

Becomes 32

Chapter 0032

Bill's POV

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My mother invited me to dinner at one of our family-owned hotels. I accepted, realizing it had been quite some time since we last caught up, just the two of us.

When I arrive, it surprises me to see Doris talking to Mom. I had no idea she'd be here. Her acting all friendly bugs me, remembering how she was rude to one of our janitors.

I just stop, suddenly wishing I was anywhere but here.

Doris spots me before I can even think about leaving. She flashes a smile and says, "Bill! So glad you made it."

Mom turns in my direction and says, "Come and join us. We were just talking about you."

I reluctantly make my way to the table where they're seated, each step heavier than the last. I drag my feet slightly as if trying to delay the inevitable meeting.

"I thought it was just going to be the two of us, Mom," I say, not hiding my annoyance about Doris being there.

Mom and Doris exchange a glance, seemingly caught off guard by my reaction. I can't help it; my mood is just too sour.

"Nice to see you too, Bill," Mom says, her voice dripping with a hint of sarcasm. I guess she's trying her best to break the tension. "Anyway, I decided to invite Doris since she mentioned she was free tonight."

I simply nod in response, choosing not to give Doris any further acknowledgment. Turning slightly, I catch the attention of a waiter with a quick gesture, signaling that I'm ready to order.

+26 BONUS

I take my time with the menu, feeling Mom and Doris watching me closely.

While we wait for our food, I pretend to be busy on my phone, ignoring Mom and Doris as they make small talk. They seem to expect me to join in, but I just don't want to.

The food arrives, and in front of me is a beautifully plated dish. Grilled salmon rests atop a bed of wild rice, garnished with a sprinkle of fresh herbs and lemon wedges on the side. I take a bite, the flavors of the perfectly cooked salmon mingling with the subtle zest of lemon and the earthiness of the wild rice.

Mom clears her throat, breaking the silence. "Any problems at work? You seem like you're stressed out. I'm worried about you, Bill."

"

"No, everything's fine, Mom," I reply, putting on a reassuring tone. "We've been closing a lot of deals lately, and many prospects are looking to partner with us." I maintain my focus entirely on Mom, deliberately avoiding any glance in Doris' direction.

Mom doesn't seem convinced. "You sure? You know you can always ask Calvin for some business advice. I'm sure he'd be happy to help you out."

Hearing Calvin's name makes me tense up. I can't forget how Serena's eyes light up when she sees him, a look that used to be just for me. They're growing closer to each other, especially since I've caught them out on what seemed like dates twice now.

My uncle is definitely overstepping. Serena is still mine.

"Bill's right. Now, we get to pick who we work with," Doris chimes in, breaking my trance. She sounds like she wants me to notice her. I just nod at her, keeping it short.

I need to get out of here. With Mom mentioning Calvin out of the blue *wW.n(o)vélwöRm.cOm*

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20 BONUS *wW.n(o)vélwöRm.cOm*

Chapter 2032

and Doris being here, it just messes with my head. Luckily, I quickly think of a good excuse to get out.

"Mom, I gotta go. I forgot about a big contract I need to look at in the office," I say.

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"You just got here. Can't it wait until tomorrow?" Mom asks.

"It's really important. It's tied to a huge deal we're working on."

"Oh, if it's that important, then you should go," Mom says. "I just hope you're in a better mood next time we have dinner."

"Bye, Mom," I say, giving her a quick kiss on the cheek. I rush off to my car, not even bothering to say goodbye to Doris.

"Bill, wait!" I hear Doris call out just as I reach the parking lot. I turn to see her hurrying towards me, catching her breath.