

probably gets him out of trouble more often than not. "I know I wasn't exactly nice to you earlier."

That's one way to put it, I think to myself, resisting the urge to roll my eyes.

"Let me make it up to you," he insists, his voice smooth and confident, as if he's completely sure I'll say yes. There's an intensity in his gaze, a mix of guilt and something else—something unreadable.

He's a bit too direct for my liking, almost as if he's used to getting his way. But at the same time, there's a flicker of curiosity tugging at me. I should probably just brush him off, but a small part of me wonders... what exactly does he have in mind?

I raise an eyebrow, curious but skeptical. "What is your suggestion?"

"Let me cook for you," he says: "At my place."

I'm caught completely off guard. I don't even know this guy, and he's already inviting me to his place? Bold move.

But what surprises me even more is the fact that he claims he's going to cook. I never would have pegged him as the type. Everything about him screams someone who hires a private chef, not someone who actually gets their hands dirty in the kitchen.

For a moment, I hesitate. A part of me wonders if this is a bad idea, if I should just laugh it off and walk away. But then again... it's not like I have any plans for the evening. And, if I'm being honest, my curiosity is getting the better of me.

So I figure—why not give it a shot?

"Hmm, let's see if you can cook, or if it's just your ego doing all the work," I tease, grinning.

He looks at me with those breathtaking eyes and gives me a confident smile. Oh, I can already tell this is going to be interesting.



Once we arrive at his house, I'm in complete disbelief. This place... this is the kind of house I've saved in my Pinterest board while manifesting my future dream home. As we pull into the driveway, the house gets closer, and with each second, it seems to get more beautiful. I stare at it, my jaw practically on the floor. Nathaniel notices and chuckles, clearly amused by how stunned I am.

"You okay?" he asks, a playful grin on his face.

I nod, still unable to find the right words.

He opens the front door and gestures for me to step inside before him. The moment I walk into the hallway, I'm greeted by the sight of a massive diamond chandelier. The interior is just as stunning — classic, elegant, and unmistakably high-end. I can't believe someone as young as him lives here all alone.

His house matches his aura perfectly — it's giving off "old money" vibes, and I can't help but feel out of place.

"Your house is gorgeous," I say, still in awe.

"Thanks," he replies, a slight shrug in his shoulders: "Guess the interior designer earned his paycheck."

As we move further into the house, he guides me into a sprawling living room—at least three times the size of my entire apartment. Floor-to-ceiling windows bathe the space in a soft, golden glow, reflecting off the polished hardwood floors. The high ceilings make the room feel even more expansive, while a grand, L-shaped sofa dominates the center, inviting yet somehow untouchable.

To the left, I catch sight of the kitchen—a masterpiece of modern design. A sleek black marble island stretches across the space, its surface gleaming under the warm pendant lights. Gold accents trace the edges of the cabinetry. Everything looks pristine, as if the kitchen exists more for show than function.

“What’s on the menu tonight?” I ask, settling onto the counter across from him, the cool stone beneath me a stark contrast to the warmth of the room.

He leans against the island, arms crossed over his chest, exuding effortless confidence. There’s something about the way he carries himself—like a man who’s never had to ask twice for anything.

“Spaghetti,” he says with a casual shrug: “My specialty.”

I blink. Spaghetti? This man could dine on lobster and oysters every night if he wanted, yet his so-called specialty is something so... ordinary? The thought flickers through my mind, and for a split second, I feel guilty for my silent judgment. But I push the feeling aside just as quickly, curiosity taking its place.