

Becomes 79

Chapter 0079

Serena's POV

Max's expression tightens, clearly not happy with my sarcasm. He pauses for a moment, arms crossed, as he thinks about what to say

next.

After a moment, Max uncrosses his arms and says. "Let's see if your Tik Tok jewelry can actually handle the high fashion scene."

Max is such a jerk to dismiss my work like that. But his comment also makes me wonder – can my jewelry actually stand up to the high

fashion world?

I've always been proud of my designs, but now I'm questioning whether they're truly ready for this level of scrutiny.

Marjorie clears her throat, cutting through the tension like a knife. "Let's move forward," she says firmly.

The meeting progresses smoothly once Marjorie takes control, detailing the schedule and expectations for the fashion show.

She covers everything from the sequence of the runway lineup to the timing for each model's appearance. Trying to shake off Max's earlier remarks, I focus on the task at hand.

Josephine shows genuine interest in integrating her sustainable fabrics with my jewelry. We discuss matching color schemes and textures.

Max is reserved but gives useful tips on how his materials can improve the runway lighting. He's very particular, which can make him seem standoffish. But I got to admit; he knows his stuff.

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Marjorie looks around the room and asks, "Are there any more questions?" Silence follows as no one speaks up.

1/5

Charter

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She nods, satisfied, and concludes, "Okay, I think that's it. See you all in a few days."

As Josephine and Max pack up their materials and leave the room, I linger behind. Turning to Marjorie, I ask, "Marjorie, would it be alright if I stayed a bit longer to work on adjusting some of the necklace fittings? I want to make sure they're perfectly aligned with the dresses we discussed."

Marjorie nods with approval, "Of course, Serena. Take your time."

"Thanks, Marjorie. I really appreciate it," I reply.

Marjorie exits the conference room. After she leaves, I spread out my materials across the table. I pull out several necklaces and lay them beside the fabric swatches we'd selected during the meeting.

Carefully, I begin adjusting the length and clasp positions of each piece, ensuring they sit just right against the fabric. I replace a few gemstones with others that better match the dresses' hues, meticulously aligning each setting to catch the light beautifully.

I wipe the sweat from my brow, pausing for a moment to check the time. My watch shows 7:46 PM.

"Shit!" I curse under my breath, realizing how late it's gotten. I quickly start packing up my tools and materials.

I got so caught up with work that I lost track of time.

As I head out of the building, a familiar voice stops me in my tracks.

"Serena!" It's a man's voice, unmistakable in the quiet of the nearly empty building. I turn towards the sound, my heart skipping a beat as I spot Bill in the waiting area.

He approaches me with a slight smile. "I thought you were never getting out of there," he jokes.

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I stare at him, stunned. "You've been waiting here for me... for seven hours?"

Bill nods, a hint of disappointment in his eyes. "Yeah, I was planning to ask you if we could grab a coffee to catch up after your meeting. But I guess it's too late now."

Is this really Bill? He's the type who barely has the patience to wait in line for a few minutes, yet here he is, having waited seven hours just to

ask me for coffee.

I raise an eyebrow. "Aren't you too busy to wait around for me like this?"

Bill shrugs, "I've got time, and besides, I didn't have any important meetings scheduled for today."

Bill notices my hesitation and quickly follows up, trying to ease the awkwardness. "Hey, do you want to grab a bite? I know you've been in there a while, so you must be hungry."

"Look, Bill. I'm too tired to do anything right now," I reply, feeling the exhaustion of the day weighing on me. "I just want to go home and rest. www.novelle.com

Bill nods in understanding. "Okay. Would you mind if I give you a ride to your apartment?"

I pause, looking at Bill with a hint of suspicion. His offer catches me off guard. Is he just being nice, or is he hoping for something more?

"What the hell do you want?" I snap, unable to keep the irritation from my voice.

Bill looks visibly hurt and lowers his gaze. "... uh, I just want to make sure you get home safely," he says, then looks up at me with sincerity.

His response makes me feel a twinge of guilt. He seems genuinely concerned, but I can't shake my suspicion. "I don't think driving me home is a good idea, Bill," I say, trying to soften my tone. "But I'll send www.novelle.com

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you a text once I get home. Is that okay?"

Bill's face brightens slightly with a relieved smile. "Yes, that'd be great," he replies. "And again, sorry for following you the other night. I promise no more of that. I don't want to scare you."

Relieved by Bill's understanding, I nod and step outside to hail a taxi. The cool night air is a welcome relief after the stuffy conference room.

A taxi pulls up quickly, and I slide into the back seat, grateful for a moment to myself.

Once I'm finally home, I pull out my phone and type a quick message to

Bill:

"Made it home safe. Thanks for your concern tonight. Goodnight, Bill."

I hit send, not really expecting a reply, but Bill texts back immediately:

"Good to hear you're home safe. Sleep well, Serena." www.novelle.com

I plan not to reply back, ready to put the phone down and end the night.

But then another message from Bill pops up:

"I just want to say..."

Curiosity gets the better of me, and I hesitate, my fingers hovering over the keyboard. Finally, I type back:

"What is it?"

Five minutes drag by with no response, leaving me staring at the screen. Finally, Bill's message comes through:

"Nevermind. Sweet dreams."

I can't help but wonder if Bill was about to tell me he loves me. The thought sends a flurry of butterflies through my stomach.

I set the phone down, trying to calm the racing thoughts as I get ready

Chapter 0079

for bed.