

Chapter 9

As Frances and Yaz pulled onto the main road, Frances glanced over at Yaz, her face bright with excitement. The sunlight caught her features, making her look even more radiant.

"Excited?" Frances asked, her voice filled with warmth.

"Yes!" Yaz smiled beaming with anticipation. "Where are we going?"

"It's a private estate, about an hour and a half drive outside the city. Where we usually meet.... It's a lot more private."

"How many women will be there?"

"Eight of us, for now," Frances said, then, noticed a slight tension in Yaz's eyes "Are you nervous?"

She hesitated before admitting, "A little bit." A shy smile playing on her lips.

Frances placed her hand on her knee with reassuring smile. "Don't be. You need to own the room, darling. Show them the best of yourself. Don't be modest, and remember, never underestimate yourself."

Yaz chuckled softly, "Easier said than done."

"Just do what I do," she said confidently.

"And what's that?"

Frances's smile turned playful as she explained, "Well, there's Frances you know. She's got big dreams, loves deeply, and can sometimes feel a bit unsure. And then there's Frances Louise...the movie star who turns heads the moment she walks into a room. She's confident, always smiling, and a bit mysterious."

Yaz raised an eyebrow, half-amused, half-suspicious. "That easy, ha?"

"Yep," Frances confirmed with a grin. "I'll teach you. It's all about separating the two. Nobody needs to know the real you unless you trust them completely. How you carry yourself is how they'll treat you, darling. Remember that."

Frances reached out, taking Yaz's hand, and brought it to her lips, kissing her knuckles gently. "You're there to do business, to make connections, allies.... possibly friends"

Yaz squeezed Frances's hand, feeling a mixture of excitement and apprehension. "You make it sound so easy. Were you always like this?"

Frances's expression shifted, becoming more serious, reflective. "No," she admitted softly. "I learned the hard way, through my mistakes. But you won't have to. I'll be right behind you, making sure you don't."

Yaz smiled, reassured by Frances's words.

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The road ahead unwound smoothly, the California landscape changing subtly as Frances's car sped along. The early morning sun rose higher, casting long shadows that danced across the car's hood. They shared a comfortable silence for a while, the tension from earlier easing into a comfortable silence with music from the radio keeping them company.

As they moved further from the city, the scenery gradually shifted from the urban sprawl of Los Angeles to the more serene outskirts, where rolling hills and scattered oak trees dominated the landscape. Frances's hand rested casually on the steering wheel, sunglasses shielding her eyes from the sun's glare. Yaz watched the passing scenery, her thoughts a mix of excitement and nervousness.

"Not too far now," Frances remarked, glancing over at Yaz with a reassuring smile.

The wind through the open window played with her blonde curls, sending them fluttering gently around her face.

Yaz returned the smile, feeling a flutter of nerves once more but also a sense of calm, knowing that Frances was by her side. "I can't believe how peaceful it is out here"

"It's gorgeous, isn't it? Away from the noise."

After another half hour, the road narrowed, winding through a dense grove of eucalyptus trees, the scent sharp and invigorating. Finally, they rounded a bend, and Yaz's eyes widened as they approached their destination.

Before them stood an imposing mansion. Its façade a blend of clean lines and grand, classical elements. Tall columns supported a wide stairway that stretched across the front of the house, while large windows reflected the surrounding greenery and the bright blue sky. The walls were painted in a soft beige tone, and the roof was covered with terracotta tiles.

Frances pulled the car to a smooth stop in front of the grand entrance, the engine quieting to a low purr before she turned it off. Yaz took in the sight of the estate, its vastness and elegance leaving her momentarily speechless.

Frances turned to her with a warm smile. She reached out, gently placing a hand on Yaz's leg, grounding her in the moment. "Ready?"

Yaz nodded, still taking in the grandeur of the place. "It's beautiful," she whispered, her voice filled with awe.

"It is," Frances agreed, stepping out of the car.

Yaz followed, feeling the cool breeze against her skin. The scent of the eucalyptus trees mingled with the faint smell of the ocean, which wasn't too far away, adding to the sense of escape from the everyday world.

Frances led the way to the grand entrance, where they were greeted by a well-dressed butler.

"Miss Louise, Miss Khan, welcome," he said, stepping aside to let them enter.

As they stepped into the mansion, the first thing Yaz noticed was the coolness of the marble floor beneath her feet. The grand entrance hall was bathed in soft natural light that poured in from the large windows, illuminating the elegant space. A sweeping staircase dominated one side of the room, its polished wooden banister curving gracefully upwards. The walls were adorned with tasteful art and large mirrors, adding a sense of grandeur and space.

Yaz took a deep breath, the subtle scent of lilies mixing with the faintest trace of expensive perfume. Everything about this house exuded a kind of understated luxury, from the intricate moldings on the ceiling to the rich tapestries hanging on the walls. It was a place meant to impress, but it also felt warm and inviting, a refuge from the hustle and bustle of the world outside. As they entered further into the house, they were greeted by the soft, melodic voice of Lillian.

"Frances, darling!" she exclaimed, reaching out to embrace her. "It's so good to see you."

Lillian was impeccably dressed in a tailored suit that hugged her figure perfectly, her dark hair styled in loose waves that framed her face. She had a warm smile on her lips as she approached them.

"Nice to see you too," Frances responded warmly, hugging her back.

Lillian turned to Yaz, her eyes sparkling with recognition. "Yaz, it's lovely to see you again. I was just telling others how much I adore your designs."

Yaz smiled, feeling a little more at ease. "Thank you, Mrs. Hartley. You have a lovely home."

"Oh, please, call me Lillian," she replied with a wink. "We're all friends here."

As they moved deeper into the house, Yaz was introduced to a group of women who were gathered in the spacious sitting room. The room was decorated in soft, neutral tones, with plush sofas and armchairs arranged in intimate circle, encouraging conversation. Large windows overlooked the gardens outside, where a fountain bubbled quietly in the distance.

Each woman Yaz met seemed to radiate confidence and poise. They were all elegantly dressed, their outfits reflecting the latest fashions.

"Yaz, this is Gloria St. Clair," Lillian said, introducing her to a tall woman with striking red hair. "Her husband is a producer, but she's also started her own production company."

Gloria extended her hand, her grip firm. "Nice to meet you, Yaz. Frances speaks very highly of you."

Yaz shook her hand, feeling a bit overwhelmed by the company she was in but also inspired. "Thank you, nice to meet you Mrs. St. Clair."

"Gloria, please," she corrected with a friendly smile. "We're not that formal here."

Yaz nodded, trying to absorb everything. She was surprised at how welcoming they all were, considering she was still new to this world.

Lillian continued, leading her to another woman, tall and athletically built, as she turned Yaz's breath caught in her throat as she recognized the famous actress standing before her.

"Oh, hello darling, how nice to see you again" the woman smiled when she saw Frances.

"It's been too long since we saw each other." two women shared a warm hug before Frances turned to Yaz.

"Katherine, I'd like you to meet Yaz. Yaz, Katherine Hepburn....As you probably know." she smiled cheeky

Yaz was struck trying to keep her composure and not to come across as Susan when she first met Frances. Before her stood a woman who was clearly commanding presence with her distinctive style. Her posture was upright and confident, embodying a

sense of self-assuredness. Her hair styled in a classic, soft waves, emphasizing her striking facial features, high cheekbones and a strong jawline.

Yaz's eyes were soaking in her fashion sense, effortlessly elegant yet unconventional. Tailored trousers and a crisp blouse paired with a blazer that breaks from traditional feminine attire, making her stand out in a room of more conventionally dressed women.

Her wardrobe was not just stylish but practical, obviously reflecting her personality. Yaz immediately noticed small details, a minimal jewelry, letting her natural poise and the quality of her clothes speak for themselves. Her look polished yet unpretentious, embodying a blend of sophistication and a no-nonsense attitude.

She looks as a woman who defines her own style and commands respect without uttering a single word.

"Miss Hepburn," Yaz stammered, trying to keep her voice calm, "it's an honor to meet you."

Katherine smiled softly, her voice gentle. "Please, call me Katherine. And the honor is mine. Frances has told me all about you. I was excited to finally have a pleasure of meeting you in person."

Yaz couldn't help but smile, feeling a mix of nerves and excitement. It was surreal to be in such company, but Frances's reassuring presence at her side gave her the confidence she needed.

As the women continued to chat, Yaz listened intently, absorbing the dynamic energy in the room. These were women who had come together to support one another, to challenge the status quo, and to carve out spaces where they could thrive on their own terms.

This weekend would be more than just a getaway, it would be a turning point, a chance to step fully into Frances's world and find her own place there. And with Frances by her side, she felt ready for whatever came next.

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Yaz found herself seated among these strong, independent women, their voices filling the room with lively conversation. The air buzzed with a mix of laughter and serious discussion, the kind of energy that only comes from a group of like-minded individuals who aren't afraid to speak their minds. As she settled into her seat, she marveled at how easily these women navigated between topics, their movements as graceful as their words were sharp.

Lillian Hartley, who had a natural knack for steering conversations, leaned forward, her eyes sparkling with interest as she brought up a topic that was clearly close to her heart.

"Have any of you seen the latest report on the gender wage gap? It's infuriating, but it's exactly why we need to keep pushing for more representation in every industry."

"Tell me about it. It's like fighting windmills" Frances rolled her eyes "It's about time they recognize the value of women's work and that everyone receives the compensation they deserve. I said it before and I will say it again.... Until that gap is closed, we're failing to honor the principles of equality and respect in the workplace."

Gloria St. Clair, ever the assertive voice in the room, nodded in agreement, her red hair catching the light as she turned to face Frances.

"Absolutely honey. We need to be in the boardrooms, making decisions, not just standing in front of cameras. That's why I started my own production company. I was tired of the boys' club calling the shots."

The women murmured in agreement, their movements fluid as they shifted in their seats, all of them deeply engaged in the conversation. Yaz couldn't help but feel a sense of awe at how these women commanded the room, not just with their words but with their presence.

Katherine, who had been quietly listening standing by the window, chimed in with her soft, yet firm, voice.

"And it's not just about business. We have to think about our social responsibilities too. The world is changing, and we need to be at the forefront of those changes. Look at what's happening in the world...McCarthyism, civil rights movements....there's so much at stake."

"McCarthyism is nothing but a witch hunt that sacrifices truth for fear and paranoia" Frances murmured sipping her wine

"Exactly" Katherine added

Yaz watched as the women nodded thoughtfully. There was a seriousness in the room now, a collective understanding that they were discussing more than just abstract ideas, they were talking about their lives and lives of their colleagues, family and friends, their futures, and the legacy they wanted to leave behind.

Another woman, Evelyn Chase, a sharp-witted philanthropist who Yaz had just been introduced to, took a sip of her drink before adding her thoughts. "That's why we have to support each other. It's not just about making our own money or succeeding in our own ventures. It's about lifting each other up. When one of us succeeds, we all do."

"Here's to that!" Lillian raised her glass

Yaz felt a surge of warmth, she realized she was among allies, women who weren't content to be in the background, who were fiercely independent and determined to shape the world around them.

As the conversation flowed, the women discussed everything from the latest political upheavals to the business ventures they were launching. There was talk of movements for women's rights, discussions about supporting charities and causes that mattered to them, and even plans to influence the industry by backing films and projects that highlighted women's stories.

Yaz listened intently, absorbing the strength in their voices, the resolve in their eyes. These women were not just wives or actresses, they were trailblazers, each in their own way challenging the status quo.

As the afternoon wore on, Yaz found herself contributing to the conversation, emboldened by the supportive atmosphere. The women didn't just listen, they engaged, offering advice, encouragement, and a shared sense of purpose. It was a meeting of minds, a collective resolve to make their mark.

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The women transitioned from their lively discussions to a more relaxed brunch setting, the conversation continuing to flow as they moved to the beautifully set table on the terrace. The view was breathtaking, with lush gardens surrounding the house and the distant hills rolling gently under the warm California sun. Yaz found herself seated between Frances and Lillian, her earlier nerves completely dissipated in the welcoming atmosphere.

As they began their meal, the women naturally turned to Yaz, curious to learn more about the woman who had captured Frances's attention, not just personally, but professionally as well.

"So, Yaz," Lillian began, her tone warm but inquisitive, "we'd love to hear more about you. Frances has been singing your praises, but tell us, what brings you into our world of chaos and creativity?"

Yaz smiled, feeling a surge of confidence. The words came easily, fueled by the encouragement she had felt throughout the morning.

"Well, I'm a costume designer at one of the studios, but recently, I've been working on branching out to start my own line. It's been a dream of mine for a long time, and with a little push from Frances here, I'm finally making it happen."

The women exchanged impressed glances, clearly intrigued. Gloria leaned forward, her sharp gaze fixed on Yaz. "Starting your own line, that's no small feat. It takes guts, especially in this industry."

Katherine nodded thoughtfully. "It's inspiring, really. We need more women like you, willing to step out and create something of their own. Tell us more about your vision.... I'm intrigued now."

Yaz felt her heart swell with pride, knowing that these women, who had achieved so much, were genuinely interested in her story.

"I want to create pieces that blend the rich heritage of my South Asian roots with the elegance and sophistication of Hollywood glamour. As a costume designer I know I can do it. It's about merging those worlds in a way that's unique, something that hasn't been fully explored yet."

Frances, who had been quietly watching Yaz with a fond smile, chimed in, her voice full of admiration. "That's why I'm investing in her venture. She has a vision that deserves to be seen."

The women around the table responded with enthusiastic nods and murmurs of agreement. Lillian raised her glass slightly in Yaz's direction.

"That's exactly the kind of initiative we need more of. A woman of South Asian roots making her mark in our world...it's powerful. It sends a message that there's room for all of us to succeed, no matter where we come from."

Evelyn Chase added with a smile, "You can count on our support hun. Whether it's helping you get your line into the right hands or simply spreading the word, we're behind you."

Yaz felt a wave of emotion, gratitude mingling with the excitement of what lay ahead. "Thank you, all of you. It means the world to me to have your support."

Gloria, always direct, grinned. "Don't be discouraged... Just remember...Most of us here came from blue collar families."

"True..." Evelyn added "My dad was a car mechanic."

Frances caught Yaz's eye and gave her a knowing smile, as if to say, 'This is where you belong'. It was a place where women like them could dream big and take risks, where they could be more than just the roles society expected of them.

Yaz took a deep breath, feeling a sense of belonging she hadn't expected.

As the brunch continued, the conversation naturally shifted to other topics, but the sense of solidarity remained. Yaz realized that she wasn't just walking away with business contacts or potential clients as she expected, she was gaining allies, women who understood the challenges she faced and were willing to stand with her. It was a

moment of realization that she was no longer alone in her journey. She had a network of powerful women who believed in her, and with Frances by her side, the future looked incredibly bright.

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Frances and Yaz left the estate in the early afternoon, the sun now hanging higher in the sky, casting long, golden shadows over the winding road. The drive back was quieter, filled with a sense of shared accomplishment and contentment.

Frances was the first to break the silence, her voice warm with pride. "You were incredible today darling. The way you handled yourself with confidence ... I couldn't be prouder."

Yaz blushed slightly, a soft smile spreading across her face as she looked out the window at the passing landscape. "I still can't believe it. I never thought I'd be meeting women like them, let alone having their support...I expected just a bunch of rich ladies with loads of money to spend"

"I had to leave something as a surprise" Frances smiled cheeky. She reached over, placing a gentle hand on Yaz's knee, her touch filled with reassurance.

"I'm excited... but also terrified. This is so much bigger"

Frances gave her a comforting smile. Her hand flying to Yaz's cheek, fingers brushing over it briefly but gently "Don't be scared...You're ready for this, darling. And you're not alone. I'll be right there with you, every step of the way."

Yaz gazed at her softly, her words encouraging.

They drove in comfortable silence for a while, both lost in their thoughts about the day. But as they got closer to Frances's house, the conversation shifted, becoming more intimate.

"So, do you have any wishes for the rest of the day?" Frances asked, her tone playful. "It's still early...We've got plenty of time"

Yaz's heart fluttered at the thought of spending the rest of the day with Frances, without any interruptions or need to keep their feelings hidden. "I just want to be with you.... Just relaxing, maybe cook something later.... I'm not fussy to be honest. "

Frances nodded, her eyes softening. "That sounds perfect. We haven't had much time to ourselves lately. I've missed you so much."

"I've missed you too," Yaz admitted, her voice tinged with a mix of longing and anticipation.

As they pulled into the driveway of Frances's house, Yaz couldn't help but feel a deep sense of contentment. The nerves and excitement of the day slowly faded, replaced by a warmth that spread through her chest.

As Frances unlocked the door and they stepped inside, the familiar scent of her home enveloped them. The house was quiet, the stillness broken only by the soft sound of their footsteps on the tiled floor. Yaz looked around, taking in the elegant but comfortable surroundings she had grown fond of.

Frances closed the door behind them, turning to Yaz with a tender smile. "I gave Betty the weekend off," she said softly, her voice carrying a hint of playful secrecy. "So, it's just us. The whole house to ourselves."

Yaz's heart skipped a beat at the thought. She watched as Frances slowly approached her, the confident movie star façade fading, replaced by something more vulnerable, more real. Frances's gaze softened, her eyes full of affection and desire.

"Franny..." Yaz began, but her words were cut off as Frances reached out, her fingers gently tracing Yaz's jawline before sliding into her hair.

Frances didn't need to say anything. The way she looked at Yaz, the slight tremble in her hand, and the shy way she closed the distance between them spoke volumes. She leaned in, her lips brushing against Yaz's in a kiss that was both gentle and full of longing. Yaz melted into the touch, her arms wrapping around Frances, pulling her closer. The kiss deepened, slow and tender, a promise of the night they were going to spend together.

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As Yaz unpacked her small suitcase, she and Frances quietly changed into more comfortable clothes. The late afternoon light streamed through the bedroom window, casting soft golden hues over the room. Yaz gazed outside, her thoughts wandering to the garden below, where the once vibrant summer blooms were giving way to the more subdued, winter tones. Though Los Angeles winters weren't like the ones she knew back home, she still felt a familiar tug in her heart, thinking about her parents and the seasons shifting back in England.

Frances, noticing her silence, looked over softly. "You alright, darling?" she asked, her voice tender with concern.

Yaz turned to face her with a melancholic smile. "Just thinking about home... I do miss it sometimes. I wish I could visit my mum and dad." There was a distant sadness in her voice, the longing unmistakable.

“I know... it must be hard being so far away,”

“Do you ever miss your dad?”

The question hung in the air like a still moment before a storm. Frances froze, her hands still on the buttons of her blouse. Her expression hardened, the warm openness quickly replaced by something much colder.

“No,” she replied curtly, the single word carrying an entire world of pain, and she turned away, busying herself with the clothes on the bed.

Yaz immediately regretted the question, sensing she had unknowingly touched a deep wound. “Sorry... I know you said you don’t speak to your dad... I just thought...”

Frances’s shoulders sagged slightly as she closed her eyes for a moment, gathering her thoughts. She exhaled slowly, dropping the clothes she had been holding and turning back to face her.

“No, don’t apologize,” Frances said gently. “It’s not your fault. The thing with my father... it’s complicated. I’ll tell you, I will... but I’m not ready to go there just yet.”

Yaz’s heart ached at the clear pain in Frances eyes. She felt regret for bringing it up in a first place “That’s okay. I’m sorry... I shouldn’t have asked. That was stupid.”

Frances reached for Yaz’s hand, pulling her closer, their fingers intertwining naturally. With her other hand, she gently moved a strand of Yaz’s hair, tucking it behind her ear. “It’s not stupid,” Frances whispered, her eyes soft but filled with vulnerability. “We should be able to talk about everything, and I don’t want to keep anything from you. I just... need some time, please.”

Yaz nodded, understanding the unspoken emotions in Frances’s gaze. “Of course,” she said softly, squeezing Frances’s hand. “Take all the time you need... it’s okay, darling.”

Frances lingered for a moment, her face still holding the weight of the conversation they’d just had. But then, like a burst of sunshine breaking through a storm, a wide smile lit up her face.

“Come with me, I want to show you something.”

Before Yaz could respond, Frances grabbed her hand and playfully dragged her down the hallway.

“What is it?” Yaz laughed, allowing herself to be pulled along, grateful for the shift in mood.

“You’ll see,” Frances winked, her excitement palpable.

They stopped in front of a door Yaz hadn't noticed before. As Frances opened it, it revealed a small, cozy room filled with shelves of books, stacked papers, and a desk nestled near the window. The warm afternoon light made the space feel almost magical, like a hidden sanctuary within the house.

"This is my little hideaway," Frances said with a smile as she walked over to the desk. "It's where I go to escape everything."

Yaz stepped inside, taking in the room. The walls were lined with books on acting, film, and novels, with a few framed photos on the wall of Frances herself from the from her modeling days as well as some smaller photos on her desk of her with the cast and crew from different movie sets. It was personal, lived-in, and unmistakably Frances.

As Frances reached out for the drawer Yaz's eyes drifted to the typewriter on the table. A piece of paper was still tucked into the machine, with half finished text on it.

"You're writing?" Yaz asked, her voice filled with pleasant surprise.

Frances turned around quickly, a bit flustered. "Oh... you weren't supposed to see that," she admitted with a sheepish grin.

Yaz raised an eyebrow, gently teasing, "You've been hiding things from me. First this room, now this? What is it?"

Frances hesitated for a moment before stepping closer, her vulnerability surfacing once again. "It's a story... something I've been working on in my spare time. It's not much, really. Just an idea I've had for a while."

Yaz smiled warmly, her interest piqued. "Tell me more. What's it about?"

Frances exhaled, her eyes lighting up as she began to explain, "Well... it's about a woman trying to find her place in the world....it's about the choices we make, the people we leave behind."

"That sounds really good.... I had no idea you wanted to write.... Are you gonna publish it?"

Frances shrugged, suddenly shy. "It's something I've always dreamed about. You know, acting is wonderful, but there's something about creating a story from scratch... Maybe one day."

"Well....If anyone can make it happen, it's you."

Frances smiled, "I hope so. It's just a dream for now, but we'll see." she smiled taking out of the drawer what she came for in a first place "Come on, I want your opinion"

"What is it?"

"It's a script...the one I told you about" she tugged her hand with a wink

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Frances paced back and forth, her glass of wine in hand, eyes darting anxiously between Yaz and the script. Yaz sat on the sofa, deeply engrossed in the pages, a small smile tugging at her lips.

"So?" Frances asked impatiently, unable to stop herself from interrupting.

Yaz chuckled, not looking up. "Wait... I'm not that fast."

"Surely you've got an idea by now?" Frances pressed, her nerves evident in her voice.

Yaz finally lifted her head, marking her place in the script with a finger. "Do you want me to glance at it or actually read it?"

Frances sighed dramatically. "Read it."

"Then stop pacing around like that," Yaz teased. "You're gonna make an indent in the carpet."

Frances rolled her eyes but remained where she was, her fingers tapping restlessly against the wine glass. "You don't have to read all of it... just the important bits."

Yaz shook her head, amused. "Which is what I'm doing."

"I'm just... nervous," Frances admitted, her voice softening.

"Really?" Yaz laughed, glancing at her with a raised brow. "You could've fooled me. I like it so far."

"You do?" Frances's face lit up with a mix of hope and relief.

"Yeah," Yaz nodded. "Becca's witty, she's not your typical dumb blonde character."

Frances smiled. "No, she's not."

Yaz leaned back, thoughtful. "I actually love it. I know you've been wanting a serious drama role, but this is refreshing. People underestimate how hard it is to make someone laugh."

Frances's pacing stopped as she considered that. "I never thought about it like that."

"It's true," Yaz said earnestly. "You can have the best joke in the world, but if you don't know how to deliver it, no one will laugh. It's a skill."

Frances nodded slowly. "You're right... that's actually a good point."

Yaz set the script down and tugged gently on Frances's hand, pulling her down onto the sofa. Frances placed her glass aside and stretched out, her head resting in Yaz's lap.

"Thank you," Frances murmured, looking up at Yaz with gratitude in her eyes.

"For what?"

"For this," Frances said softly. "For just being here. Apart from Andy, I've never really had anyone to share this part of my life with. I've always been on my own."

Yaz's heart softened, and she gently brushed a strand of hair from Frances's face, leaning down to kiss her tenderly. Their lips met in a soft, lingering moment of intimacy, the warmth between them tangible.

After a quiet pause, Frances suddenly stood up with a playful gleam in her eyes. She walked over to the record player and put on a vinyl. The room filled with the soft, mellow sound of a slow, romantic song. Frances turned back to Yaz, her smile returning, more radiant than ever.

"Come here," she said, extending her hand.

Yaz, laughing lightly, took Frances's hand as she was pulled up from the sofa. Frances wrapped her arms around Yaz, pulling her close as they swayed gently to the music. Yaz rested her head on Frances's shoulder, feeling the rhythm of their bodies moving together.

As the song played on, Frances pulled back just enough to look into Yaz's eyes, her hand softly caressing Yaz's cheek before pulling her in for a passionate kiss.

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The soft glow of candlelight flickered around the bathroom as Yaz and Frances relaxed in the warm embrace of the bathtub. The water shimmered around them, reflecting the gentle intimacy of the moment. Frances leaned comfortably against Yaz's chest, her hand tracing idle patterns across the surface of the water.

Yaz's fingers gently stroked Frances's arm, sending delicate shivers through her. Frances pressed a lingering kiss to Yaz's arm, savoring the tender contact.

“Where do you see us in the future?” Yaz asked softly, her voice a gentle murmur.

Frances smiled, her eyes closing “In a beautiful house on the beach. You’ll have your studio overlooking the ocean, busy with your next fashion show. And you’ll have a small successful store in Beverly Hills.”

Yaz’s fingers continued their soothing path down Frances’s arm. She pressed a long, affectionate kiss to the side of Frances’s head, inhaling her sweet scent. “And you?” she asked gently.

“I’ll have a lovely study,” Frances said, her voice dreamy. “A window facing the beach, with lavender plants right underneath it. I’ll be working on my new script.”

“I like that,” Yaz replied, her tone soft and filled with affection. “And we’ll have evening strolls down to the beach.”

“And have ice cream,” Frances added, her eyes twinkling with delight.

“And then come home and cook dinner together,” Yaz said, her voice warm and loving.

Frances turned slightly, her gaze meeting Yaz’s. “I want to wake up beside you each morning and walk through the streets together, letting everyone see that you’re mine and I’m yours.”

“I love you,” Yaz whispered, her smile deepened as she gently cupped Frances’s face, her fingers tenderly brushing away a stray lock of hair. Their eyes locked, and in that shared gaze, the world outside seemed to disappear.

Slowly, they leaned in, their lips meeting in a tender, passionate kiss. The warmth of the water seemed to merge with the warmth of their embrace, each kiss deepening their connection. Frances’s hand slipped to the back of Yaz’s neck, pulling her closer, while Yaz’s fingers traced gentle patterns on Frances’s back.

The kiss lingered, full of unspoken promises and deep affection, as they lost themselves in the moment.

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