7 | S E V E N [PRIVATE]

Imani swallowed hard, she rolled her lower lip into her mouth and chew so by. A vein throbbed at the base of Richard's neck, a blind man could see the e ect the small piece of jewelry had on the man. She knew deep down that this would be her excuse, her reason to fight the attraction between them. With that thought in mind, she allowed the tingles to shoot up her arm from his touch for a few more seconds before she forcefully tugged her hand free.

She went quickly to step past the brute, but he was quicker. Wrapping a brawny arm around her waist, Richard tugged the small woman back, he tightened his grip and hoisted the words through clenched teeth, "tell me that's not what I think it is, Imani."

The silence he received was enough. Her unspoken answer hung in the air like a hot branding iron on his skin. This wasn't over, not by a long fucking shot. But, the sides were darkening and Richard pondered how long he under his roof rather than in a location she could slip from his grip. Grinding his molars, he released her unceremonious form and it. ed her bag once more. Her response only encouraged the possessive monster he'd always forced down into the depths of his soul.

She was le watching a er the brute as he popped the boot and disposed of her bag in there. Walking back to the front of the car, he opened her door and gestured for her to enter. Imani was surprised with Richard's restraint, she was sure he'd have had to say about the trip with the cops. She couldn't help but selfishly feel slight disappointment at his reaction— or better yet, lack thereof. She knew it was horrible, her thoughts, but she was far too conflicted to have sort of sane rational.

However, he was currently o ering a cushioned seat and her knees felt weaker than before. She was in dire need of some kind of support. With twi actions, Imani slumped her bum and sunk down on the passenger's seat.

Closing her door with a hard thud, Richard made his way around the car and into the driver's seat.

Anxiously, Imani clamped her hands together, she forced herself not to gaze over at his handsome face. It wasn't long before Richard was treating back to his manor, the heavens leaked around them and she found herself relaxing for the first time in three years. She hadn't realized just how tired she'd become until that very moment.

Her eyelids dropped and the last thing she remembered was the sensation of Richards' hand on hers.

The drizzle became a light storm, Richard tightened his grip on the wheel and waited for the garage door to roll up. Parking inside, he pulled the key from the ignition and unbuckled himself. Releasing a deep breath, he turned to face Imani as the brute unaware of his dark scrutiny. A violent fire burned deep within and his gaze dropped to her hand, with controlled movements he pried the ring from her finger and pocketed it.

He'd confront her, give her a chance to explain herself and then he'd hunt down the fucker that decided to place a claim on his little Imani.

At ease from removing the damn band from her hand, he leisurely made his way out of the vehicle around the other side. Richard opened her door so ly and crouched down to free her from the belt. As it released, she groaned restlessly and shi ed absently showcasing her slender form. Imani was he'd mark to remind her who she belong to...

He placed an arm under her legs and the other braced her back, he li ed her from the car and made his way through the garage and into his dimly lit hallway. Passing the living space, kitchen and dining room, Richard took the stairs up towards his bedroom. He shouldered through the double doors and entered the oversized space.

Making his way towards the bed, he lowered her so ly onto the mattress.

Stirring, Imani groaned at the loss of the warmth that wrapped around her momentarily. Her eyes flickered open and she adjusted to the lighting before focusing on the man that loomed above her. "Go back to sleep, Imani," Richard mumbled.

Without thinking, Imani sat up and shook her head immediately. "I shouldn't be here," she whispered.

"You shouldn't?" Richard backed up and questioned her with the rise of an eyebrow.

Imani swung her legs over the side of the bed and went to stand up, but Richard had other plans. He placed his hands on her shoulders and kept her seated before he dropped down in front of her and slipped his hands down to cup her elbows. "You should have called," he stated, keeping his eyes trained on hers.

Trepidation spread through her veins as she realized she was along with the man that haunted her dreams and owned the passion that leaked out from between her thighs. Licking her dry lips, she came back to reality, "called?" She was confused, she had spoken to her mother.

"Yeah, o f have saved us a trip." He said as if it explained everything. Richard realized immediately that she was completely bemused. "Your sis , Imani. We need to discuss the things back home."

It was like a slap in the face. He assumed she'd just return home, like that, no questions asked. It wasn't his duty to bring her belongings back and the little devil within her mind decided to test the waters. "I'm thinking about finding a place back at Westridge." It wasn't a lie. Imani had been o ered a position at a pharmaceutical company, minutes from the university and she was yet to give her response.

Anger flared through the brute. He understood her need for independence and sustainability, but he didn't understand why it had to be located hours away from their home. "No," Richard said the word without thinking twice.

Imani leaned away from him, "no?" She questioned.

"Yeah, Imani. No." He replied without missing a beat, his voice became rough and deep, "no, you're not buying a place up there."

She knew Richard would be against the idea, but she wasn't quite sure as to why he thought he's some sort of claim over her— okay maybe, she knew why but that didn't change the fact that whatever was between them wasn't right. It wasn't healthy. "It's not a matter that concerns you," she snapped right back.

"Fuck that, babe. You aren't going back up there, end of." He barked in a finalizing tone, e ectively snapping those plump lips of hers shut. "Matter of fact," I'll have the property pack and deliver." He commented, determined not to lose her again. He'd only just gotten her back; he wasn't moronic enough to let her go once more.

She glared up at him in the darkening room, "you're insane!"

"You already knew that, Imani." He grunted back without any sort of amusement. Freeing one elbow, he stroked up her arm and placed his hand against her pulse. He could feel his e ect on her and it influenced a shot of arousal straight down to his groin. "This isn't debatable, the only reason your sweet little ass got to go was because you promised to return."

She reeled, "I'm a grown woman, Mr. Basaste—"

"—Believe me, that, I know." He cut her o , scanning her body over. Then he focused on more important matters, "who's the bastard, Imani?"

She gave dropped, "let me up," she replied. Richard's hold on her tightened, "I'm not discussing this with you." She continued.

He laughed humourlessly and spoke with a clenched jaw, "yeah, babe. You are. So get talking, because from where I'm sitting; your sweet ass was supposed to be studying and not fraternizing with other men." Richard placed himself in the seating her down and slamming into her then and there, claiming her in the most brutal and raw manner possible.

"Must you be such a mare?" She groaned out, standing up in a rush and catching him o guard. His hands dropped from her form, only to grip onto her hips.

Richard squeezed his eyes shut and suppressed the moan that clawed to escape from under his skin. It would be easy, so very easy to li her bags over his shoulders and tease the answers he needed from her lips. "You telling me, I'm the only sick fucker that feels the need to pin you down and push you without barriers?"

Her stomach clenched at his words, she could practically feel his breath seep through her clothes and hit her abdomen. "Please..." She whispered, unable to deny his assertion any more.

Richard trailed his fingers up and under her shirt, he could feel her begin to breath harder, "it's a simple question, Imani." He stroked the region just below her breasts, causing tingles to run down her spine in retort. "Answer it." The brute demanded as he placed a palm over her breast and finally raised to his full height.

Her eyes closed shut and her traitorous body leaned towards the large man. "He's good for me, I like him," the words were so and fell on Richard like a ton of bricks.

"Like," Richard growled out.

Imani bit the inside of her cheek, "I like him." She confirmed, but even then she knew it wasn't the complete truth. Her feelings towards Ben were complicated, she cared for the man and genuinely enjoyed his company. He was the closest friend she'd ever had...

A disgruntle sound came from within his chest, Richard was done playing nice. He swirled his thumb around Imani's areolae before pinching her nipple, through the material of her bra. Dropping his head, he spoke against the crook of her neck, "I dare you, sweetheart, to tell me you like that fucker one more time."

"This isn't right," Imani moaned out as the man began to play with her body like a toy.

She was helpless against his ruthlessness, her body addicted to the dangerous intoxication his touch brought about. Her body begged for more needed it like a junkie needs their fix. It was never like this with Ben, his touches were nothing but so and comfortable. Richards, however, they tore through her system without mercy, had her core aching to be touched and her nipples pebbling in an instant.

Richard opened his mouth and bit down lightly on her pulse, "but, it feels right." As his lips and tongue branded her neck, his free hand reached down and eased her legs to spread open. "You mine, sweetheart?" He questioned, the crude words countered by the endearment.

Imani rolled her lower lip into her mouth and cursed the attraction she felt towards him. Her breathing hitched as his calloused fingers slipped into her waistline and then dipped south. "Don't," she whimpered, but the refusal came out as a plea for more...

The large man slipped his hand into her pants, he cupped her heat and felt her arousal saint his palm. "Ask me to stop, Imani. Tell me you don't want me to fuck this tight little pussy until you can no longer walk, much less head back down the hall just to have you claim to like!" His words were harsh and they should have made her push away from him, but instead, she pressed her hips towards him further.

"Bastard," she hissed at him.

He took her earlobe between his teeth, "this is mine, Imani." And, as he bit down on her ear, one blunt finger pushed past her panties and thrust up into her leaking cunt.

"You don't even—"

That's when he felt it, "baby, that's where you're wrong. I own you. Every part of your body is mine, Imani." And, he wasn't lying. The jealous beast inside of him wondered if she was still his completely, he'd found his answer. "Good girl," he praised, "you kept these legs closed." Richard worked her body, slow and steady, feeling her clamp around his digit and milk his finger dry.

"You're not playing fair," she whimpered, her legs weakening.

Richard felt her body quiver and he brought his hand from her breast down to wrap around her waist, keeping her upright. "Because the games are over, Imani. I won."

The rebellious spirit in her woke. One second she was still against him, the next she thought to be released. The shock of her sudden strength loosened his grip and before he could seduce her back into his arms like a good little submissive, she broke free. "You may have won, but I'm not your prize." Her bitter response was followed by the straightening of her attire.

Richard watched as the young woman turned her back to him and started for the door, he couldn't help but find himself a raging erection. The sick bastard like it when she was angry, loved seeing that fire behind her eyes. He gave her a second, just a small breather to believe she'd really won that round and then he advanced.

Imani reached out for the door handle, and without hesitation, he wound herself pressed flush against the wooden surface. Richard took both of her wrists and pinned them behind her back in one of his large brawny hands, the other wrapped around her throat. "Don't run away from me, sweetheart, it drives me crazy."

This time he wasn't gentle, He lowered his hand from her throat and slipped them beneath her clothing, before two fingers plunged up between her slick slit and began to scissor into her heat with fast, rapid thrusts...

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