

Monica Collins and Ivy Dobbs-Thorne are women who are tired of letting their husbands be the only ones who get to do whatever they want to do. They each choose to handle their husband's betrayal in very different ways...

Its All Right...Now

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Jessica L. Terry

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Chapter 1

SIX YEARS LATER...

“Excuse me, sir. Are these the only tomatoes you have here? Most of these are bruised.”

“Ah, yes ma’am. You might wanna come back on Tuesday, that’s when our truck comes in.”

“Thanks,” Ivy grumbled, pushing her shopping cart on down the aisle. That meant she had to go to another store and get the tomatoes she needed for a new dish she wanted to try out for dinner that night, in addition to all the other things she needed to do before she went home. Now she had to rush and she hated that. Garrison preferred to have his dinner by eight o’clock and it was already almost five. She liked to please her husband as much as she could.

Her cell phone rang inside her purse. She fished around for it with one hand while perusing a box of pasta she held in her other. “Hello?”

“Hey, girl,” Monica’s voice chirped in her ear. “What you up to?”

“At the store, getting a few things. You on your way home?”

“Yeah, fighting this damn traffic. And I am too through with this today, girl. I had the day from hell.”

“Yeah? What happened?” Ivy asked, dropping the box of pasta into her cart and hurrying down the aisle towards the checkouts.

“Just the regular stuff times ten. I’ll have to tell you about it later, though. I’m about to get some gas before I go meet Lamar

for dinner. His ass better be on time, too. I am too tired to be waiting.”

“Give him fifteen minutes and then leave. If he hasn’t called you by then and still isn’t there, that’s just too bad. You know what I always tell you.”

“Yes, I do. And I’m sure it has nothing to do with you not liking Lamar that much.”

“I never said I didn’t like Lamar. I just don’t like some of the things he does.”

“I could say the same about your man, too, you know.”

Ivy pursed her lips together as she tapped her foot against the shiny linoleum. “Yeah, I know you could,” she said, wishing the woman that was slowly placing her items on the checkout counter would move faster. She was looking at everything before placing it on the moving belt like she didn’t know what she had put in her cart. Ivy tried not to groan out loud.

“Well, look, girl, I’ll get at you later on. I’m at the gas station.”

“All right, bye.” Ivy closed her flip phone and dropped it back in her purse. The woman in front of her was still moving at a snail’s pace and Ivy considered just moving to another line, but in glancing around the bustling supermarket she realized that all of the checkout lines that were open had lines stretching all the way out into the aisle.

Her eyes fell on a handsome caramel brotha a couple of lines down from her. He was tall, smooth, and had some of the prettiest teeth she had ever seen. And he was looking right back at her.

Ivy’s panties were immediately wet.

Not having had any sex in the past two months, Ivy was an incredibly sexually frustrated woman. She needed to have her tires rotated at least four times a week, and not the ones on her

Lexus Coupe. It pissed her off that her husband, who used to give it to her whenever she wanted it, was now acting like a little bitch and complaining about headaches and fatigue every time she reached for his dick.

And now this incredibly handsome, incredibly fine man was giving her the eye, in public, and she couldn't stop herself from imagining herself trying out some of the still-untested moves she had learned about in one of her many Karma Sutra books on him. She quickly pulled her eyes away, because while Garrison was far from satisfying her in the bedroom (or anywhere else, really) lately, she couldn't bring herself to cheat on him or anything. She had saved herself for him and let him be the first one to break through her womanly curtain, so to speak, and even though he was pissing her off almost every day, he was still her husband. That meant something to her. So she focused on getting her debit card out of her wallet and making sure she hadn't forgotten anything and tried to send the message to Mr. Pretty Teeth that she just wasn't interested.

Later on that evening, though, when she was in her and Garrison's spacious master bedroom, wrapping her thick black shoulder-length hair around her head with a natural-bristled brush, she wished she had at least talked to the man at the grocery store. Or rather, given him a chance to talk to her. It had been a while since she was pursued by a handsome gentleman, and with the recent neglect from her husband, she needed the reassurance that she was still attractive. That she still had it goin' on. She honestly didn't feel like she did, really. The dinner that she had spent all that time shopping for and preparing was sitting downstairs untouched because Garrison, who had come home late, didn't feel like eating it. "I don't want pasta tonight," he had said, hardly even looking at the beautifully-prepared food. He just flipped through the mail, gave her his usual dry kiss on the cheek, and said he had to go

back out the office. Ivy barely had time to respond before he was out the door.

Ivy was pissed off, again. Things had been like this for the past few months; Garrison coming home whenever he got ready, most of the time without calling or anything to let her know he would be late, and then either going right to bed or leaving right back out to the office or wherever else. And when he did stay home, he was holed up in his office with the door closed. Ivy didn't understand his behavior, and whenever she tried to talk to him about it, he insisted that nothing was wrong. He just had a lot going on at work, he always said.

Ivy peered hard at her reflection in the mirror. *Is there something wrong with me?* she thought to herself. *Could I do something with myself that would bring back that fire that Garrison used to have for me? Do I just bore him now?* Ivy bit her lip and squinted her doe-shaped eyes. She had never thought of herself as ugly a day in her life, but when your own husband just quits showing any kind of interest in you, you tend to lose a little of your self-esteem. She touched her thick black hair and wondered how she would look if she cut it all off or changed the color to something drastic. Ivy continued to peer at herself. Her lips were luscious, her skin was toffee-smooth, her breasts were amazing, and her legs didn't have a mark on them. "There is nothing wrong with me," Ivy stated aloud. She cupped her large breasts in her hands and struck a pouty pose. *Garrison is just gonna have to get with the program.*

Chapter 2

“I don’t know what you want me to say, Monica. I already said I was sorry for being late. My damn car ran out of gas. You’re acting like that’s my fault or something.”

Monica sucked her teeth and paused in the act of removing her knee-high boots. “Damn that car for running out of gas. I guess its self-gas-producing capabilities ran out again.”

“You ain’t gotta get smart.”

“How ridiculous is that, Lamar? You’ve been driving long enough to know that cars require gasoline.”

“I forgot to put some gas in it. Sue me.”

“Well, then either you’re really stupid or you think I’m really stupid. Because this is the third time in a row you’ve used that same dumb excuse.”

“There’s a difference between an excuse and a reason, Monica.”

“Whatever.”

Monica finished taking off her boots and padded to the closet. She located the original box the boots came in and placed them inside. She took her time turning back around because she knew Lamar was watching her. He always tried to give her this pitiful puppy-dog look when he knew she was pissed at him, and she was so pissed at him now. She had rushed to leave work a few minutes early, sat through traffic for an hour at the height of rush hour in ninety-degree heat, all while being hungry and having to pee, only to have Lamar call her twenty minutes after he was supposed to meet her at the restaurant to tell her that crap about running out of gas and having to wait on one of his buddies to come bring him some. And of course he didn’t want her to bring it because his boy Antoine already had a gas can and he lived closer, which meant

Jessica L. Terry

Monica wouldn't have to buy one and dent their budget. I guess he didn't realize how lame that sounded, and that Monica knew he just wanted more time to sit at Antoine's and play that stupid PlayStation 2, which is probably why he was late in the first place. Monica ended up ordering take-out at the restaurant, only to have Lamar come in an hour after she did, notice the containers on the counter, and ask where his was. She wanted to slap him so bad her hand itched.

Lamar watched Monica as she got undressed inside the closet. He knew she was mad. But he had lost all track of time when he was hanging with his boy Antoine. They had a stiff competition going in NBA Street and he wasn't about to leave until he had at least evened the score. He was only about twenty minutes late by the time they had finished the tying game, and when he called Monica to tell her what was up, she was fussing and arguing so much that he just told her that stuff about the car so he could get off the phone. There was no way he was gonna tell her what he had really been doing. There was also no way he was going right home and hear the bitch-fest in person. So he hung out at Antoine's for a couple more hours, playing video games and painfully warding off the advances of Antoine's cousin, Sydney. The girl was fine as frog's hair and too into him, but Lamar had never cheated on Monica in all the years they'd been together. He came close a couple of times, but he never really did it. Yeah, he copped a few feels and let his tongue touch a few nipples, but that was it. Monica was sometimes a demanding wife but one thing that hadn't changed since high school was the bomb lovin' she had. She was still rockin' his world after seven years together and four years of marriage. There was no need to shop when you had the goods at the house.

But there was no mistaking how fine Sydney was and how hard he had gotten when sat directly across from him, opened

her legs, and started playing with herself. Lamar had to use every ounce of self control to not even look at her, let alone jumping on top of her and banging her back out. Antoine had run out to get some batteries (or something) so they were all alone and no one would have ever known, but Lamar couldn't bring himself to do it. Even when Sydney sat next to him and placed his large hand on her full breasts, and he could feel her hard nipples under the thin material of her shirt, he resisted. *Even* when she pushed him back, told him to close his eyes (which he did without even thinking), and immediately felt his shorts being pulled down and Sydney's hands then warm mouth on his dick, he just laid there and enjoyed the pleasure. He didn't touch her or anything; he never even opened his eyes. So *technically*, he didn't do anything wrong. He just sat there. The shit felt good, though. He couldn't even front.

And now he was watching Monica stand there in her purple bra and panty set, booty looking tastier than a butter biscuit with syrup, and he was hard again. He had a fine woman; no one could deny that. Tall, dark and thick, with raven-black hair that hung just past her shoulders and lips that could put Naomi Campbell to shame. Yeah, she had a little bit of an attitude sometimes but he liked that, most of the time. She was a strong woman that didn't take any shit. He'd messed with enough ditzes and airheads to last a lifetime. Monica was fine with a brain and that was a sexy combination.

She was also his wife, which meant he could sex her any time he wanted to. And he wanted to now.

"Hey, Monica. Come here for a second," Lamar said in a low voice.

Monica didn't bother turning around when she said, "Don't even try it, Lamar. You ain't getting none of this tonight so you might as well save the Barry White voice for when I give a damn."

“Aww, baby, don’t be like that. Let me show you how sorry I am.”

“Fuck you.”

Okay, so this is gonna be a little tougher than usual, Lamar thought to himself. That’s fine. If there’s one thing about me that’s true, it’s that I do enjoy a challenge.

He walked over to his fuming wife and wrapped his long arms around her firm waist. She tried to push his hands away but he held on to her and managed to turn her around to face him. He leaned in to kiss her and she slapped him.

“Get off me, Lamar. I’m tired of you lying to me.”

“What makes you think I’m lying, baby?”

“What do you think, I’m some kind of idiot? I know full well your car didn’t run out of any damn gas. You were at Antoine’s, weren’t you?”

Lamar debated on what he should say. Maybe if he went ahead and told her the truth, she would let him off the hook and give him some lovin’. That was really all she wanted from the beginning, anyway. So if he gave her what she wanted, maybe she would give him what he wanted. But on the other hand, maybe she was pissed because he didn’t just tell the truth from the beginning and nothing but time would get her to cool off. He knew that running-out-of-gas thing was lame and that she wouldn’t believe it for a minute. The first time he tried it, it worked but he could tell she was wary of it. By now he knew he was wasting his time telling her that, and really, when he thought about it, he should have been able to tell her the truth. There was nothing wrong with hanging out with his boy. And as for the thing with Sydney, well, yeah she went down on him but he never touched her or anything so as far as he was concerned, he hadn’t done anything wrong.

Lamar dropped his hands from Monica's waist and sighed. "All right. Yes, I was at Antoine's, but, really, is that such a bad thing?"

Monica folded her arms under her breasts, which caused them to push up and Lamar had to stop himself from licking his lips. Damn, those things looked good.

"You could've just told me that from the beginning, if that's all it was."

"What do you mean, if that's all it was? What else would it be?"

"You tell me."

Shit, Lamar thought to himself. *Could she know something about what went down with Sydney?* That was impossible. But with the way women were always scheming nowadays, setting brothers up and everything trying to teach their men lessons and shit, Lamar didn't put anything past any woman. And he knew Monica had a highly-sensitive bullshit radar. She just always seemed to sense when something wasn't right, even if she didn't know exactly what.

Lamar decided to keep the innocent role. The odds of Monica and Sydney being in cahoots with each other to catch him in something were slim to none. Or so he hoped.

"I wasn't doing nothing but playing some NBA Street. You know how time flies when I get to playing that."

"I don't give a damn, Lamar. You knew we had dinner plans. You're the one that asked *me* to go, remember? Then you stand me up 'cause you're too busy playing some video game? Do you really think I'm gonna go for that shit?"

"All right, all right," Lamar conceded, holding up his hands in surrender. He knew she was right; there was no point in trying to bullshit like she wasn't. "I was wrong, baby. Yes, I was the one to ask you to dinner and I fucked up by staying at Antoine's too long. I really am sorry." And he meant that.

Monica rolled her eyes but softened a little. She was still upset at him but at least he apologized this time. Whether or not he was being sincere, though, she wasn't sure. She could see his erection trying to bust through his jeans. He might say just about anything to get him some twang-twang. She turned her back to him and continued getting undressed. Even if she wasn't upset with him, she didn't feel like doing the booty-ball bump tonight. It had been a long day and she just wanted to go to bed.

After a couple of minutes passed and she still hadn't responded, Lamar said, "Baby? Did you hear me? I said I was sorry."

"Yeah, I heard you."

"All right, so?"

"So, what?"

"You gonna quit being mad at me now?"

"Just like that, huh?"

"Well I apologized. I don't know what else you want me to do."

"I don't want you to do anything. Excuse me," she said politely, brushing past him. She tied the belt on her satin robe and headed towards the bathroom. Lamar continued to stand in the same spot, bewildered about what to do next.

Monica washed her makeup off and tied her hair down in silence. She knew something was going on with Lamar that he wasn't telling her but she didn't know what it was. It was just one of those gut feelings. She'd been having it for a while but could never get any proof about anything. There had been some suspicious behavior on his part; late phone calls that had to be taken in the other room, coming home and immediately going to take a shower, him becoming conveniently inaccessible at times. It could be nothing at all but Monica was almost always right about these things. She just had to get some kind of concrete evidence, but she wasn't a spy. She wasn't about to be

following him around or snooping through his shit or anything like that. That wasn't her thing and she didn't feel it was necessary, anyway. Men always got sloppy after a while, when they feel like they're in the clear. If Lamar had anything hiding in the dark, it would come to light eventually.

Lamar watched his wife as she came out of the bathroom and climbed into bed. He still wanted some sex but knew his wife well enough to know he wouldn't be getting any tonight. And if she felt like punishing him, he wouldn't get any the rest of the week, either. He might as well get over it. He'd have to either take it to the hand or get ready for a long, frustrating night on his back. He chose the former. He hated walking around horny.

When Lamar went into the bathroom and closed the door, Monica reached for the phone and called Ivy. It was kinda late but she knew Ivy would be up, either on her computer or watching one of those predictable Lifetime movies.

"What's up, girl?" Ivy greeted Monica after only one ring.

"Damn, what are you doing, sitting on the phone waiting for it to hatch? It barely rung."

"Girl, hush. I was just sitting here on my laptop and watching this movie. What's going on with you? I thought you'd be in the bed by now."

"Oh, I'm there. I just wanted to give you the latest on what my stupid husband did."

"What did he do this time?"

Monica glanced over her shoulder towards the bathroom and adjusted the covers around her waist. "He stands me up to play PlayStation, lies about it, finally comes home asking where his food is, then has the nerve to ask me for some pussy."

"Yeah, that sounds about right."

"I couldn't believe that shit."

"I don't know why not. I can."

There was a time when Monica would go off about a comment like that about her man, even if it was accurate. Now, she didn't even bother. It happened far too often and getting defensive when she knew her man was in the wrong would only make her look like a fool. And a fool she wasn't.

"Yeah, you're right. I'm really not even surprised. But even though I am horny as hell I'm still not giving him any. He doesn't deserve any of this."

"I hear you. So you gonna whip 'It' out?"

"I might. If I do I have to hurry up. Lamar is in the bathroom right now jacking off."

"How do you know that?"

"Girl, please. He always has to relieve himself some kind of way. If I won't give it up he'll go right in that bathroom and do it himself."

"Well at least he's doing that and not going to relieve himself with some other woman."

"Humph," Monica grunted, rubbing her inner thighs, getting ready for a quickie with 'It'. "Not that I know of, at least. I swear, something is telling me he's living foul but I just don't know how. You know how you just get that gut feeling?"

"Yeah, I know. That's how I've felt more and more lately with Garrison. He's off somewhere right now, doing who knows what. He's hardly home anymore and when he is, he's holed up in his office. I spent all that time cooking dinner tonight and he didn't even stay here long enough to sniff it."

"Girl, that's some shit right there. At least Lamar stays home a lot of the time."

"That might be 'cause he can't keep a job."

"Oh, no you didn't! Just because Garrison is some big-time IT specialist or whatever don't make him no better than anybody. He don't even have the courtesy to *pretend* that he's

not out doing dirt. His behavior is too suspicious for him not to be.”

“I don’t want him to pretend. I hate dishonesty.”

“What do you call what he’s doing now? Where did he tell you he was going tonight?”

Ivy paused ‘cause she knew where Monica was going. “Back to the office.”

“And you believe that?”

“Well, he does have a big project for the government coming up...”

“Right,” Monica said sarcastically, gently rubbing her clitoris. She was continuing to get herself ready for her self-pleasuring session and was growing tired of the conversation with Ivy. Ivy was her girl and all, but she got tired of going back and forth about whose husband was the most trifling with her. And the thing was, Ivy constantly tried to make excuses for Garrison, regardless of what he did. It was almost like she just couldn’t fully admit that he might be cheating on her. She alluded to it, but she would never come out and say it. Monica, on the other hand, didn’t try to sugarcoat what Lamar might be doing. She knew it was something but, again, she didn’t have any proof.

“Well I’m gonna get off this phone and pleasure myself before Lamar gets out of the bathroom. I’ll talk to you later,” Monica said, playing with her nipples and biting her lip. Her body was ready and her booty was already grinding into the bed. She hung up the phone and reached into her nightstand for ‘It’. ‘It’ was long, black, and ever-ready. She flipped the on switch and got right down to business. She didn’t want to be using ‘It’ when Lamar came out of the bathroom.

She was putting ‘It’ back in the nightstand right when Lamar opened the door and reentered their bedroom. He body was still tingling and she turned her back to him, hiding a smile.

Jessica L. Terry

While she loved having sex with her husband, she also loved not needing him every time she needed to get her moan-on.

Lamar climbed into bed, feeling a lot better than he had fifteen minutes earlier. He debated whether or not to put his arms around Monica but decided against it. She had her back to him for a reason and he wasn't trying to get slapped again. He just cut the lights, turned his back to his wife, and recalled how he had just busted a monster nut by thinking about Sydney.

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