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Heaven's fury often strikes those with a wicked heart, but in Carla's case, the skies weren't the only ones sending their wrath. Egg yolks, flour, and a mix of unknown liquids rained down on her, turning her into a mess that resembled more like a batter than a woman.

Flashback: Moments Earlier

Carla fumed silently in her hospital room, her thoughts racing with schemes and curses. She had spent the last hour concocting elaborate plots to eliminate Estelle from her life once and for all. Her chance of playing the victim had been ruined by that b***h, but she wasn't one to stay defeated for long. The hospital's sterile scent made her even more irritable as she replayed the day's events, especially the message and the video that had turned her from victim to villain, all thanks to Estelle.

To be honest, for a moment that night, Carla had thought Estelle might just let her drown because she would have if left to her. But the insufferable "*Mother Teresa*" had gone ahead and saved her, and then ruined everything afterwards. Had she

not, Carla had her own sick plan—pretend to drown (because she had already learned to swim, unbeknownst to Hunter), and float unconscious in the water. That would've been a real spectacle! But no, Estelle had to go ahead and play the hero.

"b***h," Carla muttered to herself as she swung her legs over the bed, dressed quickly, and shot herself a glance in the mirror. Her face looked innocent just as she had perfectly rehearsed. Satisfied, she strode confidently out of her room, fully prepared to execute her next move, but first, she needed to get home.

She probably should have waited for Hunter, but she had had enough of the antiseptic smell of the hospital. God, she had always hated it. Hunter wouldn't be in a good mood anyway, and the hospital wasn't the best place to lash out at each other.

As she stepped outside, the cool afternoon air greeted her with a fresh breeze. She took in a deep breath, enjoying the break from the hospital-choking smell. Her plan was clear—get home, clean up, and prepare for her next attack on Estelle.

But life had other plans.

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WHACK!

Something hard slammed into her head. Carla yelped, more in surprise than pain. Before she could gather her thoughts, another strike hit her, this time square on her cheek. She blinked, trying to make sense of what was happening, but all that

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came was a shower of flour, eggs, and what she could only hope wasn't expired milk.

She stumbled, arms flailing wildly as the assault continued. Cameras flashed in the background, and a mix of shock and outrage coursed through her veins as her eyes narrowed on the small crowd

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that had gathered around her from nowhere. Before she could scream, flour followed closely with egg splattered directly onto her face, blinding her temporarily.

"b***h!" someone from the crowd yelled, while others joined in, hurling curses and more disgusting mixtures at her. Carla stumbled, her feet slipping on the egg-covered ground, and collapsed with a painful thud. A whimper escaped her lips as she tried, unsuccessfully, to shield her face by curling into herself as more flour, more eggs, and even rotten vegetables pelted her from the furious crowd.

"Hey! What's going on?" someone shouted. The crowd scattered at the sound of the approaching security guards, their hurried footsteps fading quickly into the distance as they shouted, "Get in the car! Get in the car!" but Carla didn't look up. She remained crumpled on the ground, too stunned and defeated to move, until the security team arrived. Strong hands lifted her, guiding her toward a waiting car.

The moment she was in the vehicle, Carla buried her head in her knees, hot tears streaming down her face. Her body trembled not from cold, but from the sheer shock of it all. Humiliation had

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always been reserved for others in her mind, but now, as she sat in the car, looking like garbage, she felt exposed and raw with her body throbbing with pain. The once-sick grin she wore while plotting her revenge had been replaced with trembling lips and wet eyes, stained with egg yolk and tears. Her mind raced as she imagined the headlines of how her humiliation would be plastered all over the internet within hours.

Minutes Later, At Home...

The door slammed shut behind her as Carla trudged inside, looking like something scraped off the bottom of a dumpster. Hunter was waiting, his arms crossed, eyes blazing with anger. His gaze swept over her, taking in her dishevelled appearance. For a brief second, his expression softened. Then it hardened again.

"Who did this?" His voice was low, cold.

A security guard stepped forward, his head bowed. "Some people....reporters did."

"And where were you when that happened? Why are you being paid if you can't save her from something as small as this?" Hunter bellowed, and the guard lowered his head in shame.

"We didn't know it was Ma'am, Sir, and by the time

we realized it was her, it was too late. She was already... baked." The man cleared his throat, awkwardly avoiding Hunter's furious glare. "We got her out as soon as we could."

"Find them!" Hunter ordered. "Make sure they pay. All of them."

The guard nodded and hurried away, leaving Hunter and Carla in a tense silence. Hunter's eyes narrowed as he surveyed the mess before him. "You should go clean up," he said, trying to keep his voice steady.

"Don't act like you care!" Carla snapped, catching Hunter off guard. "If you cared, none of this would've happened in the first place!"

Hunter blinked, taken aback by her sudden outburst. "Excuse me? How exactly is this my fault?" he asked, his voice low but icy, a mixture of disbelief and anger.

"This!" Carla jabbed her finger into her chest, now caked in dried flour and egg. "All of this is your fault! If you'd been paying attention, none of this would've happened! If you weren't so obsessed with that b***h, the media wouldn't have gotten their hands on the footage—"

"Wait What?" Hunter gasped in disbelief and

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confusion. "You lied, Carla. You staged the entire thing, and it backfired on you. So how has that got to be my fault?"

Carla let out a sick laugh. "A lie?" Her voice rose, trembling with rage. She stomped closer to Hunter, flour scattering everywhere as she shoved her finger into his chest. "You pushed me, Hunter! You pushed me into this! All because you couldn't keep your eyes off her!" Her words faltered as her eyes glistened with tears.

Hunter's heart clenched in realization. He could feel his jaw tighten, but not out of anger. It was something different, something that filled him with a deep, gnawing regret. He hadn't fully understood until now. He had been too wrapped up in his own turmoil to notice hers. But now, it hit him all at once.

Carla wasn't just lashing out; she wasn't just changing because that's who she was. She was hurting deeply, and feeling insecure, and the reason for all this was Estelle. He hadn't even realized it, and he had unknowingly compared the two in his head many times lately. The realization made him feel sick and dirty, as if he had unintentionally betrayed her.

"Do you even care about me?" Her voice cracked,

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pulling him back to the moment. "About us? Do you even still love me?"

Hunter winced. The question stunned him and tore apart his heart. He did love her, without a doubt. His heart still raced for her, despite the chaos that had consumed their lives lately. He loved her, and he adored their daughter, Mara, with a ferocity that scared him sometimes. But with everything going on—his career, his father's manipulation, Estelle's reappearance—he hadn't been able to show it the way he should have, which left him angry at himself, at his own obliviousness.

But before he could find the words to say that to her, to soothe her fear, Carla's expression darkened. Her eyes blazed with anger and betrayal. She must have taken his silence as confirmation of her worst suspicions.


"To hell with you!" Carla spat, her voice shaking with emotion, and Hunter flinched from the sharpness of it. She turned on her heel, storming off before he could even react.

Hunter just stood there, his feet glued to the floor, the words he should've said still stuck in his throat. How had it come to this? How had he turned Carla, who was once sweet and all smiles, into a bitter woman? How had it all come to this?


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For a moment, the house was eerily silent, save for the thud of his heart, pounding loudly in his ears. Then, a piercing scream tore through the house.

Hunter's blood ran cold as he recognized the voice. Carla?

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