



SANTA'S  
CUMMIN'  
TO TOWN

B. LOVE

# SANTA'S CUMMIN' TO TOWN

## B. LOVE

PROLIFIC PEN PUSHER

Copyright © 2022 by B. Love

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the author, except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

# CONTENTS

Preface

Prologue

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

Chapter 7

Chapter 8

Epilogue

# PREFACE

*Please note: This is a short novella*

## PROLOGUE

**N**obu's frame was slouched over against the couch. With her phone in one hand and an empty wine glass in the other, her head bobbed forward as she fought to stay awake. All day, Nobu anxiously awaited her husband's arrival. After waiting two weeks longer than she normally would to put their Christmas decorations up, it was finally the day. Well, the night. Hendrix was supposed to be home early to get started, however, three hours had passed... and all of the wine and cookies she'd consumed had Nobu teetering between drifting off into a deep sleep and trying to stay up and wait for him.

Just as the wine glass slipped out of her hand onto the burgundy shag rug, Hendrix was opening the door from the garage. Nobu sat up, looking around the living room in confusion. At the sound of her husband's footsteps, Nobu's eyes rolled. She snatched the phone and checked the time, chuckling at the sight of 8:46 p.m. Had they not agreed to take off specifically to decorate that day, Nobu wouldn't have been as upset. Spending the day at home anxiously awaiting his arrival from a meeting he wasn't even supposed to take made it difficult for Nobu to even look up at Hendrix when he made his way into the living room.

"Daddy's home," Hendrix greeted playfully as he always did when he arrived, placing a kiss on her temple.

"Hey," she replied softly, swiping the cup off the carpet and setting it on the glass coffee table.

"Were you sleep?"



*“Damn near. It’s almost nine o’clock, Hendrix. You said you’d be home by five.”*

*Finally, Nobu looked up at him, and the sight of the red roses in his hand did nothing to lessen her irritation. He hadn’t gotten them because she loved flowers and gifts; Hendrix had gotten them because he knew he was in trouble.*

*Sitting next to her, Hendrix extended the flowers in her direction. She stared at them for a few seconds before taking them and grumbling, “Thanks.”*

*“You’re welcome.” His eyes scanned the clear containers filled with Christmas decorations. “You didn’t get started?”*

*“Of course not. I was waiting for you.”*

*“So... I have some great news.” Hendrix’s smile was hesitant as he took her hand into his.*

*Releasing a calming breath, Nobu shook her head, hoping that would release some of the irritation that was consuming her.*

*“What is it?”*

*“The meeting I had today was with the CEO of the biggest, black owned Fortune 500 company in New York. They offered me the chief headhunter position at their offices. But we would have to move to New York at the start of the year. Also, they invited us out for drinks this evening to celebrate, so how soon can you get dressed?”*

*For a while, all Nobu could do was stare at her husband. When they first met six years ago, she found his career as a freelance recruiter interesting. Being with a self-employed man had always been Nobu’s goal. Because she worked for herself as a crime scene cleaner, it was important to Nobu that the man she married had free time and a stable income as well.*

*She’d never wanted a corporate man who was chained to his desk unable to live life, nor did she want a man who had the ultimate free schedule because he wasn’t working and making money. In the beginning, Hendrix was perfect. He*

*made multiple six figures a year while maintaining a healthy balance between work, play, and rest.*

*Over the course of their four-year marriage, that changed. He'd started working with larger companies who demanded more of his time. Though the income was great, Hendrix was paying for it with his time.*

*Releasing a sigh, Nobu casually slipped her hand from under his.*

*"Congratulations on the job offer," she said with a smile as her heart rate began to increase. "I thought you wanted to stay freelance so you wouldn't be tied to one company?"*

*"That's true, but this is a great opportunity. It will be salaried, and I'll get commissions for each recruit. If I do as well as I know I can, I'll be making half a million a year, baby."*

*Nobu found it difficult to speak as she fumbled over which thought she wanted to process first. Her posture stiffened as her lips pressed together. Head tilted, Nobu huffed and shook it softly in defeat.*

*"That's great, Hendrix. I'm really happy for you."*

*Biting his lip, Hendrix blinked before frowning.*

*With a soft chuckle, Hendrix ran his hand across the back of his head. "Are you? Because it doesn't look or sound like you are."*

*"I am, it's just... We agreed that we would start our family once we hit five years of marriage," she reminded, causing Hendrix to look away. "We actually agreed that we would have a baby at the three-year mark, but we put it off because you started working more. It seems like every time it's time for us to start our family you get even busier with work. Is that intentional? Do you not want to have children anymore?"*

*"Of course, I do." Hendrix's expression softened as he returned his eyes to hers. "But I also want to live my life the way I want to, and that will change when we have kids. I want to be all in and be there with you every step of the way. Plus, I want to make sure I'm financially stable enough to provide for*

*us all. When we do start our family, I don't want you to have to work, Nobu."*

*"And I-I get that, and I appreciate that." She chuckled nervously, hoping her voicing her concerns wouldn't lead to an argument and ruin his good mood. "But how much money exactly do you think you'll need to be content?" Hendrix's brows wrinkled and head tilted as he stared at her, visibly confused by her simple question. When he didn't respond, she continued. "The more money you make, the less time you have. I want you to be financially stable, but I also want you to be present. What good will it do me to have a husband who makes a lot of money if I feel like a single parent?"*

*"I can admit that I'll probably never be fully satisfied with the amount of money I make because in the back of my mind I know there's always more, but that doesn't mean I can't be present for you and our family."*

*"Hendrix... You're already struggling to be here just for me. Now, you expect us to move to New York, where we don't know anyone, just so you can work for this company that's going to take even more of your time? I'm not comfortable with the idea of having my first child away from our family and friends. I just don't know about this, Hendrix."*

*"Look." Hendrix took her hand into his. "I know I said five years, but do we really have to put a timeframe on it? We're still young..."*

*"That's not the point," she seethed quietly, pulling her hand out of his. "You knew how important having a family was to me. I'm thirty-two years old, Hendrix. We've been married four years. What the fuck is the holdup?"*

*His nostrils flared and eyes closed as he pulled in a calming breath. Though they agreed to never curse at or yell at each other, Nobu was losing her patience. She was tired of having this conversation repeatedly and still feeling ignored.*

*"Why don't we go out and just enjoy ourselves tonight, then we can talk about this in the morning?"*

*“No.” Nobu stood and walked over to the clear containers of Christmas decorations. “I’ve waited two weeks for you to devote time to decorating the house. You promised that we would do it today. I’m not putting it off anymore. Feel free to go without me. I’ll just do this myself.”*

*“I promised them that we both would be there.”*

*She laughed with a shake of her head as her eyes watered. “I don’t know why. You promised me we would finally spend time together and put the decorations up. You know how much this means to me...”*

*“And you know how much my career means to me.”*

*Releasing the silver ornament she was holding, Nobu sighed. Sitting Indian style, she massaged her temples and closed her eyes as a tear slipped down her cheek. Her entire body heated and heart raced as she considered her next words carefully.*

*“What are we doing, bae?” she asked softly, wiping her face. “It’s clear we aren’t on the same page anymore, and I don’t think we have been for a while.”*

*Hendrix ran his hands over his face as he released a hard breath. “C’mere, Bu.”*

*Nobu stood, taking small steps toward her husband. The man she swore was perfect for her. The man who had completed her. So much so that the distance between them felt like it was literally ripping his heart and soul from hers. She hadn’t sat down good before Hendrix was lifting her and placing her on his lap, and this time, the closeness eased her nerves.*

*“I think we’re at a phase in our lives where we’re getting fulfillment from different things. You know I love you, and I do want to have children with you, just as I said I did.”*

*“But...”*

*Hendrix smiled with the left side of his mouth. He squeezed her thigh as he sighed. “I’m getting an extreme amount of satisfaction out of my career right now. I’m on fire, and I don’t want to slow down. With that being said, it isn’t fair of me to*

*force you to put your life on hold. I'm man enough to admit I haven't been as present as I used to be, and that isn't fair to you."*

*Hearing him admit that caused Nobu to smile as her eyes watered all over again. Licking the corner of her mouth, Nobu nodded and cupped his cheek.*

*"I don't want it to seem like I don't support you. I've always been attracted to your ambition. But like you said, we're getting fulfillment from different things and wanting to go in different lanes with our lives. I don't want to make it seem like I'm not happy with you, but I want more than just you. This. Us. I want to be more than Hendrix Cane's wife. I want to have my own cleaning business so I won't have to work as many jobs, but I don't want to quit altogether any time soon. I want babies. I want a husband that comes home at a decent hour so we can spend quality time together. I want..."*

*"Things I'm not capable of giving right now," Hendrix interrupted to say. "So what are we going to do, Nobu?"*

*Tugging her bottom lip between her teeth, Nobu swallowed hard before hanging her head. "They say elevation requires separation."*

*Hendrix's body went limp underneath hers. "You... You want a divorce?"*

*"I don't want a divorce, but I don't know another solution that allows us both to have what we want."*

*"Unfortunately, I agree." His grip around her loosened. "Damn," he grumbled before chuckling. "I failed you. I didn't take you from your parents just to give you back, Bu."*

*Wincing, Nobu's entire body shook as her heart ached.*

*"Henny," she cooed, lifting his fallen head to look into his eyes. "You didn't fail me. Life just took you in a different direction than me. That's nothing to be ashamed of. It happens."*

*"Yeah, but we're supposed to be doing life together."*

*“We did. For four beautiful years.” Nobu chuckled as her tears began to pour rapidly. “I’ve never loved a man deeper than I love you. Never been loved the way you love me. And I don’t want us to ruin that because we’re on two different pages.”*

*Hendrix wiped her tears away as his own fell. “I’ll...” His phone began to vibrate in his pocket. Nobu’s mouth twisted to the side as their eyes remained locked. As she expected, he looked away first, pulling his phone out to answer. “Yeah?” He nodded at the words being said by the other person on the phone. “Yes, I’ll be there. Just me.” As he disconnected the call, Nobu stood, weakly making her way back to the center of the living room where the decorations were.*

*“I need to get ready to go, Bu.” She nodded. “I’ll um... call David and ask him to handle the di—” He released a shaky breath, unable to say the word. “I’ll pack a bag and stay at a hotel until we figure everything out.”*

*As tears streamed down her face, Nobu stared at the silver and gold ornaments. Licking her lips, she nodded. Her eyes squeezed shut as he walked away. Even with him closing their bedroom door, she heard his sniffles, and the sound of them had her body bending against the container as she broke down herself.*

CHAPTER  
**ONE**

**N**obu  
*Three Years Later*

Every year that passed, Nobu was later and later getting her Christmas decorations out of storage. Before she got divorced, she put them up November first. Every year since Hendrix moved to New York, Nobu found herself dreading the process. It never failed—the entire time she put the decorations up, she'd think about how those same decorations led to her divorce. She always released a bittersweet smile at the fact that something so simple could give them both such a monumental realization.

For Nobu, the realization was that she wanted a family with a man who had no intentions of giving that any time soon. For Hendrix, it was the fact that his career was starting to mean more to him than his wife. As much as the two hated parting ways, they'd done so with love. It took about a year before Nobu was able to let her days go by without thinking about her ex-husband, but it never failed... as soon as Christmas rolled around, Hendrix invaded her thoughts.

Winter was her favorite season, and Christmas was her favorite holiday. She was determined to keep thoughts of her ex and their divorce from ruining Christmas for her this year, even if she was an entire month late getting the decorations out of storage. Nobu released a low huff as she cut her car off in the garage. In no rush to get out of the car and head inside of her home, Nobu smiled at the sight of her mother's name flashing against her dashboard.

Nobu accepted the call with, “Hey, Ma. What’s up?”

“Did you plan on coming to the church tonight?”

“I hadn’t planned to.”

Every year for Christmas, Nobu’s church hosted a family event on the Thursday of each week in December. Outside of food trucks that offered discounted meals, they also played games, had a mini concert, and allowed the children one hour to visit and take pictures with Santa. Usually, Nobu couldn’t wait to join in on the festivities, but this year, she really wanted to stay home alone.

While Nobu wouldn’t vocally admit it, a part of her regretted ending her marriage as quickly as she did. Though Hendrix agreed they were making the right decision, Nobu had begun to feel as if they had done each other a disservice by remaining invested in their individual desires instead of creating a life that served them as a team. There wasn’t anything she could do to change that, but Nobu had promised herself to not make that mistake the next time around. She’d be more willing to compromise, only if her husband was on the same page.

“Well... I think you should come. Even if you stay for just a little while.”

“Okay, but what’s going on?”

Mila chuckled. “Why does something have to be going on, NoNo?”

“Because I can hear the smile in your voice. You sound real sneaky right now. What’s going on?”

Her mother laughed harder. “Just get down here and you’ll see for yourself.”

Nobu smiled, nodding in agreement. “Okay. I need to change then I’ll be there.”

“Alright, baby. See you soon.”

After disconnecting the call, Nobu looked back at the decorations in the back seat. With a sigh, her shoulders



slouched and mouth twisted to the side. She'd get to them when she got back home... no matter what.



AN HOUR AND A HALF LATER, Nobu was pulling into the church parking lot. She was fashionably late, but since she had no idea what was in store for her, Nobu didn't care. After showering, she did a quick makeup look and dressed in a cream, oversized sweater dress and thigh high boots. If she was going to a regular Sunday service Nobu would have dressed a bit more conservatively, but she was sure what her mother wanted her to see was outside in the church parking lot. Knowing Mila, there was a new food truck that Nobu had mentioned wanting to try. That was the only thing that ran across her mind.

It didn't take Nobu long to find her family. Her parents were seated at their own private table with her sisters, Daisha and Luci. They all looked comfortable, laughing and talking with mugs and empty plates on their table. It wasn't too cool out, but all of the tables had heaters hanging above them. After taking a deep breath, Nobu plastered on a smile and headed in their direction.

"Alright, ol' lady," she said, gaining their attention. "What was so important that I had to come down here?"

Her father, Jacob, was the first to stand and embrace her, then everyone else followed. Her mother was last, taking her by the hand gently and leading her toward the side entrance of the church.

"There's something I want you to see."

"Ma," Nobu called, looking down at her under the night sky. Mila was half a foot shorter than her daughter. Hell, she was shorter than everyone in their family. Her daughters had gotten their height from their father, who was six-four himself. Nobu was the oldest and tallest of the three at thirty-five and five-nine.

All legs, Nobu took great pride in her lower body. Most men salivated over her toned legs, thick thighs, and wide hips. Pilates three days a week and weight training two days a week had given her a small waist, flat abs, and perky breasts, but most days her body was covered underneath her hazmat suit. Being a crime scene cleaner wasn't the most glamorous job, especially for a woman as feminine as Nobu. After witnessing her aunt and uncle's crime scene as a child and how the bloody mess caused her grandmother to have a heart attack, Nobu made up in her mind to spare anyone she could from seeing and experiencing that pain again.

She didn't just clean up after a murder or natural death; Nobu showed her clients empathy, love, and support by leaving them with flowers, a handwritten card, and dinner for at least three days as well.

"Hush and go in the church, girl. Go down to the altar. You're late so it should be fairly empty by now."

"Yes, ma'am," Nobu agreed stubbornly with a pout. She hated surprises because she was so nosy. Doing as she was told, Nobu headed through the vestibule, greeting the few people that were straggling between the sanctuary and the exit.

As she made her way down the aisle toward the altar, Nobu smiled. She wasn't sure who they'd gotten to play Santa for this year, but it always warmed her heart to see the kids' happy faces when they got to sit on his lap and tell him what they wanted for Christmas before taking a picture with him. Whatever the little girl said made the man laugh. Nobu didn't hear it, but she saw his shoulders shuddering as he placed her on her feet. She was the second to last child in line, so when her mother grabbed her hand and led her away, Santa lifted his head and beckoned for who was next.

The second she saw his eyes, Nobu knew. She knew that was her husband. Her *ex*-husband. Nobu's feet stopped mid-step, seemingly being covered by invisible cement. A quiet mutter escaped her lips as she covered her mouth with her hand. Eyes watering, Nobu's head shook in disbelief. It shouldn't have been a surprise to see Hendrix because this was his family's church too, but ever since he left, they hadn't set

eyes on one another. She had no idea what had brought him back home, and placed him in that Santa suit, but Nobu couldn't help but smile as she swallowed back her tears.

Instead of making her way down immediately, Nobu waited until he was done with the last child to slowly make her way down the aisle.

Her movements were short and jerky as her heart palpitated. As warmth radiated through her body, Nobu massaged her chest as lightness filled her excited heart.

“That’s it?” Hendrix asked, looking at the church assistant standing next to him, dressed in an Elf suit. Every request the children made, she wrote down to share with their parents.

“Um... We have one more,” Stacy announced, then giggled as she pointed in Nobu’s direction.

Hendrix looked at her, and his eyes widened and mouth hung open. His reaction to her made Nobu smile as she stepped directly in front of him. Sitting on his lap, Nobu laughed as he stared at her. She closed his mouth by pushing his chin up, causing Hendrix to chuckle as he wrapped his long arms around her.

It didn't matter how much time passed between them, she'd never forget the man that made her soul smile or his milk chocolate brown skin and tight, dark eyes.

“What would you like for Christmas?” The thick emotion that laced his tone made her heart skip a beat. Hendrix pushed her hair from her shoulders onto her back, exposing her face fully.

Her mouth opened, but instead of any words coming out, Nobu broke out into tears. Hendrix wasted no time standing and carrying her out of the sanctuary to the single bathroom behind the choir stand. Sitting her on top of the sink, he wiped her eyes while she pulled his hat and beard off. Each kiss that he placed against her face had her body shivering and nipples hardening as she sniffled, but the moment his lips almost grazed hers she pushed him away.

“What are you doing?” she checked, unraveling her legs from around him.

“I’m about to kiss my wife.”

“I’m not your wife, Hendrix. Not anymore.”

With a gleam in his eye, Hendrix gave her a playful grin. “You will *always* be my wife.”

Nobu’s eyes fluttered. Her chin trembled as she fought to maintain her composure.

“Henny,” she whispered, wrapping her arms around his neck.

Nobu’s eyes lowered to his lips, and he licked them. His nose brushed against hers, and he released a low groan that made her pussy throb. His gaze was as soft as a caress before Hendrix connected their lips, sending shock waves through her entire body. Nobu succumbed to the forceful yet gentle domination of his lips, sighing contently as he slipped his tongue into her inviting mouth.

The slow, tender urgency that started their kiss had grown hungry and frantic. Hendrix pulled her to the end of the sink, wrapping her legs back around him. She moaned against his lips as he hiked her dress up. As much as she didn’t want to, Nobu pulled away.

“We can’t do this here. Not at the church.”

He ran his hand down his face and put space between them. “Lord, forgive me. You’re right.” Nobu snickered as he helped her off the sink. “Let’s go somewhere we can finish this...”



NOBU COULDN’T TAKE her eyes off him. Out of his Santa suit, Hendrix was dressed in a brown form fitting suit with a black button-down shirt, belt, and loafers. The first couple of buttons on the shirt were undone, exposing the top of his chest. Nobu couldn’t help but lick her lips at the sight of it. As anxious as

they had been to get back to her home, they sat in the sitting room across from each other, neither making a move. It felt like forever had passed as they stared at each other silently.

It wasn't until she squeezed her thighs together and ran her hands up and down them that Hendrix said, "You're so fucking beautiful. I missed the hell out of you, Bu."

Nobu savored his words, choosing not to reply quickly.

"I missed you too. We obviously did a good job detaching from each other, but my life hasn't been the same without you."

"Same." Hendrix sat up in his seat, pressing the tips of his fingers together as his forearms rested on his thighs. "I love my life in Austin but..."

"Wait." Nobu lifted her hands in confusion as she released a quick bark of laughter. "Austin? What happened to New York?"

Hendrix's brows lifted as he exhaled a hard breath and sat back in his seat. "I couldn't stay in New York. It felt like the reason I lost you and I began to resent my position, so I moved to Austin to work at their sister company. Same great pay and benefits, just a smaller office."

For a brief second, her breathing was suspended by surprise.

"You... were that sick over losing me?"

Hendrix poked his cheek with his tongue, staring at her briefly before chuckling. "Of course, Nobu. You're my wife and I haven't been blessed with your presence in three years. You're damn right I was that sick over losing you."

Her head shook as she rejected him calling her his wife... again. "But you... You divorced me so easily. I didn't think you wanted to be with me anymore."

Hendrix scoffed and scratched between his brows as he stood and made his way next to her. His scent immediately engulfed her. It was different from the cologne he used to wear—fresh yet spicy. Leather and citrus. A complex mix of things

she wouldn't otherwise expect to blend so perfectly, but it smelled good as *fuck* on him.

"I didn't want to hurt you any more than I already had. That's the only reason I pushed for a speedy divorce. Your needs were important to me. As much as I wanted to draw things out, I wanted you to be able to live the life you wanted and deserved." He looked around her immaculately clean sitting room. Just like when they were married, Nobu took her daily cleaning seriously. It didn't matter that she cleaned for a living; she loved cleaning her own home too. It was during that time that she listened to affirmations and repeated them for hours in her head. "Did you... ever have that baby?"

Nobu's head shook as she smirked. "I didn't. As adamant as I was about starting my family, I realized I only wanted a baby with you. I've dated other men and even had one propose last year but none of them compared to you. None of them were worth going half on a baby with."

Hendrix's hand lifted to her cheek, and he used it to pull her closer. "So we got a divorce just to be unhappy with ourselves trying to make each other happy?"

It was a sad truth that made her laugh as she nodded in agreement. "Unfortunately, that's what it sounds like. It doesn't matter how great other areas of my life are..."

"My heart still craves you," he added, taking the words right out of her mouth, and she kissed the words right off his lips. Kissing became groping that led to Hendrix lifting her and carrying her to her bedroom, where they made love—deep, raw, and hard—until they both fell asleep.

CHAPTER  
TWO

Hendrix

Every few seconds, Hendrix would smile and shake his head. When he agreed to be Santa Claus, he didn't expect to see Nobu, but he shouldn't have been surprised. It was her favorite holiday and now that Hendrix was mindful of it, he knew she'd probably be at the church every Thursday. What had surprised him, though, was the fact that her home hadn't been decorated yet. When they were married, she started celebrating Christmas as soon as Halloween was over. Hendrix couldn't help but wonder if their deciding to divorce right before Christmas had anything to do with that.

Divorcing Nobu Jakes Cane was the hardest thing Hendrix had ever done in his life. His ego made it difficult for him to believe marriage and children could give him the same fulfillment and satisfaction climbing the ladder of success was giving him. The rush Hendrix got each time he signed a new recruit and received a bonus was addictive. There were days he wouldn't come home until close to midnight because he was on calls or with potential clients at restaurants or country clubs. Hendrix convinced himself what he was doing was okay because he wasn't cheating, but he'd had three years to realize the error of his ways.

It was easier to cut all ties with Nobu. If he kept in contact with her, Hendrix wouldn't be able to let her go. Staying in two different states was the only thing keeping him from showing up at her doorstep every day. It was ironic that while they were married Hendrix was okay not spending time at

home or dating his wife, but the moment they parted ways, he ached to have her closeness. Hendrix didn't believe he deserved a second chance to make things right with Nobu, but he promised God if given the chance, he'd love her the way she deserved. The way he vowed to.

The sound of Nobu shuffling into the kitchen had Hendrix looking over his shoulder from the coffee bar. They both had to have a cup of coffee before they were able to converse with anyone. Nobu had showered and dressed in his button-down shirt. It was still open, exposing the low-rise red panties she had on. She'd thrown her bra strap length burgundy hair up into a bun. His wife was just as beautiful now, if not more, than she was back then.

She was tall and curvy with a medium build. Her smooth caramel brown skin was blemish free. Like always, she had on long acrylic nails. This time, they had a red, white, and silver Christmas design. Nobu's eyes were dark and shiny, and she had the deepest dimples that made Hendrix cave every time she smiled. He used to work hard as hell trying to make her smile just to see those dimples.

"Mornin'," she grumbled, plopping down on the bar stool behind the island that separated the kitchen from the living room. "You making me a cup?"

"Mornin' beautiful, I am," Hendrix agreed, grabbing a second espresso pod.

"I'm surprised you're still here."

"Why is that?"

"Just figured you'd be gone by the time I woke up."

"I haven't had you for three years, Nobu. If I could, I'd spend every day of this month with you."

When she didn't reply, Hendrix looked back to find her smiling as she stared at him. "What are you doing in Memphis anyway?"

As he continued to fix their coffee, Hendrix told her, "I'm vetting and interviewing candidates for a new office here in Memphis. The execs want me here until the start of the new



year to ensure the new hires are right for their positions before they open on the first.”

“Oh. So... Are we going to talk about you being Santa Claus?”

Hendrix chuckled as he went to the refrigerator to grab her brown sugar and caramel macchiato creamers.

“Your mother-in-law insisted. She said it’s the least I can do for the church since I’ve been gone for so long.”

With her elbow resting on the island, Nobu palmed her forehead as her head shook.

“Are you just going to act like we haven’t been divorced for the last three years, Hendrix?”

He waited until he was setting her cup in front of her to reply. “Legally, we are divorced. Spiritually and emotionally, you’re still mine.” His eyes scanned the top of her frame. “Physically too.” Hendrix licked his lips as his dick hardened just at the thought of the night they’d spent together. “How long is it going to take for you to accept that?”

“Last night got a little heated, that I can admit, but it took a lot of work for me to get used to not having you, Henny. I don’t want to mess up the work I’ve done to heal. If you’re going to be here for the month, I’m okay with us hanging out and having sex, but it can’t be any more than that.”

Confining his laugh to a snort, Hendrix shook his head emphatically as he displayed a wide grin.

He could have gone back and forth with her, but Hendrix decided to show her his intentions. Not only was he determined to make up for the last three years apart, but he was going to make her his wife again.

“You don’t have your decorations up yet,” Hendrix vocalized, sitting next to her.

“Yeah, I was going to put them up last night, but my mom called and told me to come to the church.”

“Are you glad you did?”

Her smirk spread slowly as she nodded. “I am. It’s really good to see you.”

“After this, I’m going to the hotel to change, then I’ll be back, and we can put the decorations up.” He took a sip of his coffee before adding, “If that’s okay with you.”

She tugged her bottom lip between her teeth, trying to hide her smile. “I would love that, Henny.”

Allowing his own smile to spread, Hendrix mumbled, “Good.”

“On your way back in, can you stop by Walgreens and get me a Plan B pack? I’m not on birth control.”

Hendrix choked on the sip of coffee he was drinking, beating his chest with his fist as he coughed while she laughed and patted his back.

“I guess I should have asked that last night before I came inside of you, but I got carried away.”

Nobu’s smile lingered as she wrapped her hand around her mug. “Yes, but... it was natural. We fell back into our groove. I do need that pack though.”

“Do you?” Hendrix challenged, turning slightly in his seat. “You want a baby, right?”

Her posture was loose and tone uncertain as she said, “Well, yes, but... we’re divorced, and you live in a completely different state.”

“None of that matters. You’re going to be my wife again, and if you still want to start our family, that’s what we’re going to do.” Her mouth opened and snapped shut. Frustration covered her face as she pouted. Nobu gripped his thigh, trying to find the words to express her thoughts. “We can take things slow,” Hendrix continued. “I want to date you and treat you like the prize you are, but I’m determined to get my wife back, Bu, and there’s nothing you can do or say to change my mind.”

She stood and made her way between his legs, covering his lips with hers. Hendrix wasted no time wrapping his arms

around her waist and pulling her closer.



#### PARTNERSHIP.

That was the word Hendrix kept reminding himself of. As much as he wanted to ignore Nobu's request for the Plan B pack, he couldn't. It was her body and her choice. Realistically, Hendrix was a flight risk. There was no doubt in his mind that he'd do whatever it took to give Nobu her every desire, but what she'd said was true—they lived states apart and had just reconnected. So as much as he wanted to let fate decide, he stopped by the store and got the pack anyway.

So far, she hadn't taken the pills yet. They were in the bag on top of the island... exactly where he'd placed it when he first returned almost five hours ago. Since, they'd baked cookies and made homemade hot chocolate before starting their favorite Christmas albums while decorating her home and front yard. It felt like old times as they went from one room to the other while reminiscing. By the time they were done, Hendrix didn't want to leave.

His company had paid for his hotel suite for the month, but he was tempted to pack his bags and stay with her. He'd take things slow, though, and give her all the time and space she needed to realize they belonged together—forever this time.

“Do you have any plans for the weekend?” Hendrix asked, placing the now empty containers in the closet that was closest to the front door.

“Not really. I'm off from work but I am on call in case they get a job that's big or difficult to complete, so I never know if or when I'll be called to help.”

Hendrix nodded as he went back into the living room, sitting next to her on the gray sectional. She'd decorated her home a little differently than the one they'd shared. The living room was gray and cream with several plants on the floor and tables. Her sitting room was red and gold, and the dining room was the same shade of champagne and gray as her bedroom.

Like when they met, Nobu seemed to be doing really well for herself.

The four-bedroom two story home had to be at least four thousand square feet. Being with a woman who had her own money only inspired Hendrix to work more. His pride made him want to make three times as much as she did so he could pay their bills, spoil her, and allow her to do whatever she pleased with her own money.

“I’m going out this evening, and I would love for you to accompany me.”

Her lips parted and expression softened. “I would like that. What time should I be ready?”

“Six.”

“How should I dress?”

“However you’d like. I’ll plan our night around you. There are a few things I have in mind.”

“I’m excited,” Nobu confessed softly before pulling her hair behind her ears. “If I don’t get anything else out of this month, I’m know I’m going to have fun, do something I’ve never done, and have some amazing sex.”

Hendrix chuckled as he stood. “You’re going to get a hell of a lot more than that, but that’s the least I can offer you, Bu.”

With her hand in his, Hendrix walked over to the front door.

“Thanks for helping me decorate. Admittedly, it’s been bittersweet doing this over the years. It’s my favorite time of the year still, but I couldn’t help but think about us deciding to end things right before I decorated the last home we shared together.”

“I figured that was the case, that’s why I wanted to stay and do it with you. I don’t ever want anything you experience with me to be traumatic. Hopefully today will replace that horrible memory and it’ll regain the same excitement it used to have for you.”

Nobu covered his hand with hers, leaning further into his side. “I really missed you, Henny.”

“I missed you too. I know you’re scared and hesitant and probably a little untrusting of me too, but I appreciate you giving me the chance to fix things between us... even if it’s just for a month.”

“As much as I keep telling myself all I can handle is a month, I also told myself what’s for me will not be taken away. You’re back, and I can’t help but think it’s because you still belong to me.”

At her front door, Hendrix wrapped his arms around her. She was just a few of inches shorter than him, and he loved being with a woman who didn’t cower under his six-two frame.

“Ever since I left you, my life has been filled with lack. I love what I do and where I am, but that means nothing without you. The moment I saw you, I felt whole for the first time in three years. That’s why I couldn’t wait to get inside you. I needed us to be one again. Last night wasn’t just about sex. I want my wife back, and I’m not too proud to say that, but I’m also trying to be mindful of the fact that the choices we make affect each other. I want us to be true partners this time around. So if you need time and space or for this to just be a month long thing between us... I will accept that for now until you remember we’re worth more. Whatever it takes to get us on the same page.”

Her chin trembled and eyes watered as she looked away. “I wish you would have been like this three years ago.”

“There’s nothing we can do to change that. All we can do is go forward.” Hendrix gently coaxed her eyes back in his direction with her chin. “I’m committed now. All I need is your submission and a chance.”

Not agreeing or disagreeing, Nobu placed a kiss on the side of his mouth before opening the door and almost whispering, “I’ll see you tonight, Hendrix.”

CHAPTER  
**THREE**

**N**obu  
“You are so fucking sexy,” Nobu complimented, getting a smile and wink out of Hendrix.

He was seated across from her in the wine cellar at Napa Café, looking good as fuck dressed in his black suit. It complemented his skin perfectly. All night, she’d resisted the urge to run her hands over his bald head and through his thick beard. She kept thinking about how good it felt to feel his beard against her thighs before he devoured her pussy. No matter how slow Nobu wanted to take things, she’d never deny Hendrix’s dick or the fact that he was the best lover she’d ever had. Their years together had given him all the time he needed to learn what she liked and disliked and take her to heights no other man had ushered her into reaching.

“I know you’re drunk now,” Hendrix said, making Nobu laugh.

True enough, she’d had several glasses of wine, but her bold compliment wasn’t because of that. Quite frankly, she was tired of acting like she wasn’t happy as hell to be with him and attracted to him. Even with the divorce looming over them, Nobu felt as giddy as she did on their first date years ago. He’d even gone as far as to start their date playing the same get to know you game they did when they first met. For each fact one of them shared, the other had to return the same and add to it. Though they knew all there was to know about each other, it was nice being reminded of the things that made up the man she loved.

“I’m not drunk; I’m happy. Happy to be here with you.”

Hendrix took his suit jacket off and laid it across the bench he was sitting on. In the wine cellar, there was a small two-person table. She sat across from him in a red chair that was the same shade of the pillows on the long brown bench Hendrix occupied. The walls behind her and the sides of them were painted a dark gray color, and they were covered with several different bottles of wine. Next to their table, four candles burned, setting the ambiance for their romantic evening together.

“C’mere, Bu,” Hendrix requested quietly, tone husky and low.

Nobu made her way around the table, lips spreading into a grin when he straddled her across his lap. “You’re absolutely stunning tonight, and I’m happy to be here with you too.”

“You’ve told me that like seven times already, Henny.”

Hendrix kissed her exposed shoulder through the one shoulder burgundy dress she had on. “I’d tell you every time I looked at you if I believed it wouldn’t annoy you. I have a lot of time to make up for.”

His nose brushed against hers before his lips made a wet, lazy trail up her neck. She licked her lips and clutched the back of his neck as her body relaxed against him. Hendrix had always been affectionate and sensual, but his appetite for her had grown with time. He had more self-control when they were married. Now, he seemed to have to have her whenever he wanted her, and the riskiness and excitement of his public arousal had Nobu’s panties soaking wet.

“The waitress will be back with our dessert soon,” she reminded him as he rocked her pussy against his hardened dick.

Hendrix clenched his jaw and released a deep breath as he sat her on top of the table. She moved his glass closer to hers as he stood, dick pressing into his slacks. Without speaking, he stepped out, and Nobu wasn’t sure how much time had passed before he returned, but it wasn’t long.

“What did you do?” Nobu asked, squealing when he sat in front of her and laid her flat on the table.

“Made sure we won’t be disturbed while I eat.”

He spread her legs and pulled her to the edge of the table, lowering himself to her center. The moment Hendrix pushed her panties to the side and licked between her saturated folds, Nobu gripped the back of his head as her neck and back arched and eyes closed.



“TONIGHT HAS BEEN PERFECT,” Nobu admitted as they sat in her enclosed patio.

That patio was what had her most excited when she first saw the house years ago. The patio was inside and could be accessed through the bedroom, living room, and exterior of the house on the side. She had several plants out there, a heater, and a TV. It was just as therapeutic as she thought it would be.

“We can still enjoy ourselves together, and that’s good.”

Nobu nodded in agreement. They’d gone dancing and had just as good of a time as they used to after dinner. The divorced couple had a lot of the same interests—dancing and music, coffee, sports, and gaming. They both loved to read. Nobu loved shopping and swimming as well while Hendrix loved a good game of golf and club hopping. Nobu preferred lounges because they were usually less crowded and rowdy, but she always felt safe and secure with Hendrix and enjoyed herself with him.

“Yeah, and the sex is even better somehow. Didn’t think that was possible.”

Hendrix gave her a knowing smile before chuckling and taking a sip of his wine. “I haven’t had that pussy for three years, Bu. You’d better damn well believe I’m pulling out all the stops and filling you with my seeds every chance I fucking get.”



Her body heated and nipples hardened from his response. She'd been in cream pie city more since they reconnected than she had been while they were apart. The dating she'd done over the years hadn't amounted to much of anything, even with her ex, Lamar, randomly proposing to her after three months of dating. Nobu wouldn't deny they were having a great time with each other, but marriage was the last thing on her mind at that point.

"About that..." She cleared her throat and sat up in her seat. "I haven't taken the Plan B pills yet. I figured we could get the most out of today and tomorrow before I take them. After that, you'll need to pull out until we figure out what we're doing."

"I can agree to that, but I also would like to know what it is you want, because I've made it clear what I'm doing."

That was true. It didn't matter how much Nobu tried to downplay what was happening between them, Hendrix made it clear that he wanted his wife back. While Nobu wanted him too, there was a part of her that wasn't sure she could trust that. Self-preservation over the last three years made it difficult for her to submit to any man and trust him to care for her and not hurt her—even Hendrix.

"I would love for us to get back together, but I'm also hesitant to trust you right now. There are a lot of things you said and promised that you didn't deliver on, Henny. It's not as easy for me to just... trust your words right now. When you leave home, you can go back to Austin and fall back into your old habits, then what? I'll have to detach from you all over again."

"I understand that fear, and your feelings and concerns are valid." He paused, and Nobu was glad. She needed a moment to let his words resonate within her. Communication was hit or miss for them when they were married. They could talk, but it seemed as if it took quite some time for one to process the other's words. That was the first time that she'd openly expressed how she felt, and Hendrix didn't try to excuse or justify it to avoid accountability for making her feel that way. Gritting her teeth, Nobu briefly hung her head to keep her eyes

dry. “I know that when we were married, I said one thing while my actions said another. It was never my intention to make you believe anything other than God was more important to me than you. There are a million words I could say to express that, but I would rather show you that I’m worthy of your trust. So, I acknowledge your fear and hesitation, and I will alleviate both through my actions, okay, Bu?”

At that point, Nobu was unable to hold her tears back. She stood and walked over to him. Straddling his lap, she cupped his cheek and covered his lips with hers. While she wouldn’t blindly go all in trusting Hendrix, no matter how much she loved him, Nobu was more than willing to give him the chance to show her that a relationship with him would be just as safe and stable as it was when they first met.

CHAPTER  
**FOUR**

**H**endrix

As upset as Hendrix wanted to be with his parents, all he could do was shake his head. It was December fourth, the first Sunday of the month, and they insisted on him and Nobu joining them for brunch after church. Hendrix had made it clear to them that they were taking things slow, but that didn't stop his parents from basically planning their second wedding while they ate. Hendrix couldn't imagine how difficult things had been for Nobu after their divorce.

They had removed each other from all social media, and she'd gone as far as to stop going to the seven o'clock service on Sundays to avoid seeing his family. Everything in Memphis reminded her of him. She didn't have an easy way out like she thought Hendrix did. He was in a completely new city and state, but that didn't stop his mind from being consumed by thoughts of her.

"I'm really sorry about that," Hendrix said, opening the door of his S Class Benz for her. "I told them we weren't officially back together but obviously what I say doesn't matter."

Nobu laughed softly as she got into the car, showing him those deep dimples he'd fallen in love with. She looked beautiful as always, dressed in a cream two-piece pants suit with her hair in a high, neat bun.

"My parents are the same way, so I don't mind."

With a nod of relief, Hendrix closed the door and made his way to the driver's side. Once he was settled inside and pulling out of his parents' driveway he told her, "I have to meet with a potential client for a round of golf at three. What are your plans for tomorrow?"

Nobu shrugged as she looked out of the window. "I think I'm gonna go to the store and fix a few meals to give away to the homeless downtown. With me taking the entire month off and leaving things to my employees, I have a lot of free time on my hands. All the Christmas plans I have are really for weekends and evenings, so my days are free."

"That's good to know. I'll adjust my schedule accordingly."

Nobu looked over at him with a small smile and took his hand into hers. The night before, they talked about how she'd hired three employees and decided to take the first extended break she'd have since she went into business as a crime scene cleaner. Hendrix was proud of her, because though his career was always a topic of conversation between them, her hours were just as long and sporadic. The only difference was, Nobu had the discipline to say no to jobs when she needed to—Hendrix didn't.

"You're really dedicated to making the most out of this month we have together huh, Henny?"

"Absolutely. Even if you are still unsure when I go back to Austin I'm not letting up. I want to plant enough seeds while we have the chance to be together often to make sure thoughts and positive feelings bloom for me every day that I'm gone."

"Trust me, you don't have to worry about that," she admitted. "I'm missing you already and you haven't even left yet."

"If that's the case, why don't you come to my suite later? We can have dinner at the hotel and see what else we can get into tonight."

"I like the sound of that, but I also want you to know you have the freedom and space to spend your time here doing

whatever you want. You don't have to be with me every day."

Hendrix chuckled and lifted her hand to his lips to kiss. "Bu, I've gotten used to being with you every day of my life. You're my wife. Being with you is natural to me. When I need a break and some time to myself, I'll take it, just like I know you will."

The cutest guffaw escaped her as she excitedly sat up in her seat and looked in his direction. "You remember when we planned our solo vacations and ended up going to the same place?"

Hendrix laughed in recollection as he nodded. "Hell yeah. Not just the same city, the same hotel too. It was fun as hell trying to avoid you."

Her laughter was like the sweetest melody as she tightened her grip on his hand. "I know, right? But that just showed how in sync we were and how much we had in common. I was so pissed because we kept going to the same places."

"Well, at least we got too vacations out of it that month."

"Yeah, and after that, we planned our solo trips together to make sure we went to separate places."

They released a soft laugh before a brief, comfortable silence filled the car.

"We had some good times, bae."

"We did," Hendrix agreed. "I hate that we were selfish and not the partners we needed to be, but I know everything happens for a reason."

"I agree. Maybe we needed time apart to realize what we truly have in each other."

"You're right. I can admit that I'd begun to take our love for granted. It lost the magic it once had. God took my blessing because He knew I wasn't cherishing it the way I should. But I promised Him, and I promise you, if I get you back... you'll never have to worry about that happening again."

“Hendrix,” she called softly, pulling her hand from his. “Every time you say stuff like that, it makes me want to buss it open for you.”

“Well, shit,” he replied, imitating Leslie Jordan as he pulled over onto the side of the road, getting an immediate laugh out of Nobu. “Buss it open for ya man, Bu.”

“I can’t with you,” she said through her giggle as he cut the car off and unbuckled his seatbelt.

“You can and you will. Come sit on my lap and ride this dick. You know it will always belong to you.”



AS HAPPY AND content as Hendrix was while working, he was anxious to get back to Nobu. They’d discussed the problems they had within their marriage and how they could correct them going forth. He’d realized them going in different directions wasn’t the problem; them not trying to blend their lives as they grew was the problem.

Three years later, Hendrix knew he could have easily put boundaries in place with work to ensure he worked a normal set of hours and Nobu could have hired a staff to work when she couldn’t. If they worked the same hours, they would be home at the same time. That way, they wouldn’t be lacking with effort and quality time.

Hendrix had never not wanted to have children with his wife, he just didn’t see how he’d be able to be a husband, father, and still climb the ladder of success within his career. With time, maturity, and a mentor that had lost his wife because of work as well, Hendrix realized the same amount of success could be had if he worked four to eight hours a day versus eighteen.

It wasn’t the time that made Hendrix such an asset; it was his skill and ability to close deals and secure recruits. The more he rested and took time for himself, the sharper he was mentally when it came to clients and prospects. While Hendrix hated having to lose Nobu to find a better, healthier version of

himself, he was praying he could keep her around so she would be able to experience this version of him.

The moment he made it to his car, Hendrix was calling Nobu to tell her she could head to the hotel. When she answered the FaceTime request, dressed in a burgundy lingerie set underneath an opened satin robe, Hendrix's mouth watered and parted slightly.

“Damn, Bu. You look so damn good.”

She bashfully smirked. “Thank you. How did it go?” she asked, lifting her wine glass to her lips.

“It went well. Got him to sign the contract.”

“Hendrix, that's great! How many more contracts do you have left to fill?”

“Seventeen. I have meetings lined up with thirteen potential candidates already, so hopefully I can get every position filled by the end of the year.”

“I'm confident that you will, and they are too, otherwise they wouldn't have trusted you to do this.”

“Mhm,” he agreed, grateful for her support but too lost in her beauty to focus on much of anything else. “I'm just going to come to you. We can have a late dinner in a few hours. Take that shit off and be naked by the time I get there.”

Nobu's head flung back as she laughed, though Hendrix was dead serious. All the sexy lingerie he'd bought her over the years never stayed on more than a few minutes before he was taking it off. Nobu's body was beautiful, and she knew how to style herself so that whatever she wore accentuated her curves. Being a man who was stimulated by what he saw, Hendrix's dick was almost always hard when he was around his wife. And her kisses... he couldn't ever French kiss her without his dick hardening too.

*The hell was he thinking letting her go?*

Nobu had *always* been the one, and Hendrix was confident that he was hers forever and always too.

Not just because of the sex and physical attraction, but because of how much they had in common while their differences balanced each other out. Even if they did nothing together, they still had peace and comfort with each other. While he cultivated her to make her better, she influenced him to make him better. Nobu was his best friend and there wasn't another woman he had as much fun with. Another woman he grew spiritually and emotionally with.

She wasn't perfect, but she was absolutely perfect for him, and Hendrix wanted to spend his days doing nothing more than being in her presence and making sure she enjoyed every second of becoming one with him again.



CHAPTER  
FIVE

Nobu

As soon as Hendrix walked into her parents' home, Luci, Nobu's youngest sister, began to play "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" and they all laughed. Hendrix was cute as hell in his Santa suit, fake white beard and all. They'd given new meaning to that song though, and just the thought of it had Nobu biting down on her bottom lip as she watched him interact with her family.

"What's got you looking at that man like you want to rip his clothes off?" Daisha asked.

"Girl, I do. Let's just say Santa has been cummin' all up in this town."

Daisha gasped and gripped Nobu's wrist while Luci grabbed her thigh. They huddled around her on the couch, causing Nobu to laugh as quietly as she could to avoid everyone else's attention being placed on them.

"So y'all are getting back together?" Luci confirmed.

"Fuck that," Daisha said with a shake of her head. "Are y'all using protection, because I know you stopped your birth control after he left."

"We aren't," Nobu admitted. "I got a Plan B when he first came back, but Hendrix made it clear he wants to get back together, and he wants us to have a baby. I did take the pills, but we've been having sex damn near every day and he cums in me every time."

“So basically we’re about to be aunties?” Luci asked, and the thought had excitement oozing through every vessel around Nobu’s heart.

“We will see. We’re not planning it or forcing it; we’re going with the flow. That’s a lot of what caused conflict between us in the past. Trying to control and force each other to do things our way. We’re just going with the flow. If we have a baby any time soon, great, if not, we’ll have more time to spend with each other. If we commit to each other soon, great, if not, I’m enjoying every day I have him.”

“That makes me so happy for you, sis,” Daisha said, and Luci quickly agreed. “We understood why you two ended things, but everyone knows y’all belong together.”

Nobu knew it too, even if she was too afraid to accept it. Like Hendrix said he would, he’d been showing her with his actions that her heart would be safe with him again. And in exchange, Nobu was doing the same for him as well. While her love language was gifts, Hendrix’s was service. Several times out of the week Hendrix used to buy or make her something, no matter how big or small, to make sure she felt loved. Because of her work schedule, she didn’t provide the service she could have to give him the same.

Hendrix paid all their bills, and she used her money on herself, to pay for their trips when he allowed her to, or to buy him gifts as well. Though Hendrix appreciated the gifts, that wasn’t his love language, so it didn’t matter as much to him. Instead, he felt her love when she cooked for him, cleaned for him, or even put his towel and boxers in the warmer while he was in the shower. Little things like having his lunch packed with a love note inside, those were the things that warmed Hendrix’s heart most.

Nobu justified it by saying they both were working, so they both had to split household responsibilities, but the truth was, Nobu didn’t have to work; she chose to. Hendrix told her several times that she could quit but she didn’t want to. Because of that, Nobu decided to hire employees a year after their divorce. Blaming the divorce on Hendrix alone wouldn’t

have been fair. It took two to make a relationship work, and in their case, it took two to end the relationship as well.

Now, if they were to get married again, Nobu would be working less and able to love him in his love language more. In her immaturity, she convinced herself doing things around the house made her his slave more than his wife, but Hendrix didn't give a damn what she did for him as long as she did it for him. He gave so much to others and to her that having someone provide service to him made him feel just as special as she did when he bought her gifts.

Her parents finally released Hendrix, and he made his way over to the trio of sisters. After giving Daisha and Luci a hug, Hendrix lifted Nobu to her feet. He gave her a warm, lingering hug before placing a soft, quick kiss to her lips.

"It's good to see you," she said, keeping her arms wrapped around him.

"I'm glad you shared your location with me. One of my client's needs to meet today instead of in two days, so I need to go handle that. I wanted to stop by and see you before I went in to work, though."

"Thank you, bae. I really appreciate that."

Nobu had gotten used to spending every day with Hendrix. When he had to meet with clients, there was no guarantee he'd be able to leave immediately. While some meetings lasted less than fifteen minutes, some could go on for hours.

"Walk me to my car. I got something for you."

With a nod, Nobu allowed Hendrix to take her by the hand and lead her outside, ignoring her sisters as they aww'd and ooh'd. She flipped them off, apologizing to her mother when Mila reprimanded her for it. They all laughed as she stepped outside with Hendrix.

"How long are you going to be over here?" Hendrix asked, leading her to his car.

"Not sure. We're going to put their decorations up and eat down here. I'll probably head home this evening."

“Cool. Hopefully this guy won’t want to meet long. He’s an older man, and they are the ones who usually draw the meetings out. I’d originally planned for us to have coffee to keep it brief but since he’s leaving town, he asked to do lunch at the country club instead. Ain’t no telling how long he’s going to try and keep me.”

Nobu chuckled. “Well, hopefully it won’t last too long. Why don’t you come by when it’s over? I’ll fix you dinner and give you a massage to end the night.”

“Mm,” he moaned, pulling her into his arms and pressing her against his car. “I love the sound of that. That gives me something to look forward to.”

After placing a tender kiss to her lips, Hendrix pulled away and opened the door. She gasped at the sight of the large bouquet of two dozen red roses. There was also a card and brown bag.

“Bae, did Christmas come early?” she asked, accepting the flowers from him.

Hendrix laughed before licking his lips. “No, that’s not your Christmas gift. I told you I’m making up for lost time, so I got a lot of flowers and gifts to give you too.”

“Thank you, Henny. I love them. They are absolutely beautiful.”

She inhaled them before handing them to him so she could open the bag. His ruse of the brown bag heightened Nobu’s surprise when she realized the gift was a trio of black, white, and gold Hermes Clic bracelets.

“I love these!” She shimmied and squealed. “Thank you so much!”

“Aww.” Hendrix’s laugh was sexy and low as he held her close when Nobu embraced him. “I’m glad you like them, baby.”

“I’ll put these on tonight when you get home, some heels, and an apron. How does that sound?”

“As appetizing as that visual is, you know what part sounded best?”

“What?”

“You saying when I get home.”

“Oh.” She gave him a shy grin and rocked from her heels to her toes. “I didn’t realize that, but... it’s... how I feel. For the next three weeks at least, I want you to consider that your home.”

“In that case, I’ll check out of the hotel and send you whatever you pay monthly for your bills.”

“Hendrix, you don’t have to...”

“I wasn’t asking,” he replied sternly. “And if you don’t tell me, I’ll just send you ten thousand. Your rent’s probably three or four thousand with a house that big, right?”

Her eyes rolled playfully as she leaned against the car. “Yes, Hendrix.”

“Okay, then I’ll send ten thousand, and I’ll see you this evening.”

Connecting their lips, Hendrix kissed her deeply, and her body tingled from the contact.

Breathlessly, Nobu pulled herself off the car and watched as he got inside and drove away. It wasn’t until he was down the street that she slowly made her way back into the house with a huge smile on her face.

CHAPTER  
**SIX**

**H**endrix  
A week later, Hendrix had settled into a comfortable routine. He worked five days a week, but after five p.m., he cut his business phone off and no longer responded to emails. His time had been divided between his family, friends, and Nobu. As much as his brother, Tucker, and best friend, Riley, clowned him about spending so much time with Nobu, they were happy to see them together again.

He'd been spending his Saturdays with the guys and Sundays were split between his family and Nobu's. They would have brunch with his, take a break and get some time in for themselves, then have dinner with Nobu's family. That week, he and Nobu had gone on a food tour and ice skating, but other than that, they simply chilled at home.

It was clear Nobu had leased the home with children in mind. It's large, open design made it the perfect starter home. Each of the four bedrooms had their own bathroom attached, and there was also a guest bathroom downstairs and upstairs. She had a living room, dining room, and sitting area that were all spacious. The attic and enclosed patio were Hendrix's favorite parts of the home. Though he hadn't been there for the selection of the home, Hendrix was comfortable there.

She'd only decorated the main rooms and her bedroom, plus one of the bedrooms upstairs that she was using as a theater room. If he could convince her to marry him again, Hendrix had already made up in his mind to take over all the bills and sublease his penthouse apartment in Austin.

Hendrix hadn't divorced Nobu just to marry her all over again. If he was to be honest with himself, the divorce hadn't meant anything to him. Though he entertained women over the years, his heart, mind, and body all belonged to Nobu Jakes Cane. There wasn't a woman alive that he craved the way he craved her at the soul.

"Baby," he called, feeling himself getting sleepy while he waited for her in the kitchen. They were supposed to go upstairs to the theater room and watch a few Christmas movies, but if she didn't hurry up, he'd be sleep soon. "I'ma just go lay down while you finish that up."

"Nooo," she whined. "If you get in the bed, you're gonna go to sleep. I promise I'm almost done."

"Can I help?" he asked standing, hoping that would speed the process up.

She'd convinced him to wear matching pajamas for their night in and she wanted to create a backdrop for them to take a few pictures in front of before they went upstairs. It didn't help that she wouldn't allow him to drink her famous homemade hot chocolate or eat any of the cookies or popcorn until she was done.

"I'm just about done. I just need to let this glitter set for a little while longer so it won't fall when you pick it up, then you can put it on the wall by the front door."

"Okay," he agreed, feeling his lips form a pout though he couldn't see it.

Nobu's laughter confirmed it as she told him, "Come here, big baby." Hendrix made his way over to her, arms crossed over his chest. She stood on the tips of her toes and gave him several pecks on the lips until his body relaxed and he kissed her back. "Will you feel better if I let you eat a coo—"

"Yes," he agreed, not bothering to wait for her to finish before he grabbed one of the peanut butter cookies off the island. Every week she made a different kind. First, it was chocolate chip, then, it was sugar. Next week, she was going to do butter, and he couldn't wait for those.

Nobu laughed as she wiped the crumbs that fell onto his chin before running her hand down his bald head.

“You are so sexy, baby. I love looking at you.”

“Don’t tell me that. I’ll toss all this shit on the floor and have my way with you.”

“I know you will, so go back over there until I get done. Two minutes, tops.”

Hendrix agreed and went back to the couch, slumping down a little further. Nobu’s two minutes was really like twenty, so he decided to shut his eyes and have a quick nap after he finished the cookie while he waited.



CHAPTER  
**SEVEN**

**N**obu

Mila stared at Nobu, waiting for her to respond. The question seemed simple enough, but Nobu didn't have an answer. She'd just finished telling her mother about how she and Hendrix had gone to L.O.V.E. to hear Joe perform live. The day had started out great. They went to get mani-pedi's and he treated her to a spa day before they parted ways. When Hendrix returned home, they went to the lounge and had an amazing time singing to each other and dancing... until they parted ways briefly and a woman tried to talk to Hendrix while he was at the bar.

She'd never been insecure when it came to Hendrix but watching a woman flirt with him irritated the hell out of her. The only difference was that they weren't married or even in a committed relationship. Nobu had no claim to him, so technically, Hendrix could do whatever with whoever. Of course, he declined the woman's advances and made it clear that he only wanted his wife, but it still bothered Nobu.

"Why did it bother you so much, NoNo?" Mila repeated, watching as Nobu took a sip of her lemonade. They'd met at Stoney River Steakhouse for lunch, though Nobu didn't have much of an appetite. If anything, she probably wouldn't feel better until she worked this out mentally then went for a run.

"I guess I was so upset because I felt possessive of him, and I couldn't talk to him about it because I knew he would simply tell me I had nothing to worry about."

“Then why are you worried?”

“Because we’re not together but we’re acting like we are.” Though she hadn’t told her mother they were having unprotected sex, the pair was doing everything they used to do while they were married. If Hendrix randomly decided he no longer wanted to invest in rebuilding their relationship, Nobu would be crushed. “He keeps telling me he’s invested and that he will show me with time, but I don’t know. Last night was the first night I didn’t feel secure with Hendrix because we aren’t in a committed relationship.”

“Whose doing is that?” Mila asked with a knowing smile. “Hendrix has already asked us for your hand in marriage again, so I know it’s not him.”

“Well if you know, why are you asking?” Nobu grumbled under her breath, making Mila chuckle.

“Because I want to hear your stubborn behind say it. Acknowledge how you feel. What you want.”

“I’m scared,” she stressed quietly. “I...” Nobu snapped her mouth shut. “I’m still in love with my ex-husband, Ma, and if we don’t work this time... I don’t think I’ll be able to take it.”

Nobu hadn’t meant for her eyes to water, but they did. Her chin trembled, and Mila immediately stood and walked over to her side of the booth.

“Baby,” she called softly, wrapping her arm around Nobu’s shoulders. Nobu quickly dabbed her eyes as Mila asked, “What did Jesus tell His disciples after He walked on water?”

“Don’t be afraid, I am here,” Nobu replied in between snuffles.

“And what is faith?”

“The substance of things hoped for. Evidence of things not seen.”

“Do you have faith that your marriage will work? And that even if it doesn’t, God will comfort you, heal you, and give you the love you deserve with someone else?” Nobu nodded softly. “It’s natural to have fear, especially when dealing with

humans and something as fickle as our heart and emotions. But if you truly believe God would be pleased with you reuniting with your husband, have no fear, because Jesus will be with you both every step of the way.” Mila placed a kiss on her temple. “Hendrix is invested in this. Whatever the two of you went through before the divorce, he’s actively working to validate your trust in him. It’s okay to surrender and let him.”

“You’re right,” Nobu agreed quietly. She huffed, wiping the last of her tears. “I don’t want my fear and lack of faith to ruin this. Honestly, we didn’t have any major issues. No cheating, no abuse. We just... were being selfish and not willing to compromise and work together.”

“Has that been an issue now?”

“No, but I guess the fear is in what will happen when the newness of us being back together wears off. Will we still put forth the effort that we are now?”

“NoNo, you’re going to ruin the gift of your time with him in the present worrying about what may or may not happen in the future. The past is no more, and the future is not yet. All we have is right now. The gift of this day. You know Hendrix’s character, and you know what the both of you are capable of. If you are this worried about things not working in the future, end things now. But if you have any confidence that you two can make this work, you’ve got to feel that fear and do it anyway until you have the strength and confidence to release it altogether.”

“Thanks, Ma.” Nobu smiled and gave her mother a hug. Their talk had given her the relief she needed.

“Always, baby.”

Mila made her way back to her side of the table just as their waitress returned with a fresh basket of biscuits, and as Nobu picked one up, she was happy that her appetite was beginning to return.



“I LIKE BEING able to end the night with you instead of going to sleep alone,” Nobu said as she rubbed coconut oil into her hands.

Earlier, they’d gone to see *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* live, then came back and wrapped gifts for their families while listening to Christmas music. Between the happiness of the moment and the tequila spiked hot apple cider, Nobu would have probably begged Hendrix to stay the night with her if he was still staying at the hotel.

“I’m not looking forward to going back to Austin,” was Hendrix’s reply as he coated his chest with Vaseline.

“Well, maybe you can work something out with your schedule. Do you have to be there physically to secure recruits? Or can you have meetings from anywhere?”

“Honestly, I can do the meetings over the phone or computer, but this company has a reputation for spoiling their clients and potential recruits. A lot of time and money is spent with these meetings to give the recruits a taste of what’s in store if they sign on. So if I did try and work in a different state, I would have to fly back to Austin a lot, unless I started working at the Memphis location.”

Nobu couldn’t contain her grin no matter how hard she tried.

Trying to hide her excitement, Nobu didn’t reply right away. She waited until she had her silk bonnet on, and they were snuggling against one another in bed to say, “I wouldn’t want you to uproot yourself on account of me, but I would love it if you came back home, Hendrix. I know you’d have to get your affairs in order there, but... I want my husband back.”

Nobu felt the moment he stopped breathing. When his heartbeat returned, Hendrix told her to, “Say that again, Bu.”

She giggled softly. “I want my husband back.”

“You don’t know how long I’ve been waiting to hear you say that,” Hendrix confessed, tilting her head and connecting their lips. But she did know, because she had been waiting just as long to say it.

CHAPTER  
EIGHT

Hendrix

It was the last Thursday before Christmas, and though Hendrix had enjoyed being Santa and interacting with the kids, he was glad he didn't have to put the suit on anymore after that night. As happy as he was to get out of the suit after the last child left the sanctuary, Hendrix stayed seated at the sight of Nobu walking down the aisle to him. Her smile was comfortable, expression as confident as always. Her and those damn dimples. Hendrix couldn't get enough of her.

Nobu casually made her way onto his lap, wrapping her arms around his neck in the process.

"What would you like for Christmas, Nobu?" Hendrix asked again, just like the first evening he'd seen her there.

"You," she replied, and that was a gift they'd *both* be able to share.

"Yeah?" Hendrix confirmed before licking his lips and looking down at hers.

"Yes, Henny."

Chuckling, he scratched his jaw, gaze unfocused from disbelief. This was all he'd wanted. All he needed. Hendrix helped Nobu to stand, then he sat her down in his seat. Kneeling in front of her, Hendrix took Nobu's hand into his.

"Hendrix..."

"When I accepted the assignment to come back home, I prayed and asked God to give you back to me if He trusted me

with you. As an act of faith, I had your ring updated, and I said I would bring it home with me.” Hendrix pulled the ring box out of his pocket. “I’ve had this ring with me every day this month, waiting for you to surrender to me and trust me again. Now that you have...” Hendrix opened the box, and at the sight of the four-carat cushion cut diamond ring, Nobu gasped then whimpered.

“No you fucking didn’t.”

“Shut your mouth,” Hendrix demanded through his chuckle. “Don’t be cursing in this church.”

“Jesus. I am so, so sorry,” she whispered, hands lifted in prayer position. “Lord, *please*, please forgive me. I am so, so sorry.”

Hendrix ran his hand over his face and beard as he laughed. “Bu, I’m trying to propose to you.”

“Oh, yes. Go ahead!” Nobu placed her left hand back inside of his with a smile.

“As I was saying, now that you have, I want you to know that I love you more than anything in this world. If given the chance, I want to spend the rest of my life showing you that you are my highest priority under God. Would you do me the complete honor of being my wife... again?”

With tears streaming down her cheeks, Nobu kneeled in front of him, meeting him in the partnership they would need to make their marriage work this time around.

“Yes,” she whispered, choking back more tears. “I will be your wife.”

A low groan escaped him as he tugged his bottom lip between his teeth. With watery eyes, Hendrix pulled the ring out of the box and slipped it onto her finger. Cupping her cheeks, he kissed her deeply, thanking God for giving him his crown back.



TWO DAYS LATER, on Christmas Eve, Nobu woke Hendrix up with head in bed. Before he could dive into her pussy, his phone began to ring. Confusion settled in at the sight of his boss' number on his personal phone. They agreed Harold would only call that number if the matter was extremely important. Sitting on the edge of the bed, Hendrix answered the call with, "This is Cane."

"I know it's early, but I was hoping to catch you before you started your day," Harold said. "Omar has finally reached out to the office. Apparently, he's been on vacation in Denver with his family. He said he can talk to you today or tomorrow, after that, he'll be M.I.A. again until the start of the new year. How soon can you get to Denver? If we don't get anyone else for the Memphis office, we need him."

With a low chuckle and shake of his head, Hendrix stood and began to pace.

His mouth opened and closed in shock before he managed to say, "It's Christmas Eve, Harold."

"I know that, and trust me, you will be well compensated, but I need you in Denver ASAP."

Releasing a slow, hard exhale, Hendrix looked over at Nobu. Her legs were spread wide as she played with her drenched pussy. That alone had his dick throbbing as he licked his lips.

"I'm spending today and tomorrow with my wife and our families. If Omar can't understand that and speak with me after the holiday, you can put someone else on his account."

"Hendrix." Harold sighed. "You're my top hunter. I don't trust anyone else on this but you."

"I'm honored, and I appreciate the confidence, but the answer is no."

"If we lose out on this client because of you, you'll be done here, Hendrix. Is that a chance you're willing to take?"

His nostrils flared as his body heated. Gritting his teeth, Hendrix tried to control his growing rage.

“Wow.” He chuckled before sucking his teeth. “I’m your top hunter and earner, yet because I want to spend today with my family, you’re threatening my job?”

It was in that moment that Hendrix realized how dispensable he really was to that company and any other like it. They didn’t value him as a person; they valued what he offered. There wasn’t anything special to them about him as a man. All they gave a damn about was how many recruits he could bring in.

“Cane...”

“I quit. Merry Christmas, Harold.”

After disconnecting the call and cutting his phone off, Hendrix sucked his teeth and hurled his phone onto the nightstand. When he sat on the side of the bed, Nobu wrapped her arms around him.

“I’m sorry, bae, but it’s truly their loss. You’re amazing at what you do. He is going to regret that.”

Shoulders slouched and head hung, Hendrix released a defeated exhale. Shortly after, he lifted his head high.

“I know he will. I shouldn’t be surprised, but I am. And I’m disappointed and hurt more than anything else. I’ve brought in millions a year since I’ve been with him, but Harold is like a lot of CEOs. They don’t give a fuck about the person, just the ways in which they can benefit from them. I lost you once because of a damn job; I’m not losing you again.”

“Henny...” Nobu laid him back on the bed and laid on top of him. “I hope you didn’t quit because of me. I would have been a little sad if you had to leave, but more than anything, I would have gone with you.”

“No, I needed to do that. My marriage is more important to me than anything else. I can freelance or work for a company that will allow me to do remote meetings with potential recruits and still make just as much money because of my resume. You said yes to marrying me, and I feel like that call was a test from God. The old me would have chosen work and



hoped you would understand, but that's not me anymore, and I hope you truly see that."

"I do," she cooed. "And it made me love you more, which I didn't think was even possible."

As Nobu laughed, Hendrix flipped her over so that their positions were switched. With Nobu lying on her back, he made his way between her legs for his favorite breakfast—her.



IT WAS the first time in three years that the Cane and Jakes families had come together for Christmas. Everyone had gathered at Nobu and Hendrix's home to exchange gifts and feast. One of the gifts Hendrix had given Nobu was a five hundred thousand dollar check to pay the house off. She cried endlessly when he gave it to her, but she shouldn't have expected anything less. Hendrix had always been a provider, and even though the house was in her name, when she opened the doors to make it his home as well, it was his job to take care of it financially.

All afternoon, no matter what they were eating, playing, talking about, or listening to, Nobu found her way into his arms for a quick hug and kiss. She had no problem reminding him of how happy she was to have him back, and that meant more to Hendrix than any of the materialistic things she'd gotten him. Nobu Jakes Cane was the best gift he could ever receive for Christmas, and all was finally right in Hendrix's world now that he'd finally gotten the love of his life back.

# EPILOGUE

Nobu  
*Valentine's Day*

Nervously, Nobu stared at one piece of clothing to the other, unsure if she wanted to change her outfit for the evening or not. For Valentine's Day, they decided to book a flight to Aruba. That evening, they were going to do the classic dinner and dancing after exchanging gifts, but Hendrix wanted to do something special to celebrate their first Valentine's Day back together.

While she waited for him to arrive, Nobu considered when she wanted to tell Hendrix she was pregnant. It was bound to happen, but she was still shocked when she missed her period in December *and* January. When she couldn't deny it anymore, she took a home pregnancy test, and it came back positive. At that point, the trip didn't matter nor did any gift Hendrix could have had for her. The baby inside of her stomach was gift enough. Still, Hendrix insisted on going to his brother's house to get Nobu's gifts since that's where he'd kept them. She was so nosy, Nobu had practically torn their home up trying to find them, so she had a good laugh at herself when she learned they weren't even there.

They'd settled into a day-to-day routine easily. Hendrix had several companies lined up to freelance for at the start of the year. Because he was contracted, he couldn't work with anyone else for the last three years, and the companies were anxious to add him to their team when he sent out the announcement that he was no longer under contract. Instead of

signing with just one company, he chose to freelance to ensure he would have the flexibility with his schedule that he would need to be there for himself and his family, and have a proper work, rest, and play balance.

Nobu continued to work weekend days and two evenings out of the week, leaving the rest of the schedule for her employees. And now that she'd accepted the fact that she was pregnant, Nobu was glad she'd gotten out of the habit of working ten- and twelve-hour days. Being home more often would have been a hard adjustment, even if she was happy about being with her baby.

Though they didn't have an exact date for their wedding yet, they knew they wanted the opposite of the first one, which was a winter wedding at their church. This time around, the couple wanted a summer destination wedding. That summer was out since she was going to still be pregnant, but she couldn't wait to officially become Mrs. Nobu Jakes Cane again, summer 2024.

At the sound of the front door opening and closing, Nobu released a quiet, "Ah!" before grabbing her robe and trying to rush out of the bedroom to the kitchen in time enough to avoid Hendrix seeing the workstation she'd created on the kitchen island. Underneath several pieces of tissue paper were all the gifts she planned to bag up for him. By the time she made it to the kitchen, Hendrix was holding the one she was most concerned about—the pregnancy test.

He didn't seem to give a damn about the Rolex, new briefcase, or Versace robe. All Hendrix did was stare at the pregnancy test.

"You're back early," she announced, taking small, slow steps toward him.

"You're pregnant?"

"You weren't supposed to see that yet."

Finally, Hendrix lifted his head and looked into her eyes as tears fell from his. "Are you? I need to hear you say it."

Cupping her cheeks, Nobu nodded as she giggled. “Yes,” she almost sang as her own eyes watered at the sight of his tears. “I’m pregnant, Henny. Happy Valentine’s Day.”

“Bu,” he called softly, voice thick with emotion as he dropped the test onto the island. Closing the space between them, Hendrix took her into his arms and lifted her in the air, wrapping her legs around him. “Thank you, baby. I love you so much. Thank you.”

He buried his face in her neck, and the feel of his tears had her own falling.

“Thank you for coming back for me. I love you too.”

“We’re having a baby!” he yelled before jumping up and down and spinning her around, causing Nobu to squeal and laugh as she held onto him tightly. She’d been doing that daily—holding him, randomly, not wanting to let him go. And after three long years, her husband had finally made his way back to her heart, his eternal home.

The End

Merry Christmas ♥

Make sure you recommend this story to a friend and leave a review for Bu and Henny!