

Love Cruise Ch. 1

By Breakthebar

The following story is the introductory chapter for a slow-burn commission piece that will be posted on CHYOA to start. Love Mansion is a fan-fiction spoof of the popular UK dating show Love Island (which also has AUS and US spin-off versions). I may have mentioned it before, but I love crappy dating television shows. The Bachelor, Love is Blind, etc. They provide great fodder for character elements, and I like buying into the silly drama. So when chingchangchong23 reached out about the commission, and we discussed that chapters may only be commissioned twice a month at most, I had to accept.

Chapter 1

The digital tones and rhythmic beat of the two-second jingle have played for nine seasons, but this year something is different. This year the show isn't airing on prime-time television.

Season 10 of Love Cruise has been purchased by the hottest new online streaming service, and it promises to be the biggest, wildest season yet.

So the song plays, and millions of new accounts tune in as the camera pans over the beautiful upper decks of the famous mega-yacht known to every fan of the show as the *Poseidon's Passion*. For nine years the *Passion* has ferried some of the sexiest singles from across the United Kingdom through eight weeks of summer in a reality competition as they compete to find love and win £50,000.

Millions of watchers, streaming to computer screens, tablets, phones and televisions, waiting batedly to see their first glimpses of this year's hot young adults, excited to decide who they love and who they'll love to hate...

The camera shot panned down to Miya Jamal, the beautiful hostess who had taken up the duty last season, as she stood at the stern of the *Passion* right over the elegant lettering of its name.

"Another year, another amazing day to start a sun-soaked journey of love," she said. "And with a new home, our Love Cruise is sure to spring some new surprises. All we need now are some sexy Passengers - but, I think, that might just be where our first surprise of the season kicks in..." Miya Jamal, when not hosting the Love Cruise, is a popular radio host with a smooth voice and a playful banter when she does interviews, and she is as hot as her phone-sex worthy voice promises. She smirks just a little into the camera, her eyes playful, "Because I think you might recognize some familiar faces..."

The camera cuts to a series of clips - memorable moments from across the nine seasons of Love Cruise - as the hot new song of the summer begins playing. The scenes are great memories, favourite heroes and villains of the show playing in quick succession, but it confuses the viewers a little because usually this was when they get their first introductions to the new cast of the show through silly little skits that showed off something about them. The hairdresser abandoning a hairdo half done to join the show, or a personal trainer getting stressed out by a shouting client pulling off their jogger to reveal a swimsuit underneath. But there aren't any skits.

It's a departure from the format, and some viewers start to question whether the new streaming platform is really as good as they promised.

But then the title card of the show, **LOVE CRUISE** lands on the screen, and immediately stamped underneath it like a 'top secret' stamp *REUNION TOUR*.

Eyes go wide. A million voices cry out all out once. Holy Shit!

The camera bounced along, panning to show off the first two contestants as another hot song for the summer started to bop away. It's always two contestants who appear together first on the show, and this time the only difference was that both of the women weren't quite as giggly-nervous as usual. One was a beautiful blonde immediately recognizable, both for her wavy blonde surfer girl hair and her infectious smile - along with her surprisingly impressive chest. The other is a woman with beautiful warmly tanned skin, a sweet smile and an almost equally impressive bust, her Thai heritage very obvious.

LACIE, 25 Season 5 and **JAZ**, 28 Season 4 were both labelled under them just in case any of the viewers could possibly forget.

"Holy carp," the voiceover announcer cut in, his thick Scottish accent a warm welcome to the fans at home. *"No one told me that we could catch, release, and catch them again! Hold on to your hats, you sexy singles, because we're back, and I don't just mean me and Miya! I think the Poseidon's Passion is about to get really crowded."*

The camera view shifted, the drone-shot backing away from the speedboat ferrying Lacie and Jaz to show off the decks of the nearby mega-yacht. *"As a reminder, as if any of you lot at home need it, our sexy singles are about to spend eight weeks aboard a state-of-the-art yacht, touring through undisclosed ports somewhere hot and sunny. It comes equipped with fantastic outdoor amenities to keep our sexy singles outside in their teeny weeny bathing suits, a luxurious salon for the girls and more effeminate boys to do their skincare routines, an awkwardly public washroom where cameras point at the one big shower stall, and of course the deluxe bedroom. Or should I say, beds-room? But who cares about all that, am I right? Bring back to the girls!"*

The camera swapped back to the deck after showing the rooms as Jaz and Lacie climbed up onto the main deck. Both of them are grinning and laughing, their eyes tracing across the amazing facilities of the *Passion* for the first time in years. Here they both went through love and heartbreak in front of millions of viewers.

“Drinks?” Lacie asked Jaz as she spotted the pre-set-up round table with the nondescript bottle of ‘champagne’ and the iconic plastic ‘gold’ flutes the show was known for.

“Oh, hell yes,” Jaz nodded and they both went over to the table and started pouring. The camera didn’t miss the opportunity to pan across their bikini-clad bodies and bums, focusing particularly on Jaz’s for a long, but not too long, moment. Whoever was doing the editing agreed with the internet - she had the perfect booty. Big, but not huge, with just the right amount of wiggle-wiggle when she walked. “So, to finding love at last?” Jaz asked in a cheers once they had their drinks.

“To love at last and for sure,” Lacie agreed, clinking flutes and then both women took a drink.

The camera cut to Jaz in the Confessional booth, a room with a big wooden deck chair with a camera positioned so that someone sitting down would look right down the barrel. She was in the same swimsuit she was wearing outside, a blue bikini that seemed to cover her decently up front, leaving her fit, golden tan torso bare. Close, or obsessed, observers would notice that it was actually one of the same bikinis she wore during Season 4, a throwback easter egg. It also happened to show off a deceptive amount of generous side boob when the camera caught her at the right angle.

“Yeah, so obviously love didn’t work out after the last time I was on the show,” she said, looking into the camera. “My last relationship didn’t last too long after the show before he moved on, though it was pretty mutual. Then I dated someone who shall *not* be named from another season and that ended *very* badly, and I spent the next couple of years travelling as much as I could and volunteering. But now I’m ready for love, and I’m just looking for a guy who wants the same thing.”

The camera cut again, this time to Lacie in the same confessional. She’s dressed in a fairly simple black bikini top and a saucy pair of high-waisted jean booty shorts with the button and zipper undone and folded down. Her long mass of wavy blonde hair is pulled to one side as she leans forward with her elbows on her knees, inadvertently giving a great shot of her impressive cleavage.

“It’s been hard, but I really worked through the grieving process and I’m ready to try again,” she said. “When JD died, I think I just wanted to curl up into a ball and only left the house to work or run errands. It wasn’t until quarantine that I really started to come out of my shell again, and then there I am needing to spend two years practically alone. When Love Cruise reached out,

how could I say no to another shot at love? I just want to find a bev to cuddle up with and talk long term.”

The camera cut back to the deck of the ship, where Jaz and Lacie are drinking and talking. Jaz was laughing at something when both girls jumped in surprise as a booming female voice echoed from the entryway.

“Lacie, my dear love!” the Irish lilting voice called. “I damn well knew you would be here for this.”

Lacie and Jaz turned, and Lacie immediately turned and rushed towards the newcomer. She was a thin woman with delicate features that belied her fiery personality, and long brown hair currently tied back in a perfectly slick high pony.

“Mary!” Lacie said, immediately hugging her tight as both women started jumping a little in excitement.

MARY, 30 *Season 5*

Soon Lacie was pouring Mary a drink as Jaz welcomed her with a hug as well.

“So we were just talking about being ready for love,” Jaz said. “What do you think? I’ve seen in the papers you like to party; are you finally looking to find the right guy?”

“Hah! I was ready last time,” Mary said, gesturing with the champagne flute. “Serves me right for getting it in my thick noggin’ that I should ignore red flags over and over, eh? Yes, I’m ready already! Where are the boys?” She looked around, calling out to the heavens dramatically. “Bring on some real men!”

The camera cut to inside the confessional booth with Mary leaning back and rolling her eyes. She was wearing a knit halter bikini top that accented her smaller bust by showing off some questionably-tasteful amount of inner and underboob, along with a bikini bottom of the same cream knitting that sat low on her hips.

“Yes, I am ready for love,” she sighed at the camera. “I thought I was in love last time, but as everyone in the bloody world knows, he cheated on me. And yes, I went on a bit of a wild spree to get back at him, but that’s not me all the time and I’m ready to get back to, you know, the real me. I just love love, and I want that for me.”

The camera cut back to the women on deck as they chatted for a moment about how long they’d been single - each of them for over three years now - and then it cut back to a new shot of the speedboat and another contestant.

EMMA, 20 *Season 8*

The darling brunette princess was still sure to be upfront in the minds of the viewers at home, especially as she stood in the speedboat with her silky brunette hair streaming behind her as she smiled into the wind in her white bando bikini top with a tastefully small decorative hole in the centre of her cleavage, mirrored on the sides of the moderately full bikini bottoms. It was a long slow-mo shot of her bouncing in the boat, and totally not focused on her bust.

As the speedboat pulled up to the wood-and-rope stairs mounted to the side of the *Passion* Emma tossed her hair to get it out of her face and began walking up, and when she reached to the top she smiled and waved to the three other women. “Hey,” she said.

“Heeey!” The three others called, waving her over. They all hugged and started introducing themselves.

The camera cut to the confessional again. “Yeah,” Emma said, and then sighed as she glanced off-camera before facing forward again. “So it’s true, the engagement is off. Things were going really well after our season, and I didn’t even mind that we got second place. But the longer we were together, the more the differences between us started to show, and cracks were forming. It never got bad, and I still think he’s a sweet boy, but it just wasn’t going to work in the long run. Which sucks, but I guess here I am again.”

Back on deck, Emma asked the girls. “So what are your types?”

“Oh, God,” Lacie laughed. “I used to say surfer boys, but I think I’ve had enough of them. I need something different.”

“Well, I still like big and manly,” Mary smirked. “And this time I intend to go after an actual manly man and not delude myself. Jaysus, ladies. If I start talking nonsense, tell me!”

“We promise!” Jaz laughed. “I’m looking for tall, dark and handsome I think. But he has to make me laugh. What about you, Emma?”

Emma sighed and shook her head ruefully. “Well, I have two types, but neither ever seems to work out. Honestly, I just need someone complex instead of simple or else I’ll get bored of them.”

“You sure you don’t mean toxic, love?” Mary smirked and gave the younger woman a nudge. “Careful what you wish for.”

“Hah, no!” Emma laughed. “Toxic is the last thing I want.”

In a brief cut to the confessional, Emma scrubbed at her face with her hands for a moment. “Please let me see the red flags this time.”

Another top 40 track cut on, and another slow-mo view of the speedboat revealed the fifth and final 'first girl' of the season.

Her soft caramel skin tone was sleek in the spray of the ocean, and her long sun-drenched hair looked golden as it shimmered in a wave behind her. She was wearing the most scandalous of the swimsuits among the women, a bright red string bikini with full cups and crotch covering, but little else beyond red string hold them in place. That did reveal her very fit, perfectly curved body, however.

JAY-ANNE, 26 Season 5

"Hello, hello, sweethearts," Jay-Anne said as she strutted onto the deck of the ship. All of the women were wearing heels - a ridiculous concept for even the deck of the luxury yacht, and yet somehow a necessity. Jay-Anne definitely had the tallest, however, in red to match her bikini.

"Whaaat," Mary said. "Are yer joking, Jay! I can't believe yer here."

Cutting to the confessional booth, Jay-Anne is sitting forward and aggressively talking to the camera. "Yes, I'm back. And this time I'm not getting screwed around. All of you at home watched me get run in circles, but this season it's all about Jay-Anne and her search for love. And don't tell the girls, but screw the girl code this time. I'll step on toes all I need to if I think the man I want is getting cosy with someone else."

Back on deck the women were hugging and laughing as they bonded over their mutual relationship issues when the camera panned to one of the doors leading into the yacht interior where Miya Jamal was stepping out, a big grin flashing to the camera as the girls all started cheering for her.

"Hello, ladies, hello," she said. She was a stunning woman in her dress, looking glammed up as the host of the show even though she could very well have fit in with the beautiful contestants. She ushered the women over to the dramatic sitting area on one side of the main deck where a stone firepit was encircled by a wide semicircle of plush bench seating.

Miya smiled again after some light banter with the women. "So, obviously you fantastic ladies have figured out this season is a little different than before."

"Damn straight," Mary laughed, hugging Lacie around the shoulders excitedly. The two had been close friends before Lacie had been voted off the yacht during their original season.

"Well, as each of you knows, you're not just here for yourselves. This time around you're looking for love, but you're also competing for a charity of your choosing. The public won't just be voting like our past seasons, they also have the chance to donate funds through our online portal to your charities to help influence the votes."

A quick overview cut in, panning through the five women and their chosen charities. Lacie was representing the Dolphin Project, Mary was representing SVP, Jay-Anne was representing United for Global Health, Emma was representing Cancer Research UK, and Jaz was representing ShelterBox.

“But that’s not the only twist this season,” Miya went on. “But what’s a twist without the right audience? Before I let you know the big news, how about we bring in the boys?”

“Yes!” Jay-Anne said, and the others laughed.

“I’m sure you five have put together that this is a reunion season. Anyone in particular you’re hoping might walk through those doors?”

“There’s some I hope *don’t* walk through,” Mary said with a rueful raise of her slim eyebrow.

“Same,” Emma said.

“Well, don’t worry because I think we’ve taken good care of you,” Miya said, patting Mary’s arm reassuringly. “Now, all you ladies know the drill. Let’s get you set up, and we’ll introduce the first lad to you and see whether you want to step forward and let him know you’re interested.”

The camera cut to the girls organized in a line on the deck on one side of the pool, while Miya was standing on the other. “Let’s just go over the name of the game for our friends at home. The lads are going to come out one by one, and our lovely ladies will have a chance to step forward if they like the looks of him and are interested in coupling up. But it’s the lad who gets the final choice, and he can pick someone who stepped forward or not. So, are you ladies ready for man number one?” The girls cheered and clapped. Miya grinned and gestured to the door she’d come out of earlier. “Then let’s re-meet, raising funds for the British Heart Foundation, Roland.”

ROLAND, 32 *Season 1*

The first thing that stood out about the white guy who stepped out of the doorway was his beard - it was a beautiful, immaculately trimmed work of art. He was fit without being muscly but walked with a swagger that matched his smirk of confidence. “Hello, sweethearts,” he said as he walked across the deck. “I heard you might be looking for a true geezer ready to settle down, eh?”

In a brief cut to the confessional booth, Roland was laughing. “I’m here for fun more than anything. I mean, don’t get me wrong, I’m open to love but I was locked down for all six weeks in my season. I feel like I missed out on the Love Cruise experience!”

Back on deck, Roland swaggered up to stand next to Miya Jamal and gave her a side hug around the shoulder, kissing her on the cheek.

"Welcome, welcome, Roland," she said as she smiled professionally and took a half-step to the side. "How are you feeling being back?"

"It's surreal," Roland said. "It's been so long!"

"How does the *Passion* look? See anything different?"

"Lots!" he laughed. "Everything's changed."

"And how about the girls, you like the looks of them?"

Roland flashed a confident grin across the pool to the girls. "Absolutely."

"Alright, well let's get a move on, then," Miya said. "Roland, as the first boy in, you've got the first pick. But first, let's see if any of our ladies fancy the look of you. So, ladies, if you fancy Roland, please step forward now."

After a dramatic pause... none of the ladies stepped forward.

"Ouch!" Roland laughed, playing like he'd gotten hit in the heart.

"No one?" Miya asked. "Lacie, not interested in Roland?"

Lacie smiled sweetly. "I'm just not getting a spark," she shrugged a little shyly. "I don't much like facial hair either, sorry."

"No, it's alright," Roland assured her.

"What about you, Jay-Anne?" Miya asked.

"Honestly, I'm being picky and want to see who else comes through those doors before I put my cards on the table," Jay-Anne said.

"That's fair," Miya smiled and nodded, then turned to Roland. "Well, Roland. It's your choice - which of these lovely ladies would you like to couple up with?"

Roland made a show of thinking, stroking his beard. "You know what? I think I'll go with Emma."

"Alright," Miya said. "We have our first couple of Season Ten. Roland and Emma."

Roland walked around the pool and Emma stepped forward with a polite smile to give him a brief hug, and then they stood side by side. Roland slipped his arm around Emma's waist, putting his hand on her hip as he shifted a little closer to her.

The camera cut to the confessional with Emma in the seat. "I'm twenty years old right now. If he was on season one, that means I was eleven when he was last on the show." Emma made a gagging and retching noise as she rapidly blinked at the idea of the age gap between them.

The camera cut again, but this time Roland was in the confessional seat with a smirk. "Daddy like," he laughed and then winked.

"Alright ladies. Let's meet our next lad, and you're sure to recognize him... raising funds for British Red Cross, Peter."

PETER, 29 Season 9

Where Roland had swaggered, Peter practically floated above the ground he was so chill. He was a dark-skinned black man with a perfectly formed set of muscles and a bright, self-satisfied smile, but his most arresting feature were his naturally light blue eyes. "Bonjour, bonjour," he said.

Peter, a male model, had been a bombshell addition to the Love Cruise during the last season, disrupting one of the long-standing couples of the show when he entered as part of the *Cata-Amare*, the mid-season event. He was a model and had become internet famous overnight when the world got a look at the massive bulge in his speedo.

"Peter, good to see you again," Miya said. "Welcome back to the Love Cruise."

"Good to be back, Miya," he said and winked at the host.

"What do you think of our lineup of returning ladies?"

Peter looked over the women with a broad grin, rubbing his hands together. "I think I'm a very lucky guy. You all look lovely."

"So, fun or romance, Peter?" Miya asked him.

"Oh, definitely romance," Peter said. "Peter is all about the romance."

There was a quick camera cut to a clip from the previous season, where Peter was sitting in the hot tub with three of the other male contestants. "Romance is for chumps and tossers," he laughed. "I'm telling you, lads. Make them chase you, never chase them."

Back on deck Miya was still smiling. "Alright, well Peter, as you can see Emma is coupled up with Roland already, but you'll be able to steal her if you want as all five women are open for coupling. Let's give you a little insight into what they're thinking though. What do you say, ladies? Step forward now if you are interested in Peter."

After another dramatic pause... Jaz and Mary both stepped forward.

“Two ladies for Peter,” Miya said, almost sounding a little surprised. Almost. “Jaz, what is it about Peter that had you step forward?”

“Well, he’s extremely attractive,” Jaz said. “And he’s just really different from the guys I’ve dated and I think it’s important that we try something new.”

“How about you, Mary?” Miya asked.

“I mean, look at him!” Mary said. “It’s been a few seasons but I think I’m ready to bring back my old catchphrase. Fanny flutters!”

That got everyone laughing.

“Well, you heard them, Peter,” Miya said. “Are you interested in Jaz or Mary, or maybe one of the other ladies?”

“You sure you’re not available, Miya?” Peter joked, sticking his tongue out a little.

Miya played up rolling her eyes ‘playfully.’ “Not this season, Peter.”

“Well then, I’ll have to go with my girl Mary I think,” Peter said, gesturing across the pool to Mary.

“Then we’ve got our second couple, Peter and Mary,” Miya announced.

Peter strutted around the pool and scooped Mary up into a big hug, kissing her on the cheek, and Mary grinned widely as she glanced back at him as they took their standing positions. As Peter slipped his arm around her she leaned back into him a bit, pressing her slim ass back.

In the confessional booth, Mary’s eyes were wide as she held her hands a significant distance apart in the universal sign for measuring a certain something. “Are yer jokin’? I think it’s real!”

Back on deck, Miya asked, “Are you ready for the next lad, girls?”

“Absolutely,” Jay-Anne said.

“Well, raising funds for Guide Dogs, let’s meet... Michael,” Miya said.

MICHAEL, 24 Season 8

Not so long off the show, Michael was the rugby player who never really got a chance at love - he’d been the second Passenger dumped from the yacht and had never really made a love

connection despite being ridiculously fit. Walking out of the door onto the deck, looking at Michael was like looking at an artist's vision of the perfect male form - his muscles were all perfectly highlighted and looked like they might have been chiselled out of granite. His nose had clearly been broken in the past and reset, but his smile was a perfect charmer. He was also heavily tattooed, including both of his arms and his back, and a smattering of others across his godly pecs and legs.

"Mikey!" Emma called in surprise.

"Hey, Ems" He waved back. "Hey everybody." Emma and Michael had been on the same season and had developed a cute friendship in his two-week stay on the yacht, while she had gone the distance to the end.

"Michael, welcome back to the *Passion*," Miya said. "How is it being back?"

"Wild," Michael said. "But nice to see some friendly faces."

"Last time you never made a connection on the yacht. Do you have better hopes this time?"

"Absolutely," Michael said. "I've got a big heart and I'm ready to open it up."

"Well, as you can see Emma and Mary are both coupled up, but you know how things work here on the Love Cruise - you can pick one of the open girls, or you can steal one from someone else. But let's see what they think first, hmm? Alright ladies, if you fancy the looks of Michael, step forward."

After an unnecessary and yet entirely expected dramatic pause... Lacie, Emma, Jaz and Jay-Anne all stepped forward.

"Oh my God," Michael laughed, covering his face with his hands for a moment as he blushed a little.

"Wow, they certainly like the looks of you, Michael," Miya smiled. "That's the first time you've stepped forward, Lacie. What draws you to Michael?"

"He seems sweet," Lacie said. "And he obviously works hard for that bev bod, which I appreciate a lot."

"And how about you, Emma? You're coupled up with Roland, but you fancy Michael. Any regrets from your Season together?"

"No regrets," Emma shook her head, but she was clearly shooting 'Pick me, you bastard!' eyes over at her friend. "But I love the hell out of him, so starting out this new journey with a solid friendship would be great."

“Well, Michael? You have your pick. Do you want to choose someone who is free, or steal?” Miya asked.

“Oh, I’m definitely going with Emma,” Michael said, smiling and gesturing to his friend.

“Well, that means Roland, you’re now uncoupled from Emma. Come on over and wait on the substitute bench. And that also means we have a new couple, Michael and Emma.” Miya announced.

Roland shot Michael a little look as they crossed paths rounding the pool. Emma stepped forward to meet Michael, wrapping her arms around his shoulders in a big hug as she whispered, “Thank you! That guy was... Ugh.” None of the other contestants could hear it, but the mics around each contestant's neck certainly picked it up. Roland, meanwhile, was directed to lounge off to the side.

In the confessional booth, Michael was rubbing his arms with his hands and looking up at the ceiling. “Emma looks even more beautiful than she did on our season! This might be harder than I thought.”

Back on deck, Michael gave Emma a chaste kiss on the cheek and the two took their positions, Michael wrapping his arm around Emma’s shoulders as she leaned into him comfortably.

“Alright, our fourth returning lad to the yacht...” Miya announced. “Raising funds for Dementia UK, Percy!”

PERCY, 25 Season 6

As Percy came out from the door into the yacht he spun around and started doing a moonwalk. Back on his original season he’d been known as a joker, and that didn’t seem to have left him. The moonwalk also happened to highlight the feature he had frequently made a show of during the season, having become semi-famous for twerking his ‘dump truck white boy butt’ on national television. Despite his goofiness, Percy had also been known as the posh schemer and had jumped from relationship to relationship.

When he reached Miya, Percy spun on his heel and struck a confident pose with a big smirk.

“Hello Percy, welcome back to the Love Cruise,” Miya said. “How are things looking so far?”

“Absolutely excellent, Miya. Thank you for asking,” he replied in his posh, ‘I’m richer than you’ tonality that screamed old money aristocracy.

“Wonderful,” Miya said. “Any immediate thoughts on the girls?”

"I'm astounded by the beauty before me," he said. "But I've definitely got my eye on one or two gems."

"Well, let's see if they return the looks," Miya said. "Ladies, if you fancy the look of Percy, step forward now."

Another dramatic pause, and... Jay-Anne stepped forward.

"Hmm, interesting," Miya said. "Jay-Anne, what's catching your eye about Percy?"

"He looks like he knows what he wants, and is willing to go get it," Jay-Anne said. "And from what I'm remembering from the outside world, he's quite ambitious and I like that."

"But no interest from you, Lacie?" Miya asked.

Lacie shrugged softly, looking just a touch awkward at being asked to comment on a guy she hadn't stepped forward for again. "Just a vibe thing, I think," she said. "You sound like you've got good banter, though."

"Well, Percy," Miya said, turning to him. "Jay-Anne stepped forward, but you can pick anyone you want. Who would you like to couple up with?"

"Well, I have to admit she's exactly my type, so I'll need to go with Emma," Percy said, gesturing across the pool to the brunette. "Sorry, Michael."

Emma smiled, but murmured just loud enough that the mic picked up her saying, "Oh dear God."

In the confessional booth, Percy shrugged with that self-aggrandizing smile. "Don't get me wrong, Jay-Anne looked fire in that red bikini and I can't wait to give her a pash in a challenge, but Emma and I... we're just cut from the same cloth, so to speak."

Michael went and sat on the substitute couch with Roland, who shot him a self-satisfied look, while Emma gave Percy a quick hug of welcome and he kissed her on the cheek and then slid his arm around her waist and pulled her tight. He glanced down at her with a smarmy, charming smile, and Emma gave him a polite smile back but the viewers at home couldn't miss that it dropped a little when she looked away.

"Alright, we have another replacement couple," Miya announced. "Percy and Emma. Emma, you're a hot commodity today."

"I wasn't expecting it at all," Emma shook her head. "I mean, all of the women here with me are so attractive, I don't know why anyone would be going for me when someone like Jay-Anne steps forward."

Jay-Anne shot Emma a sweet, thankful smile.

Then the camera cut to the confessional booth for a moment, where Jay-Anne was scowling. "It's because she's practically a fucking baby and guys are morons," she said. "Emma is five years younger than Lacie, who's the next youngest. It's ridiculous these guys think that's an asset when they say they're looking for love and to settle down."

Back on deck, Miya continued on with the show. "Well, we've still only got two couples, and now two lads on the substitute bench. Let's go for three couples, why don't we? Raising funds for the WWF, Harold, come on out!"

HAROLD, 28 *Season 5*

Lacie, Mary and Jay-Anne all screamed in excitement as Harold came barrelling out of the door, rolling across the deck and springing to his feet dramatically. He was taller than the other four guys, standing around 6'4", and was a big slab of bulky muscles. He also happened to be wearing his wrestling trunks and made a show of doing the old Hulk Hogan 'listen to the crowd' move as he stepped up next to Miya.

"Hello Harold," Miya Jamal said once the girls had stopped cheering and laughing. "It sounds like you've got some fans!"

"Oooh, Miya, I've got fans aaaaaalllll over the world," Harold said, putting on a stage voice he used for his wrestling acts. He was the perfect combination of drama kid and athlete, and since his last season on Love Cruise he'd gotten contracted by a certain large 'sports entertainment' business for their UK brand show and was trying to make it up to the main roster over in the US. "But I'm not here for fans, I'm here to find my one, true, lov-uh. You get me?"

"Oh, I get you," Miya smirked. "How about you girls, let's find out if you get him. If Harold strikes your fancy, step forward now."

One last dramatic pause.... And Jaz and Emma both stepped forward.

"Well," Miya said. "None of you ladies from Season 5 see a spark with Harold?"

"I love Harold," Lacie said. "But I love him like a brother."

"Same," Mary said, grinning across at her friend. "Harold, I love yah. You'd be m' favourite cousin if we were related, but y'know I'm not interested in kissin' yah."

Harold kissed his fingers and pushed them out to the blonde and the brunette with a wink, acknowledging that he knew this too.

“Emma,” Miya said. “You’ve been through three boys now, but you’re stepping forward. What do you see in Harold that piques your interest?”

“He’s just really different than anyone I’ve ever met,” Emma said. “And I said I wanted something different. Plus I love that he’s tall and built.”

Standing behind her, his hand planted on her waist, Percy’s smile wavered for a split second.

“How about you, Jaz?” Miya asked.

“Love the height, love the body, but most of all I love the energy,” Jaz said. “I need that kind of positive energy in my life.”

“Well, Harold. You’re the last lad, so you know the deal. You can pick any girl you like, and no one is going to be able to steal her from you. Who would you like to couple up with?”

In the confessional booth Harold was rubbing his forehead, sweeping his blonde curls out of the way. “Uuugh, I think Lacie’s tits got even bigger since the last time I saw her, she looks so good in that bikini top. But I’m always the ‘big brother,’ agh!” Viewers would remember a brief moment in the early part of Season 5 when Harold had crushed on Lacie, but at the time she’d been infatuated with someone else and the two had drifted into a very strong friend zone that had lasted well beyond the end of the season.

Harold reached out a hand to both the girls who had stepped forward for him. “Emma, you’re absolutely lovely and very sweet, and I can’t wait to talk with you, but I’m going to have to go with Jaz because I’m feeling the energy vibe bouncing back at me right now.”

“Go join Jaz and we have our third couple!” Miya said. Once Harold had circled the pool and slipped in beside Jaz, who took his arm from her shoulder subtly and slid it down to her waist, Miya called Roland and Michael back up next to her. “Well, boys. No more stealing for you. Roland, you were the first to come out, so you get to pick first. Would you like to couple up with Lacie, or with Jay-Anne?”

Roland grinned over at the ladies again. “Oh, definitely with Lacie,” he said.

“Alright, then we have our fourth couple, Roland and Lacie,” Miya announced.

Lacie met Roland with a soft smile and a quick hug, and they took their spot as Roland stood behind her and put both of his hands on her waist.

“Michael, I think you know what that means,” Miya said.

“I do, I do,” Michael nodded. He walked around the pool to Jay-Anne, who had on a frosty smile at being the last choice, but hugged him nonetheless and seemed to warm up a little when he

kissed her cheek and put a hand comfortably on her shoulder as he stood just behind and to the side of her.

“Well, Passengers,” Miya said. “We’ve got our five couples, but I promised you another surprise, didn’t I? You all know that you’re competing not just for love, but also for charity. What you don’t know is that the grand prize this season is... a little different. What was it in previous seasons again?”

“Fifty thousand pounds” all ten of the contestants chanted. None of them had been winners on their seasons.

“Ah, that’s right. Well, this season that number has gone up a titch. The starting Grand Prize for Love Cruise Season 10 is a whopping one million pounds.” The contestants clearly hadn’t heard this yet, as they all started whispering amongst themselves in shock. “But that’s not all,” Miya said. “Because that number is going to go up! Whenever a viewer donates to one of you as a vote through the Love Cruise portal or app, half of that donation will go straight to your charity of choice, and the other half will go into the Grand Prize pool.”

There was more furious discussion happening between the contestants.

“No cheers?” Miya asked.

It started slowly, and behind the scenes they had to reset and do the announcement again so that the producers could get the reaction they wanted of all the contestants excitedly cheering.

“OK, well we now have five lovely couples. Lacie and Roland, Emma and Percy, Jaz and Harold, Mary and Peter, and Jay-Anne and Michael. Will you stay together, or will your heads be turned? Remember the public will be voting, and donating, for their favourite couple throughout the series, and that couple could win a massive one million pounds or more cash prize and be crowned winners of Love Cruise. But don’t forget, finding your perfect match is never that simple. For now, I’ll see you all soon.”

Miya blew a kiss to the Passengers and walked off with a wave, re-entering the crew-only area of the yacht as the contestants quickly started to disperse and begin chatting animatedly at the news that had changed the entire game.

No one had ever picked Money over Love at the end of Love Cruise. Everyone was supposed to be there for Love. Everyone was usually worried about their partner’s head getting turned from them by another man or woman...

But a million pounds plus...

Deep in the bowels of the yacht, Miya glanced at the monitors again in the editing bay. Love Cruise was filmed almost as close to live as could be conceived - the events of that morning would air that evening, and likely the second half of the show would still be in processing and need to be uploaded while the first half was already airing live. The entire setup worked at an insane pace, but it was worth it. The ad revenue the show had garnered on national television had funded a dozen other programs, but even the network couldn't help but sell their cash cow for the price that had been offered by the new mogul owner.

He'd even bought the fucking yacht from the president of the network.

Still, Miya was fairly certain even the Mogul wasn't fully aware of what he'd started. She'd tried to tell some of the producers what would happen when she had heard their plans to ramp up cash flow via donations and to give big donors more perks like influencing the challenges.

At the heart of the problem, in Miya's view, was that the contestants had just found out that popularity would bring in more cash. That meant, to the producers, there would likely be better television. More drama, more backstabbing, more emotions.

But Miya knew how those young, dumb and horny contestants thought. Well, at least some of them. Eventually they would figure out what the people really wanted. And they would feel the pressure to deliver. More and more.

"Come on, hurry up," Benny, the sound editor, said. He was standing in front of Miya with his pants down, his hard cock standing with a delightful curve. Miya had discovered the hidden gem that was his cock during her first season hosting the show last year.

"Sorry," she smirked. "Just thinking."

"That's dangerous, that is," Charles said from behind her. Then he slid his fat cock inside her pussy, pushing her face forward as she gamely opened her mouth to take Benny between her lips. Charles was one of the visual editors.

Miya slurped and groaned happily as the two editors started to thrust. It had been forty-four weeks of being a good media darling back home, and almost every day she'd daydreamed about the debauchery that happened behind the scenes in the depths of the luxury yacht.

Now, she was sure, it wouldn't be long before that debauchery went above deck and started to make it onto the show.