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THE CRAZY THINGS THAT STILL HAPPEN IN THE 21st CENTURY

“Babe, since the day I met you, I knew that I wanted you in my life, and I’ve been waiting for this day for the longest time, and now it’s finally here. I want to do life with you. I want to do forever with you. I’m going to be so blessed to be your husband. I am so sure that God made you for me. I don’t know where I’d be if you didn’t come into my life. Destiny, I want to be your husband. Will you marry me?” He asked. There is no way this guy didn’t go to acting school. I was so frozen that I forgot that it was time to play my part. I looked around the restaurant we were in and noticed people watching, expecting my response. “Babe?” he called to get my attention.

“I can’t believe this.” I sniffled. “Babe! Yes! One million times” That was the response I was supposed to give. I know you’re probably wondering how I got here. Don’t worry, you’ll see. What you need to know for now is that I’m engaged to the ‘love of my life.’

My Instagram blew up with about a thousand messages in one hour. Somehow, my engagement photos had made it to the gram with the caption ‘she finally said yes’. Not like I wasn’t expecting it. I wonder who ‘everywhere gossip’ is, but she could have posted a better picture. Other posts had the following captions:

He is fine.

He could have got a better ring

They look so cute together!

Oh my God! I didn’t know they were dating!

Publicity stunt

He deserves better. I am better.

Noah is handsome. I get it. But I deserve better, not him. He took me home from the restaurant and the car ride was quiet. He stopped when he got to the front of my house.

“I guess that’s that.” He broke the silence and sighed. I turned to look at him.

“I guess. Thank you for dropping me off.” I gathered my things and was about to get out of the car but stopped, “Oh yeah! That was a nice proposal speech. You surely practised it well.” I said and got out of his car.

The things that happen in the 21st century that people don't pay attention to are too many to keep up with. People are being more creative about their sexuality. Everything is on social media, and everything can be done via social media. You can meet a person online and get married to them. Sex before marriage is now cool. Everybody does it now. Something about *'I have to know if I'm sexually compatible with him first. What if he isn't able to satisfy me the way I want?'* People now have open marriages; in my case, arranged marriages are still a thing. You didn't think of it, did you? I'll tell you how I found myself here.

I am the CEO of one of the most successful fashion businesses. Yes, I'm that popular, so I have to be conscious of everything I do or say in public. My mother started building the company before getting involved in an accident that killed her. My dad remarried a year after. I continued where my mother left off. I was eighteen. By the time I clocked 25, I already made it to Forbes under 30. A few years after, the post about me being 28, and a CEO went around. They raised questions about my success. They questioned my relationship life. They said I am too feminist to keep a man,

talk less of getting married. It wasn't in my plan to be famous or even get married. When these questions started affecting business, my dad had to come in with a solution. Fixing the problem that was raised and somehow, he found a way to convince me to get married. Something about *'your mother wouldn't like how you're handling this situation. It's just a marriage, you don't have to love him. It's what people do these days.'* Noah is my father's friend's son. He is an equally successful businessman. Three months after meeting him, we are already engaged to be married in a month. I was to tell the gram that I had a private relationship. They said the quicker I got married, the better for Destiny.

This is my life.

I'm getting married to someone I don't know.

The crazy things that happen in the 21st century.

2

DON'T I LOVE MY LIFE

I don't know what I'll be doing if I wasn't working at Destiny. Yeah, my mum named the business after me. I watched my mum work with models since I was four, and I found them fascinating. I always wanted to work alongside her. I guess that didn't work out.

I was at the office, head buried in my computer because I had to submit a portfolio for new designs, so you can imagine the look on my face when my manager came in with my phone.

"You have a call from Mr. Lawson, and before you say I should ignore it; He has called like 10 times." my manager said. That was Noah.

"What does he want?" I asked.

"You can ask him," she said, handing the phone to me. She was about to leave, but I stopped her.

"Noah? You know you're not supposed to call me at work." I said, my attention going back to what I was working on.

"I won't call you if you replied to my messages. Today is our pre-wedding shot. You're supposed to be here." he sounded frustrated.

I sighed in frustration at the amount of work I had to complete. "Can you postpone? I have a portfolio to finish."

"No, we can't. You have to be here ASAP." he paused. "Please," he begged. I sighed and told him I'd meet him there. I was hoping that all of this would not have been necessary, but here I am.

Don't I love my life?

I was about to speak, but she interrupted.

“I’ll finish up the portfolio. Can I speak freely?”

“No.” I said, fully aware of what she was about to say, but she went ahead nonetheless.

“Enjoy this, Destiny. You never know what may come out of this.” I ignored her and left for my photoshoot. Don’t get me wrong, she’s my friend but any talk about this fake thing, I wasn’t interested. Got there and met Noah talking to the photographer. As soon as he saw me, he walked up to me and kissed me on my cheek. Yeah, we are back to the acting.

“You’re late, babe” I hate when he calls me that.

“I’m sorry I lost track of time. Is my designer ready?”

“She has been waiting for you.” I rushed into the changing room and got dressed as quick as I could. The make-up artist was able to do her work quick.

I would not even lie, I looked beautiful. I was lost in admiration of myself until I heard someone walk in, pulling me out of my thought process. It was Noah. He just stood there, looking at me. He probably thought I didn't look as good as I thought.

“Your designer told me you were ready,” he whispered but loud enough for me to hear. “You look nice.” He said, taking me in more than once. Nice? I looked better than nice.

“Let's get this over with,” I said, walking past him.

Nice? I looked gorgeous. Or maybe it was just me. Maybe I looked just nice, as he said. Why was I letting his compliment affect me?

“Can you look each other in the eye?” I didn’t want to do that, but I had to. I turned to look at him, but he was already looking at me. He was too close for comfort. Nah, I needed to look somewhere else. If I took a step forward, our lips would be touching. It was too much, I had to look up, but he made me look back at him by pulling my face down gently by my chin, and he moved closer.

Oh. My. God

I hate this guy.

Destiny, this is just acting. A few more minutes.

He pulled me closer by my waist. I looked him in the eye to see that his eyes were closed.

The photographer coughed to get our attention, causing me to step back quickly, “This is fun to watch, but we were done shooting a while ago. You can change clothes now.” I rushed back to the changing room and sighed.

“Are you okay?” He asked from behind me. I turned to look at him.

“Don’t do that again.”

“Do what?”

“Try to kiss me,” I said. He laughed.

“Don't get ahead of yourself, Destiny. I'd do anything to make the pictures look believable,” he said and left. The guy is such a jerk.

The rest of the shoot was pretty normal. I left before Noah finished changing. By the time I got back to the office, Grace, my secretary, had finished the portfolio.

“Is it good?” she asked.

“I love it. I hope they do too. Thank you.”

“Flowers came in for you. They are from Noah. He wants to have dinner with you tomorrow night.” I groaned.

“Why?” she shrugged. “Tell him I’m busy tomorrow.”

“He’s your fiancé. Tell him yourself,” she said and walked away.

This woman

The next night, I heard a knock on the door of my house. When I opened the door, it dawned on me that I had forgotten to tell Noah that I was unavailable for dinner.

“Grace didn’t tell you that I was unavailable?” I asked again and he shook his head. “Come in.” He had never been into my house, so he was still taking in the place.

“Nice house.” he complimented

“Thank you! Wine?”

“Sure.”

“Red or white?”

“White, please.” He stood as I walked into the kitchen and came back out with a bottle of wine and two glasses.

“If you don’t mind, I have so much work to do tonight, so I can’t go out,” I said while pouring him a glass.

“Oh! You could have just texted me.” He sounded disappointed. Why did he?

My next words surprised me, “We could stay here.” I offered.

“You don’t mind?” he asked, looking at me to be sure.

“I don’t mind company,” I said.

“I could cook,” he offered.

I smiled, “I’d like that. Thank you.”

3

WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE?

“Wait, you really let him stay?” Grace asked.

“I didn’t want him to feel bad, that’s all.” I said with a shrug.

“And he cooked. He really is a good guy.”

“It really doesn’t matter,”

“Destiny, this guy is not the reason you are getting married to him. You agreed to it. Stop treating him like he’s nothing. He can do without you.”

I know you all are probably wondering why I agreed to the whole thing. All my life, I've always wanted to make my mother proud of me, and I know she would be to see how I am saving Destiny. The contract we both signed stated that the marriage will be for only five years, after which we get a divorce.

Even though Grace was right, I never really like to talk about it, "There is so much work to be done this morning, Grace." Being at work provided me with a different space.

"I don't know why you're even here. Your wedding is next tomorrow. You should be packing into his place already." I frowned at her.

"I'm not staying with him in marriage."

"Can you even hear yourself right now? You want this to be real as much as it can, and you're not going to move in with him. Just cancel the whole thing then."

"I had to save my company. What choice do I have?"

"You're still in the process of saving your company. You were supposed to move in after the engagement. You have to go now. I'll call the moving company." She somehow forced me to leave everything I was doing.

When I showed up in front of Noah's house, he was surprised to see me and my things.

"What is happening?" he asked with a questioning look.

“Do you have an extra room?” I asked. He was confused. “I was told that moving in will make us believable.”

“Yeah, I do. Come in.” The room was big enough to sleep in and have an office. Noah helped me with my luggage, but I didn’t allow him to help me unpack when he offered. Noah came in after I finished unpacking.

“Are you having a bridal shower?” he asked as he handed me a glass of orange juice.

“Nope. I think it is unnecessary.” he nodded.

“Destiny, are you sure you want to do this?”

“Do I have a choice?”

“You do. I know you’d do anything for your company, butt you really have to think about this.”

“I have thought about it, Noah. This is the only way,” I paused then asked,

“Why are you doing this?”

“Unlike you, I have no choice.” He said and left. I didn’t even bother asking what he meant by that.

Moving into Noah’s house didn’t mean that I was going to sell mine. I mean, the point of moving in is to make it look believable. Besides, I would need a house to move back into after our divorce.

4

MRS LAWSON

It's finally here!

I looked gorgeous and I knew it. It kept me going. I made my dress myself and the plan is to auction it after the wedding, and everything about the dress was perfect. I turned to the door when my dad walked in.

"Your mum will be so proud of you." he said with no expression.

"Mum wouldn't force me into a marriage to save a business" He frowned.

"Is this still what it is about? I thought you guys had found a common ground already, or at least that's what he told me."

"Dad, I really do not want to have this conversation with you." I said and walked past him. The only request I made for this wedding was that I wanted it private and lucky for me, Noah wanted the same thing, so the church was scanty. Noah had his eyes on me. He looked good. The plan was to look him in the eye and look happy, so I was just there, smiling so big, and I think he noticed because he took my hands in his, and then it was that time. We read our vows, although I had not prepared anything, it was still good, and then he was asked to kiss me.

He looked at me, a questioning look on his face. I stared at him. Before I could do anything about it. I felt his lips on mine.

But it was just a peck on my lip.

Was I prepared for the paparazzi? No, I wasn't, but I wasn't surprised. As soon as we stepped out of the church, cameras started flashing everywhere that I had to rush into the car with Noah.

"So, it's done," he stopped. "Are you okay?" he asked.

"I really don't know how I feel, but these heels are killing my feet right now. I'd do anything to get into bed." I said with a chuckle. He laughed too and then before I knew what was happening, he grabbed my ankle, took off my heels and started rubbing them. It felt good, to be honest. "You don't have to."

"What kind of husband will I be?" he asked with a small smile. "You look beautiful." He said and looked away. I smiled. That was, I knew the main reason I married him.

Not because he was nice, or he was good to me. Not even because I wanted to save Destiny.

It's because I have a secret crush on him, and I didn't know until we were in the car.

I was too proud to admit it.