

Becomes 125

Chapter 0125

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"So, what are you suggesting, Taylor?" I ask. "I could post a storytime on my TikTok, but it might just make me look defensive."

Since I don't have any evidence that Max sabotaged my debut as a designer, it'll just look like a he-said- she-said situation.

Taylor smiles at me, her eyes lighting up with a hint of excitement. "That's why I'm here, Serena. We can do an interview, and part of it will let you explain what happened between you and Max."

I remember that Taylor wanted to interview me about my Rebirth of Venus jewelry set for the fashion show. But she had mentioned her schedule was booked.

"Oh, right. I thought you were busy with other stuff?"

"I am," Taylor admits. "But something opened up next Tuesday, and I figured why not do the interview then?"

I think about it for a moment. This could be my chance to clear things up and show my work without all the drama.

"Alright, let's do it," I agree, nodding at Taylor.

Taylor's face lights up. "Awesome! This is going to be great, Serena."

Stevie grins. "Oooh! I'm excited too. I can't wait to see your interview."

Taylor and Stevie notice my hesitation. "What's wrong, Serena? You having second thoughts about this?" Taylor asks.

I sigh. "No, I'm still happy to do it. It's just... it's my first interview, and I don't know what to say. What if I freeze up?"

Taylor puts a hand on my shoulder. "Don't worry, I got you," she reassures. "We'll go over everything beforehand. I'll give you a list of questions so you can prepare your answers. And during the interview, I'll be there to guide you. It'll be like a conversation between friends."

Taylor's confidence is infectious. I start to believe I can actually make it through the interview without a hitch. "Thanks, Taylor."

"Of course, I'd do anything to help out. You're my friend." Taylor smiles warmly.

We spend the next few minutes discussing the details, setting a time and place to meet.

"Okay, that settles it," Taylor says. "My team will send you everything you need for Tuesday's interview. And if you have any concerns, just give me a call."

"Gotcha. See you then, Taylor!"

Taylor gives me a reassuring smile before heading out the door. Stevie and I exchange looks, big smiles spreading across our faces.

Then Stevie's smile slowly changes into a frown. "Girl, I think we forgot to tell Taylor something."

+25 BONUS

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My smile fades. "What is it?" I ask, feeling a hint of worry.

"We forgot to mention our new summer collection," Stevie says. "This interview is the perfect way to promote it, and we just missed our chance."

My mind races. Of course, the summer collection! How could we forget something so important?

I take a deep breath, trying to stay calm. "I'll just send Taylor a message about it," I say. "I think she would be kind enough to squeeze it in."

"Great! At least one good thing will come out of all the Max drama." *www.nov(e)lWo(r)m.cOm*

"Speaking of our new summer collection," I begin, "can we close the shop tomorrow? I have to go somewhere, and it can't wait."

Stevie furrows her brows. "Where do you need to go?" she asks.

"I'm not sure yet," I admit. At least, I didn't lie to Stevie this time. Bill technically didn't say where we're going.

"Hmm... are you sure that's a good idea?" Stevie asks, skeptical. "You're pretty pregnant to be going anywhere alone."

"I'm not alone. I'm going with someone," I reply. "He says he's going to help me find inspiration for the summer collection."

Stevie smiles as if she's been let in on an inside joke. "So, it's a date then?" she asks with a wink.

I can feel my face getting hot. "Not a date," I mumble.

Stevie rolls her eyes. "Whatever. I hope you and Calvin have fun." *www.NoVe(l)Wo(r)m.cOm*

Once again, Stevie assumes I'm going with Calvin instead of Bill.

What if she finds out I've been lying to her all this time? Would she still want to be my friend?

I shake off the thought. I don't want to lose my best friend in the whole world.

"Oh, one more thing," she adds with a mischievous grin. "If you and Calvin get cozy, I totally support it."

"Okay, what the hell do you mean by that, Stevie?" I ask, raising an eyebrow. Is she seriously suggesting

have sex?

"Hook up. Fuck. Bang each other!" she says a little too loud. "I heard having sex helps with pregnancy

cramps."

My face turns bright red as I shush her, noticing a couple of customers looking our way. "That's disgusting, Stevie," I say, trying to keep my voice low.

Stevie rolls her eyes. "Don't be such a prude, Serena. It's just sex," she retorts, clearly amused by my embarrassment.

I hate to admit it, but one of my pregnancy cravings is sex. It's like my hormones are constantly in overdrive.

The thought makes my cheeks burn even hotter, but there's no way I'm telling Stevie that.