

Becomes 43

Chapter 0043

Serena's POV

"Calvin?" I call out, noticing his sudden change in demeanor. He seems to have spaced out, lost in thought. "Are you alright?" I ask.

Calvin breaks his trance, blinking a few times as if returning from a distant place. "I'm alright, don't worry," he says, his voice a touch distant. "I'm your friend. I'd do anything to support you."

Our orders arrive, and my stomach grumbles with anticipation. A plate of spaghetti carbonara is placed in front of me, the savory aromas making my mouth water. Calvin's lasagna sits beside it, tempting him with its layers of cheese and sauce.

To start, the waiter brings a basket of endless salad and warm

breadsticks.

I eagerly dig into my spaghetti, savoring each bite as if it's the best thing I've ever tasted. "Wow, this tastes amazing," I say between

mouthfuls, unable to hide my enthusiasm.

Calvin chuckles at my enthusiasm. "You're really into your food," he remarks with a playful smile. "You look like you haven't eaten in a day."

I drop my gaze down. "Actually, the shop got so busy and I didn't have the chance to eat," I say.

Calvin sighs, concern etching his features. "Serena, running a busy shop is one thing, but you need to take care of yourself, especially with the baby on the way," he says gently.

I meet his gaze, feeling a pang of guilt. "I know, Calvin," I reply. "But I enjoy being busy."

After three years of being Bill's housewife, I can't help but feel that being busy and productive is the life I want.

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+25 BONUS

"Okay, I respect that," Calvin says with a nod. "Just promise me you won't let yourself get too tired and that you'll eat your meals on time."

"Promise," I say earnestly. "I'll take better care of myself and my baby."

Talking to Calvin feels so effortless like we've known each other for years. He listens with such genuine concern, and his advice always comes from a place of caring. But lately, there's been this strange feeling nagging at the back of my mind. It's as if he's not just acting like a friend, but more like a boyfriend.

I quickly shake off the thought, not wanting to assume anything unless Calvin confesses he sees me as more than just a friend.

"Did anything else interesting happen today?" Calvin asks as he takes a bite of his lasagna.

"Well, our first customer was a nice lady," I say, a smile playing on my lips. "She bought a lapis lazuli necklace after I told her the story behind it. Later on, she came back with some friends to have a look at the shop."

"Sounds like you found your first loyal customer," Calvin remarks with a grin. "Did you get her name?" [www.noelewo\(m\).com](mailto:www.noelewo(m).com)

I nod. "Her name is Marjorie Munger," I confirm.

Calvin's eyes widen in surprise as he hears the name. His fork pauses midway to his mouth, a look of astonishment crossing his face. "Serena, are you familiar with De Luca Couture?" he asks.

As Calvin mentions De Luca Couture, I remember they're known for their haute couture. I see their exquisite dresses, adorned with intricate lace and shimmering beadwork, each piece a masterpiece of craftsmanship. I couldn't help but stop at their window displays when I passed by one of their shops.

"Yes, I am. I like their dresses," I say. "Why did you ask?" [www.noelewo\(m\).com](mailto:www.noelewo(m).com)

"I think the lady you met was Marjorie De Luca—Munger," Calvin says, dropping the bombshell. "She started De Luca Couture."

My jaw drops slightly as my eyes widen in disbelief as Calvin's words sink in. I had no idea that the woman casually chatted with earlier was the founder of such a prestigious fashion brand.

"Wait, seriously?" I exclaim. "Now, I feel bad that I didn't know her."

"I couldn't say for sure. But I just know Marjorie De Luca—Munger and her billionaire husband, Timothy, live in Van Nuys," Calvin says.

"Oh, wow," I say. If Marjorie liked the jewelry I made, it could be an opportunity for us to work together. But I don't want to set my expectations too high. After all, I only own a small shop. Who am I to dream this big?

"I hope she comes back to my shop," I simply say.

"I bet she will," Calvin says confidently. "You're a talented designer, and your work speaks for itself."

Calvin really knows the right words to say. Maybe it's the ambiance, but I find the courage to finally ask him, "Calvin, why are you so good to me?"

He seems to be caught off guard by the question. "Like I said, I'm your friend. Of course, I'll always look after you."

"Is that really all there is?" I say, my voice trailing off slightly.

Calvin falls silent for a moment. He looks hesitant. "Okay, Serena. I have something to tell you," he says.

"I'm listening," I say, my heart racing with anticipation. This feels like the perfect moment to find out the real score between us.

□ 125 HONUS

But just as Calvin opens his mouth, his phone rings. He furrows his brows and says, "Sorry, I've got to take this."

Calvin answers his phone. "What? I told Glenn to handle everything," he says with frustration evident in his voice. [www.noelewo\(m\).com](mailto:www.noelewo(m).com)

I stare at Calvin, hoping the call would end soon.

He shakes his head. "This is just unacceptable, I gave you all two months to fix this," he says, sounding exasperated.

Oh no, the call seems serious. "Why do I have to handle everything on this deal? I thought I hired the best people to do their jobs well," he continues, his tone growing more agitated.

Calvin seems really upset now. But he tries to compose himself as he takes a deep breath. "Fine, I'll handle it immediately. Bye."

Calvin drops his phone and looks at me apologetically. "Serena, I have to take care of something really urgent. I'll book an Uber for you if you like," he offers, his expression filled with regret.

"Oh, I see," I say, trying to hide my disappointment. "No worries. I can take care of myself."

"You sure?" Calvin asks.

"Yeah, it's okay," I say, forcing a smile to reassure him.

Calvin stands up abruptly, his lasagna barely touched. "Wait, Calvin!" I call out, the urgency clear in my voice. "What were you trying to say a while ago?" [www.noelewo\(m\).com](mailto:www.noelewo(m).com)

He smiles warmly. "I promise I'll tell you the next time we see each other," Calvin says.

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"But I begin, but Calvin interrupts.

"Sorry, I really have to go now," he apologizes,

+25 BONUS

With that, Calvin leaves the restaurant, leaving me with many questions

unanswered in my mind.