



CHANEL MONAY

**Love
or
War**

(Part 2 of the Love Series)



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Publisher: tredition, Hamburg, Germany

ISBN

Paperback: 978-3-7482-1909-5

Hardcover: 978-3-7482-1910-1

eBook: 978-3-7482-1911-8

Printed on demand in many countries

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CHAPTER

1

The anger, the embarrassment, and all the rage that boiled through her blood replayed over and over again in Ashley's head, like it had done for the last four months. The audacity of Antwan. The audacity of Tameka. Whew, that bitch Tameka. Ashley was far from done with her and that bitch would get exactly what she deserved one way or another. Karma was a bitch, but Ashley was relieving karma from her duties and taking over on this one. She laid in one of Dominique's guest bedrooms staring at the walls. This room had been her safe haven for the last four months. She had not left outside of the room at all, but today would be different. Today she had awoken with a new attitude and a new strength that came from nowhere. Dominique and Smooth had

provided her with Grade A hospitality, but she was finally ready to face reality and get back to living her life or what was left of it.

FOUR MONTHS EARLIER.....

Standing in the door way in complete shock and hurt, Ashley watched as her best friend/maid of honor made love to her now husband. The woman who had stood beside her as a witness of their love and commitment was now riding her husband like a mechanical bull. Ashley immediately jumped on Tameka like a lion pouncing on its prey. She was not a fighter, but at that very moment she had turned into Laila Ali and was going for the championship belt. She wanted to beat Tameka into a coma. Her other bridesmaids and best friends, Dominique and Nicole, pulled her off of Tameka but not before Ashley was able to land a kick to Tameka face with her diamond bedazzled Guiseeppe shoes.

Antwan was scrambling to get dress and come up with some kind of lie. Of course he led off with the most common one, “Baby it is not what you think it is”.

“I think you fucking this bitch.” Ashley managed to spit out while connecting a right punch to his face. She then turned and ran out of the room drenched in tears. Dominique and Nicole ran out behind Ashley and caught up with her on the elevator just before the doors closed. The ride in the elevator down to the lobby seemed like a flight around the world. No one made a sound. No one said a word. No one knew what to say. Dominique, Ashley, Nicole, and Tameka were the Fabulous Four. They were a squad; a band of sisters. But now one had betrayed another.

Once the elevator reached the lobby, Antwan came running out of the stairwell as the ladies were exiting. “Ashley, please let’s talk about this” Antwan pleaded.

“Talk. Talk. Talk about the fuck what Antwan.” She replied full of rage.

“Please baby, not right here. Let’s go talk in private. This is just a misunderstanding.” Antwan continued to plead in a low whisper.

“Misunderstanding Antwan. You were fucking my best friend. What am I not understanding?” Ashley replied and the loud words filled the lobby. You could hear people’s grasp and whispers. Ashley turned to see almost all of her wedding guests standing around in the lobby or standing in the entrance of the ballroom looking back at her. She was so humiliated and embarrassed. “Are you happy now Antwan?” Ashley screamed and continued, “Now everyone knows that you were fucking the maid of honor on your wedding day.” She spit in his face and ran out the front entrance of the hotel.

Dominique and Nicole followed behind her. Neither one of them knew how to comfort her, but they were not going to let her be alone to endure the hurt. By the time they reached the parking lot on the side of the building, Smooth and Jay were pulling up for them to get into the back of the truck. Smooth was Dominique’s current boyfriend and Jay was Nicole’s current boyfriend. Once

they were loaded in the truck, Smooth told Jay to drive to the airport. Then Smooth turned and looked at Ashley and said, “I love Dominique. When you hurt, she hurt. When she hurt, I hurt. And we will all hurt together. We are taking you back to Miami until you decide what you want to do. Don’t matter if it is for a night or forever, but just know that we got you.”

And they definitely had her. They all five flew back to Miami in Smooth’s private jet. Dominique set Ashley up in one of her many guest rooms in the mansion she shared with Smooth. She made sure Ashley was in a room at the end of the hall with a private bathroom so that Ashley could have privacy and space. Dominique loved her friends. They were her sisters. Dominique was the only child. She did not know her father so far as she was concern, she was the only child because she grew up alone. Her heart was so heavy seeing Ashley in so much pain and not be able to take her pain away. She was the friend that wanted everyone to be okay. This was a new situation for her. Hell, for all of them. They had always practiced “catch no feelings so feelings never can get

hurt". Ashley was hurting. Not only had she been hurt by a man, but by her best friend also. The best friend that she confided in and trusted. The best friend that she loved with every breath in her. The best friend that she valued as a sister.

Ashley picked herself up out the bed, threw on a bath robe, and headed downstairs. She could smell the breakfast cooking soon as she opened the bedroom door and it smelt so good. She also noticed the beautiful touch that Dominique had put on the home since the last time she was there. She had been in that room for four months and had not noticed the décor. When they stayed at Smooth's house for Memorial weekend, it looked just like a bachelor pad, but now it had life. There were plants, flowers, pictures, curtains, accent pillows, throw rugs, etc. Let's just say that now the house had a woman's touch and perfect fun-sway. When Ashley turned the corner into the kitchen behind the wall that laid behind the stairwell, she could see Dominique cooking and dancing

to music. Her beautiful long legs and curvy hips were vibing to the beat. Dominique loved music and always said it kept her in a good mood.

“Hey Nique! What you whipping up?” Ashley called out sounding like a happy school girl.

“Well look who has come out of hibernation.” Dominique replied while blowing Ashley a kiss. She was shocked to see Ashley. She was happy and relieved to see her but she was shocked. Her friend had sunk into a depression and it was taking a toll on her. She had been completely isolated for four months. She did not even want Dominique to come on and sit with her.

“Well it is easy to stay laid up when you are being treated like a sick Queen Elizabeth.” Ashley stated while acting like she was placing a crown on her head.

“You would do the same for me.” Dominique gloved and continued.... “Now sit down and let me get you a lil fat.”

Ashley took a seat in one of the chairs at the kitchen table in the middle of the floor, and Dominique brought her a plate of French toast, cheese eggs, grits,

bacon, sausage, and hash browns. The house maiden brought them over some mimosas. Yes, Dominique had a house maiden. Dominique had and got whatever she wanted. Smooth made sure of it. Smooth was still the man in the game and probably was on every person in the world's play list. He was the hottest rapper alive and swimming in money. He loved Dominique and whatever was his was hers, so she was swimming in money too. Plus with a mansion like theirs, they needed a house maiden. Smooth did not like for Dominique to over work herself and with a house maiden, Smooth was more secure that she wouldn't. But Dominique did not allow the house maiden to cook, unless they were hosting for a lot of people. She was the only woman who cooked for her man in her kitchen.

“This looks so good Nique. You still know how to whip it up don't cha guh” Ashley stated trying to sound southern like Dominique.

“I do a little something, something. Plus Daddy will be home today so I gots to make sure he good.” Dominique replied licking her tongue out.

“Y’all are a mess”. Ashley chuckled and continued, “I really appreciate you and Smooth and everything y’all are doing for me. I’m ready to face the music Nique. Get my life back on track. I have to get out of this depression.”

“I understand that girl. You have missed A LOT and whenever you are ready I will fill you in Mrs. Anderson.” Dominique spit out and looked down in her plate. She already knew that Ashley would not like the sound of that.

“Don’t play with me Nique” Ashley playfully threw a piece of bacon at Dominique and continued, “I’m glad I missed that tragedy. And the nerve of Tameka. I can’t wait to see that bitch.”

“About that. You are Mrs. Anderson.” Dominique replied and gave Ashley the run down. Antwan had filed the marriage certificate, which made them legally married. Tameka had opened a clothing store in Manhattan, NY called “Allure”, which was the name of Ashley’s store she was due to open in Los Angeles. Dominique had not talked to Tameka since Ashley’s wedding day, but

based on Tameka's Instagram, it was obvious that she was still dealing with Antwan because she had been taking pictures in Ashley's house. Ashley sat back in the chair and her suntan colored complexion was covered with anguish all over her face. She was furious and it was time for people to feel her wrath.

"What you doing today Nique?" Ashley finally said after moments of silence.

"Going over to Nicole's. They only ten minutes up the road. Come with me. She misses you and asks about you every day. She even came over and peeked in on you. You were always sleep or in the bathroom." Dominique sounded so sad.

"Tell her hey and give her my love. I miss you girls, but I need some more time to recuperate and process this information." Ashley got up from the table and headed upstairs. Dominique had just hit her with a lot. She knew she was going to be returning to hell, but she hadn't even imagined that it would be this drastic.

"You okay though boo?" Dominique called after Ashley with a voice full of worry. Ashley had come out

of her guest room for the first time in four months. She did not want to send her back into a deep depression for another four months.

“I’m fine boo. I’m just preparing myself for war. Because there will be a war.” Ashley blurted out and continued upstairs.

Ashley threw herself on the bed and tried to make sense of everything that Dominique had laid upon her. She was furious with Tameka. This had been her best friend of 10 years. Had Tameka been envious of her life the whole time and she was blind to it? She had opened a store and named it the very same name that Ashley was going to name her store. Tameka knew how hard Ashley had worked towards opening her own store. Ashley did not even know that Tameka liked fashion enough to operate a fashion boutique. Tameka knew the true meaning of what Allure meant to Ashley. Tameka had stolen Ashley’s dream and was sleeping with her fiancé’ all at the same time. Well not her fiancé; her husband. Antwan was her husband. The thought of Antwan being her husband sent chills up Ashley’s spine. Why would he file the

damn marriage certificate? He has to know that Ashley wanted nothing to do with him and she definitely did not want to be his wife. She had to get to the bottom of this. She had to get answers and she wanted them immediately.

It was a Saturday, so Ashley knew she would have to wait until Monday to start getting the main answers she wanted. She got up off the bed and grabbed her laptop from the closet. Smooth had her stuff delivered and everything had been in the closet since it arrived. Ashley wasn't sure how Smooth got her belongings because she heard Antwan telling Dominique on the phone that they were not getting shit out of his house, but when Smooth was in Los Angeles the last time a delivery truck dropped off Ashley's belongings at Dominique's in Miami. Not all of her things, but most of what she needed. Ashley logged onto her computer and the dings began. Her app notifications and emails were jumping like Jordan. She decided to check her emails first. At the top of the list was her bank statement for the week. She still had

her money and what seemed like much more than she remembered. She immediately noticed emails from Antwan. She read them. They were emails of mix emotion. The emails went from being apologetic, to angry, to full of rage. All she got from the emails was that Antwan was sorry, but she was his wife and needed to bring her ass home. She was coming home, but not in the form and fashion he would be prepared for. Ashley was going to reclaim her life. Antwan had her fucked up and she was going to show him just how much. Ashley booked her flight and hotel and then slammed her laptop closed. She would catch up on the rest of her life on her flight.

Ashley could hear Dominique coming up the stairs so she came out of the room and told Dominique she wanted to have drinks with her and Nicole. Dominique told Ashley to get dress and informed her that they were having dinner since Smooth and Jay were on the way back to Miami but they would squeeze in drinks and girl talk until the men arrived to eat.

When Dominique and Ashley arrived at the restaurant, Dominique noticed Nicole's new drop top white

on white Audi A6. They pulled in beside her and proceeded inside. Nicole was already inside upstairs on the rooftop in a private cabana. Soon as Nicole saw Ashley she ran and gave her a hug.

“Lawd knows I missed you Ash.” Nicole let out. She was so happy to see her friend out and about.

“I miss you too beautiful. Look at you glowing.” Ashley replied taking Nicole by the hand and spinning her around. Nicole was definitely glowing in her all black tube romper that hugged her curvy hourglass shape and a pair rhinestone strappy heels that accentuated her jewels.

They all sat down in the cabana. “I ordered y’all a round of Henny shots” Nicole stated as the waitress walked up with their drinks. Ashley told the waitress to bring another round because they would need it.

Dominique and Ashley enjoyed their shots and other drinks while Ashley informed the ladies that she would be leaving the next day for Los Angeles. Nicole had a bottle of water because she claimed she was not feeling good. Ashley thanked both of them for being real friends and being there for her but she was ready to face