

# The Day I Kissed An Older Man By Cher the Cherished

## Chapter 501

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Rosie would never refuse an instruction from the man she loved, and she nodded demurely as she said, "I will, Lucas! Rest assured I'll bring Anya back!"

Her heart was abuzz with joy because she felt that Lucas's willingness to assign a task as important as taking care of Anya meant that she was a special person in Lucas's heart.

Corinne, on the other hand, was just a shabby little secretary doing odd jobs.

After Rosie left, Lucas glanced at the people all around him. His refined and elegant gaze was very polite, yet it belied the annoyance in his expression. "Do you all intend to continue being a busybody?"

Everyone was silent, but they soon left sensibly.

Lucas glanced at Corinne and said, "Miss Corinne, how do you feel after seeing someone you

don't wish to see?"

Corinne could hear the subtle sarcasm in Lucas's tone but answered calmly, "I don't feel

anything."

Lucas curled his lips into an expressionless smirk. "You're very honest."

Corinne was starting to get bored, so she said to him, "Mister Lucas, if there's nothing you

need me to do, then can I get off work right now and go

home?"

Lucas narrowed his eyes and looked at her. "How are you going to leave this place all by yourself when there aren't any taxis around here?"

Corinne knew that it was not easy to find a taxi around those parts, so she planned to ask Aaron to pick her up. However, she had to keep her connection to the Newmoon Group a secret from Lucas, lest she lose the chance to continue being the secretary.

“You don’t need to worry about me, Mister Lucas. I can book a taxi using an e-hailing application.”

“E-hailing application?” Lucas snorted softly. “You need to be aware that you’re now a full-time employee of the Rivera Group. If something happens to you when you’re on the way home, the company will have to take responsibility and we’ll be subject to public backlash. Must you do things that will cause trouble for our company?”

Corinne’s lips twitched. ‘Is he cursing me? Why is he so sure that I’ll get into an accident?’

Besides, if he was genuinely worried about the personal safety of his employees, he could always get a car to send her home. The fact that he did not do so made it abundantly clear that he simply did not want to let her have her way, rather than being worried about her safety.

“Fine. I’ll wait until the party is over and leave with you.

Lucas grunted indifferently and walked away.

Corinne followed silently behind him when she passed by the bathroom in front of her. “Sir, I’d like to go to the bathroom.”

“Go ahead.”

Corinne went into the bathroom, locked the door, and exhaled deeply. Thin, dense beads of cold sweat began to drip from her forehead. As she sat on the edge of the toilet seat, she gently lifted her dress and saw a scrape on her thigh just above her knee.

It was already bleeding from when she climbed the window and across the wall from Cole’s room to the other room. The wound was caused by a scratch from the edge of a windowsill that had not been repaired for years. It hurt

badly, but she did her best to endure it because she was worried that someone might suspect her of climbing the window.

After cleaning the wound and taking care of it, Corinne came out of the bathroom.

However, Lucas was nowhere to be seen. Clearly, he would not wait for such an insignificant secretary like her at the bathroom door.

Moreover, Lucas hated her from the bottom of his heart. In any case, she was in no mood to look for Lucas at that moment and decided to just head downstairs so she could find a place to sit and rest. No one could tell that she had an injury to her thigh from the way she walked leisurely toward the stairs.

All of a sudden, a rough and slightly cold palm appeared out of nowhere and landed on her shoulder, holding her down.

'Who is it now?' Corinne thought to herself in shock.

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"Corinne! It's you!"

Jason's handsome face startled her and she finally heaved a sigh of relief.

"Ah, kind sir!"

"What's wrong?" Jason asked with a smile, "Who did you think I was?"

"Nobody. I was just startled when you placed your hand on me all of a sudden."

Hehe! What am I afraid of, anyway? Was I expecting Jeremy to come back and look for me? I'm just overthinking things!"

Jason walked gracefully to her side with a smile on his face. "Do you remember when we last met? I asked you if we'd be able to meet again, and you said it's all up to fate. Since you and I ran into each other here today, does that mean fate has plans for you and me?"

Corinne laughed heartily. "You're right, it's quite a coincidence!"

Jason frowned and pretended to be unhappy at her remark. "Don't just brush me off like that! Aren't you happy to see me?"

Corinne yawned. "Why would I be?"

Jason sighed, and leaned closer to her all of a sudden, "I'm very happy to see you though."

Corinne remained calm when facing the charming face that appeared suddenly in front of her. "Oh, is that so?"

There was a sparkle in Jason's enchanting eyes, and he gazed deeply at her eyes for about half a minute but found himself unable to bewitch her with his charm.

He could only smile helplessly at her and say, "You were always dressed casually when I saw you all those times before, and this is my first time seeing you dress up like this. You look

stunning."

"Thanks."

Corinne went downstairs and looked around. There was no longer an empty place in the banquet hall. Every sofa or table or chair in the reception area was filled with people chatting in small groups. The last thing she wanted was to sit in those places and bother the conversations or become the subject of those people's conversations.

Jason still followed her with a smile as she walked down the stairs, and she wondered if he had nothing better to do.

Corinne turned around and asked, "Have you seen Lucas, kind sir?"

Jason cocked his eyebrow. "Why would you be looking for Lucas?"

"No particular reason. I came here with him today, since I'm now working as his secretary, and he's my boss."

Jason was rather surprised to hear that. "When did you start?"

"Just two days ago."

“Oh? Is it for Nellie Nymphaea’s painting?” Jason looked at her drily.

It was Jason who revealed to her the relationship between Nellie Nymphaea and Lucas, so there was no need to-and no point of-hiding her reasons for working under Lucas.

“Yes. I hope you’ll avoid talking about this matter in front of him.”

“My lips are sealed.” Jason smiled.

“Thanks, kind sir!”

“Just call me Jason, will you? It’s frustrating to hear you call me that all the time!”

Corinne thought over his request and decided to grant him his wish since the information he provided her had turned out to be correct.

“Okay! Thank you, Jason.”

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Jason was dazed for a moment when she called him that. Then, he smiled with satisfaction and said, “You’re welcome, Corinne. I just rushed over here from work, and Zeke called to tell me that they were drinking at Grace Garden. Lucas was probably invited too. Would you like to come with me and look for him?”

Lucas had very likely gone to meet Zeke and the others, and Corinne was confident that Jeremy would not be around because she had earlier confirmed that Jeremy had left.

Having considered all that, Corinne nodded and said, “Sure. I’ll go with you.”

Lunar Century Manor’s Grace Garden was a small garden separate from the manor. It was a very quiet place since it was far from the banquet hall.

Corinne walked into Grace Garden with Jason, and as soon as she entered the room, she saw three men sitting around playing some cards.

Jason asked with a smile, "What are you boys playing?"

"Jason! You came just in time! Care to go for a round?"

Zeke cocked his eyebrow after dealing his card and was stunned for a moment when he saw Corinne standing right beside Jason. He narrowed his eyes incredulously and joked, "Your companion looks a little familiar!"

Jason smiled and explained truthfully, "Don't get me wrong, my companion was Angie-my secretary. Corinne came here as Jason's companion. I ran into her earlier when she was

looking for Lucas, so I brought her here with me."

Zeke became even more confused as he turned his head to look at Lucas. "Why is she looking for you?"

"She's my secretary now," Lucas answered calmly.

'She ran away from the Holdens, and now she's hired as Lucas's secretary? Tsk, tsk, tsk! Things are getting more and more interesting!'

Zeke stared at Corinne, whom he had not seen in a long time, and turned his head before raising his chin towards the floor-to-ceiling window. He then said, "Hey, Jeremy! An old friend of yours is here. Aren't you going to catch up on the good old days?"

Corinne's calm expression stiffened after hearing what Zeke said. 'Jeremy hasn't left yet?'

She turned her head and saw Jeremy leaning lazily on the wicker chair by the window. He had a cigarette between his long fingers with smoke wafting through the air. He stared at them like a cold, hard sculpture.

He had been in Lunar Century Manor all along, but he simply did not participate in the card.

game.

By the time Corinne came back to her senses, Jason had already ushered her to the sofa. She sat silently and watched the men playing cards, but she could not shake off the cold gaze that

was fixated on her.

She felt as if she was sitting on pins and needles... With ants in her pants, and a fishbone stuck

in her throat.

Moreover, she was beginning to feel a little tired at that moment. Pregnancy itself made a woman tired easily, and her wounded leg made her entire body uncomfortable too.

Jason saw her discomfort and asked, "Are you all right, Corinne? Do you feel unwell?"

Corinne shook her head. "No, I'm just a little thirsty."

Jason immediately got up and poured her a glass of water. "Here you go."

Corinne took the glass and said, "Thank you."

Jason was very thoughtful to have provided warm water for her. She felt slightly better after drinking the entire glass.

After Jason sat back down, he leaned into her ear all of a sudden and whispered, "I can send you home if you feel unwell. You're probably on your period now, right? Is your discomfort because of your period?"

Corinne was taken aback for a moment after Jason's surprising remark. Periods were part and parcel of being a woman, and she was surprised not because she was shy, but because she found it a little strange.

She frowned, looked at the charming man beside her, and asked, "Why do you remember my menstrual period?"

Jason chuckled, leaned close to her ear, and whispered, "Did you forget your first visit to my gallery? You felt uncomfortable because you had your period, and that day was four months ago today."

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Corinne's lips twitched. "You have nothing better to do, don't you, Jason? Do you have so much time on your hands that you can remember these things?"

Jason said softly, "It's not like I remembered it on purpose! I just couldn't forget that day

because I consider it our first date."

Corinne was speechless. 'Date? What date?! I was married at the time! Even though I was just cooperating with Jeremy, going on a date with you would be equivalent to cheating!"

She did not want to talk to Jason anymore. That rascal was teasing her at every Unfortunately for him, he teased the wrong person.

Corinne would never fall for that!

turn!

Over at the other end, Lucas adjusted the order of the cards and looked up to see Corinne whispering so closely to Jason. He frowned, and a touch of contempt manifested at the corners. of his eyes.

Anya's best friend, Rosie, often mentioned how much of a flirt Corinne was, and that she would flirt around whenever the opportunity arose. He had always been skeptical about that and believed that Corinne was not that fickle a woman, but if Jason a veteran in the dating scene – would be so meek toward Corinne, then it was clear that Corinne had certain tricks up

her sleeve.

Lucas could not help but feel disgusted at his newly hired young secretary.

At that moment, a crisp melody accompanied by short vibrating bursts was heard.

Lucas glanced at the caller ID on the phone, picked it up and asked, "What's wrong? I'll be there right away!"

After ending the call, he raised his eyes to look at Corinne. "Miss Corinne."

Corinne put down the water glass and got up. "Yes, sir?"



Lucas then instructed her, "Come here and take over for a bit. I need to take care of something right now."

Corinne did not want to, but she had no other choice except to reply, "Sure."

She went up and took the cards from Lucas before sitting in the only empty seat at the table.

After Lucas left, Zeke's Intrigue was piqued, and he raised his eyebrows playfully with a naughty smile on his handsome face. He asked Corinne in a childish tone, "Pretty brave of you to take over from him. Do you even know how to play bridge?"

Corinne said, "A little."

Zeke smiled sinisterly, "Go ahead and give it a try! Don't cry if you end up losing all of your boss's funds later."

Corinne sighed. "Well, I'll try my best."

After Zeke played his card, he cocked his chin at her and said, "Your turn!"

Corinne looked at the cards that Zeke played and adjusted the order of her cards before playing

her card.

Zeke saw that she played her card correctly, so it seemed as though she did understand the rules. Although Jason was also at the card table, he did not enter any bids and merely played his cards according to turn.

Gerald and Zeke were on the same side, and though they did not speak, they went all out playing their cards. After several rounds, Corinne played her last trump card and won by surprise.

The three men at the card table looked at her with all sorts of expressions, ranging from admiration to suspicion.

Her way of playing cards was unlike that of a novice who only knew a little bit about the game. More astonishingly, Corinne seemed to be bored the entire time and even yawned sleepily, almost as though she was absent-minded throughout the game.

Despite all that, she still ended up securing victory. It was almost like a silent expression of contempt for the three men.

Zeke frowned and looked at Corinne. “You can’t be serious, right? You said you only knew ‘at little’ about bridge!”

Corinne smiled slightly, “I’m telling the truth. I got lucky because Mister Lucas was dealt a good hand.”

Zeke laughed and said, “She’s quite a modest girl, isn’t she? Well, you need to rely on your luck for the next game! How about we up the stakes since you’re so good at playing?”

Corinne did not fall for it. “If you want to bet big, you can wait to bet with Mister Lucas when he returns. I’m just his subordinate. I have neither the money nor the right. I’m only responsible for ensuring his money remains intact, so no, I’m not going to up the ante.”

Zeke was not about to let her off so easily. “It’s fine. We won’t use money in this bet! The next one will be your bet. You can represent yourself to gamble with us.”

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Corinne shook her head. “No.”

Zeke was unhappy. “Tch! What an interesting personality you have for a secretary! Once your boss comes back, I’ll ask to borrow you for my company so you’ll become my secretary. Then, I’ll make sure to teach you a good lesson! Lucas will be happy to agree, don’t you think?”

Corinne was speechless. ‘It’s possible!’

The reason Lucas kept her around was mostly because she negotiated the big cooperation with Abura. Since the contract was already signed, he could easily replace her with someone else for the follow-up.

Lucas’s attitude had made it clear that he did not like her all that much, so he could just pass her to Zeke as a favor if he asked. However, Corinne could not let that happen.

Corinne needed to stay in the Rivera Group so she could investigate the true reason why her mother was kicked out of the Riveras all those years ago.

Zeke's aggressiveness put a bit of pressure on Corinne.

After thinking about it, Corinne asked, "What huge bet do you plan on making?"

There was a successful smile on Zeke's smug face and he began to explain his bet in a very 'considerate' tone.

"I know it's not easy for you to find a new job, and you don't have much money now, so how about we bet on a striptease? Whoever loses would have to do a striptease right here. How does that sound?"

After hearing that suggestion, Jason spoke up for Corinne in a very gentlemanly manner. "You're going too far, Zeke. Corinne isn't good at playing cards, so don't use that to bully her."

Zeke did not take Jason seriously. "Does she look like the kind of person who doesn't know how to play cards? I might be the one who's going to lose! Then you'll all be feasting your eyes as I do a striptease for all of you!"

Gerald retorted, "No one wants to see you do a striptease."

Zeke snorted with a smile and had a confident smile on his face. "Miss Corinne will do the honor then!"

Jason ignored Zeke, turned his head, and said to Corinne, "Don't force yourself to do it, Corinne. You can refuse to play if you don't want to make this bet."

Corinne stroked her chin, thought about it for a moment, and finally sighed helplessly. "Fine. I'll make a bet with you, Mister Zeke. If I win, I want you to do the striptease on the banquet hall's dance floor. Any objections?"

Both Gerald and Jason looked at Corinne with admiration. They did not think that she would be so brave as to accept the bet.

Zeke smiled indifferently and said, "Wonderful! I love it when things get exciting, but I'm afraid that you might not be so lucky in the end."

Corinne did not bother with any useless remarks and asked directly, "Is the decider going to be through one hand only?"

Zeke curled his lips and nodded, "Yes!"

Corinne said calmly, "I hope you'll go easy on me then, Mister Zeke. Go ahead and shuffle the

cards."

As soon as she agreed to bet with Zeke, she sensed a cold and stern gaze from another direction tightening over her neck and strangling it like a steel wire.

She did not know if she had sensed it wrongly, but whatever she felt at that moment gave her a tremendous amount of pressure.

Zeke shuffled the cards and dealt them.

Corinne opened her hand and glanced at it, only to realize how dire the situation was. The starting hand was very unfavorable, and her hand was far worse than the previous one.

The cards Zeke dealt to her were tricky and rather difficult to play.

Corinne frowned. She knew how to play bridge, but the quality of her hand made it incredibly difficult to win. After a few rounds, none of the cards she played went smoothly and her position was extremely disadvantageous.

The outcome was already clear, and Zeke smiled provocatively.

"Why aren't you dealing your card? Is it because you don't have a high card?"

Corinne glanced at him calmly. She had to consider which card to play while also predicting the trend of the opponent's next card and seizing all possible chances to turn the tables. She lacked high cards, and any mistake she made would cause her to lose the entire game. It was therefore all the more important that she had to be cautious.

At that moment, the sofa beside her suddenly sank. Someone had taken a seat next to her, and

there was a faint smell of tobacco from that

person.

Corinne was startled because she knew without looking that the person was Jeremy. His

sudden decision to sit there with him made her confused, and she began to have goosebumps on her arms.

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Corinne thought was interrupted by Jeremy's sudden movement. She secretly took a deep breath to compose herself. Then, she pulled out a card and was just about to place it on the

table.

Suddenly, Jeremy's hand roughly forced her to put the card she wanted to place on the table back into her hand before picking another card and throwing that one onto the table.

Corinne was stunned. However, realization dawned on her when she saw the card Jeremy picked. 'Yes. Why didn't I think of that? I'll definitely have a bigger chance of winning by letting go of that card.'

She cocked her head to look at Jeremy, not understanding why he was helping her when he completely ignored her earlier.

Their eyes met.

"What are you looking at me for? Focus on the cards!" said Jeremy harshly.

Corinne was speechless. "Tsk. Why's he being so mean to me?"

She was grateful for his help and wanted to thank him for his unexpected act of kindness, but she changed her mind after that.

Pouting, she turned her head away and looked at the cards in her hand with a frown on her face. 'Gah, I'm so annoyed!'

Everyone was a little surprised at Jeremy's action but at the same time, found it reasonable.

Zeke and Gerald looked at each other with their eyebrows raised. Then they turned to look at Corinne with mixed emotions.

Corinne who had been immune to his advances-was calm and peaceful throughout the entire card game. In fact, she took everything in stride with nary a frown on her face. Then came Jeremy who only had to sit beside her to make her all worked up.

'She looks so cute, all huffy and puffy like that. How come she's never like that with me?

With Jeremy's guidance, Corinne found it much easier to win the game. Occasionally, he would rearrange the cards for her and whisper to tell her what to take note of. He would talk to her in a neutral tone but for some reason, Corinne would still feel pressured by his presence.

Her priority then was to win the card game. Therefore, she was willing to put down her pride and follow whatever Jeremy told her to do.

After a few rounds of the game, Zeke realized the ship had sailed and that he was not going to win anymore. so he said, "Jeremy, do you know it's not gentlemanly to interfere with other

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people's card games?"

Jeremy was unfazed by his pointed remark. He glanced coldly at him and said, "Well, do you know it's not gentlemanly to cheat in card games?"

Zeke spent his free time learning magic tricks and one of them was sleight of hand in card games.

Having been exposed by his good friend, Zeke simply smiled. He did not see anything wrong in what he did. "Jeremy, just which side are you on? Corinne is now working for Lucas and she has nothing to do with you, so why are you helping her?"

Corinne did not know how to react to Zeke's words. Him saying that was as good as putting a spotlight on the fact that Corinne and Jeremy were trying to avoid each other. It had the effect. of changing the atmosphere in the room.

Jeremy picked up the glass of water on the table and took a sip emotionlessly. "It's not that I want to help her. It's just that... I really want to see you do a strip dance."

Zeke frowned and covered his chest in mock horror. "Jeremy, I only see you as a good friend so don't even think of..."

Jeremy's face darkened and he threw Zeke a disgusted look. "Cut it out," he spat coldly.

Corinne looked at the dramatic Zeke and then cocked her head at Jeremy. She realized he had drunk from her glass-the one that Jason poured for her.

'Why's he drinking from my glass again?'

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'Isn't he a germaphobe?' thought Corinne with a frown. She found the whole thing weird but told herself to focus on the game instead.

"Hurry up and play the cards," she said out loud.

In the end, she put down her last card on the table and won the final round.

She raised her eyebrow and said, "I look forward to your strip dance, Mister Callen."

The smile instantly disappeared from Zeke's face.

"Yeah, Zeke. You're the one who said you'd put on a strip show for us if you lose. I hope you don't go back on your words," said Jason with an expression that said he was enjoying the situation.

Zeke crossed his arms and scoffed, "Jason, are you or are you not my friend? Why do you look so happy to see me lose?"

"You have no one but yourself to blame!" said Gerald coldly.

Zeke pretended to be hurt. "You too, Gerald?"

Jason and Gerald continued to make fun of Zeke when suddenly, Corinne heard Jeremy whispering coldly into her ear. "Lady Luck must be smiling down on you today, Miss Carew."

Corinne was stunned. She did not turn to look at him.

Instead, she replied in a small voice, "Yes, she must, but I still have to thank you for helping

me out."

"Aren't you old enough to know that the banker always has the upper hand in a card game? How can you agree to play with Zeke when you're not even sure that you can win?"

"I had no choice but to play with him since I didn't want to be his secretary."

Jeremy stayed silent for a minute and then he took a sip of another water. "So you're saying you only want to be Lucas' secretary?"

Corinne nodded honestly. "Yes. That's correct."

Jeremy did not say anything else. Instead, his hand tightened around the glass, making his knuckles even more pronounced. In fact, he held on so tightly to the glass that it looked about to shatter into a million pieces.

Corinne suddenly felt a cold vibe swirling around her, making her subconsciously move away from Jeremy. That little movement of hers did not escape Jeremy's vision, and it hurt him to no end to see her reacting like that.

At that moment, Gerald got up from the table in a bid to drag Zeke-who was trying to escape -to the dance floor to do his strip dance.

"Come on, Zeke. Don't be a sore loser. You need to uphold your end of the bargain," Gerald said in a jesting tone.

Jason smiled and said, "Corinne, Jeremy. Do you want to join us in the banquet hall to watch. Zeke's strip dance?"

Jeremy did not make to get up. Although he said he wanted to watch Zeke's strip dance a few moments ago, he was not actually interested in it.



Corinne, however, immediately got up. “Sure thing! Looks like it’s the guests’ lucky day to be able to witness Zeke’s show.”

“Tsk tsk tsk. You naughty people. I never knew you guys were so interested in my naked body. You dogs,” said Zeke cheekily.

Everyone was speechless.

The corners of Corinne’s lips twitched a few times. ‘I can’t believe he still has the mood to joke

around like that.’

Gerald pushed Zeke to the middle of the dance floor in the banquet hall. The couples who were dancing the waltz did not know what was happening, but they all stopped and gave way to Zeke when they saw him along with Jeremy, Gerald, and Jason standing there.

There was a stubborn emotion on Zeke’s yuppie and handsome face, but that smile looked

even sadder than if he was to cry.

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Zeke, in his all-white tailored suit, stood proudly in the middle of the dance floor like a

handsome knight in shining armor. No one except for Corinne and the rest of the group knew what he was going to do.

Jason called one of the waiters who was carrying around a tray of red wine in his hand over. He then picked up a glass of red wine and gestured to the waiter using his chin, signaling him to offer the wine to each of his friends.

Gerald and Jeremy both picked up a glass, clinked them together, and stood waiting to watch Zeke’s performance.

Corinne shook her head at the waiter. “Thank you, but I don’t drink.”

Jason smiled. “Bring this lady a glass of juice instead.”

“Yes, Mister Talbot,” the waiter replied with a nod. He then went to do as he was asked.

Jason took the opportunity to stand beside Corinne. He put his lips close to her ear and whispered mischievously, “Corinne, do you usually not drink?”

“Well, that really depends on my mood,” Corinne answered lightly.

Jason raised his eyebrow and there was curiosity and interest in his alluring eyes. “Do you drink when you’re in a good mood or in a bad mood?”

“Both.”

Jason smiled. “If that’s the case, can I take you out for a drink sometime?”

Corinne looked sideways at his alluring face. She wanted to tell him to stop flirting with her. However, as soon as she turned around, she accidentally saw Jeremy looking over at them with narrowed eyes. The look in his eyes was sharp, dark, and terrifying.

A weird feeling bubbled up inside Corinne. She quickly turned her head away and stopped talking to Jason.

At that moment, the piano music in the banquet hall had given way to a sexy song.

Gerald—with the wine still in his hand—started swaying to the beat of the music.

“Zeke, you should move your booty now!”

Zeke made a ‘tsk’ sound, raised his hand, and flipped his hair with it.

It was now or never. There was no more holding back.

“Fine, whatever. I’ll dance! I’m manly enough to not be threatened by this, and to prove I’m

not a sore loser, I’ll put on the best strip show you guys have ever seen!”

He then wiggled off his suit jacket. Then, twisting to the beat of the music he held his suit jacket high up in the air and twirled it around a few times before throwing it to the audience.

The girl who caught the suit jacket started blushing while her friends screamed. enthusiastically. Some of them even fought over who got to sniff the suit jacket.

Jason did not feel embarrassed at the lack of response from Corinne. Instead, he clinked glasses with Gerald and Jeremy before taking a sip of the wine. He was enjoying both the wine

and Zeke's sexy moves.

Corinne, too, was enjoying the show so much so that she could not help but smile and laugh at Zeke's antics. She was so into the performance that she did not realize someone was staring at her coldly from the side.

Zeke was completely half-naked by then. His broad shoulders, tiny waist and eight-packs looked exceptionally seductive under the limelight. His pure magnetism drew in all the girls' attention. Although shy, they still could not help but watch enraptured at his dancing like a

moth to a flame.

His dance moves became increasingly erotic. The next moment, he winked at the girls hanging around the dance floor before unbuckling his belt so that he could take off his pants.

Suddenly...

Click!

Pitch-black darkness descended over the banquet. Everyone was shocked and they all started

to panic.

'Is this a blackout?'

"What's going on?"

"Did the electricity trip?"

"It's so dark. What should I do? I'm afraid of the dark..."

Some of them started to jostle each other and Corinne was forced to take a step back, causing her to nearly fall. However, at the last minute, she managed to grab Jason's arm to prevent herself from falling.

She wore high heels which she was not used to, so her sense of balance was a little off. She shuddered to think what would happen to her and her baby if she was to fall. What happened if no one saw her fall due to the darkness and a stampede occurred?

Corinne grabbed Jason's arm tightly to balance herself.

"Jason, please let me hold on to you for a while."

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Jason did not answer her, but he did not shake her hands off either.

After a while, there was finally some light. The manor's butler came rushing into the banquet hall with a flashlight in his hand.

"Dear guests, please do not panic. It's just a circuit trip. We've already asked someone to fix it, and the light will come back soon enough," announced the butler in a bid to reassure everyone.

"Please fix it as soon as possible. My girlfriend is afraid of the dark."

"Ugh. That really gave us a fright."

"It's okay. It's okay. There's no need to be scared. It's just a circuit trip."

After a minute or so, the lights in the banquet hall came back on. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief and went back to what they were doing.

Unfortunately, Zeke—who was still standing in the middle of the dance floor—had already put on his clothes and was tying up his tie.

He smirked at his friends and said, "Sorry guys. I finished the strip show when the electricity was out. Too bad you all didn't get to see it."

Jason, Gerald, Jeremy, and Corinne were all speechless. In fact, Corinne heavily suspected that

Zeke was the one behind the blackout. Otherwise, it was too much of a coincidence for the circuit to trip just when he was going to take off his pants.

It was not that she really wanted to see Zeke naked. She just thought it was a pity that he did not get the full punishment when he was the one who deliberately egged her on to raise the bet during the card game.

Since the lights had come back on, Corinne let go of Jason's arm. She then looked up at him and said, "Thank you. Earlier..."

She stopped talking mid-sentence because when she looked up, it was not Jason's face she saw but Jeremy's. His face was emotionless and cold, as usual.

'Jeremy? How could it be him? He wasn't standing here before the blackout.'

It never crossed Corinne's mind that the man she had grabbed in the dark would be Jeremy. She instinctively took a step back to get away from him.

However, coincidentally at that moment, the waiter who Jason had asked to bring a glass of juice for Corinne was coming up from behind her with that glass of juice in his hand. The waiter did not expect Corinne to step back and was caught off guard, causing the tray in his hand to nearly fall onto Corinne.

"Look out!"

Jeremy pulled Corinne into his embrace in the nick of time, and that was how Corinne was able to avoid knocking over the waiter, who at the same time managed to stabilize the tray in his

hand.

Not only did Corinne not get away from Jeremy, but she was actually closer to him more than ever. Her cheeks were squished against his strong chest, and she could feel the air thickening

with tension.

"Jeremy!" shouted Anya suddenly.

Her voice pulled Corinne out of her trance, and she looked to where Anya's voice came from.

Anya was standing not far away from them with Joey in her arms. She blinked innocently and frowned. Lucas and Rosie were also beside her, and the two of them were staring daggers at

Corinne.

In that instant, Corinne quickly pulled herself away from Jeremy's embrace to make room for Anya and Joey.

Anya walked over to Jeremy and said gently, "Jeremy, there was a blackout. Both Joey and I were so scared and he kept crying for you."

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Wanting Jeremy to carry him, Joey opened up his chubby little arms and kept calling out for Jeremy in that baby voice of his.

"Dada, Dada."

Seeing that, the guests began to whisper among themselves.

"Is that Miss Anya's and Mister Jeremy's kid?"

"I think so. He's a spitting image of Miss Anya."

"They're not even married yet. How can they have a kid together?"

"Why not? I mean, they've been together for the longest time and the only reason they're not married to each other is because both of their parents objected to them being together. Having a kid is just one of those sooner or later things since they're so madly in love with each other."

"Hey, that kid is so cute!"

Corinne began to feel like she was the third wheel in the situation, so she stepped a bit further from Jeremy.

Lucas must have thought the same as her as he suddenly said, "Miss Carew, come over here. We're leaving soon."

Corinne was relieved to know she could finally leave the party. She walked over to Lucas and said, "Yes, Mister Lucas."

Rosie stood in front of Lucas and said longingly, "Lucas, you're leaving so soon?"

"Yeah. You stay here and take care of Anya for me."

"Okay. Don't worry, Lucas. You can leave her to me!"

Rose nodded and agreed without hesitation. She then threw a warning glance at Corinne.

Corinne did not take it to heart. She simply followed Lucas out of the noisy banquet hall.

Jason raised his glass and took a sip of the red wine as he watched Corinne walk out of the banquet hall.

Zeke suddenly waved his hand in front of him. "Why do you keep staring at her? Jason, you were very nice to Corinne tonight so much so that I'm starting to wonder if you have a crush on her."

Jason smiled. "And what if I do?"

Zeke was stunned. He exchanged glances with Gerald. Both of them thought of the same thing.

"Jason, she used to be Jeremy's wife! It's not worth breaking up our bromance for a woman."

Jason simply smiled nonchalantly at Zeke. "Whose wife did you say Corinne was?"

Zeke looked to where Jeremy was standing.

At that moment, Jeremy was busy with Anya and Joey so he could not extricate himself from

them.

Zeke thought about it and shrugged. "I get your point. It's obvious Jeremy and Corinne have nothing to do with each other anymore."

The smile on Jason's lips became even deeper. "You've got that right."

The car Lucas and Corinne were in sped along the road.

Lucas was scrolling silently and emotionlessly on his phone while Corinne was looking out the window at the passing scenery. It was then she realized that something was different.

'Why are we driving on the highway? This isn't the road to the city.'

"Mister Lucas, where are we going?" she asked quizzically.

Lucas looked up from his phone. He did not answer her. Instead, he ordered the driver to stop.

the car.

The driver pulled into the emergency lane and slowly stopped the car.

Lucas gestured to the door with his chin and said, "Miss Carew, you can clock off work and get

down from the car now."

Corinne was shocked. "But Mister Lucas, we're on the highway," she said with a frown.

Lucas half-smirked at her. "That's not my concern. You have to figure out a way to get yourself home since I've already said you can clock off work. It's not my obligation as a boss to send you home."

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