
CODES AND CONSEQUENCES

The Billionaire Spy Book 2

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This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only.
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Lost Connection

Mariana Wilson Smith sat at her regular corner table of the restaurant at the Wilshire, Beverly Hills, her home away from home when she was working at her office in Los Angeles. She found it easier to unwind from a hectic day managing other people's crises by people watching and reading while enjoying her meal. This evening, she planned to dive into a steamy romance.

She gave the waiter her order and was only a few pages into the book when a text message appeared on the screen of her private smartphone. Her husband didn't have a cell phone, that she knew of—Will disliked gadgets on principle—but he still managed to send her texts whenever he had access to a computer. So at least she knew, whatever mission he was on right now, he was somewhere that had electricity.

Will: *Bedtime*

The message made Mariana smile and caused a pleasant tingle to spread through her body. Will wanted to fool around.

Mariana: *Dinnertime*

Will: *Room service?*

Mariana: *Restaurant*

Will: *40 minutes*

Mariana: *I'll do my best, Daddy*

Will: *Bad girl*

Mariana was glad she had decided to order the Cesar salad with grilled chicken. It would be served quickly, and she could get upstairs in time for some role-playing on the phone before Will fell asleep, assuming it was nighttime wherever he was.

In the nearly three months since they'd married, Mariana had spent a combined twelve days, seven hours, and odd minutes with her husband. They had been intense days, hours, and minutes of pleasure, but the tally was still disappointing.

A frost crisis in the orange groves of Orlando had changed her life. The folk at Sonnyshine had fired her for recommending they follow the advice of the earthy tree-whisperer, William Smith. But where she lost a client, she found a loving husband. As it turned out, the simple arborist was, well, not so simple. He turned out to be a man of many layers, a billionaire, a spy, and the head of a secret organization charged with improving and conserving society. Conservation could be dangerous work.

Now, Mariana spent even more time on planes than before, trying to keep her long-distance marriage on track. She had agreed to come home to Will, either in Connecticut or New York, every weekend. That plan wasn't going as well as they both had hoped. She'd had to cancel on a couple of occasions when her business got in the way. He had canceled too, with a couple of 'tree emergencies'.

Phone sex helped to fill-in the gaps. She had learned that Will could be as creative with remote lovemaking as he was in person.

Back in her room, Mariana changed out of the suit she'd worn to work. She washed up quickly and slipped into a comfortable cream silk camisole nightgown that came down just to the tops of her thighs. Then she plugged in two of the three smartphones she carried around by the nightstand, using her private phone to send a quick message to Will.

Mariana: *I'm ready to be tucked-in for the night*

She got a perplexingly formal reply.

Will: *Standby.*

It was another ten minutes before her phone finally played the ringtone she'd programmed for Will.

"I'd fallen asleep already," she said.

"Liar," he said.

"Fibber, perhaps," she replied. "I was starting to doze off."

"Well, if you'd rather sleep..."

"No," she said. "I'd rather fuck your brains out, but you're not here."

"Such a dirty mouth," Will said. "I'd kiss it clean if I were there."

"I miss you so much," Mariana said. It was truer than she could ever have imagined. After years of living alone, it should be easy to spend a few days apart. Instead, it was both physically and emotionally painful to be separated from Will.

"I'm never too far," Will said. "Remember that. You're with me every moment of the day, if not in body, then in spirit."

"My body needs you, though," Mariana said.

"Mine needs you," Will said. "Get out of bed and go stand in front of the full-length mirror. I want you to see yourself as I see you. I want you to make love to yourself as I would make love to you."

"How do you know there's a full-length mirror?"

"I'm a magician, remember?" When Mariana was quiet, he added, "There's a full-length mirror in most hotel closets or in the bathroom. I was bound to be right. Go stand in front of the mirror, put the phone on speaker, and set it down on the counter of the sink."

"I'd rather stay in bed," she said.

"Do as you're told," he replied.

Mariana rose from the bed and went to stand before the long mirror in the bathroom, doing just as Will had ordered.

“This feels a bit weird,” she said.

“Play along,” Will said. “Trust me. It’s going to feel very good. Can you see yourself?”

“Yes,” she said.

“Tell me what you see.”

“It’s me. I’m wearing a silk nightie. My hair is down and a little wild right now. It could probably use a brush,” Mariana said.

Her long, dark honey-blond hair was fine, and her natural locks had a tendency to tangle.

“Do you have one handy?”

“You want me to brush my hair?”

“We could start with that,” Will said. “Just remember it’s my hand holding the brush, smoothing those silky, rebellious tendrils of yours.”

Mariana reached for her brush on the bathroom counter and then went back to the mirror and began brushing her hair with long, slow strokes.

“You’re brushing my hair,” she said. “And being gentle with the knots.”

“Describe the brush to me,” Will said.

“It’s an ordinary broad brush, black with an oval head and boar and nylon bristles,” she said, continuing to run the brush through her hair, from root to tip.

“Is your hair smooth now?” He asked.

“It’s much better,” she said.

“Good,” he said. “I want you to take the brush and swat your bottom with the back.”

“What?”

“You heard me,” he said. “A swift, firm swat.”

Mariana hesitated. She felt a bit silly trying this, but it did pique her curiosity to know how the brush might feel against her flesh.

“Remember, it’s my hand holding the brush,” Will said. “Do it service.”

Thinking of Will spanking her with the brush made the notion more titillating. She turned just enough to see a bit of her backside in the mirror and swatted her right back cheek. It had a bit of a sting, nothing like what it might have felt if Will had done it.

“You’re hardly trying,” Will said. “You made me wait for you tonight, while you ate your leisurely dinner. I had to shuffle some things around, just to make the time for us, and you kept me waiting. I think that is a good cause to give you a more meaningful swat, don’t you?”

“You kept me waiting too,” Mariana said. “Standby. What kind of message is that?”

“Clearly, you are feeling mischievous,” Will said. “I can promise you that, when you and I are together, I will make up for your weak hand. For now, I want you to give yourself five more swats like you mean it.” He corrected himself, “No. Like I mean it.”

She brought the brush to its place and closed her eyes so that she could more easily imagine Will behind her in the bathroom, his strong hands holding the implement. She drew on her memory of his scent, green and musk, sea breeze and sunshine, forest, and linen. Lord, she missed the scent of the linens on his favorite brass bed at the cabin by the lake. He would not keep her waiting there. He would put his strong arms around her, pick her up, throw her over his shoulder and carry her to bed. He would dominate her.

“Swat, Mariana,” he ordered. “I want you to feel my bite on that full, round, apple ass of yours.”

She struck five times, each more intense until she really felt the bite of it. “Ouch,” she said on the last swat, though it came out more like a sigh. A slick warmth spread between her legs.

“Good girl,” Will said. “Now put the brush down, and I want

you to turn your attention to my cunt. It is my cunt, after all, right, Mariana?"

"Yes, Will, it is," she said.

"Are you wearing panties under your nightie?"

"Yes," she said.

"One of those little thong things, or one of your lace bikinis that are cut high over your ass? Or are you wearing your sweet white cotton panties?"

"I am wearing seamless panties, actually," she said.

"What are those? Have I seen them before?"

"They're spandex hip-huggers—a seashell beige—soft and silky," she said.

"Let me see them," he said.

"How?"

"Just lift up your nightgown," he said. "You're my eyes in the mirror. Let me see them."

"Okay," Mariana lifted up the bottom of her nightie over her navel.

"Are your pretty panties damp?" Will asked.

"Yes," Mariana said.

"Take them off," Will said.

Mariana did as Will asked, tossing the discarded panties in the corner of the bath.

"Now, touch yourself, tell me just how wet you are, coat your fingers in that delectable nectar of yours," he said.

Mariana did as Will asked, watching herself reach under the skirt of her nightgown, parting her legs, to bring her fingers between the slick folds. She was very wet, but that was no surprise. She seemed to live in a permanent state of excitement now. Just thinking of him during the day made her ache. She closed her eyes again, imagining his fingers, exploring her.

"Are you wet, Mariana?"

"Yes," she breathed deep. "Very."

“Bring your fingers to your mouth,” he said. “Be my mouth. Let me taste you.”

Mariana imagined that it was his hard dick entering her mouth. Will seemed to be thinking something similar.

“What tastes better your nectar or my cum?” His voice had changed, becoming deep and raspy.

“Your cum,” Mariana sighed. “It is a delicacy.”

“Nothing on earth could be tastier than the honey from your pussy,” Will said, savoring every word. “Take off your nightie for me.”

Mariana lowered the camisole’s spaghetti straps one at a time and let the garment spill to her bare feet. She stood naked now, in front of the mirror, wearing only the necklace that Will had designed for her. It was a blue diamond floating on a platinum 8, nestled and shimmering just above her breasts. She touched the stone, remembering the moment when he had placed it around her neck as she sat naked on his brass bed in Connecticut. Her skin had still been damp, fresh from the shower, and she was covered only with a towel. She had sat waiting, with her eyes closed, as he crawled on the bed behind her. She sighed and shuddered with pleasure at the memory of his weight behind her on the mattress. That blue diamond was his heart, he had told her, and she had vowed never to take it off.

“Are your nipples hard?” he asked.

She looked at the pink pebbles in her reflection, and the puckering, rose pink areolae. “Yes,” she said.

“Let’s turn our attention to your breasts, then,” he said. “I want you to stroke your nipples, with the tips of your fingers, feel their little bumps and ridges. Do you feel them?”

“Yes,” Mariana said, growing breathless, as the sensation on her nipples reached deeper.

“Where do you feel them, Mariana, tell me.”

“In my cervix,” she said.

“What happens in your cervix when you touch your nipples?”

“It gets hard as a knot,” she said.

“Hard enough for me to plow?” Will asked. “Hard enough for me to force my dick deep into that tight pussy of yours? Hard enough for me to ram that wall, pounding, knocking at your womb to open up to me?”

“Yes,” Mariana sighed, her hand moving between her legs, to soothe the ache that was building up inside of her.

“Do you have your little helpmate with you?” Will asked, bringing her back from the edge.

“My dildo?”

“Yes,” Will said.

“How do you know about my dildo?” Mariana said.

“I figured you’d have something,” Will said.

Mariana felt like she’d been caught doing something naughty, though she knew she hadn’t. How did Will know these things?

“It’s in the drawer of my nightstand,” Mariana answered.

“Go there,” Will said.

Mariana went to bed, bringing the phone with her, placed the phone on the nightstand, and opened the drawer to pull out the silk purse in which she had discretely stored the device.

“Describe it to me,” Will said. “Is it big?” Will asked.

“Well,” Mariana hesitated. It felt funny discussing the substitute of his member with Will.

“It’s good-sized,” Mariana said.

“Bigger than Tom?”

“Who’s Tom?”

“You know Tom, dick and hairy,” Will said.

“I didn’t know your dick had a name,” she said, suppressing the urge to laugh.

“Well, you’re good friends,” Will said. “I don’t mind sharing that secret with you.”

“Tom has nothing to fear from Johnny,” Mariana said. “They’re equally matched. Except Johnny is electric, so he does fun things.”

“Hmm,” Will said. “Tom isn’t about to get a battery installed, but we can work on more fun things now that we know we have some competition from Long John. It isn’t silver, is it?”

“No,” Mariana genuinely laughed now. “It’s bubblegum pink, made of a translucent gel, and it shimmers with glitter.”

“Interesting,” Will said. “Turn Long John Shimmer on for me.”

Mariana twisted the knob at the base of the plastic phallus. It matched Tom on length and fell a bit short of Tom on girth. It also lacked the gentle little curve that made Tom so appealing.

“That’s loud,” he said. “Does it have variable settings?”

“Yes,” Mariana said.

“Do you have lube?”

“Yes.”

“Good,” Will said. “Dab some lube on it. Set it on low, lean back on the bed, spread your legs wide, and bring Long John’s tip to your clit for me.”

Mariana complied, her breath heavy as the device’s vibrations brought her to the edge of orgasm.

“I wish you had a mirror on the ceiling,” Will said.

“Why?” Mariana sighed.

“You could watch yourself,” Will said.

“This isn’t that sort of hotel,” she said. “Besides, I’d rather close my eyes and think of you.”

“I know,” Will said. “Do you want me inside of you, Mariana?”

“Yes, I do, Will,” Mariana sighed. “Very much.”

“Tom is warm,” Will said. “He has that over Long John, at least.”

“Nothing is better than Major Tom,” Mariana said.

“That’s my girl,” Will said. “Put the usurper in you now, pretend it’s me, and I will too.”

“I love the feeling of your cock stretching me, Will,” Mariana

said, nearly out of breath as the dildo found its place. "Filling all of me. Nothing compares to you."

"There's nothing better than the feel of your silky sheath around my cock," Will said. "When I finally get you back, I think I'm going to break the bed with you."

"But you love that brass bed," Mariana said.

"It's sturdy," Will said. "But it will need new springs by the time I'm done with you."

"You'll never be done with me," Mariana sighed.

"Never," Will said, his deep, husky voice reverberated through her body. They both left words behind to exchange sighs and moans. "I'm going to come, Mariana. I need you to come with me," Will's voice was strained as he reached his orgasm. "Can you do that, baby? Can you come for me?"

Mariana could. And, crying out his name, she did.

By Thursday, after resolving an exhausting number of client issues, Mariana was more than ready to leave her office and head to LAX to catch her flight home to the comfort of Will's arms. She was nearly out the door when Will's dedicated ringtone started playing in her tote. The only other person who had that private number was her once assistant, now business partner, Sandy Fine, who was sitting at the receptionist's desk just outside Mariana's office.

"Hello, darling," Mariana said, picking up. "I'm on my way out, I promise. I'll be there tonight."

"That's why I'm calling," Will said, sounding much too severe for her liking. "I have to go, and I won't be back before you'd have to return to Los Angeles."

"Tree emergency?" she asked. William Smith got a lot of those.

"Something like that," he said.

“I could come along—ooh and ahh, as you check soil samples and discuss beetles,” she said.

“No, honey,” he said. “I’m sorry, but I can’t bring you with me this time.”

“Oh, I see.” Mariana didn’t really see.

She knew Will’s career called for him to play many parts, and he was pretty secretive about most of them. It was something she had agreed to accept when she married him, but it was harder to take than she had first thought.

“No problem,” she said, though she couldn’t help if her tone was tinged by disappointment. “It will be good to have an extra day in the office to catch up with myself tomorrow, and I have things I can do here this weekend.”

“I’ll make it up to you next weekend,” he said. “I promise.”

“I’ll hold you to that,” she said.

“Listen, I know you will want to have some fun, but please be careful,” Will warned. “Remember where you are.”

“Will, I’ve lived in Los Angeles for years,” she said. “I know how to take care of myself.”

“Yes, but you’re not alone in the city,” he said.

She knew that Will still worried that she’d bump into Martin Harper, the CEO of PlayTech.

Mariana had dated Martin, briefly, before she and Will were married. Just before. Martin was a bit of a hothead and had not taken Mariana breaking up with him very well. After her rush wedding, Martin had confronted both of them at the St. Regis. Will had put Martin in his place with a swift punch and she hadn’t heard from him since.

Will worried needlessly, Mariana thought. The last thing the high-profile tech CEO wanted to do was to cross a leading publicist like Mariana Stein (now Smith or Wilson, depending on Will’s role at the setting). She’d make him pay for any further harassment in ways that really mattered.

But she knew Will well enough not to argue with him on this point.

“I’ll be careful, *papí*,” she said playfully.

“Oh, Mariana... please don’t,” he said. He didn’t mind playing her little game. Quite the opposite. She knew he had enjoyed it the last time they were alone at their cabin on the lake in Connecticut. She was trying to tease him, and it had worked. “I’m having a hard enough time already.”

“I bet you are,” she said.

“Mariana, behave.” It was his really bossy voice so she knew better than to keep pushing. She’d earn herself a serious spanking if she kept it up.

Although, that might be nice too.

“Fine, I’ll stop,” she laughed. “Now, tell me, where are you headed? Can you say?”

He hesitated for a long time before answering, “No.”

“Fine, mystery-man,” she said. “Just be safe.”

“I will. You mind me and stay out of trouble, little girl.”

“*Si papí*,” she said.

“*Ay, Dios mío*.” Mariana found it thrilling that Will spoke perfect Spanish, but he had never explained how or why he acquired that skill. “I have to go. I love you,” he said, clearly in a rush. She wondered whether someone was flagging him to get off the phone.

“I love you more.”

“No, I love you more.” He hung up before she could argue.

Mariana called out to Sandy through the intercom. Will had suggested that they needed to get a bigger office, which would allow them to hire an assistant. Mariana wasn’t quite ready for that. She didn’t want to push her small firm too far too fast. She did have plenty of new clients coming in, some of them through Will’s organization, but Mariana was still worried she’d stretch her business resources too thin.

Sandy came in, carrying her yellow pad with her, as always.

She was less fond of relying on technology than Mariana, and only really trusted handwritten notes. Sandy was admirably organized with her papers and also had the memory of an elephant to fall back on. She was a walking-talking index of useful information.

“What’s up?” Sandy asked, taking a seat on one of the chairs in front of Mariana’s desk. “Shouldn’t you be going?”

“Well, that’s the thing,” Mariana said, with a sigh of disappointment. “My weekend has been canceled. I need you to please cancel my flight and the driver, and let the Wilshire know I’ll be back tonight. After that, maybe we can take advantage of the time and catch up on loose ends?”

“Tree emergency?” Sandy said.

“Yes.”

Sandy rolled her eyes. Mariana wasn’t sure whether Sandy was trying to express sympathy over her canceled plans or skepticism over Will’s cover story. Sandy only knew William Smith, the arborist. She did not know about Mr. William Wilson, the magnate, or any other roles William played.

Mariana worried she might accidentally slip up at some point with Sandy. It was all well and good for Will, keeping up with aliases, but she had lived her life very differently until she married him. That’s not to say Mariana didn’t appreciate the importance of discretion. She guarded plenty of secrets for her clients, after all, but she had always been open with Sandy. Keeping secrets from her business partner felt wrong. Then again, they weren’t Mariana’s secrets to tell.

“I had plans for this evening,” Sandy said. “So I can’t stay late.”

“No need for that,” Mariana said. “I just meant that we can catch up tomorrow.”

“Good,” Sandy said. “Maybe now we can finally file your hours, so we can polish up the billing? Particularly for Crystal.”

“Yes, ma’am,” Mariana said.

The young artist known to the world as Crystal, whose real name was Christina Langford, had come up from television shows as a little girl. She'd graduated to tween movie remakes of old family classics and then went through a rebel phase during which she got into goth rock. Recently, she transitioned to a more mellow pop sensation who held a comfortable place in the top 20, week after week. Mariana had taken Crystal on as a client back during the goth stage when she got in so much trouble day-to-day that she needed a full-time crisis manager. Not much had changed in that department. Crystal could still find trouble when it didn't go looking for her.

Mariana had a soft spot in her heart for the girl. Though she was now a 20-year-old woman, she had the impulse-control of a 15-year-old. Tops. She was two handfuls most days, but Crystal's mother was the real culprit.

Karen Langford had reared Crystal solely for the money and just wanted to keep Crystal out in the public forum, by hook or by crook. She gave her daughter shockingly bad advice and filled her head with a sick cocktail of pop-psychology, dubious mysticism, and downright malignant dietary tips. Mariana had long abandoned any idea of persuading Karen that her daughter needed stability in her life and emotional support. She just took on the role of an unofficial fairy godmother for the starlet. As a result, Mariana often spent more time with Crystal than the hours reflected on her agency time-logs. Sandy was always trying to fill in the gaps.

Mariana spent the rest of the day on miscellanea. She caught up with the tidal wave of email that filled her inbox from day-to-day and updated her calendar with her plans for the days ahead. Those plans included checking-in with Crystal the following Wednesday, assuming Crystal didn't call sooner.

Mariana was in a good mood on Friday morning. Tying up some of the business loose ends that had been niggling at her for weeks, because of all the flying back and forth, only made her feel more cheerful. But by Friday night, when she hadn't received a message or a call from Will, her mood shifted to melancholy.

Will was probably en-route to wherever he had to be next, and he probably couldn't get in touch. He might not even have a phone around. Mariana tried to tell herself she had nothing to worry about, but it didn't help.

When did she start to count on having someone to talk to at night? Someone to laugh with? Someone to love, who loved her and accepted her as she was? What would she do if she ever lost him?

There was one sure-fire way to get over these blues, Mariana had found, and that was to spend some time being pampered at the salon and then do a little shopping.

Come Saturday, she did just that.

Peter, the stylist at the Wilshire's beauty salon, took one look at her and determined she needed a dramatic change, something empowering, he said.

"You slave over your hair, but it doesn't love you back," he said. "It's too long. You need something that will pop with all that attitude that you're repressing."

It was just shop talk, up-selling services, but Mariana was in the mood to listen. He recommended a bob, which would just brush the nape of her neck at the back, cut at an angle forward to end just below her cheekbones. She was unsure whether Will would like it, but she figured, worse come to worse, hair grows back.

Peter also put some light blonde highlights in her dark honey-blonde hair and blended in a few swatches of pink and lavender.

"Are you sure I can carry this off?" Mariana said, wondering about the brightly colored strands.

“Honey,” Peter said. “You’re already carrying it off! Check yourself out.”

She looked in the mirror, seeing a woman she didn’t really recognize as herself. Except it was her, as she might have been fifteen years earlier when she was still a carefree teen and a bit on the wild side. Long before Bill Stein—her first husband—took all her fun away.

“I like it,” she said, persuaded. Maybe it was all the chemicals in the place, but she felt good.

She had her mani/pedi done to match with lavender toes and pink bubblegum fingers. She walked out of the salon three hundred dollars poorer but feeling like a million bucks.

After a light lunch, she went down Rodeo Drive in search of some outfits that would play well with her new springtime hair. She found a bone-white silk blouse, with lavender butterflies printed on it, that she fell in love with instantly. She also bought a matching pair of slacks, a couple of pastel print summer dresses, and an ivory knitted suit that would work well for work.

Though Will was ridiculously wealthy, and always offered to buy her things, she still kept her own accounts and covered her personal bills. It was partially carry-over from having to report every penny of her spending to her ex-husband, which had never worked out well for Mariana. She preferred to maintain financial independence, and she could afford it. There was good money to be made in getting people out of all the awkward situations they tended to put themselves into.

Mariana was strutting down the street, hunting for shoes, when Will’s dedicated ringtone started playing in her tote. Mariana felt her heart lighten and picked up right away.

“*Hola, papi,*” she chirped.

“Can’t talk long, but I just wanted to check how you’re doing,” Will said. His deep ‘be serious’ voice caused ripples of pleasure to run down her spine.

“I miss you terribly, but I’m doing okay otherwise. You?”

“Are you getting some shopping therapy?”

“Yes,” she said. “A bit.”

“I wish I could be there with you,” he said. “But I’ll approve your purchases next weekend.” Will meant he would approve of the style. He had a really good eye for fashion. And, as Mariana had learned the first time they were together in Connecticut, it was surprisingly fun to go shopping with Will.

“I’m not sure I can pack all of this,” she said.

“Oh, boy,” he said. “Well, take pictures with that phone of yours and show them to me next week.”

Will disapproved of Mariana walking around tethered to her three cell phones all hours. He wasn’t really a Luddite. She had seen him use some very advanced technology in their townhouse in New York. He just had a very old-fashioned streak, in many ways, and preferred to remain offline and analog as much as possible. There was an element of maintaining his anonymity and security too, which Mariana understood and appreciated.

“Are you keeping safe from falling branches?” she asked.

“I’m mindful of strong winds,” he said. Everything was a metaphor in Will’s manner of speaking, a sort of code that Mariana was learning by osmosis. Strong winds sounded dangerous.

“When will you be back home?”

“Tuesday, I think,” he said. “No later than Wednesday.”

“Would it still make sense for me to fly out on Thursday, or will you need some time to catch up with yourself?”

“Don’t you dare delay.” He practically snarled. “There will be consequences if you are not home on Thursday night.”

“Yes, sir.”

“I’ve got to go. Try to stay out of trouble.”

He hung up before she could answer, and she was left feeling a bit melancholy again. There was only one cure for it—shoes!