

Becomes 25

Chapter 0025

Serena's POV

"It's just dinner with Calvin, nothing more," I remind myself, trying to play it cool.

Even though I tell myself it's just a casual catch-up, the nerves and excitement I feel say otherwise.

I consider the midnight blue dress, its fit is perfect for accentuating my curves and a neckline that's just the right kind of bold. Imagining Calvin's impressed look has me second-guessing—is it too daring? Eventually, I decided against it.

Choosing comfort and confidence, I go for the familiar little black dress and my favorite heels—stylish yet comfortable for the entire evening.

I'm pacing around my living room, back and forth, waiting for Calvin to show up. I keep checking the clock, wondering when he's going to get here. [www.novellworm.com](#)

Just as I'm doing another lap across the room, my phone buzzes with a text from Calvin: "I'm here." Almost on cue, there's a knock at the door. My heart skips a beat. Here we go.

I open the door, and instantly, my heart skips a beat. Calvin is there, looking nothing like the man I first met. The usual stubble is gone, revealing a clean-shaven face that makes his jawline even more pronounced.

He's wearing a sleek, charcoal gray suit tailored to perfection. And he smells like luxury, with a rich, woody scent that's both subtle and captivating. [www.novellworm.com](#)

"Wow, Serena, you look great," Calvin says with a smile, his eyes lighting up.

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"Thanks, Calvin. Wow, you clean up nice," I manage to say, feeling a bit flustered as I take in his sleek look. My words tumble out with a nervous laugh.

"Ready to go?" Calvin asks. I just nod, still a bit caught up in how different he looks tonight.

"...and then he realized he was wearing his shirt inside out the whole meeting!" Calvin ends his story with a chuckle.

We're in a cozy corner at Soleil et Lune Bistro. As Calvin tells me about his friend, who was hungover and totally lost during an important meeting, I can't help but laugh along. [www.novellworm.com](#)

"So, that's why you don't drink much?" I ask, still chuckling.

"Yeah, you could say that," Calvin replies with a smile. "But it's mostly because I realized I'm not getting any younger. I need to start taking better care of myself. Can't afford to get wasted anymore."

"Well, cheers to being sober," I say, raising my glass. [www.novellworm.com](#)

"To being sober," he echoes. We clink our glasses filled with sparkling water. Calvin didn't even question when I opted out of wine. He just goes with it, making me feel relaxed and comfortable being around him.

After taking a big gulp of my sparkling water, I set the glass down and say, "By the way, thanks for inviting me out tonight."

"The pleasure is all mine, Serena," he replies with a warm smile.

I'm truly thankful to Calvin. I never imagined I'd be at ease with anyone from Bill's family. But maybe it's easy because he's just so kind.

The waiter brings our meal to the table. I have Coq au Vin, chicken cooked in a rich wine sauce with mushrooms and onions. Calvin has

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Bouillabaisse, a colorful seafood stew with fish, mussels, and shrimp, served with toasted bread on the side. Everything looks and smells

amazing.

"So, have you thought about your plans... after you and Bill aren't together anymore?" Calvin asks.

I remember him asking me the same question once before in the hospital hallway. But unlike last time, I now have a clear answer. "Well, I'm about to start a handcrafted jewelry business. My friend, Stevie, is going to help me out. My parents are on board as investors too."

Calvin falls silent for a moment and absentmindedly scratches his right

brow with his thumb.

Seeing his reaction, I can't help but feel a bit anxious. "Is there

something wrong with what I said?" I ask, my brows knitting together in

concern.

"No, not at all," Calvin quickly reassures me. "I think it's great you want to become an entrepreneur. It's just that the jewelry business can be tough to break into."

"My dad thought the same way," I say. "But when I showed him how I can make it profitable and shared some of my samples, he stopped doubting me."

"I'd love to see some of your handcrafted jewelry," Calvin expresses.

"They're right here," I reply, gesturing to my earrings, necklace, and bracelet.

"May I take a closer look?" Calvin asks.

"Of course," I say, extending my left arm towards him. As his fingers gently touch my skin to get a better look at the bracelet, a spark of electricity seems to pass between us.

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Calvin's fingers carefully explore the bracelet, tracing the delicate filigree work and gliding over the sapphire gemstones embedded in the design.