



YourEssence - Quarreling Lovers, Volume 2 - Chapter 6

Lyle listened intently, and his ears perked up when he heard Daisy conclude, "It's pretty complicated, though..." Lyle had been a good sport going through the peculiar events that night, but the confirmation that his suspicion was apt surprised him, given his lifelong inability to successfully pick up on social cues. Usually, Lyle was the last person to "get it" when a room of people arrived at an obvious conclusion.

"David and I are technically... married," Daisy said, sounding contrite.

"Holy shit!" Lyle's response said everything.

"I know! I'm so sorry, Lyle. I should have told you sooner. It's just that we are taking some time apart to ensure that we have worked out some... problems... that we each have encountered this past year that shook us to our core. I'd go into more details, but... it's kind of... unusual."

"Okay... I am trying to decide between walking out right this minute or waiting to hear why it's so unusual. You do realize that this whole night has taken on a bizarre vibe now, right?"

"Yes, I completely understand. You've been nothing but a gentleman and accommodating to a very strange evening. It's just that you have to promise me you won't tell anyone. We could get in serious trouble if you told other people what has transpired between David and me."

"For real? Like trouble with the law kinds of trouble?"

"Yes! Exactly. Not that we haven't already had our fair share of that. So, do you want to know? Or is this where we decide to part ways?"

Lyle was at a crossroads. He could tell, even now, that his choice would change the direction of his life forever. He just had to decide if staying would leave him on

a better path than he was currently on. Lyle was routinely lonely in life; his intellect and social awkwardness kept him from successfully mingling with crowds, and he frequently ended conversations early once he ran out of memorized 'small talk' questions. In reflecting on the evening, he had to admit that he had actually enjoyed his time. It had been unconventional, unusual even. Sort of like he was. The chance of making a more profound connection weighed on him heavily as he replied, "Tell me, but I still reserve the right to bolt if you tell me something I'm uncomfortable with."

"Of course, Lyle. When you hear what I say, I assure you, you are free to leave. I hope you won't, though."

"Good, so what's so unusual about you and your husband's past?"

Daisy collected herself by taking a deep breath before beginning, "David... was... hrmph. This is harder to say than I thought it would be. We've talked about it in therapy so many times, but saying it to someone else feels so... dangerous."

Lyle leaned in, hearing the tremble of Daisy's voice. His interest was at its maximum. "Go on, Daisy. It's okay. I promise I won't get you in any trouble."

Daisy looked Lyle deeply in the eyes; Lyle felt that he could practically hear Daisy's thoughts as she considered whether she could truly trust the young man.

"Yes, I know I can, Lyle. Thank you. I'll try again," she said, wringing her hands. Lyle reached out and held her hands in his own. The gesture was well outside his usual comfort zone, but Daisy made him feel differently about the world. He felt comfortable in times of stress and wanted to comfort her. Lyle looked deeply into Daisy's eyes with a deep appreciation and confidence that finally allowed Daisy to continue, "David killed an intruder, and we haven't been the same since."

Lyle leaned back in shock. "David... has killed someone?"

"Yes, it wasn't intentional, but he did. Someone broke into the apartment—this apartment, actually. It scared me to my very core knowing I had just narrowly avoided this whole situation," Daisy shared before continuing to detail how she had moved out to the two-bedroom apartment across town mere days earlier.

"Wow! That is pretty shocking! I can see why things would be strained between you both when you are going through something like that. But I don't understand why you were living apart?"

"Oh, that was just temporary. I moved across town because we were planning to... expand the family. If you know what I mean..."

"Oh! Oh my. Well, I can't possibly stand in the way of something like that. I wish you and David all the best—" Lyle responded before Daisy interrupted.

"Don't," Daisy said, grabbing Lyle's hands and pulling him back to a seated position.

"But, you're married. And you were planning to have kids."

"Yes, but things changed. We decided to take a minute in our lives before we would make that decision again. We're... not the same people we were then." Daisy replied.

"I'll say!" Lyle responded enthusiastically, causing Daisy to look a little nervous.

"What do you mean?"

"Well, you're just so different from Amber. I can barely imagine that a person who would be so into her would also be into a low-key and sweet girl like you."

A look of relief and then a blush to her cheeks appeared on Daisy's face. She paused with her head turned to the side momentarily before she leaned forward and planted a kiss squarely on Lyle's lips. Lyle's lips met hers and returned the kiss as his mind ignited with feelings and thoughts he could hardly process. It wasn't Lyle's first kiss. It's just his first in a long time. Placing his hands behind Daisy's neck, he took the lead.

The two kissed with increasing passion as Lyle's confidence grew. Daisy was putty in his hands as he kissed her firmly. Their lips pressed against one another, parting only momentarily to take a quick breath before Lyle returned to kissing. His hands began to move lower, and he felt his excitement mounting. So did Daisy. As Lyle's hand started to reach lower, Lyle was becoming bolder. As his hand began to reach towards second base, Daisy finally pulled back.

"Hey, I'm not sure I'm ready for that step quite yet..."

"Oh, gotcha. No problem," Lyle responded, and immediately after, a doorknob twist pierced the otherwise silent room.

"Hey, you two. I had just like the best idea... again! Can you believe it?" Amber interrupted the couple.

"Sounds good, Amber. Should we come out to join you?" Daisy asked instantly. Lyle looked at Daisy, wondering if she was trying to escape the situation.

"Totally. Sharing the good news with you all will be a blast."

David was sitting in an armchair holding a full glass of brown liquor, which Daisy assumed to be bourbon based on her tastes. Amber had Daisy and Lyle sit on the couch and remained standing to introduce her idea.

"So, while I was making out with David, I started thinking—"

"Super hard, I'm sure..." Lyle interjected under his breath towards Daisy but inadvertently said it loud enough to interrupt Amber despite his intention.

"Thank you," Amber continued earnestly, "He is quite the man. It is definitely hard to think about how good a kisser David is when mid-kiss." Lyle leaned back, thankful his condescending comment hadn't offended his target.

"So, I started talking to David before things got too hot. It was just too good of an idea to let it wait any time at all."

"What's the idea, Amber?" Daisy tried to move the conversation along.

"Here it is. I'm hot, David's hot, Daisy's got... some good qualities, and Lyle is kind of cute, too—in his own sort of way. I've been wanting to do this for so long. So, here goes—we should date!"

"Like a double date, again?" Lyle asked.

"No, no. Tonight was fine, but I'm thinking of something more. I think we should all date each other."

"Uhh, what does that mean?" Daisy asked.

"Have you heard of polyamory, Daisy?"

"Uh, like those people who end up with multiple wives?" Daisy asked, looking David in the eyes. David looked back with a straight face despite Daisy's glare.

"No, more like a foursome. We each date one another in pairs, trios, and all together. It would let us get more intimate with each other and not have to worry about boundaries. Even though David is hot to the maximum, I couldn't help but wonder what it might be like to get a little... randy with Lyle. Even you, too, Daisy!"

"Well, I'm flattered," Daisy answered again, looking David in the eyes, trying to convey her discomfort over David's girlfriend's suggestions.

"I think it seems kind of fun, too," Lyle shockingly shared his thoughts. Daisy immediately turned her attention to her date. "Really? You're into this?"

"Yeah, why not? I was already starting something new, and I can say that tonight's been the most fun I've had in a long time. I don't have any problem spending more time with all of you."

It was David's turn to show his concern. He leaned forward momentarily before rocking back in his chair, repositioning uncomfortably. Lyle noticed the male-repositioning—the move where a man has to shift in his chair due to arousal. Lyle was left to wonder if David was becoming excited that Amber's suggestion was gaining traction or if Lyle's explicit agreement had excited him.

Daisy was starting to look frustrated when David once again shifted in his chair, got up, and moved over to his estranged wife. Sitting much closer than the casual acquaintances Lyle had been led to believe they were at the beginning of the evening, David placed his hand under Daisy's chin. He lifted her face up so they were looking each other squarely in the eyes. "For me. For Diana. For us. Please."

Lyle watched as Daisy's eyes went from anger to caring to shock, back to love, and then finally landed on resignation. "Ugh, you always do this. For once, can we just be a normal couple of adults..."

"I think you'd agree. There's little normal about us at this point, Daisy."

"That may well be, but do we need to bring other people into it?" Daisy asked, ignoring the presence of the two relative outsiders.

"It will be fine. They seem cool, and it will be good for us. I think. If not, you know I love you, and I'll be with you forever. This lets us explore and have the best of all worlds."

"Uh-huh, and your girlfriend knows that you're married then?"

"Well, she does now... I'm guessing your new boyfriend already knew?"

"As of about fifteen minutes ago, yeah."

Lyle watched in relative disbelief at how casually the married couple was discussing him and Amber while they were still in earshot. If he hadn't gotten the

explanation from Daisy earlier, he would have bolted for the door by now. Lyle's thoughts turned to Amber, who he now assumed must really want to have sex with multiple people because she showed no sign of leaving or even surprise.

"I've known for the whole time, Sweetie," Amber said, directing her comment to David, possibly as a shot across Daisy's brow. "I just don't get why Daisy changed her name from Diana."

Daisy shot straight upright at hearing this. Lyle was unnerved by yet another secret being kept from him. For Lyle, the overwhelming number of instances of drama tonight had just turned the corner into being moderately entertaining. "David just mentioned Diana, too. If Daisy is Diana, then what's the story there?"

David stood up after planting a kiss on Daisy's cheek. A gesture that seemed to reassure the woman by Lyle's judgment. "Well, Lyle, Amber, it's a complicated story, but Daisy did change her name from Diana... You see..."