

Becomes 117

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Chapter 0117

Serena's POV

Stevie is out of breath when she reaches the shop. Her usually neat hair is tousled, and there's a light

sheen of sweat on her forehead.

She bursts through the door, causing the bell to jingle frantically. Her eyes are wide with urgency as she clutches her phone tightly in one hand.

"I get that you need to show me something. But why are you running like a madwoman?" I ask, raising

an eyebrow.

Stevie shoots me a look, her eyes narrowing slightly "Because this is important! I haven't watched it yet. I wanted to watch it with you to hear what that douchebag has to say."

I take a deep breath, trying to steady my nerves. "Okay, let's see it."

Stevie unlocks her phone and quickly navigates to the video. She hands it to me, and we lean in together to watch. The screen lights up with Max's face, but this time, he isn't wearing his usual smug

expression.

Instead, he looks almost apologetic, his eyes blank and devoid of emotion.

"Hello everyone, it's Max Laurent here. I want to take a moment to address some recent rumors and clear the air," he begins. His voice is steady but lacks its usual confidence.

Something feels off. But I can't put my finger on it.

"Recently, there have been rumors circulating that a certain billionaire CEO, Bill Richardson, punched me," he continues, pausing for effect.

My stomach twists. What is Max planning to say next? I glance at Stevie, who looks just as tense.

"Looks like nothing good will come out of Max's mouth," Stevie whispers.

I nod, feeling my palms start to sweat as I brace myself for his next words.

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Max takes a deep breath. "I want to confirm that this did happen, but I also need to clarify the context behind it."

If Max just wanted to ruin Bill's reputation, he wouldn't need to provide any context. Could he actually be about to tell the truth?

"The truth is, I did something I deeply regret," Max begins, his voice wavering slightly. "Out of envy and a moment of weakness, I sabotaged Serena Nixon's jewelry at the fashion show."

Stevie and I look at each other, our eyes widening in shock.

"She is an incredibly talented jeweler," he continues, "and instead of celebrating her success, I let my insecurities get the best of me." www.OverLords.com

I feel a mix of anger and vindication, my heart pounding in my chest as I listen.

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"This is not an excuse," Max adds, "but an explanation of my actions." www.OverLords.com

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Max looks straight at the screen. "To Bill and Serena, I'm really sorry for what I did. I know it was wrong and caused a lot of trouble."

"Ugh, the nerve of this guy," Stevie says, shaking her head in disbelief. She crosses her arms and leans back. "Like an apology is going to fix everything he messed up."

Max continues, "I'll be taking some time off to reflect on my actions and try to be a better person. I hope I can eventually earn back some trust."

The video ends. Stevie and I sit in stunned silence, both of us still processing what we had just watched.

"Is that it?" I say, breaking the silence. While Max cleared Bill and me of blame in the video, he didn't really tell the whole truth. Bill's mom paid him – that's why he destroyed my jewelry.

Stevie narrows her eyes and tilts her head slightly, studying my expression. "Why? Do you want to tell me something?"

I can't let Stevie know Bill's mom bribed Max. She'll hate Bill even more, even though he had nothing to do with it.

"Nothing," I lie. "I just thought the video ended abruptly. And that apology came straight from his ass."

Stevie raises an eyebrow but doesn't push further. "Yeah, it did feel off. And he sounded like he was reading a script."

I sigh. "I guess we should take this as a win," I say. "I doubt Eden will come after us again. He probably doesn't want to be associated with Max's mess."

But in the back of my mind, a nagging thought lingers. Bill set up Max's apology, I'm sure of it. I should be happy, right?

Then why do I feel like he just wants to save himself and his mom, not me? If he really cared about me, Bill would have let Max tell the whole truth, including his mom's involvement.

X

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