wanted Liam back. She missed his embraces, kisses, touches, words, and reassuring grin. All of it.

She really wanted to be in his arms.

Blake came in through the door with a dish in his hand. She looked at him for a second and then turned away. She felt nauseous when she saw him.

He sat in front of her on the side of the bed. "Come on, Sophie, eat something." His voice was so gentle that it was hard to believe.

She wouldn't look at him, and he moaned. "Please. You want your kid to be healthy, right?"

She laughed at him while still looking aside. "As if you care about it."

He said firmly, "I care about you," which surprised her.

"You're lying. If you cared about me at all, you wouldn't keep me in here."

"It's just to keep you from running away."

“How nice of you,” she murmured with a hint of sarcasm as she finally looked at him.

His face didn’t appear malevolent; instead, it had softened and he looked pained.

“I do care about you, Sophie,” he said again, looking her in the eye. “But you keep running away from me. It drives me crazy, especially since you are engaged to Liam Whitmore of all people.”

“Why do you hate him so much?”

“As if he doesn’t hate me as much as I hate him.” He rolled his eyes.

She said, “Liam will find me.” “He will find me, Blake, and then he won’t spare you.”

“He’s too busy hating you for leaving him, Sophie. He doesn’t have time to look for you.” He leaned in closer and clenched his teeth.

Sophie’s cheeks became pale as she realized that Liam really thought she had left him. That notion made her want to cry even more.

Seeing the tears in her eyes made Blake’s face softer again. Yes. He did care for her. But he was so in love with her that he would do everything to keep her with him. Even if it meant taking her away.

He used his thumb to gently wipe away the tears, which made Sophie flinch and shrink back from him. She didn’t have the strength to oppose him.

He took the plate of rice and curry from the nightstand and gave it to her. “Please, Sophie, eat something. I know you’re hungry.”

“I am not,” she said, sniffing.

He pushed a stray hair behind her ear, filled the spoon with rice and curry, and brought it to her mouth. He cursed his nervous problem as his hands started to tremble, but somehow he was able to keep it steady enough not to drop it.

He continued bothering her since she wouldn't talk. She sighed loudly, grabbed the spoon from him, and ate it. "Are you happy?" she questioned in a mocking tone.

He grinned. "Very."

She rolled her eyes and ate the remainder of the meal, even though she was quite hungry.

She huffed and put the dish down on the bed. He grabbed it up and got up to go, but not before kissing her forehead softly and saying goodnight, leaving her alone again.

Liam was lost in contemplation as he looked out the window at the clouds going past.

Alley, Nathan, and Saffron had all fallen asleep in the back seats.

Jason, who had insisted on going with them, was awake and sat down next to Liam, who was lost in contemplation.

"Sir..." he said.

Liam looked at him. "Liam." He corrected him, and he nodded in accord.

Liam asked him, "Are you still writing your story?" Jason was astonished since he didn't think Liam would ask that.

"Yes, I am."

Liam let out a sigh. "Jason, can you promise me something?"

“Yes. Of course.” He said right away.

Liam looked down. “If this doesn’t end well, can you promise us a happy ending in your story?” Liam’s voice trembled at the end, and he felt a lump in his throat.

“Why are you being so hopeless, Liam?”

“I’m just saying it’s possible,” he said in a low voice. “Please promise me this.”

“Yes. Your story will end happily. In real life and in my story. Please don’t give up hope.”

“Thank you,” Liam said softly as he looked out the window again.

As Liam was leaving Ruby Garrison’s office after talking to him about Blake, he got a call from a number he didn’t know.

“Liam Whitmore here,” he stated in a chilly voice.

“Ah, Liam.” Blake’s voice on the other end made Liam’s jaw clench and his grasp on the phone tighten.

“Blake,” he said. “Where is she?”

He laughed in a dark way. “You aren’t beating around the bush, are you?”

He said, “You must really love her to come all the way to New Zealand.” “I swear, Blake—

“Ah-ha. Let me talk first before you start threatening to kill me and all that.” He said this in a calm voice, with a hint of humour.

Is this person real? Liam thought.

“So, Sophie is who you want to find. I know where she is. I mean, I know where she is because I took her. Anyway, I’m sending you an address. If you want to see her, you should go there.”

Liam’s mouth opened a little. “Are you drunk or do you really not know what you’re talking about? You’re just telling me where you are.”

Blake clicked his tongue. “Yes, just like that. But there’s one thing: come alone. It’s smart of you to get help from Ruby Garrison, but now you need to come alone. I can see everything you do, Liam. I can see where you go and who you meet. Be careful what you do next. If I see anyone other than you walking to this address, you might not see your precious fiancée again.”

“Tell me the f\*\*\*\*\*g address.” “You’re not very patient, are you?”

“Blake,” Liam said, and Blake laughed again. “Okay. I’m sending the address. I’ll see you there.”

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Liam couldn't believe what he saw on his phone after the call ended. A second later, it buzzed and he got a text with the address.

Liam took a big breath and thought about what to do. Nathan and his family were at the hotel, which was good.

He thought about it for a while, then walked inside Ruby's office and came out a few minutes later.

He got out of the building, got into one of the cars that Ruby had lent him, and went to the location.

Sophie, I'm coming.

He got out of the car and glanced around. There were forests on both sides of the road.

He proceeded into the woods down the narrow route that Blake had informed him about. It led to God knows where.

After walking for about two minutes, they saw a two-story house that seemed like it had been around for a long time. The paint was peeling off the walls. Some of the window glass were cracked, and some were shattered.

And not a single person in sight.

He walked carefully towards it and was too absorbed looking at the home to hear

someone coming up behind him.

Something smacked him on the head, and he fell into darkness.

Liam woke up with a terrible headache. His eyes were getting used to the low light and the guy seated in front of him on a chair.

He saw that he was sitting in a chair with his wrists bound behind his back and his feet chained to the chair.

The chair was moved a bit closer to him, and he could see the person's face. "Hi, Liam," Blake said with a smile.

"Where's Sophie?" Liam yelled. "Oh, she's fine."

Liam peered around the room for any traces of her, but he couldn't see anything since it was too dark. The only place that was lit up was where he and Blake were.

Liam snarled, "Blake." "Where is she?"

"Aww...our lover boy is getting impatient." He gently got up. And he clapped his hands.

"Let her in."

He could hear some muffled sobs, and Liam was relieved to see that Sophie was okay. Two big men were holding her hands as she tried to get away from them. Her eyes were swollen, her nose was red, and her hair was down and dishevelled. She didn't want to wear the clothing Blake gave her, so her t-shirt and pants looked soiled.



She didn't see him until he spoke gently. "Sophie."

Sophie stopped fighting and turned her head to his. "Liam!" She started to cry right away. "I didn't leave you, Liam. I didn't. He had me taken."

"That's enough," Blake said, stopping her. "Of course you didn't leave him, or else he wouldn't have come this far."

"Why did you take him now?" Sophie yelled. "You wanted me, and here I am."

Blake didn't pay attention to her and talked to Liam. "She was pretty sure you would find her."

Liam wanted to break free and smack that idiotic grin off his face. "Blake, let her go."

Liam then saw the little television in the corner of the room that showed the outside of this facility. So, that's how he knew he was coming.

Only those two men had Sophie, and no one else did. Everyone else was facing away from the television.

Liam smiled to himself in his head.

Sophie's eyes were full of tears because she was scared of what Blake may do to him.

"You should be worried about yourself, Liam. She will be fine, but what about you?"

"Please leave him, Blake. I'll do what you say. Just leave him," Sophie begged.

"Sophie. No." Liam admonished her, and his eyes begged her to be quiet.

“Oh, I’m having fun with this,” Blake said with a chuckle. “You’re both begging the other person to spare them. That’s so sweet. You must really love each other.”

“Please, Blake, don’t hurt him,” Sophie implored.

“Sweetheart, we both know he needs to get out of the way for you to give in to me,” Blake said, and Sophie’s face became pale.

“No, Blake! Please! I’ll do whatever you say. Just leave him!” Liam tried to wriggle out of the chair, but it was no use.

“Will you?” Blake asked. “Will you do everything I say? But then what? You will think about him every day and compare me to him.” Blake gestured to Liam.

“I won’t,” Sophie cried.

Blake shook his head. “No, sweetheart. You can’t be mine until he is alive.”

The two guys who were holding Sophie had let her go a little bit because she had been standing there for so long, but Sophie was too busy pleading for Liam’s life to notice.

Blake took a gun out of his back pocket and loaded it. “No, Blake!” Sophie yelled.

Liam didn’t worry about his own life as long as she was protected. He cocked the rifle and raised it, aiming it right at Liam’s heart.

“No!” she yelled, but it was too late. He had already pulled the trigger, and in a second, the bullet went through his chest and into his heart.

No. No. This can’t happen. She thought.

She pulled away from them, and since it was loose, she was able to get free. She rushed up to Liam, whose face was getting pale, and his eyes were shut as blood

poured out of his chest.

She knelt down in front of him and hit him in the face again and over. “No. Liam, please!”

He smiled a little when he saw her, even though she was crying. He assumed she would be safe.

“Please,” she said softly. She didn’t even know what she was attempting to express. She heard a little murmur when his eyes were barely open. He finally got the words he had wanted to speak to her for so long out of his mouth.

“I love you.”

It made her weep even more. I adore you, too. She wanted to scream, but it was too late since his eyes were closed.

And her heart stopped beating with his.

From Sophie’s point of view:

“Is this ruby?” I questioned Liam, running my finger over the red stone on the ring he gave me.

“Yes,” he said. “Ruby and diamond.”

“Why the hell did you buy such an expensive ring?” I asked him as he sat next to me on the bedsheet we had laid out on his balcony.

He drew me closer by putting his arm around my shoulder. “You’re Liam Whitmore’s fiancée, honey,” he added with a smirk. I struck him on the shoulder, and

he laughed as he kissed the side of my head.

I looked up at the sky and felt him looking at me. He called my name in a serious voice after a while. “Sophie...”

I looked at him. “Yes?”

“Did I tell you that you are a blessing to me?” My heart is filled with love. “Nope. You didn’t tell me,” I responded in a humorous way.

He grinned a little. “Well, I’m telling you now. You are a blessing to me. You made this house come to life and took away the loneliness.”

I kissed his cheek as I leaned in. “Thanks.”

He kissed my cheek in reply. “No, thank you.”

“I can lay my life down for you if I have to,” he said firmly, with a commitment that almost made me cry.

“Oh, please do,” I said with a smile. “That way, I could have all your money.”

He thought that was funny. “I’ll make sure I die first so that my beautiful fiancée can have all my money.”

I laughed with him, but when I stopped laughing, I put my hand on top of his. “Liam, please don’t leave me.”

“I wouldn’t even think about it.”

“You better. Because if you ever did, I will hunt you down and kill you with my bare

hands.”

He laughed and said, “I’m sure you will.”

I grinned and put my head on his shoulder. He put his head on top of mine, and we both stopped talking.

I enquired after a minute had gone. “Have you come up with any names for the baby?”

“Didn’t you say you would name the child?” “Well...” I responded, feeling embarrassed. “I’m open to ideas.”

He chuckled softly and said something. “I thought of a name for a girl.” “What is it?”

“Lanky.”

“Lanky. Where did you get that? Did you use Google?”

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He added gently, “It was your mother’s name,” and then looked at me to see how I would respond.

“I’m sorry...what did you say?”

“I...um...well, you said your mother died while giving birth, so I did some research and found out that her name was Lanky. She was only twenty.”

His gaze moved over my face as my mouth was open, waiting for me to say something. He started to babble while I didn’t. “I’m sorry. I should have asked you before I found out all this. I thought you might want to know your mother’s name since you didn’t know anything about her and—”

I placed my lips on him, cutting him off as usual. A bit later, he kissed me back slowly and lovingly.

I drew back after softly biting his bottom lip. “You talk too much,” I said softly. His cheeks were a little rosy. “I’m sorry. I freaked out.”

“Thank you for finding out about her,” I said, tears welling up in my eyes for what he accomplished.

He kissed my forehead and wiped away my tears. “Anything for you, honey.”  
“Lanky...” I muttered, trying out that name. “Do you like it?”

He smiled and nodded. “I love it.” “What if it’s a boy?”

He shrugged his shoulders. “I haven’t thought about it.”

“What do you think of Beckham? I really like that name.” “Sounds good.”

“Lanky Whitmore...”

“Or Beckham Whitmore...” He said, and then he kissed me for a long time.

“Liam.” I gasped and opened my eyes wide. My chest was rising and falling as I breathed deeply. I was lying on a bed in a strange place. I saw the IV tubes that were hooked up to my arms.

What happened?

“Liam,” I muttered, and everything fell apart. Liam. I recall Blake shooting him.

NO.

I sat up straight, and my head was spinning from the rapid movement. No one was in the room. I was about to get out of bed when Alley came in through the door. Her eyes were full of tears. When she saw that I was awake and walking closer to her, she gave me a faint, sad grin and then hugged me tightly.

I wept as she stroked little circles on my back and wrapped my arms around her torso. “It’s okay...” She attempted to make me feel better.

“I didn’t even get to tell him I loved him,” I cried. “He said he loved me, and then he left.”

At that point, Alley drew back and held my cheeks. “Hey...look at me...” “He died because of me, Alley...he died...” I wept.

“No, he didn’t.”

My head turned quickly to her. “What?”

“He’s not dead, Sophie. He’s still alive.”

“No. Don’t make fun of me, Alley. Don’t give me false hope.”

“Really? No! He’s alive, Sophie. He’s still alive.”

“How can he be alive? I saw Blake shoot him in the heart!” Alley shook her head.

“No, he didn’t.”

“What do you mean?” I said, my brows furrowing. “How can this be?”

“Did you know Blake had a nervous disorder?” she said, and I remembered when he told me about it. I nodded, and she said. “His hands shook, and his aim wasn’t great as he raised the pistol to fire him. He didn’t get him in the heart, but he did hit him a few inches away from it.”

Ruby Garrison and his men got there just in time, as Liam had planned. You had passed out, as Ruby informed us.

“He’s not dead?”

She shook her head. “He’s alive but is having surgery right now. He needs prayers.”

This knowledge made my brain hurt. He’s still alive. Is this a miracle?

“I want to see him,” I informed her.

“He’s being operated on, Sophie. You can’t see him.”



“I want to see him!” I said, but as tears started to fall, my voice got lower. “I want to see him... please...”

She kissed me on the head. “He’s fine, Sophie. You need to rest. You can meet him later, okay?”

I bowed my head and glanced down at my tummy, where I put my hand. I looked at Alley, and she answered my question without me having to ask it. “The baby is fine.”

I nodded in relief, and she told me to lie down on the bed and relax. And she went away, and shortly I fell asleep.

Someone was caressing my hair as I woke up. I gently opened my eyes and saw Alley’s face.

She whispered quietly, “He wants to see you.” “Is he okay?”

She nodded. “Yes. He has had a successful operation. He wants to see you.”

I woke up and saw that the IV tubes that were linked to my arm were already gone.

Alley helped me get out of bed because I was still feeling weak. She took my hand and led me out of the room and down the hall to another room where Nathan and Saffron were waiting. They grinned when they saw me.

Nathan and Saffron both hugged me from the side, which made me feel lucky to have them in my life.

I smiled at them to reassure them and put my hand on the door handle. I took a deep breath, opened the door, and went inside, where I saw a big room.

When I saw Liam on the bed with a bandage over his left side of the chest, I sobbed. His hair was all over the place, and his eyes were closed.

He opened his eyes and smiled a little as I cried.

I raced to him with all my power and held him hard, weeping my heart out. He held my shoulder hard with his right hand, and my face was buried in the crook of his neck.

“Sophie,” he said softly, making me cry even more. I could feel my shoulder growing wet as tears fell from his eyes.

I was still weeping a minute later, not believing he was alive after I witnessed him die.

He gently pulled back and moved about on the bed to make room for me. He then motioned for me to sit next to him.

I sat down next to him, unsure of what to do. He stroked my hair and kissed my forehead slowly.

“I thought I lost you...” I wept again. “Why would you do this to me?”

“Well...you could have taken all my money. That would have been good for you,” he said with a laugh, lightening the situation.

In between my weeping, I let out a little laugh. “Yeah...”

“I love you, Liam,” I said in a whisper, and his hand stopped caressing my hair right away.

He let out a long sigh. "I love you too, Sophie." My heart skipped a beat. "Please say it again," I replied quietly.

He said in a sweet voice, "I love you, honey. More than you could ever know. I love you so much that I can't put it into words."

"Now, this sounds good," I muttered, which made him laugh quietly.

I looked up at him, and our lips gently met in a passionate kiss that made my heart skip a beat and my breath hitch. I kissed him while he grinned against my lips and put my hand over his cheek. Our tongues touched for a little time before I pulled back. The kiss didn't last long, yet it was long enough for us to pour our feelings into it. He kissed my forehead and mumbled. "I love you."

I muttered back, "I love you too," and put my head back on his chest.

He moved his hand from my hair to my tummy and stroked it in circles. "How's my Lanky doing?"

"She's fine...wait a minute. How do you know it's only Lanky? What if it's Beckham?"

He smiled. "I think it's Lanky," he said with a wink. "And I think it's Beckham."

He made a clicking sound with his tongue. "Okay, okay." "We'll see."

I lightly ran my fingertips over the bandage. "Is it still hurting?" "A little bit."

"I'm sorry. You had to do it because of me."

"Shut up!" he yelled at her. "I love you, Sophie. It was the least I could do for you."

“Least? You almost died for me!”

“I didn’t care what it cost, Sophie. I just wanted you to be safe.”

“And what about me? Do you think I would have lived without you? What about this child? Did you want to make him an orphan? I cried again.”

“No, Sophie. That wasn’t the plan. Blake called me there and told me to come alone. I told Ruby to follow me, but only after 15 minutes. So, while Blake was busy with me, they could all sneak up behind him. I never thought Blake would shoot me. You passed out, and that’s when they all came in.” “I still have to thank him.”

I wiped my tears away. “Don’t do it ever again, or I’ll kill you with my bare hands.”

He laughed. “I wouldn’t dare, sweetie.”

Someone knocked on the door interrupting us and I got down from the bed and told the guy to come in.

A stranger came in as the door opened. I didn’t know who he was since Liam appeared delighted to see me. “Ruby...”

Ruby smiled at me and said to Liam. “You scared all of us, buddy.”

“Because of you, I’m still alive.”

“Oh, no need for it, Liam. I was just helping my friend.”

“Thank you, Ruby. I really owe you.” Liam said this and then turned to me. “And Sophie, this is Ruby Garrison, the CEO of Garrison Holdings and my friend.”

I shook Ruby's hand and smiled back at him. "Thanks for keeping us safe."

"Oh, just drop it already," he muttered with a sigh and then laughed. "I'm tired of everyone thanking me."

We both smiled at him, and after saying a few more things to Liam, he departed. I then sat down next to Liam on the bed. "So...um...what about Blake?"

Liam's jaw tightened. "Don't worry about him; Ruby will take care of him."

He held my hand. "Did he hurt you?"

I shook my head. "No. He was more like taking care of me. The area where he kept me was nice, too. Some penthouse, and he made sure I was

having food and everything. But when you got there, he brought me to that strange old home in the woods.

He arched an eyebrow at me and said, "He really took care of you?"

"Yes. I think he really cared about me, but he was obsessed with me, which was a bad thing."

"Is he mentally sick or something?" Liam enquired.

I shrugged. "I don't know...maybe...because he really did take care of me. For example, when I wouldn't eat, he picked up the spoon and tried to feed me himself."

Liam frowned and pondered about something. "If he's mentally sick...and did all this because of his sickness, then...he needs treatment. It isn't fair to throw him in the prison directly."

“Um... maybe...”

I picked up Liam’s phone from the tiny table next to his bed and gave it to him. He phoned Ruby and instructed him to check on Blake first before doing anything else.

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At that point, I fell even more in love with him since he was so nice, and I hugged him, which surprised him.

“What?” He exclaimed in shock as he hugged me back.

“I love you,” I said, and he laughed a lot. “I love you too, Sophie.”

EIGHT MONTHS LATER...

Sophie’s point of view:

I muttered quietly, “Lanky...” as I looked down at my baby girl’s little, weak body as she cried. I kissed her forehead softly.

I looked up at Liam, who was standing next to me, and was too thrilled and startled to say anything. His mouth was slightly open, and his eyes were full of emotions as he looked at our infant.

“Can I h-hold her?” he managed to say.

I nodded and cautiously gave her to him. His fingers were practically shaking as he carefully held her, afraid he may drop her.

He smiled and gave out a little, frightened laugh. A tear ran down his face.

“She is still crying...” He grimaced. “Why won’t she stop crying? Is something wrong?” I chuckled at him instead of answering.

“Didn’t you learn biology in school?” His face twisted in pain. “I hate biology.” I laughed and said, “No wonder you don’t know anything.” This made him frown.

The nurse came and asked Liam if she could give her the baby so she could wash her. Liam nodded and gave her to her. The nurse took her away, and he bent down and kissed my forehead for a long time. “I love you.”

I grinned. “I love you too,” he said, and then he kissed me.

“I told you it would be Lanky,” he said with a chuckle. I rolled my eyes. “Yeah, whatever...”

“Congratulations!” Alley said as she rushed in the door with Nathan and Saffron behind her with her baby son in her arms.

“That’s the tenth time you’ve said congratulations.” I rolled my eyes as she hugged me and gave her son to Nathan.

We all agreed to have a modest celebration at Liam’s house with only family. Alley’s family, Liam and Nathan’s parents, and ourselves. A week after, I had Lanky.

Nathan questioned me, “Where’s Liam?” and I searched about but couldn’t see him. “I don’t know...he was here a little while ago...”

“Don’t worry, I’ll find him.” He moved past me to look for him.

Lanky was in Margaret’s arms, or should I say “mother,” as she urged me to call her. I couldn’t be happier.

Everyone sat down on the couch and talked to each other while Helen brought them refreshments. And God knows where Liam and Nat were.



I said I was sorry and went up to hunt for them. I was about to knock into Liam when I turned my back on everyone. He grabbed my forearm to support me.

“Hello, Sophie,” he said gently so that no one else would hear.

“Where were you?” I whispered and yelled.

He didn’t listen to me and took my left hand in his. Then he pulled the engagement band off my ring finger.

“What are you doing?” I inquired, confused by what he was doing.

He said, “The ring looks boring, doesn’t it? I think we should change it.”

I hit his hand away. “Are you crazy? You can’t just throw away an artificial ring. It’s Ruby and diamond for God’s sake!”

“You can keep it if you want, but wear it on a different finger.” He put the ring on my right hand’s ring finger.

“Why?”

“Cause I am trying to propose you for marriage, honey. You are making it difficult.” He whined in a childish way.

I gasped and laughed a little. “What’s that?”

Nat was there too, watching us from a distance with a slight smile on his face. Everyone else had also gotten quiet and was watching us.

Helen came out of the kitchen with a tray of food and Liam mumbled something funny to Nat. “Brother, please take the tray from her before she drops it in shock.”

Helen was confused by all she saw. “What’s going on?”

Nat grabbed the tray from her and walked into the kitchen to store it. Then he came back out.

Liam took a big breath and held both of my hands in his. “I read all of my romance novels again last night, but they didn’t help me get ready for this moment.” He looked deeply into my eyes.

Okay, he means it. I guess.

“I love you, Sophie. I know I’ve said this a lot before, but it never seems like enough. Thank you for coming into my life, for giving birth to Lanky, for loving me, and for giving me a chance to love you.”

I started to cry, and to my astonishment, he too had tears in the corners of his eyes. He smiled tightly, pushing back his emotions.

“Marry me, Sophie, and I’ll give you all the love and happiness in the world. I need you, just you, by my side as my wife.”

He took another long, anxious breath and looked across to Nat, who took a little box out of his pocket and threw it to Liam, who caught it with no trouble.

He dropped down on one knee, holding the box in one hand and my left hand in the other. “Please, Sophie, will you marry me?”

I grinned big and nodded my head, even though I was crying. “Yes!”

He pulled the ring out of the box, slipped it down my ring finger, kissed my knuckles, and then stood up and hugged me tightly. And everyone clapped.

He kissed the side of my head and said, “I love you.”

“I love you too,” I murmured back, enjoying the feeling of being in his arms.

“I knew it!” Saffron’s statement made us draw back. “I knew you two would get married one day.”

Everyone laughed at her as she bounced up and down with joy and her face lit up with enthusiasm.

She complimented us, and Liam bent down and kissed her forehead. “Thanks, best friend.” She grinned at him, and he winked back.

Liam came out of the bathroom and sat next to me on the bed as I was breastfeeding Lanky. He kissed me on the forehead and then Lanky on the forehead.

He put his head on my shoulder and quietly watched Lanky. I saw the faint scar on the left side of his chest because he wasn’t wearing a shirt. It made me sigh and brought back thoughts of what occurred. I lightly touched it with my finger, and he looked at me.

“Liam...” I said softly. “Yes, dear?”

“Are we going to be okay?”

“Yes, Sophie. Why are you saying that?” “I don’t want to lose you, Liam or Lanky.”

He held my hand and intertwined our fingers. “You won’t, honey. You won’t.”

“Blake...”

“He’s far away...he can’t reach us now. Plus, he’s in the rehab centre,” he said to me.

After that, I had nightmares for a few weeks, but Liam was there to comfort me and hug me close.

The dreams are long gone now, yet there is still some terror that won't go away.

“And if something like this happens again, please don't plan anything so stupid. Ask Nat, he has better ideas that don't involve dying.” I said this to make him laugh.

“I swear that wasn't part of the plan... it just happened, okay?” I rolled my eyes. “Whatever.”

He kissed my neck and then kissed all over it. I gently pushed him away. “I see a kid in here,” I remarked with a smile.

“That's asleep and too young to understand anything,” he muttered in a husky voice as he nibbled on my ear.

I pushed him away and picked up Lanky, which made him moan in displeasure.

I put her in her crib when I was done nursing her and she was already asleep. I kissed her forehead and then walked back outside.

As soon as I closed the door, Liam rushed up behind me and picked me up in his arms like a bride, making me scream.

“Got you!” He said as he walked back to our bedroom. I lightly punched his shoulder.

He said in a husky voice, “You are mine for the rest of the night,” as he put me on the bed and got on top of me.

“No,” I said, trying to make him mad. “I'm going to bed.”

“Oh, you aren't.” He put his nose in the crook of my neck. His fingers gently slid under my t-shirt and rubbed my waist in circles. “I'm going to make love to you over and over again, honey.”

When he put his lips over mine, my legs tightened and I stopped protesting. It was if my body was responding to what he was saying.

He whispered against my lips, “You and Lanky are a blessing to me, Sophie. I love you both.” I kissed him back.

THE END