

## Chapter 2

Tomcat Aaron

Before I even had a chance to reply, Aaron sent an address.

"Is that Vincent?" asked Cinder.

I shook my head. "No. It's the tomcat. Seems like he's changed his mind..."

She gasped and snatched my phone away. "Aaron Morris... Oh my g\*d. That's Vincent's friend?!"

"Yeah? You know him?"

"Know him? My old man tried to set me up with him. Aaron's the second son of the Morris Group. Not only is his family loaded, but he started his own business in college." She shook her head and passed my phone back. "He was offered three million dollars for his patents, but he said no. His company's thriving now." She paused to sip her drink. "Trust me. Go see him. Vincent is no match."

She's right. Aaron was easily my best choice at the moment. I can already imagine Vincent's seething jealousy and crushed ego if I could make this work with Aaron.

Cinder took a second to map the address Aaron sent me. "He's at... oh! Tribeca. That's right by my place." She nodded at me excitedly, "You can go to my house to change into something sexier. Fix up your makeup. He'll be totally blindsided!"

"I don't think that's necessary," I said. "It's just a h\*\*kup. I don't need

to go all out."

She pouted, "Alright, fine. Don't. But if you go there looking like a tramp, security might not even let you inside."

"Okay!" I gave in, finishing my beer. "Your place it is. Let's go."

An hour later, I was dolled up and Cinder had gone back to her office for the night. At this point, my rage had boiled away, leaving behind a numbness. I didn't even have it in me to feel ashamed.

I realized I hadn't eaten anything all day, so I stopped by a local burger joint on the way to his house. While I waited for my order, I pulled out my phone.

heyOlive: Have you eaten yet? I'm grabbing food from Joey's by your house. I could get you something...?

Amorris: ?

Amorris: I don't even have pants on, and you're asking if I want burgers? lol

I laughed at the absurdity of it all.

What the hell was I thinking?

Amorris: Go ahead and pick something for me.

Amorris: Thanks darling

As I held the paper to-go bag in my hand, I glanced between the map on my phone and the cars speeding by. After a few minutes of this, he sent another message.

Amorris: 2 out of 5 stars. Delivery came super late. Will not be ordering again.

I scowled. Just who the hell did he think I was?

heyOlive: Lost

Amorris: Great.

tice.

Amorris: Where are you now?

I quickly sent him a picture of my location. Three minutes later, he was suddenly in front of me. It took me a moment to even recognize him.

Most of the times I'd ever seen Aaron were at dim and foggy night clubs. He'd wear either black or white shirts and always had a beautiful woman at his side. Between Vincent calling him Tomcat and Emily always complimenting his style, my mental image of Aaron was similar to a classy and flirtatious boss.

But today? He was dressed for home: a black sweatshirt and washed out jeans. He seemed like a wholly different person than the one I met at nightclubs in the past.

He grinned as soon as he saw me. "Hi."

G\*d, he was so handsome. His Facebook avatar did not do him jus

It's said that men are creatures of sight, that they judge by looks. But women can be the same, right? The fact that my notion to "toss the burger to him and leave" had disappeared was enough proof. I knew that Aaron was handsome, just not really my type...

Except that the man in front of me now was exactly the kind of

knockout I wanted.

I smiled back, "Hi."

He reached for the paper bag in my hand, frowning. "Ooh. And the food's cold."

If he treats me like a odda'n delivery girl one more time...

He walked me back to his building, leading the way up to his pent house. The view was breathtaking, showcasing the bustling nightlife of

Manhattan.

To be honest, I expected it to be somewhat awkward, but Aaron went straight to the kitchen as soon as we entered, grabbing utensils out of a drawer and putting his burger on a plate. He was really going to eat it with a knife and a fork. Classy.

He looked up at me and asked, "Do you want ketchup?"

I had to remind myself: I am here for a date. I have to at least try having dinner with him before I leave.

G\*d, even his ketchup tasted amazing. It was some ritzy brand I'd never heard of.

After a bit, Aaron stepped into another room to take a phone call. I finished eating and brought the dishes to the kitchen, absentmindedly washing my hands when I felt one of his land on my shoulder, startling

He grabbed the plates and put them in the dishwasher, smiling. "You can just leave 'em in there."

Then he leaned in a little closer. Granted, it was a safe, platonic distance, but I couldn't even call myself friends with him yet. I shook the water off my hands and turned to look at him.

His expression was innocent. "Something came up. I have to go."

What? Was this date already a failure?

"Wait for me, okay? I'll get changed real quick and take you home," he said, lifting a hand to brush my hair out of my face. I immediately took a step back to avoid him, and his hand stopped awkwardly in mid-air. He paused for a few seconds before putting it down, still wearing that seductive smile.

"Huh? You were the one who invited me over," I said, incredulous. How could he just leave like that? I borrowed Cinder's clothes and redid my makeup for this!

"Alright..." He started slowly. He looked almost confused. "So you wanna wait for me? I'll be back in soon."

I bit my lower lip and cursed him internally, but tried my best to stay

polite.

"No, it's alright. I can call a cab," I gave him a cordial smile, turning to leave. In an instant, he caught me by the wrist and pulled me back. I didn't resist, letting him bring me to stand in front of him.

He stared at me, brows lowered. Staring into those beautiful blue eyes of his, I felt like I won the lottery.

"Kitchen, living room, or bedroom," he asked, voice low.

"Bedroom," I said, suddenly breathless. "The bedroom's fine."

Aaron let out a deep laugh. "Perfect."

I got a good look at his penthouse as he led me upstairs. I'd expected the rest of his home to be gaudy, typical of a young and reckless millionaire, but he surprised me. It reminded me of an elegant hotel suite, decorated with gorgeous vintage furniture, expensive paintings, and marble sculptures.

His bedroom itself was unexpectedly light and simple in comparison. It had a mature black and white color scheme to it. The windowsill was set with wine and scented candles and dimmed gallery lights hung from the ceiling. The space was free of furniture aside from the king-sized bed and nightstand in the middle of the room.

75.99%

I was suddenly disgusted, thinking about how many women he must have had in this bed.

The smell of the candles became almost overpowering, and I hesitated at the doorway. "Can we take a step back?" I asked.

"Back?" He frowned, puzzled. "To what?"

"The living room? Or the kitchen? Somewhere else..." I rubbed my nose with one hand, resting the other on my chest.

Aaron cocked an eyebrow at this, walking across the room to open the window and blowing out the candles in the process. He made his way back to me, took my hand, and shot me another award-winning smile. "Darling. Going back isn't an option."

And then, I was pulled inside.