

## Divorced Me 1051

### Chapter 1051

Jolie frowned. "Mom, I told you, I'm not close to Mr. Cooper."

Daisy replied, "Of course, you won't be close to him if you don't stay in touch with him. The more you connect, the closer you will be. Get in touch with Mr. Cooper soon and let us know once you've arranged everything. We'll handle the time and place." After saying that, she didn't bother to see Jolie's reaction and went back to arranging flowers.

Jolie felt a deep sense of helplessness.

How could they think she was close enough to Gavin to casually invite him to dinner?

They were so confident, weren't they?

Jolie got up and left. She had originally planned to meet some friends for a photoshoot today. As a freelance photography enthusiast, she enjoyed capturing moments outdoors, but now, she wasn't in the mood. She wandered around on her own.

At the entrance of a mall, she unexpectedly ran into Selena.

Selena had come to pick up something she'd forgotten to buy while shopping with Aveline yesterday.

Neither of them spoke at first when their eyes met.

Jolie was the first to approach, offering a smile. "Selena, what a coincidence."

Selena furrowed her brows slightly but didn't look unfriendly as she responded, "What's up?"

Jolie grinned. "Can't I talk to you without a reason?"

Selena gave her a long look before saying, "I'm busy. I'll be leaving now."

With that, she turned to leave.

Jolie called after her, "Do you drink?"

Selena paused mid-step and glanced back at her. "You want to drink?"

Jolie nodded. "You're not going to stop me, are you? Even if you're my sister, you can't control me. I wouldn't listen anyway."

Selena let out a cold laugh. "You're overthinking. Drink all you want. I won't join you."

After saying this, she got in her car and drove off without another glance.

Jolie's smile faded as she lowered her gaze slightly.

Just then, a series of honks rang out.

Jolie looked up to see Selena pulling up, her expression sharp and unyielding. "Day drinking? Really? Get in the car."

Jolie blinked in surprise. "Weren't you going to leave me alone?"

Selena frowned. "Are you getting in or not? If not, I'm leaving again."

Before Selena could finish, Jolie had

door,

already opened the passenger and fastened her seatbe

slid

efficiently.

Selena's lips twitched slightly before she started the car and drove off once more.

Jolie didn't ask why Selena had come back. Instead, she quietly gazed out the window.

Selena glanced at her and asked stiffly, "What's wrong?"

"Selena, you're worried about me, aren't you?"

"Of course not!"

Selena denied it instantly. "Don't overthink it. I was just asking."

Jolie smiled. "You care about me. I won't make fun of you for it, so there's no need to explain yourself

so urgently." Content belon

Selena's brows furrowed. "I regret letting you in the car. Get out."

"Fine, I won't say anything," Jolie said, dropping the subject.

Silence filled the car.

Jolie noticed that the road looked increasingly familiar. It seemed to lead to the Cooper family villa.

She asked in surprise, "Are you taking me to the Coopers?"

"If you don't want to go, get out," Selena replied bluntly.

Jolie fell silent again.

The car pulted into the sprawling Cooper family villa. A servant

approached and opened the cal

dooras Selena stepped out, holding a shopping bag.

Jolie gazed at the grand and luxurious mansion, her eyes flickering with a complicated emotion.

Her dream last night... it had taken place in one of the rooms here. She and Gavin...

"What are you thinking about?"

Selena glanced at her. "Come with me."

Chapter 1052

Jolie followed Selena into the Cooper family villa.

Neither Gavin nor Gernard was home. Gavin was at the office, and Gernard had already left for South Afreeca.

Wilfried had gone fishing with an old friend, leaving only Aveline, Lucas, their two kids, and the household staff in the villa.

"Ave," Selena called as they stepped into the living room.

Aveline was holding Pax, keeping him entertained, but she looked up at the sound of Selena's voice. Surprised, she asked, "Back so soon?"

Her gaze shifted, catching sight of Jolie trailing behind.

"Miss Quin, hello," Jolie greeted with a polite smile.

Aveline returned the smile warmly. "Please, have a seat. Make yourself at home."

Selena had already washed her hands and returned to pick up Joy, gently coaxing the child with a soft tone.

Jolie sat on the edge of the sofa, visibly tense. Noticing her unease, Aveline walked over and asked with a gentle smile, "Would you like to hold the baby?" Jolie blinked in surprise. "Me? Can I really?"

"Of course," Aveline said, nodding. She carefully passed Pax over to Jolie.

Jolie quickly stood up. "Let me wash my hands first."

"Sure," Aveline replied with a nod.

As Jolie headed toward the restroom, Aveline turned to Selena and asked quietly, "What's going on?"

"I saw her wandering alone by the road," Selena explained. "She seemed upset about something, so I brought her here."

"Oh..." Aveline dragged out the word, giving her a knowing look.

"Don't get any ideas," Selena said flatly. "She can stay for a bit, but she's leaving later."

Aveline pressed her lips together in a soft smile, saying nothing.

Jolie returned quickly, her hands freshly washed, and carefully took Pax into her arms.

The little boy, full of energy after being fed stared at her with big, dark eyes that gleamed like black pearls. Though he couldn't quite focus yet, he gazed at her unblinkingly

Jolie sat stiffly, nervous she might accidentally drop the baby.

"He's so tiny... and soft," she murmured, wonder flickering in her eyes. Her friends weren't married or had children yet, so this was her first time holding a baby.

Selena, cradling Joy, came closer and asked, "Want to hold her too?"

Jolie looked at Joy, her heart melting at the sight of the chubby, rosy-cheeked little girl. Without hesitation, she reached out to take her.

Watching from the side, Selena

remarked, "These two are usually fussy about who holds them, except for people they're close to. If they let you hold them, it means they like you."

Jolie smiled warmly. "I like them too."

Aveline observed the interaction with a quiet smile, noting the way the distance between Jolie and Selena seemed to shrink as they spoke. Breaking the moment, Aveline asked, "Miss Quin, what do you do for work?"

"I'm a freelancer," Jolie replied. "Right now, I'm into photography."

Aveline nodded thoughtfully. "That sounds so liberating. I can't help but envy it a bit."

Jolie chuckled lightly. "When your body feels confined, the only thing you can do is set your soul free."

Selena's expression shifted slightly. After a pause, she asked, "What's that supposed to mean?"

Jolie turned to her, her gaze calm and steady. "Selena, I wish I could be more like you."

She didn't answer calls, ignored nagging voices, and refused to accept the arrangements laid out for her.

But Jolie couldn't do that. She'd been pampered and given the best of everything growing up. Now, it was her turn to repay those efforts. Selena frowned. "I have no idea what you're talking about."

She moved over and took Joy back into her arms.

Jolie sank back into the sofa, a faint smile lingering on her lips, saying nothing more.

Chapter 1053

After the two little ones fell asleep, the nanny carried them back to their room.

Aveline stood up and said, "I've been working on some sketches lately. You two chat. I just had a spark of inspiration and need to put it down before I lose it." Selena immediately made a show of trying to stop her from leaving, but Aveline only smiled faintly, giving her a meaningful look as if to say, "Take care of Jolie." Selena was left speechless.

She suddenly regretted bringing Jolie here.

What on earth had possessed her to do that? Was she out of her mind?

Aveline had already gone upstairs, and now Selena couldn't just get up and leave. Glancing at Jolie, she asked, "Want to watch TV?"

Instead of answering, Jolie asked, "Why did you bring me here, Selena?"

Selena fell silent.

Her irritation spiked.

Why did everything have to be spelled out? Why couldn't people just let things be?

With a grumble, she snapped, "You probably think I've lost my mind, don't you?"

Jolie chuckled softly. "If that's the case, I hope you keep losing your mind more often."

Selena was speechless.

She stared blankly at the wall, her face utterly devoid of expression.

Jolie stood up, her tone calm but decisive. "I know you don't like me and would rather not see me. But the fact that you brought me here... it meant a lot. Thank you. I'll head out now and stop bothering you." "Stop."

The word left Selena's lips instinctively, cutting Jolie off before she could leave.

Jolie turned to her, confusion evident in her eyes, as if silently asking. "You don't even like me why stop me from leaving?"

Selena glanced at her briefly before looking away and saying, "The security cameras clearly caught you leaving with me. If you leave now and something happens, it's on me. So, no, you're not going anywhere." Jolie blinked.

That reasoning... felt awfully flimsy.

Seeing that she still seemed inclined to leave, Selena frowned and added, "You're already here. What's the rush?"

Jolie hesitated, then nodded. "Alright, I'll stay."

She sat back down on the couch.

Selena grabbed a cushion and hugged it, falling silent.

Jolie busied herself with her phone. Neither of them said a word and the atmosphere grew awkwardly tense.

After a while, Jolie broke the silence. "If you don't want to go home, then don't."



Selena didn't respond.

Jolie continued as if speaking to herself. "To them, making a profit is always the priority. Even after all these years of being doted on, I still can't escape that reality."

Selena let out a faint scoff. "You're important to them. They'd never use you as a bargaining chip."

"Why wouldn't they?" Jolie said with

a wry smile. The only reason they haven't is because none of the offers interested them before. But now, they've found someone they deem worthy, and suddenly, have a role to play."

Selena turned to her, narrowing her eyes. "Who do they want you to marry?"

Jolie's lips curved into a bitter smile. "Gavin Cooper."

Selena scoffed. "They've got some nerve dreaming that up."

Jolie shrugged. "Who doesn't, right?"

After a brief pause, Selena said, "You could always choose to leave."

Jolie shook her head, her voice calm

but resolute. I don't have that

option. I've benefited from

everything the Quin family has provided me. It's only fair that I do

what's best for them in

return."

She looked at Selena, a flicker of longing in her eyes. "That's why I envy you so much. You're free, unrestrained by any of this."

Her gaze lowered, and she didn't continue.

If she had the choice, she would've gladly traded places with the one who wasn't loved, the one left overlooked.

But fate rarely grants wishes-it only offers the opposite.

Selena frowned, watching her for a moment before saying, "Let's not compare ourselves. If you're bored, watch TV. I'm going to rest for a bit." With that, she stood up and left the room.

Chapter 1054

After Selena finished speaking, she got up and left the living room.

Jolie watched her retreating figure, her lips pressing together lightly. Did Selena really dislike her that much?

If so, what was the point of staying here?

After a moment of thought, Jolie stood and left.

A housekeeper noticed her leaving and quickly informed Selena.

Selena remained silent for a moment after hearing the news, then walked to the window on the second floor, watching as Jolie left.

Her silhouette, so slender and delicate, inexplicably carried a trace of loneliness.

"Since you brought her back, why not at least let her stay for dinner?" Aveline appeared beside her, also gazing at Jolie's fading figure.

Selena sighed lightly. "Ave, I just can't bring myself to talk to her calmly."

"That's understandable," Aveline replied softly.

Selena leaned against her, exhaling slowly. "It's like I can't let go of the things that happened in the past, even though I know none of it was her fault."

Aveline gently rubbed her arm. "Take your time. The fact that you brought her here today is already a big step. There's no need to rush. You've got plenty of time."

"Mm," Selena murmured.

Later that evening.

Jolie didn't go home.

Instead, she went to a bar where a friend was celebrating their birthday. The group was already deep into the party spirit, and at some point, they started playing a game of Truth or Dare. When it was Jolie's turn, she chose Dare.

Her friend immediately grinned mischievously. "Okay, here's the dare: you have to ask the next man who walks through that door for his belt." "Wow!"

The group erupted with laughter and cheers at the outrageous challenge.

"Our Jolie has never made the first move with a guy. Are you trying to drag her off her pedestal?" someone teased.

"Exactly! She's never done anything like this before, which is why it's the perfect challenge. It's got to be fun!" "Go for it, Jolie!"

The crowd's cheers grew louder, and with the atmosphere reaching its peak, Jolie knew she couldn't back out now.

Taking a deep breath, she got up and walked toward the entrance, her nerves tightening as she scanned the people walking in. She had never done anything like this before.

The Quin family would never allow her to do something so outrageous.

But tonight, just for once, she wanted to let go.

The seconds ticked by, and the first to enter were two young women. Behind her, her friends were still laughing and egging her on. Jolie grabbed her drink and took a sip, trying to calm her nerves.

And then, a man stepped inside.

He was tall, dressed in a sharp black suit that fit him perfectly. Even the tie and collar were meticulously neat. His entire demeanor exuded a composed, restrained elegance with an undercurrent of cold detachment.

It was him.

Jolie's heart skipped. Her eyes flickered briefly as she instinctively wanted to pretend she hadn't noticed.

"Jolie!"

Her friends weren't about to let her off that easily, their cheers growing more enthusiastic, leaving her no room to hide.

She exhaled slowly, steeling herself before walking toward Gavin.

He stood near the entrance, one hand holding his phone as he skimmed through messages. He didn't even look up as someone blocked his path, his voice low and commanding.

"Move aside."

"Mr. Cooper."

A familiar voice broke through the noise. Gavin looked up to find Jolie standing in front of him, a soft smile gracing her beautiful face.

He slid his phone into his pocket, his eyes unreadable, a shadow of something unspoken flickering within them.

Jolie's voice was calm yet tinged with nervousness. "Can I borrow your belt for a moment?"

For a second, Gavin thought he'd

misheard her. But then his gaze shifted, catching sight of the rowdy crowd in the distance, some of them snapping pictures and clearly enjoying the spectacle. He pieced it together—she must've lost a game and was fulfilling a dare.

An unsettling thought crossed his mind.

Would she have approached any random man who walked through the door?

His expression darkened, and the temperature around him seemed to drop. His eyes locked onto hers, the weight of his gaze pressing down like a tangible force.

Jolie noticed his silence and the way

the air seemed to chill. Realizing he probably didn't want to play along, she decided to abandon the dare and

save herself the awkwardness. She'd just go back and down a drink instead.

As she turned to leave, his deep voice cut through the tension.

"If you want it," he said, his tone cool and deliberate, "take it yourself."

Chapter 1055

Jolie stared at Gavin in surprise. Under the flickering lights, his features were sharp and defined, his deep, dark eyes fixed on her without wavering. She had to take it herself?

She thought she must've misheard him.

But before she could process his words further, the sounds of her friends cheering in the background reached her ears. The corners of her lips curved slightly, and she took a step forward. "Thank you, Mr. Cooper."

Her slender, delicate fingers reached for the cool metal of his belt buckle. She fumbled, unfamiliar with how to undo it. After all, this wasn't something she had experience with. The situation was undeniably awkward.

The proximity between them was far too close. Gavin's intense gaze bore into her, radiating an inexplicable pressure that made her palms sweat.

Why was this thing so hard to figure out?

Just as her frustration peaked, his fingers suddenly covered hers. Guiding her hand, he directed her to the right spot on the buckle and pressed gently. With a soft click, the belt released.

But Gavin didn't let go of her hand. Instead, he held it firmly, moving it to grasp the top of the belt, then helped her slide it out inch by inch.

The entire process felt excruciatingly slow.

The space between them seemed to shrink even more, their breaths mingling in the dim light. His unwavering gaze remained locked on her face, and his warm hand never left hers. Jolie's breathing became unsteady. Her lashes trembled, and her fingers curled slightly under his touch. She glanced up at him, her heart pounding chaotically in her chest. Before she could say anything, his phone rang, breaking the tension.

Holding his phone in his other hand, Gavin answered, his voice steady and low. "Yes?"

Yet his eyes stayed on her.

"Alright. I'll be there shortly."

With that, he ended the call and finally released her hand.

"Keep it safe for me. I'll come back for it," he said, his voice deep and resonant.

Then, without waiting for a response, he brushed past her and headed upstairs toward one of the private rooms.

It felt like a gust of wind had swept through, disrupting the calm surface of Jolie's heart, leaving ripples in its wake.

She tightened her grip on the belt, lowering her gaze as she tried to steady her breath.

Her heartbeat was completely out of rhythm.

Jolie, what are you standing there for?"

A friend came over, giving her a light pat on the shoulder, snapping her back to reality.

Jolie blinked, shaking off her daze.

"Nothing," she said casually before turning to walk back.

Her friend trailed behind, her tone teasing and full of curiosity. "Wow, you nailed it! I saw everything. That guy is a total catch-broad shoulders, long legs, the whole package. He even looked a little

familiar, but I can't quite place where I've seen him before."

She continued musing aloud, trying to recall the man's face.

Jolie, now seated on the couch, held up the belt and announced with a playful smile, "Done. Your turn."

The smile she wore was dazzling yet laced with mischief, the kind that warned she was ready to dominate the game.

The party carried on until the early hours of the morning.

Jolie had a few drinks, her cheeks glowing with a faint blush that only accentuated her allure. Her entire demeanor was intoxicating-her hazy, smiling eyes held a magnetic charm that made anyone near her

feet weak in the knees.

A friend slung an arm around her shoulder. "How are you getting home? Want me to have someone drive you?"

Several people immediately perked up at the suggestion. After all, Jolie was stunning, and many were eager for the chance to get closer to her, hoping for something more.

Jolie shook her head, a hint of a tipsy giggle escaping her lips.

"I've already called a ride," she said, letting out a soft hiccup.

"Alright, then. We'll leave you to it," her friend said, letting go of her and heading to their own car.

One by one, the group began to

disperse. Before long, Jolie was left standing alone under the dim glow

of the streetlights, the city's distant hum wrapping around her in the quiet night.

Chapter 1056



The night breeze carried a faint chill, prompting Jolie to rub her arms as she glanced at the app to check on her ride. She had indulged in a few drinks tonight. Otherwise, she would have driven herself home.

Just then, a sleek black SUV pulled up in front of her. The tinted window rolled down, revealing a chiseled, serious face. ""Mr. Cooper," Jolie greeted with a polite smile when she saw him.

Gavin rested one hand casually on the steering wheel, his deep gaze briefly sweeping over her. "Get in."

What?

Was he offering to give her a ride?

Jolie hesitated, instinctively shaking her head. "There's no need, Mr. Cooper. I've already called a car."

Gavin's voice was calm but firm. "You still haven't returned my belt."

Oh. Right.

Jolie quickly fished the belt out of her bag, the black leather contrasting starkly against her fair hands. The striking visual caught Gavin's attention, and his gaze lingered on her fingers-slender and delicate, so pale they seemed almost fragile as if they might snap with the slightest pressure. His eyes drifted back to her face.

For a fleeting moment, a shadow of another figure-Selena-seemed to overlap with hers. But the vision disappeared as quickly as it came.

"Get in and give it to me," he said in a low voice, his tone leaving no room for argument. He turned his gaze away, waiting.

Jolie wasn't sure what he was thinking or why he insisted she get in the car.

Couldn't he see she was trying to keep her distance?

With a quiet sigh, she relented. Walking around to the front of the vehicle, she opened the passenger door and climbed in.

Once seated, she handed the belt over with a polite smile. "Thank you for your help tonight, Mr. Cooper."

Gavin took the belt without a word and casually tossed it onto the back seat before locking the doors.

"Where to?" he asked.

Jolie hesitated for a moment. At this point, refusing again would seem unnecessarily pretentious. Resigning herself, she gave him the address of a small apartment complex she occasionally stayed at.

The car started, smoothly merging

into the quiet night. Jolie turned her head to gaze out the window. Her cheeks still carried a faint blush, and the motion of the car combined with the tranquil atmosphere made her feet drowsy.

Gradually, the tension left her body, and before long, her eyelids grew heavy, and she drifted off to sleep.

The soft patter of rain woke her. She opened her eyes slowly, blinking at the droplets streaking down the window, blurring the view outside.

Startled, she quickly turned to the driver's seat.

Gavin was reclined in his chair, his eyes closed, completely still. The car's interior was dark except for the faint glow of streetlights streaming in through the rain-slicked windows.

His profile was strikingly sharp-high

cheekbones, a strong jawline, and a nose that cast a defined shadow in the dim light. His lips were faintly pressed together, and his prominent Adam's apple added a rugged touch to his otherwise composed demeanor. The aura he exuded was cold, distant, and commanding, even while he was resting.

Unbidden, a memory surfaced in Jolie's mind, a recollection of the intense moments she had spent with him before.

He was, indeed, as stoic and

unyielding as he appeared, utterly uncompromising in his dominance. He had left no room for her to have her own thoughts, asserting his

control with relentless

determination.

A flush crept up her face at the memory. She quickly turned her gaze away, scolding herself for letting her mind wander.

That day had been an accident. Just a one-time mistake...

"Mr. Cooper," she called softly, her voice breaking the silence.

There was no response.

She called out a little louder, "Mr. Cooper?"

Still nothing.

Was he really sleeping that deeply, even in the car?

Jolie frowned and glanced at him curiously but decided not to disturb him further. They had already arrived at the entrance of her apartment complex.

Leaning forward, she searched for the lock release on the console. But the controls were hard to see in the dark, and she fumbled around blindly, relying on touch to locate the switch. However, her hand landed squarely on his thigh.

Chapter 1057

Jolie jerked her hand back instinctively, but before she could fully retreat, her wrist was firmly caught in a hot, unyielding grip.

Startled, she looked up and found Gavin awake, his dark, piercing gaze locked onto hers. She hadn't even noticed when he'd opened his eyes, but now he was staring at her with an intensity that made her skin prickle. ""Mr. Cooper, you're awake?"

Forcing a stiff smile, she tried to play it off casually, her tone light but betraying her unease.

"What were you doing?" His voice was deep, steady, and laced with suspicion as his sharp eyes bore into her.

"I saw you were asleep and thought I'd just let myself out to head home," she explained quickly. "I didn't mean to touch you. It was an accident. My apologies."

Her flustered tone melted into something more composed, her lips curling into a picture-perfect smile. The shift was almost seamless like a sly little fox slipping its mask back on. One moment she was frazzled; the next, she was polite and poised, as though nothing had happened.

Gavin didn't let go of her wrist.

In the dim light, it was hard to read his expression, but his grip remained firm.

"I brought you back here, and you were just going to leave without a word?"

Jolie blinked, caught off guard by his question.

What was that supposed to mean?

Was he upset?

Her fingers curled slightly, and she struggled to explain, "I... I did call your name, but you didn't wake up."

"So now you're blaming me?"

Jolie was speechless.

The weight of his presence seemed to intensify, pressing down on her. Her wrist remained in his grasp, and the awkward angle was beginning to make her uncomfortable.

"Mr. Cooper, that wasn't my intention," she said, her tone softer now, hoping to defuse whatever had upset him. "I just didn't want to disturb you, so—"

"But you did disturb me," he interrupted, his voice cold and devoid of emotion.

Jolie froze, unsure how to respond. His unwavering gaze made her feel like she was being pinned in place, and the tension in the small space was suffocating. Jolie felt like he was deliberately picking a fight.

What was his problem?

Confused, she looked into his eyes, hoping to find some clue to his mood, but all she saw was an impenetrable darkness. His emotions were completely unreadable. He was unfathomable—clearly not someone she could match wits with.

He was unlike any man she'd ever encountered before.

Cold, serious, and undeniably attractive.

At first glance, his detached demeanor might draw people in, but up close, he was rigid and devoid of charm.

He was distant and uptight.

But now, he was shattering that initial impression.

He was still cold, but not at all uptight.

Instead, he was unreasonably gripping her wrist, pressing her with questions that left her no room to retreat.

Jolie felt herself nearing her limit. She tried to pull her wrist free and said, "Mr. Cooper, could you... let go of me?"

Gavin didn't budge. Instead, his tone

took

na hint of mockery."

If I let you go

run away?"

you

What?

Jolie's face filled with disbelief.

What did he just say?

She was up to no good?

That was impossible! She had no interest in men like him!

"Mr. Cooper, you've misunderstood me. I wasn't," she said, her forced smile slipping as frustration seeped into her expression. She was on the verge of losing her composure.

Gavin studied her silently, his eyes narrowing slightly as he caught the flicker of impatience in hers. His gaze deepened before he finally released her wrist.

Freed at last, Jolie immediately sat upright, rubbing her wrist as she regained her composure.

"Thank you for giving me a ride, Mr. Cooper," she said, her tone polite but distant. "It's late-drive safely."

With that, she reached for the door handle, ready to leave.

But the door didn't unlock.

Jolie paused, confusion flickering across her face as she turned to look at him.

Gavin's voice broke the silence, calm and deliberate. "I brought you back. Aren't you going to invite me up for a cup of tea?" What?

Surprise flashed in Jolie's eyes.

For a moment, she genuinely wanted to ask him if he realized what time it was.

It was late-far too late for such a request to make any sense. Was he serious?

But she only dared to complain inwardly. After all, he had gone out of his way to bring her home.

She hesitated for a moment before finally asking, "Would you like to come up for a cup of tea?"

Chapter 1058

"Alright," Gavin agreed without hesitation.

Jolie fell silent.

She led the way out of the car, her expression less than pleased. This wasn't how the night was supposed to go.

She and Gavin were from two entirely different worlds, and there was no reason for their paths to cross like this. Where had things gone wrong?

As they walked, an image flashed through her mind-Gavin's gaze when he looked at Selena. At that moment, her eyes grew colder.

Her apartment was on the 17th floor. At this late hour, the elevator was empty, leaving just the two of them.

Jolie stood in front, the reflective elevator walls showing Gavin's sharp, handsome features. He kept his gaze lowered, his face expressionless.

Ding!

The elevator doors opened, and Jolie stepped out first, entering her apartment by scanning her fingerprint.

She opened the door and retrieved a pair of men's slippers from the shoe cabinet, placing them in front of him.

"Please, Mr. Cooper."

Gavin's gaze flickered briefly over the shoe cabinet. Alongside the men's slippers were men's dress shoes and sneakers.

After switching into the slippers, he asked casually, "Do you have a boyfriend?"

Jolie shook her head. "No."



His eyes lingered on her for a moment, but he said nothing further.

Jolie didn't feel the need to explain herself, either.

In her mind, she began to piece together why he was acting so strangely. If her suspicion was correct, this situation was going to become... messy. Turning away, she grabbed a cup and set the water to boil. When she glanced back, she found Gavin standing silently in the living room.

Her apartment was a spacious

single-floor unit,

unit, spanning 200

square meters. Normally, the space felt a bit empty with just her there. But with him standing quietly in the center, it no longer felt that way—he seemed to fill the room with his presence alone.

"Please, take a seat. It'll just be a moment," Jolie said as she walked over.

"Alright," Gavin replied, his deep voice calm as he took a seat on the sofa.

The apartment was decorated in a style that reflected Jolie's personal taste—simple and rustic, with bright, warm tones that exuded a sense of comfort and charm.

After retreating to her bedroom for a shower, she changed into a fresh set of clothes. When she came back out, the water had already boiled, but instead of making tea, she walked straight to Gavin. Leaning over him, one hand resting on the back of the sofa, she brought herself close, her presence enveloping him with a soft, fragrant warmth.

Gavin looked up, his calm gaze meeting her face, now just inches away.

He remained still, his expression unreadable, as her eyes flicked down to his lips, then to his nose, before finally locking with his own.

"Mr. Cooper," she said boldly, her voice soft but teasing, "it's late. Are you planning to stay the night?"

Jolie had never said anything so forward before. But to test her suspicions, she didn't mind stepping out of her comfort zone just this once.

Fresh from her shower, her skin glowed faintly, and the lingering warmth of the steam gave her cheeks a soft flush. Her captivating eyes sparkled with mischief, her lips

curving into the faintest hint of a playful smile. She looked every bit like a mischievous little

fox-beautiful and daring.

"You're inviting me," he said evenly, his deep voice steady, though he made no move.

Jolie's confidence began to waver. The sheer weight of his gaze and the shame of her own actions were enough to make her second-guess herself. She wasn't cut out for seduction.

Her lashes trembled, her hesitation betraying her inner turmoil. Should she push a little further? What if she had misunderstood his intentions all along?

Her eyes flickered, and with a quick motion, she straightened up, pulling away to reestablish some distance. "I was just asking if you wanted to stay, Mr. Cooper. It's late, after all. I didn't mean anything else."

Without waiting for a response, she turned toward the kitchen to make him tea.

But before she could take a step, a firm hand gripped her wrist, yanking her back with surprising force.

The next thing she knew, she had fallen into his lap, his strong arms holding her firmly in place.

Chapter 1059

Jolie let out a startled gasp, her wide eyes meeting Gavin's as her body stiffened. Perched awkwardly on his lap, she didn't dare move.

"But you took a shower, got so close to me, and then asked if I wanted to stay. If that's not an invitation, then what is it?"

His voice was low and deliberate as his strong arm wrapped around her slender waist, holding her firmly in place. His dark eyes locked onto hers, catching the panic flashing through them.

Jolie's breath hitched, her lips trembling slightly, as though even her soft, petal-like lips were reacting to his words. Her hands instinctively grabbed his arm, feeling the solid, defined muscles beneath her fingers—a testament to years of disciplined fitness. "Mr. Cooper, I..." she began, but before she could finish, his hand tipped her chin up, and his lips captured hers.

Her eyes widened in shock, and she instinctively tried to pull away, but his grip was unrelenting.

The kiss was searing, his breath hot and consuming as he dominated her lips. His intensity left her gasping for air as he claimed every corner of her sweetness.

"Mm!"

It wasn't a kiss of finesse but one of raw possession, clumsy yet overpowering. The roughness made her uncomfortable, her body twisting in protest.

"What are you squirming for?" Gavin growled, his breath heavy as he shifted, pinning her down on the sofa. His broad chest loomed over her, amplifying her smallness and fragility beneath him.

Jolie's breath came in shallow, uneven gasps. Her lashes fluttered as she whispered, "Mr. Cooper, why are you doing this?"

She looked up, her gaze searching his, desperate for answers.

"Is it because, when you look at me, you see someone else's face?" she asked, her voice trembling but firm as she voiced the doubt that had been gnawing at her.

The tension in the room shifted instantly. The intimate atmosphere deflated like a balloon pricked and slowly losing air.

Gavin's expression darkened further as he stared into her eyes, his own holding a storm of emotions.

"So, this," he said slowly, his voice a notch deeper, "was all to test me?"

They were both intelligent people her single question was enough for Gavin to grasp her intent.

Having her thoughts exposed, Jolie felt a flicker of embarrassment but didn't shy away.

Instead, she lifted her chin slightly and said, "That's right, Mr. Cooper. I know you like Selena. But she's her and I'm me. I won't be anyone's substitute. If you think you can't have her and want to find some resemblance in me, you're mistaken. I won't play along."

With that, she pushed against his chest, trying to get up.

But his body was too heavy, and after their earlier struggle, she found herself too drained to make much effort. Her attempt to shove him barely budged him. Frustrated, she glanced up at him, her eyes now flashing with irritation.

Gavin stared at her coldly, his voice

low and firm. "Miss Quin, you're the one who tempted me, and

want to pin this on me? I can you

accept that."

"What?"

Jolie's eyes widened in disbelief at his audacious claim.

Gavin's hand slid to her waist, this time directly against her bare skin. His fingers brushed over her softness, sending a wave of heat through her.

"I'm just a normal man," he said, his

voice calm but cutting. "You started by boldly asking me for my belt.

Then you touched my thigh. After et

that, you let me, a stranger, into your home took a shower, and got so close to me I could feel your breath. What was I supposed to think?"

Each word was sharp and deliberate, painting a picture where all the blame landed squarely on her.

No.

In his eyes, this entire series of events was her calculated attempt to seduce him.

Chapter 1060

"You..."

Jolie was stunned, completely taken aback that her unintentional actions had been twisted into something so outrageous by him.

"No, that's not true! I wasn't..." She shook her head furiously, desperately denying the accusations.

Gavin's eyes bore into hers, his gaze intense and unreadable. His large hand still rested on her bare waist, the occasional movement of his fingers causing her body to tense.

The unfamiliar sensation sent a strange shiver through her an unfamiliar and unnerving response. She tried her best to suppress the fluttering feeling, remaining perfectly still, afraid to make any sudden moves.

His voice, calm and detached, broke the silence. "If that's the case, why did you say those things? Weren't you testing whether I see you as Selena's substitute?"

Jolie froze.

Her thoughts, her intentions-everything had been laid bare. The stark embarrassment of having her ploy exposed washed over her like a tidal wave.

She wasn't a match for him. That much was painfully clear.

But what could she do now? How could she salvage the situation?

Her startled, flustered expression didn't escape Gavin's notice. His arm tightened around her, pulling her closer against him. His sharp nose brushed against hers, their breaths mingling in the narrowing space between them. Pinned beneath him, Jolie found herself utterly at his mercy. His sudden closeness left her completely powerless.

"Wait! Just wait a second!" she blurted, her voice trembling as her chest rose and fell rapidly. The softness of her body pressed against the hard contours of his, and the overwhelming pressure of his presence made her heart race. "I'll admit it-I was testing you," she confessed hurriedly, her voice tinged with desperation.

"I can't stand the thought of being treated as someone else's substitute. I'm Jolie Quin, and no one else. But that was only after we got inside those other things you mentioned weren't intentional. You misunderstood me, please don't think of me that way!" Her eyes, wide with urgency, brimmed with sincerity as she pleaded with him to believe her. She couldn't bear this kind of misunderstanding.

She wasn't trying to seduce him-far from it!

But Gavin's attention had shifted entirely. His gaze had fallen to her lips-soft, plump, and inviting, like a flower in full bloom or a ripe cherry ready to be plucked. Whatever she said, it was clear he wasn't listening.

He spoke in a low, steady voice, "What's the difference between seducing once or multiple times?"

"I..."

Jolie opened her mouth to argue, but before she could say another word, his lips claimed hers once more.

This time, his kiss was deeper, more commanding, his breath overpowering as he seized every ounce of her sweetness, pulling her entirely into his rhythm.

His hand roamed over her delicate skin, feeling the shivers coursing through her. Even her softness seemed to tremble under his touch. "No..."

Jolie tried to protest, desperately searching for a moment to speak, but each attempt was silenced as his lips crushed hers again.

It was infuriating.

He was dominating.

He left her no space to catch her breath, no room to resist.

This total loss of control, this feeling of being utterly at someone else's mercy, was something she loathed.

Gasping for air, Jolie struggled against him, her hands clawing at his chest and shoulders in defiance.

Feeling frustrated, she even tried to bite him, aiming for the tip of his tongue.

But Gavin didn't stop her.

Instead, he let her flail against him,

her struggles only fueling his resolve. Before she could carry out

her defiant act, he tightened his hold,

deepening the kiss, his dominance

pushing her further under his

control.

Jolie felt like her entire world was spinning. Everything else seemed to fade away, leaving only the overwhelming sensation of his aggressive presence surrounding her.

Finally, after what felt like an

eternity, she flinched as his touch

became more heated, sending a jolt

through her. Her body instinctively recoiled, and she gasped, "Neno... stop..."

Gavin's temple visibly tensed, the veins at his forehead faintly pulsing. His eyes were heavy with intensity a thick haze of desire swirling in their depths as his hands gripped her waist with unmistakable intent.