

Becomes 73

Chapter 0073

Serena's POV

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Stevie parks her car right across from De Luca Couture headquarters. The building stands out sharply from its neighbors, sleek and modern with walls of shining glass. The morning sun bounces off the surface, scattering light across the street. Over the revolving glass doors, the De Luca logo is displayed in elegant, bold letters, watching over the bustling avenue.

I feel a mix of nerves and excitement. Turning to Stevie, I see she's looking up at the building with awe. "Can you believe we're really here?" she says.

I squeeze her hand and reply, "Yeah, it's crazy, right?"

I still can't believe we're going to be part of a fashion show. It's thrilling to think that our jewelry designs, which started as simple sketches in my studio apartment, are going to be showcased on the runway. Www.novelworm.co

Stevie and I cross the street and approach the revolving glass doors. Inside, the air is cool and the lobby is bright and open, with high ceilings. and sunlight pouring through large windows. The floor is polished marble, and stylish furniture is arranged neatly around the space.

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We head straight for the receptionist's desk. As we approach, I catch the receptionist's attention and say, "Good morning, we have a meeting with Ms. Marjorie Munger and her husband. My name is Serena Nixon and this is my business partner, Stevie."

The receptionist nods, her smile still in place, as she begins to check her schedule on the computer.

"Please give me one moment," she responds, her fingers moving swiftly over the keyboard. After a brief pause, she looks up, her expression welcoming.

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"Yes, you're scheduled for 10 a.m. Ms. Munger and her husband will be with you shortly. You can take a seat over there," she gestures toward a stylish seating area adorned with plush sofas and glossy fashion magazines spread out on low coffee tables.

In the waiting area, Stevie and I sit in silence, both wrapped in our own nerves. Every so often, we exchange glances to comfort each other.

Soon, a poised assistant arrives with a reassuring smile. "Ms. Munger and Mr. Munger will see you now in the conference room," she informs us, leading the way down a sleek corridor adorned with iconic fashion photography. Www.novelworm.co

Upon entering the conference room, Marjorie greets us with a warm hug. Standing beside her is her husband, Timothy, who handles the business aspects of their fashion empire.

Timothy gives us a friendly nod and a firm handshake. "Serena, Stevie, great to see you both. We're thrilled to kick off this collaboration," he

says.

Marjorie beams at us. "Your pieces are just what our show needed. I've always believed in your talent," she tells us, making me feel proud and even more confident about our collaboration.

We settle around the conference table where the contract is neatly laid out. Timothy takes the lead, carefully explaining each section, and making sure we're all on the same page.

As Timothy concludes his detailed walkthrough of the contract, he looks at us with an encouraging smile. "That's all there is to it. Any

questions?" he asks.

I raise my hand, pausing for a second before I ask, "Well, there is one thing. Why do we need to sign an NDA?"

Timothy nods. "Oh, that's standard for us. It's just to keep the details

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about the designs and the show under wraps until everything's

launched. We like to surprise our audience with something fresh, you know?" he explains.

Marjorie lights up as she reaches for her phone. "Speaking of something fresh," she says with a hint of enthusiasm in her voice, there's something I want to share."

She swipes through her phone for a moment before turning the screen towards us. "The theme for the fashion show is inspired by this painting,

she explains.

Marjorie's phone displays an iconic image: a depiction of a goddess, emerging from the sea on a shell, her hair flowing around her, and robes billowing in the ocean breeze

"The Birth of Venus," I recognize aloud. Turning to Marjorie, I'm genuinely curious about her creative process. "How did you come up with this theme, Marjorie?"

Marjorie smiles. "I've always loved how classic art blends natural beauty with a bit of myth. This painting, especially, just has something magical about it — grace, femininity, all that good stuff. I thought it would be amazing to bring all those together into our collection."

Hearing Marjorie's passion, I feel my own creativity start to spark. The idea of blending such a timeless piece of art with modern fashion gets me really excited about what we could do with our jewelry.

"That's awesome, Marjorie," I say, enthusiasm clear in my voice. "It gives us a lot to work with. I'm already thinking about the kinds of pieces we could design — something dreamy but still modern."

"Great. I must say, Serena, you inspire me. I love how you draw inspiration for your designs from different stories. You're not just an artist — you're a storyteller," Marjorie compliments.

Hearing Marjorie's praise, I feel a mix of happiness and a flutter of

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nerves. It's both flattering and a bit overwhelming to know that my Tik Tok videos, where I share the stories behind my jewelry, have inspired a prominent designer like her.

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"Thanks, Marjorie. That means a lot to hear from you," I say. Turning to Stevie, we exchange a quick look of mutual approval. "We're ready to sign the contract now."

Marjorie nods with a smile, pleased by our decision, and gestures towards the documents laid out on the table. Timothy slides the

contract towards us.

Stevie picks up the pen first, her hand steady as she signs her name with a flourish. Handing the pen to me, I take a deep breath, feeling the weight of the moment. I sign my name next to hers.

Here we go... This is a make-or-break opportunity for our small

business. We'd better make the most of it!