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Chapter 3

None of the Callahans bothered to look for Thea even though she had been gone for ten days.

To the Callahans, Thea was the black sheep of the family and the laughing stock of Cansington. If it were not for Thea, the Callahans' business would be booming.

Once Thea had recovered, she picked up her marriage certificate with James and they went home together.

Lex Callahan had three sons.

According to birth order, they were Howard, John, and Benjamin.

Benjamin was shunned by his own family because of Thea. It did not matter that he worked hard, expanding the family business by leaps and bounds.

At home, he did not have any rank, status, or authority whatsoever.

Benjamin might be a Callahan Group manager, but he had no shares in the company. All he got was a fixed salary each month with no bonus. As such, he was struggling to make ends meet.

It was true that he had bought a house, but there was still the mortgage to pay off every month.

“This is my home, Jamie.”

Pointing to the doors, Thea said, “It’s nothing compared to the palace you live in though.”

James took her hand in his and smiled. “Home is wherever you are.”

Thea smiled. Approaching the entrance, she knocked on the door gently.

Gladys opened the door.

She was slightly shocked to see a beautiful girl and an unfamiliar man. She asked, “Can I help you?”

“Mom,” Thea said.

Gladys was stunned upon hearing this beautiful girl call her mom.

“Mom, I’m Thea. Your daughter.”

“What?”

Gladys was shocked. Looking at the girl in front of her, she was confused. “Y-You’re Thea?”

“It’s me, mom. My scars are all gone now.”

“Hi, mom,” James added.

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“What?” Gladys thought that she would never recover from all the shocks.

Holding onto James’ arm, Thea said, “Mom, grandfather picked him as my husband.”

Gladys finally responded. She pulled Thea to her side quickly. Coldly, she said to James, “I’ve never acknowledged you as my son-in-law.”

She touched Thea’s smooth face. “Thea, is it really you? You... Your face and the scars and your body... What happened?”

“Mom, I’ve been undergoing treatment for the past ten days. I’ve recovered now, and will no longer be a humiliation to the family,” Thea choked out.

Ever since the incident, she had been an embarrassment to the Callahans, causing them to be the laughing stock of Cansington. Her parents were barely able to show their faces in public.

“My girl...” Gladys hugged Thea, crying. “My girl... It’s my fault. I never should have left you alone to deal with it. You’ve been through so much... Come, let’s go inside.”

She pulled Thea into the house.

Now that Thea had recovered her looks, Gladys had other plans in mind.

With Thea's beautiful looks, she could marry a rich man instead of a lazy worm who was after the family's wealth.

She pointed at the door and coldly ordered James, "Get out."

"Mom, what are you doing? He's my husband, hand-picked by grandfather!"

"Let's go to the family villa now. I'll have the old man call off the wedding himself."

Gladys wasted no time, dragging Thea with her.

"Jamie..."

Thea turned around to look at James helplessly.

James shrugged, looking like he did not have a care in the world. He merely followed the two women.

The Callahans gathered in the villa's foyer, looking at the beautiful girl standing next to Gladys in disbelief.

How could she be Thea?

Thea, who was disfigured for ten years?

What on earth happened? How could she have transformed in just ten days?

"Thea, is that you?"

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“Thea? Did you undergo plastic surgery in Korea? Is their technology so advanced that there’s a full-body option?”

The Callahans were gobsmacked.

They could not believe that the beautiful girl in front of them was the same Thea who was scarred all over.

What did she do?

Gladys got straight to the point. “Dad, I disagree with this marriage. With Thea’s looks, she could marry someone rich from a prestigious family. How could she marry some spineless worm?”

Smoking a tobacco pipe on the couch, Lex stared at Thea.

He was struggling to keep up.

How did Thea recover her looks in just ten days?

However, Thea was a beauty now. There was no denying that. He nodded his head, saying, "You're right. There are still many eligible bachelors among Cansington's most prestigious families. I could put a word out and find a suitable husband for Thea."

"No."

Thea stepped up with tears in her eyes. "Grandfather, you decided to marry me off to James. Now that James has helped me recover, you're not keeping your word. What am I to you?"

"You ungrateful brat..." Gladys slapped Thea across the face. She yelled, "What do you see in this penniless man?"

Thea grabbed a knife lying on the table and pressed it to her cheek. "I'll cut my face up if you push me too far."

"How dare you..." Gladys trembled in anger.

"Enough!" Lex roared. "What is going on, Thea? This is for your own good. Look at how beautiful you are now. You could marry well and enjoy an easy life. Why do you insist on being with a poor fellow like him?"

Just then, James, who had been quiet all this time, spoke up. Looking around at the Callahans, he said mildly, "I don't care about being part of your family either way, but this is between Thea and me. We've obtained our marriage certificate. If she wants a divorce, I'll go with it. If not, no one will force her to do anything."

“Who gave you permission to speak?”

Tommy, the eldest grandson of the family, leaped to his feet and pointed a finger at James. “You’re nothing but trash. You have no right to speak here. If we want you gone, you’re gone.”

James reached out and bent Tommy’s outstretched finger backward. Coldly, he said, “No one has ever pointed a finger at me before.”

“Ah, it hurts!”

Tommy yelled in pain. His body was bent at an awkward angle and his face twisted with pain. He said, “My bad, my bad. Please let go.”

James obliged.

Tommy panted hard. Looking at James’ expressionless face, Tommy was angered. He picked up an ashtray from the table, preparing to hit James on the head.

“What are you doing?” Lex shouted. “Is there no order in the family anymore? Put it down!”

Tommy looked at Lex pleadingly. “Grandfather, James has crossed the line. You have to help me.”

“Enough.” Lex was still puffing on his pipe, waving a hand. Looking at James, he said, “I’ll give you five hundred thousand dollars. All you have to do is divorce Thea and stay away from her.”

“No!” Thea yelled.

“How dare you!” Lex slammed his hand onto the table. “I’m not dead yet. I’m still the head of the family. All of you have to bend to my will!”

James did not want Thea’s relationship with her family to fracture.

His return was fueled by two purposes. To repay Thea, and to avenge his family.

He did not want Thea to suffer a broken relationship with her family just so he could fulfill his own purpose.

“Grandfather, give me a chance. Let me prove that I’m just as capable as anyone else.”

“A chance?” Tommy sneered. “James Caden, according to our information, you’re an orphan. You grew up at an orphanage, and you were in the military for a few years. Thea’s out of your league. Sure, we could give you a chance. Have you heard of Celestial Group? We’ve always wanted to work with them, but we’ve never managed it. If you could make it work, we’d be happy to acknowledge you as part of the family.”

Tommy had disliked James from the start. He was a retired soldier after all. He had no money and no power. What was he so arrogant for?

Therefore, he came up with this idea to make things difficult for James, hoping that he would give up.

He already had a better candidate in mind for Thea, Joel Xavier. The Xaviers was the leader of The Great Four, and it would be a beneficial union.

“Grandfather, let James try getting a deal with Celestial Group. If he gets it, we’ll acknowledge him. Otherwise, he’s gone.”

Lex puffed on his pipe. “Agreed. Our business mostly deals with medicinal processing. Recently, Celestial Group has been expanding its production, and they have released plenty of order opportunities. Many businesses are fighting to obtain these orders. If you could get an order worth thirty million from them, I’ll tell everyone you’re the son-in-law of the Callahans. You have ten days.”

“I don’t need ten days. I’ll get it done tomorrow.”

After that, James left with Thea.

“He’s bold but stupid. Celestial is the leader of the pharmaceutical groups, worth a hundred billion in the market. It’s almost impossible to get an order from them.” Tommy was unimpressed.

Gladys begged, "Dad, you can't do this. What's thirty million when Thea could marry anyone from The Great Four?"

Lex waved his hand. "We can't rush it. Celestial's business dealings are all with The Great Four. It won't be that simple to get an order from Celestial. Let James try. He'll give up. By then, we'll think of an idea for Thea to marry someone from The Great Four. With a marriage alliance, we'll be able to rise through the ranks in Cansington."



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