

## Divorced Me 1121

### Chapter 1121

Jolie opened the door and asked curiously, "When did you leave?"

Gavin replied, "I live upstairs. I just went back to take a shower."

He had also changed into a simple set of loungewear-a white T-shirt-that made him look several years younger. Jolie's gaze lingered on him briefly before she quickly looked away and shut the door.

She headed straight to the bedroom, but Gavin watched her and asked, "Why aren't you going to the master bedroom?"

Without turning back, Jolie replied, "I don't want to end up having to change the sheets later. It's exhausting."

She was well aware of his tendencies. Once things started, they wouldn't stop until everything was a complete mess.

She cleverly opted for the guest room, figuring she could clean up after a good night's sleep.

However, Gavin said, "But I want to be in the master bedroom."

Jolie immediately frowned and turned back to glare at him. "Gavin, do you always have to be so demanding? This is my house!" Gavin looked at her calmly. "If you're not okay with it, we can go to my place."

After a pause, he added, "It's not far. Just upstairs."

Jolie was speechless. She was utterly defeated.

"Fine, let's go to your place!"

She spun around and stomped toward the door, her face puffed with annoyance.

Gavin's lips curved into a faint smile, though the expression vanished just as quickly as it appeared.

Once they got into the elevator, Jolie began to regret her decision. Why had she suggested going to his place?

Wasn't this akin to walking right into a lion's den?

But there was no time to overthink it. His place was just upstairs, barely ten minutes away.

Gavin stepped out of the elevator first, opened the door, and turned to look at her.

Jolie's long lashes fluttered slightly. Avoiding his gaze, she walked past him into the apartment.

The room was dimly lit with only a few lights on. She didn't bother to take in her surroundings, her only thought being to start quickly and finish even faster.

The sound of the door closing behind her made her tense up instinctively.

A moment later, Gavin scooped her up in his arms.

Jolie let out a startled cry, her hands reflexively wrapping around his neck, afraid of falling.

But there was no chance of that. His arms were strong and steady, holding her effortlessly.

Despite their many close

encounters, Jolie couldn't help but feel shy. She glanced up at him hurriedly. His sharp jawline, lightly pressed pale pink lips, and the kissable shape of his mouth all made her heart race.

When he kissed her, the desire in his eyes was always overwhelming, impossible to resist.

A faint blush spread across Jolie's fair cheeks.

Gavin carried her into the master bedroom. The decor was minimalist, the color palette dark and subdued, with no unnecessary ornaments.

On the deep gray bed, Jolie's figure stood out vividly against the monochromatic background.

Initially, Gavin had no particular thoughts, but seeing her shy and innocent expression, he quickly abandoned any restraint.

Tilting her chin upward, he leaned down and kissed her without hesitation.

Jolie's lashes fluttered slightly, and then she wrapped her arms around him, responding to his kiss.

The atmosphere grew heated in an instant. It had been over a month since their last encounter, and both were a little unfamiliar with each other's touch.

Gavin's fingers trailed over her back, stopping when he felt a series of scars. Without a word, he flipped her over.

"Don't look..."

Jolie instinctively tried to squirm away, not wanting him to see.

But Gavin held her firmly in place, stopping her from moving. Under the soft light, the whip marks on her smooth, pale back became all too clear. Even after a month, the scars remained, crisscrossing her delicate skin.

Chapter 1122

Gavin's expression darkened instantly. His fingers traced over the scars, and suddenly, he leaned down, pressing gentle kisses along each one. Jolie froze in shock.

Her face showed disbelief as she tried to turn her head to look at him, but he held her down, making it impossible for her to move.

How could he kiss such ugly scars?

How could he bear to do it?

Wasn't his willingness to be with her because of her beauty?

At that moment, her understanding of him wavered.

As his kisses continued, her body trembled lightly.

Biting her finger to stifle her emotions, Jolie felt her breath quicken. His touch was feather-light, sweeping over every inch of her back like a soft breeze, making her unable to handle the tenderness.

Gavin's actions were filled with care, his movements unhurried, and he seemed intent on ensuring her comfort. Watching her expression shift into pleasure time and again filled him with a profound sense of satisfaction. As the night deepened, their breaths intertwined, becoming one.

Later, Jolie drifted into unconsciousness, her mind floating like waves at sea. She didn't even know when it had all ended. All she remembered was the warmth of his embrace, a warmth that she found herself reluctant to part with.

...

The next morning.

When Jolie opened her eyes, she stared at the unfamiliar surroundings, momentarily disoriented.

She had spent another night at his place and planned to go back home after everything was over.

Turning over, she noticed how refreshed she felt, a clear sign that he had bathed her afterward.

She sat up, and the blanket slipped down, revealing her bare skin. Her fair complexion was marked with faint traces of intimacy, scattered like whispers of the night before.

By the bedside, a neatly folded set of clothes awaited her. She picked them up and quickly got dressed.

Stepping out of the room, she saw Gavin standing by the floor-to-ceiling window, speaking on the phone. One hand rested on his hip, his broad shoulders, narrow waist, and long legs forming a striking silhouette. His voice was calm and steady, carrying a cold detachment.

The sunlight poured over him, making his presence inexplicably dazzling.

Jolie's heart skipped a beat uncontrollably. She quickly averted her gaze, forcing herself to calm down.

He wasn't her type.

So, she needed to stay composed.

"Awake?"

Gavin hung up the phone, turned around, and walked straight toward her.

Jolie nodded. "I'll head back now."

"Have breakfast before you leave," Gavin said.

She was about to refuse, but her stomach let out a perfectly timed growl, betraying her hunger.

Taking the opportunity, she nodded. "Alright."

Gavin tied on an apron and began boiling water to make noodles.

Jolie sat

watching the dining table,

his back. Unable to

out her phone and

resist,

snapped a photo of him, et

When she looked at the picture, she froze, unsure why she had taken it.

Still, she didn't delete it.

Setting the phone aside, she rested her chin on her hand and continued watching him cook.

He moved with an effortless

precision his gestures simple and clean, his expression focused yet detached, as though nothing could stir his emotions.

No, that wasn't entirely true.

In bed, his emotions had been anything but calm. They were intense and layered, impossible to ignore.

Jolie's cheeks flushed at the memory, and she quickly lowered her gaze, fiddling with her phone to distract herself.

In less than ten minutes, the pasta

was ready. As the plate was placed in front of her, Jolie blinked in surprise. Why did this look exactly like the plain pasta she had made for him last night? en

"Give it a try," Gavin said. "First time making something so simple and bland."

Jolie was speechless.

She strongly suspected he was mocking her!

How infuriating!

Annoyed, she wanted to snap back, but hunger won out. Picking up her utensils, she reluctantly took a bite. Then... she couldn't stay mad.

It was delicious!

Way better than what she had cooked!

Chapter 1123

Jolie took a bite of the noodles and then looked over at Gavin.

"What is it?" Gavin asked in a calm tone, meeting her gaze.

Setting her utensils down, Jolie stared at him earnestly. "Tell me, how did you make this? Can you teach me?"

The same pasta, the same vegetables, the same seasoning-how could it taste so much better when he made it?

How on earth did he do it?

She was dying to know!

"No," Gavin replied bluntly.

Jolie's expression almost crumbled.

Grabbing his arm, she began to shake it lightly. "Come on, teach me! I'm willing to pay tuition. This is really so good! Teach me, won't you?"

She was trying to coax him.

Gavin glanced at her small hands resting on his arm.

In the past, she was always polite and reserved around him, maintaining a calm and composed demeanor. But now, she had dropped the mask, gradually revealing more of her genuine emotions in front of him. And this playful, coaxing behavior? That was something reserved for those she felt close to.

The fact that she was acting this way with him-didn't it mean she now considered him someone important?

His mind raced with thoughts, but outwardly, he remained composed.

"No," he repeated.

Jolie pouted, withdrawing her hands as she returned to eating.

"Fine, don't teach me!" she muttered to herself. "Stingy man!"

Hmph!

Gavin watched her puffed-up cheeks with an amused look. In a calm voice, he said, "If you want to eat it again, you can come find me."

Jolie ignored him and focused on finishing her meal.

After finishing the entire plate of pasta, she wiped her mouth clean, got up, and left without saying another word.

Gavin raised an eyebrow slightly. She had quite the temper for such a petty matter, but he found it oddly endearing.

Back home, Jolie sat on the couch, still fuming. He wouldn't teach her and even had the nerve to say she could come to him if she wanted to eat again. Was he doing it on purpose?

But as she thought about it more, her anger faded.

Ahem...

Actually, this was a good excuse to interact with him.

She hadn't forgotten what Selena had told her.

The only problem was that she still hadn't figured out how to bring it up.

There were five chances left. She could take her time and think it through.

...

Selena occasionally sent updates, describing how the imposter overseas had narrowly avoided getting caught time and again. Each incident was a dangerously close call, leaving Jolie on edge with every new detail.

Jolie listened with her heart pounding in fear.

Three days later, Gavin knocked on her door again.

She stood at the doorway, looking at him. "The fifth time?"

Gavin's dark eyes locked onto hers. "Do you think I'm here just for those matters?"

Jolie blinked. "Aren't you?"

"Not entirely," Gavin replied.

Jolie let out a soft snort. "What is it this time?"

Gavin replied, "I had a scar removal cream custom-made for you. Come to my place, and I'll apply it for you."

Jolie extended her hand. "Just give it to me. I can apply it myself."

Gavin countered, "The scars are on your back. There are spots you can't reach. I'll help you."

"I can ask someone else to help me," Jolie said flatly.

Gavin's tone remained calm. "The cream is mine. Who applies it is my decision." Jolie frowned. "Aren't you giving it to me?"

"I had the cream specially made for you," Gavin said. "You haven't even said thank you, and you're so eager to distance yourself from me. Is that really appropriate?"

Jolie smirked. "Then I don't need it. Thanks for your kind offer, Mr. Cooper."

The two went back and forth, neither willing yield an inch. After

Ps remark, she moved to live

Chapter 1124

Gavin suddenly reached out, pressing his hand against the door, stopping her from closing it.

"Hmm?" Jolie looked at him suspiciously, unsure of his intentions.

His dark eyes bore into hers, studying her for a long moment before he finally spoke. "Jolie, you're really asking for it."

What?

Jolie's eyes widened in disbelief. "What did you just say?"

Was he threatening her? How ridiculous!

Aside from her parents, no one had ever dared talk to her like that.

Anger flared in her chest as she shoved at the door, wanting him out of her sight.

But Gavin easily pushed it open and stepped inside as though her resistance meant nothing.

"Hey! Get out! I don't want to see you right now!" Jolie snapped, her face turning frosty as she pointed toward the door. "Leave!"

Gavin ignored her entirely, strolling further into the room and dropping onto the sofa with an air of ownership.

"Go take a shower," he said, lifting his chin slightly, his tone leaving no room for negotiation.

Jolie's anger burned hotter. "Gavin! We have nothing to do with each other. Are you seriously ordering me around? Get out of here! This isn't your company, and I'm not one of your employees. You have no right to boss me around!" She was like a riled-up fox, her sharp claws fully on display as she glared at him with fiery defiance.

Gavin stared back at her, his gaze deep and unwavering. Loosening his tie, he seemed to be struggling to hold back his emotions.

"Jolie," he said, his voice colder now, laced with an edge that sent a chill through the air.

Jolie's lashes trembled inexplicably before she snapped, "Leave!"

She didn't care if she offended him-right now, she didn't want to see him at all.

He was arrogant, cold, and overbearing.

He acted like he ruled the world.

But this wasn't the Cooper Enterprises! She wasn't going to accept his orders here.

The tension in the living room was thick, the atmosphere taut with neither of them willing to back down.

Gavin had never imagined being defied like this. From a young age, he had lived a privileged life, and after taking over Cooper Enterprises, his decisions were rarely, if ever, opposed. Over time, this nurtured his commanding and authoritative demeanor. So, when it came to her, he instinctively issued orders.

Her refusal? It irked him. He wanted her compliance, almost as though it was a foregone conclusion.

But Jolie clearly wasn't the obedient type.

The more he pushed, the harder she pushed back.

Her defiance against her family's arrangements had already proven how stubborn she was to her core.

If this standoff continued, it would do neither of them any good..

Lowering his gaze in thought, Gavin paused before his tone softened unexpectedly. "Jolie, this cream is highly effective. It'll completely erase your scars in just a month."

Jolie had been bracing for an outburst, fully expecting him to lose his temper after she'd all but thrown him out without an ounce of respect.

Yet, to her surprise, he softened his tone instead.

And even went on to explain the benefits of the cream?

Her brows furrowed, her resolve

faltering. After a moment's hesitation, she asked cautiously, "How much does it cost? I'll buy it from you."

Gavin looked at her calmly. "Have you not tried buying anything recently?"

Jolie frowned. "What do you mean by that?"

"Your bank cards have been frozen," Gavin replied.

"What?" Jolie exclaimed in shock, quickly pulling out her wallet to check.

She tried making an online purchase but found that every attempt failed at the payment step.

Frustrated, she called her bank manager, only to be informed that all her cards had been frozen. Every single one of them.

How could this happen?

A wave of cold panic washed over her, leaving her hands and feet icy.

She immediately called Daisy.

"Hello, Jolie," her mother answered, her voice soft and gentle.

"Mom, why can't I use my cards?" Jolie asked, her tone tinged with urgency.

Daisy's reply was calm. "Well, since you decided to go abroad for further studies, it's only fitting that you experience independence in every aspect. I've already paid your tuition, but as for your living expenses, you'll need to manage those on your own. Jolie, when you make a decision, you have to take responsibility for it, don't you think?"

Chapter 1125

Jolie's entire body trembled as she listened to Daisy's words.

So, the punishment wasn't over.

They were trying to slowly break her spirit, forcing her to bow her head and yield to their will again.

Clenching the phone tightly in her hand, Jolie felt a surge of cold fury rise within her.

Daisy seemed to sense her daughter's emotional shift and softened her tone, letting out a small laugh.

"Jolie, you've always been such a good, obedient child. If you admit your mistake and behave, we'll let this go. Then you can come back home. Of course, if you want to stay abroad and enjoy yourself for a while, that's fine too. We'll reinstate your accounts." A slap on one cheek, and now they were dangling a sweet reward in front of her.

But whether she got that reward depended entirely on them and her obedience.

Ha!

Jolie let out a bitter laugh in her heart, one that quickly turned into self-mockery. Taking a deep breath, she said evenly, "Alright, I'll think about it."

Then, without waiting for a reply, she hung up the phone.

The next moment, she hurled the phone to the floor with all her strength and collapsed onto the ground herself, staring blankly ahead, her eyes devoid of focus. Gavin watched her silently. His

brow furrowed as he knelt down on one knee in front of her. Her pale face and hollow expression pierced something deep inside him.

In a low voice, he said, "Now do you understand? Everything you're doing is meaningless."

Jolie's voice was hoarse as she replied, "I just need some time alone."

Gavin knew she needed space to process her emotions, but instead of leaving, he said, "How about finding another way to let it out? I'm sure it'll be better than what you're doing now."

Jolie closed her eyes, her exhaustion palpable. "Sorry, I'm not in the mood."

Ignoring her dismissal, Gavin gripped her chin lightly, forcing her to look at him. His gaze locked on her lifeless eyes, and his breath caught for a moment. Then he said softly, "You'll think it through properly, won't you?" Jolie felt her emotions teetering on the edge of control.

Why wouldn't this infuriating man just leave?

What was he even rambling about?

She didn't want to hear it. Not a single word.

Jolie slapped Gavin's hand away, stood up, and walked straight into her bedroom without sparing him another glance.

Gavin's fingers flexed slightly before he straightened and left her apartment without a word.

The room fell into a heavy silence.

Jolie sat on the bedroom carpet, hugging her knees, staring blankly ahead.

She had thought what the Quin family did

before was already crit

enough. But now, she rea they

could go even further.

Cutting off her financial resources was their way of forcing her to yield.

And if she continued to resist, what would happen next?

She had once truly believed her parents' love for her was genuine and unconditional. How naive she had been. Everything came with a price.

Silent tears slipped down her cheeks, slow and soundless.

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The next morning.

Jolie stood outside Gavin's door at the crack of dawn. Taking a deep breath, she raised her hand to knock.

But before her knuckles met the door, it opened.

Gavin stood there, dressed in workout clothes, clearly ready for a morning run.

He paused when he saw her, his surprise evident for a brief moment.

Jolie's lashes quivered as she said softly, "Sorry, I hope I'm not disturbing you."

Gavin's

eyes studied her with

five-thirty in the morning. Did you stay up all night?"

file expression. "It's on

Jolie nodded. "I spent the whole night thinking."

Without another word, Gavin stepped aside, gesturing for her to come in.

Jolie walked inside and stood by the

door as Gavin opened a cabinet.

He

pulled out a pair of women's slippers

and

set them down.

Jolie glanced at them and recognized them immediately-they were the same ones she had worn the last time she was here.

Chapter 1126

Jolie's feet slipped into the perfectly fitting slippers, and she slowly stepped further into the apartment.

This time, she took a moment to glance around. Though she didn't inspect it thoroughly, she quickly noticed that the color scheme matched the master bedroom she'd been in before. The entire apartment, like Gavin himself, felt cold and uninviting.

Standing behind her, Gavin watched her nervous and uncertain demeanor. A sudden thought crossed his mind-confessions were something he should handle.

She was still a young woman, and she'd already rejected him once. It made sense that she'd find it hard to gather the courage to bring it up again.

Jolie was in the middle of mentally preparing herself, trying to work up the nerve, when a shadow appeared in front of her.

"Jolie."

His deep, resonant voice sounded from above her, drawing her gaze upward.

Caught off guard, she found herself locking eyes with him.

Gavin's handsome, chiseled face held a serious, almost solemn expression, as though he was about to deliver the evening news.

"It's been a long time," he began, his tone steady but earnest. "I thought I wouldn't feel this way about you anymore, but I was wrong. Those feelings haven't faded-they've only grown stronger. So, I want to ask you again: will you be with me?" Jolie froze.

Her eyes widened with disbelief.

He... was confessing again?

After how firmly she'd turned him down last time, he was confessing again?

A wave of emotions surged through her chest-complicated and unfamiliar, like faint flutter she couldn't quite identify.

But one thing was clear: he was serious. There wasn't the slightest hint of a joke in his expression.

Jolie opened her mouth, hesitated, and carefully considered her response before finally saying, "I've given it some thought. We do get along pretty well, and I think we could give it a try. But..."

Gavin wasn't in a hurry. He waited patiently, his gaze calm and steady. He could sense her hesitation and was willing to listen to her concerns, even her reservations.

Jolie lowered her eyes slightly and voiced her thoughts. "We could take it slow and see how things go. If we realize we're not right for each other, we can part ways peacefully. That's okay with you?"

"Alright," Gavin agreed without hesitation.

Though he didn't particularly like the idea of her mentioning a breakup before they'd even started, Gavin chose to respect her feelings.

Jolie, being new to relationships, was unsure how to proceed. After a moment's hesitation, she extended her hand. "Then... here's to a smooth partnership?"

Gavin grabbed her hand, but instead of shaking it, he pulled her closer in one swift motion. His clean, cedar-like scent enveloped her, catching her off guard. Jolie let out a small gasp, looking up at him in confusion. "What are you doing?"

"Have you completely cut ties with Ian?" he asked, his deep voice serious.

He would never tolerate being a third party in someone else's relationship.

Jolie blinked at his earnest expression and suddenly felt like teasing him. She sighed dramatically. "Oh no! I forgot about that. Hang on, let me go break up with him first..."

She turned as if to leave.

Gavin's eyes narrowed dangerously,

and he grabbed her wrist tightly, pulling her back. "Jolie, you haven't explained why you suddenly want to be with me. Does he know about this?"

The he in question was clearly Ian.

Seeing the growing intensity on his face, Jolie couldn't hold back her laughter any longer. She patted his chest lightly and said with a grin, "Relax. You're overthinking this."

As she spoke, her hand moved from his chest to his stomach, patting again. Predictably, her palm landed on firm muscles-chest and abs.

"Ian and I were never real," she said finally.

Gavin froze for a brief moment before the realization dawned.

She had gone to such lengths, even faking a boyfriend, just to rebel against her family.

And for the sake of this fake relationship, she had endured so much, leaving herself scarred, both physically and emotionally.

Chapter 1127

As Jolie thought further, she realized her rebellion had been directed at none other than him.

Gavin's expression darkened instantly.

Noticing his displeasure, Jolie quickly tried to defuse the situation. "Uh... weren't you about to go work out? You should go. I barely slept last night, so I'll head back and get some rest, okay?"

She attempted to pull her hand free, eager to escape, but Gavin tightened his grip on her wrist, refusing to let her go. His dark eyes locked onto hers, his voice low and commanding. "You've already been up all night. Another few minutes won't make a difference." A sense of danger prickled at Jolie's instincts. Her eyes instantly reflected her wariness as she stammered, "W-What are you going to do?"

Instead of answering, Gavin wrapped an arm firmly around her waist, pulling her closer. His voice dropped even lower. "What do you think?"

"I... I don't know!" Jolie's panic surged as she caught a glimpse of something in his expression she hadn't seen before.

Beneath his usual calm exterior lurked a smoldering anger, cold yet fierce. His entire presence exuded a dangerous energy that made her want to run-far and fast.

She caved immediately. "Gavin, I'm really tired. I just want to rest. Can we talk about this after I've slept, please?"

Her voice softened unconsciously, laced with a hint of pleading. Her wide, innocent eyes only added to the effect, making her seem pitiful and helpless.

The storm of anger in Gavin's chest subsided unexpectedly. Looking at her pleading expression, his brow furrowed slightly.

"Rest here," he said, his tone cold but unyielding.

"N-No, it's fine. My place is just downstairs. It's so close; I'll be there in no time," Jolie tried again, still intent on leaving.

Gavin wasn't having it. "Either we talk now, or you rest here."

Faced with no other option, Jolie immediately changed course. She yawned dramatically and shuffled toward his bedroom, mumbling, "I'm so tired. Fine, I'll stay here and sleep."

Seeing her retreat, Gavin finally released her wrist. His tense expression eased slightly as he watched her disappear into the bedroom. Only then did his tightly wound emotions begin to settle.

...

Jolie pressed her ear to the door, listening intently. When she didn't hear Gavin's footsteps approaching, she let out a long sigh of relief.

For now, she had dodged a bullet.

As for what came next, she would just take it one step at a time.

At least she and Gavin had officially established their relationship now.

Initially, she had planned to wait until

the end of the "five times" arrangement to bring up her real intentions. But Daisy's words had shattered her composure. She didn't want to wait anymore.

The result would be the same in the end, so what was the point of waiting?

Her next focus was planning how to "return home." However, she intended to hold out "abroad" a little longer to test just how far the Quin family was willing to push their

stance.

Jolie lay down on the bed, thinking she wouldn't be able to sleep. But the faint cedar scent lingering in the room-his scent-lulled her into a surprisingly quick slumber. She ended up sleeping straight through to the afternoon.

When she woke, she felt completely disoriented.

"Who am I? Where am I?" she thought and sat on the bed in a daze for a long moment before it clicked. She was in Gavin's apartment.

Oh.

And they were... together now.

She climbed out of bed, went to the bathroom to wash her face, and shook off the last remnants of sleep. Feeling more alert, she stepped out of the bedroom. The living room was empty.

Huh? Where was he?

Just as she was puzzling over his absence, a door opened, and she turned her head. Gavin emerged, his tall figure commanding as ever.

He wore a dark gray shirt and black

trousers, the clean lines of his outfit accentuating his composed, restrained elegance. His cold, aloof demeanor still carried that

unmistakable air of dominance

Chapter 1128

"Awake?" Gavin walked over to her, his gaze falling on her slightly dazed face. Without warning, he reached out and pinched her cheek. The action was natural, even intimate, leaving her no time to react.

Gavin wasn't one to overthink-when he wanted to do something, he simply did it.

Truth be told, he'd wanted to do this for a long time.

Her cheeks were softer than he had imagined, and the sensation was oddly satisfying.

Jolie nodded, then asked, "Didn't you go to work?"

"I'm back," Gavin replied simply.

Back already? She was a bit surprised but didn't linger on it. Instead, she said, "There's something I need to tell you."

Gavin naturally took her hand and led her to the sofa. Sitting down beside her, he said, "Go ahead."

Jolie hesitated for a moment, then said, "Technically, I'm still abroad."

The statement seemed abrupt and confusing, something that would make no sense to anyone unfamiliar with the context.

But Gavin understood immediately.

He nodded. "I know. Selena helped you with that."

Jolie let out a small breath of relief. It would be much easier to explain now.

"My family sent me abroad to force me to behave. They even cut off my finances. But their real goal was to push me closer to you." As she spoke, Jolie carefully studied Gavin's expression.

His face remained calm and indifferent, as though none of this mattered to him in the slightest.

Seeing no reaction, Jolie continued, "Now that I'm with you, it's essentially me giving in to them. So, I need to go back to the country."

Her family would likely try to welcome her back with open arms after hearing about her relationship with Gavin. If she wanted to maintain the illusion, she had to make a trip overseas.

But Gavin easily saw through her intentions. "You want me to take you abroad?"

Jolie nodded, a bit sheepishly. "Exactly."

Gavin raised an eyebrow. "So, I've become your tool? Just a last-resort choice?" Jolie was stunned.

How did this man's brain work so fast?

topic  
couldn't they just stick to the

topic at hand? Why did he have to dig

g deeper into things?

"It's not like that. Don't overthink it," Jolie said quickly.

Gavin, however, calmly replied, "Even if that's exactly what you think, it's fine."

Jolie blinked at him in confusion. "Wait... you're saying you wouldn't mind if it was like that?"

"I would mind," Gavin said matter-of-factly. "But there's no point in dwelling on it."

Now Jolie was completely lost. She couldn't keep up with his train of thought.

Seeing her confusion, Gavin

elaborated, "Because we're already together. Obsessing over why you decided to be with me doesn't matter. It would only create tension between us, and I want to be with

you don't want us to start with

I our relationship with unnecessary conflict or arguments."

Jolie stared at him, utterly dumbfounded.

Gavin found her wide-eyed, innocent expression unexpectedly adorable and leaned in to steal a quick kiss. Caught off guard by the sudden gesture, Jolie blinked and asked, "So... what you care about is the future?"

"Exactly," Gavin replied.

She cared about the present.

He cared about the future.

Their goals weren't entirely aligned,

but Gavin didn't mind. He firmly believed he could change her perspective, just as he had turned her initial rejection into their current relationship.

The man brimmed with confidence.

Jolie, feeling relieved that he wasn't pressing the issue further, asked, "So, when are you taking me abroad?"

"No rush," Gavin replied casually.

"Huh?" Jolie blinked in surprise. "What do you mean, no rush? Do you have something else to do first?"

Gavin's lips curved slightly as he said, "There are plenty of things I need to take care of."

With that, he suddenly stood up.

Chapter 1129

Jolie froze for a moment as Gavin moved closer. His earlier words echoed in her mind, making her inexplicably nervous.

But instead of doing anything unexpected, Gavin grabbed her hand and pulled her to her feet. "Go change. I'm taking you out to eat."

Jolie stumbled forward a couple of steps, startled.

A look of surprise flashed across her face.

A date?

She nodded quickly. "Alright."

Back in her apartment, she leaned against the door, her heart fluttering with unexpected excitement.

It was her first date!

She needed to dress up for this.

Jolie rushed to her bedroom, took a shower, and began picking out an outfit. She carefully applied her makeup, making sure everything was just right.

By the time she was ready, two hours had flown by.

She sent Gavin a quick message, then opened her door-only to find him already standing there, impeccably dressed in a tailored suit. He leaned casually against the wall, exuding an air of effortless elegance.

Jolie blinked in surprise. "Have you been waiting here this whole time?"

"I just got here," Gavin replied smoothly.

To him, waiting for his girlfriend was a given there was no need to overthink it.

"Hungry?" he asked.

Instead of answering, Jolie spun in a small circle in front of him, her floral dress swaying with her movements. "Do I look pretty?"

Gavin's dark eyes deepened as he took in her appearance. She wore a flowy floral dress, her long hair cascading over her shoulders. Her light makeup was exquisitely done, highlighting her youthful, sweet aura. She smelled faintly of a soft, sweet fragrance-everything about her was warm, delicate, and utterly captivating.

She was a vision of charm.

"Yes," he murmured in acknowledgment.

Jolie frowned slightly, clearly dissatisfied. "Just one word? No detailed feedback? You don't feel anything special?"

"I do," Gavin said honestly.

Her curiosity piqued, Jolie pressed further. "What kind of feeling?"

Gavin's gaze never wavered as he answered, "I feel like kissing you."

And with that, he cupped the back of her head with one hand, leaned down, and kissed her without hesitation. "Mm!"

Jolie barely had time to react before Gavin's kiss landed firmly, leaving her no room to escape.

Her lips were thoroughly ravaged, and her lipstick was completely devoured-there wasn't a trace of it left.

Later, standing in the elevator, Jolie pulled out a small mirror to touch up her makeup, her cheeks puffed out in indignation.

"From now on, if I'm wearing makeup, you're not allowed to kiss me without my permission!" she

said, glaring at him with her bright eyes, her tone full of seriousness. en

"No," Gavin replied calmly.

Jolie turned to him immediately. "What do you mean, no?"

Gavin said matter-of-factly, "You're my girlfriend. Kissing you is my right as your boyfriend. You can't take that away from me."

Jolie's eyes widened slightly, and she pointed at her lips. "But look at what you've done! My lipstick is completely gone!"

She couldn't accept his nearly predatory kissing style. It was as if he intended to consume her entirely.

Gavin's gaze dropped to her lips,

now free of any lipstick. They glowed with their natural, soft red hue—plump, fresh, and incredibly enticing.

"You look even better like this," Gavin said simply.

Jolie didn't believe him for a second. "Either way, if I'm wearing lipstick, no kissing!"

Gavin remained silent, offering no agreement.

When the elevator doors opened, Jolie had already finished retouching her makeup. In no time, she was back to looking like a radiant little

fairy.

By then, the golden hues of dusk painted the horizon. Once they got into the car, Jolie turned to him and asked, "Where are you taking me?"

"Dinner first, then a movie," Gavin replied.

Jolie blinked in surprise. "So... today is our date?"

"Does this count as a date?" Gavin asked.

"Didn't you plan it?" Jolie retorted.

"I did," Gavin admitted. "I just didn't think something as simple as dinner and a movie would qualify as a date."

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Jolie looked at Gavin in surprise. "I've heard rumors before that you've never been in a relationship. At first, I didn't believe it."

Gavin glanced at her and replied, "It's true. I haven't."

Jolie nodded. "Hmm, I believe it now."

His eyes held nothing but focus on his work.

With both hands gripping the steering wheel, Gavin drove steadily down the road. The sunset had already faded, and the city lights were beginning to glow.

Having stayed indoors for several days, Jolie felt a bit unfamiliar stepping out. She kept her gaze outside the window throughout the ride, her eyes betraying a quiet excitement she herself hadn't noticed. Gavin stole several glances at her, but she didn't notice any of them.

Finally, the car came to a stop.

Jolie stepped out and saw a restaurant ahead. The building had a three-story traditional design, exuding a strong vintage charm. Even the entrance was adorned with intricately carved beams and painted columns. Jolie glanced at the restaurant's name: Serenity House.

Gavin walked over, naturally taking her hand. "The food here is excellent."

"I've heard of this place," Jolie said. "But isn't the main branch in Cloudflare City? When did they open one here in Larbor City?"

"Not long ago," Gavin replied.

Jolie was curious. "How did you find out about it?"

Gavin explained, "It's run by my brother-in-law. My sister loves the food from Serenity House."

Ah, that made sense!

Jolie recalled hearing about how the Cooper family had recently reunited with their long-lost daughter, who had settled in Larbor City. Naturally, her husband had followed her here too. "Such a touching bond," she thought.

Gavin glanced at her again and remarked, "You've met my younger sister before. You two seemed to get along well."

Jolie nodded. "Yes, Miss Aveline has such a gentle personality. I really like her."

"Then you should spend more time together," Gavin said. "It'll help strengthen the connection."

Jolie blinked and thought, "Strengthen what connection?"

A connection between sisters-in-law? That felt a bit premature!

She and Gavin had only just started seeing each other! Becoming Aveline's sister-in-law was still a far-off possibility.

Gavin led Jolie upstairs, where a server guided them to the door of a private dining room.

As Jolie stepped inside, a look of awe flickered in her eyes.

The intricately crafted double-sided embroidered screen was both elegant and stunning. Walking around it revealed a spacious dining area, complete with a cozy lounge and a dining section.

The carved wooden windows with their open latticework faced the riverside view. The last rays of the setting sun danced on the wafer's surface, creating a breathtaking scene.

Jolie moved to the window, captivated by the clash of twilight and the fading sunset, her admiration deepening. Taking out her phone, she handed it to Gavin. "Take a picture of me."

It was so beautiful! She had to capture it!

Gavin hesitated for a moment, saying nothing as he silently opened the camera and began snapping photos.

Jolie struck a few poses, but when Gavin handed the phone back to her, she froze. "You're done?"

"Yeah," Gavin replied calmly.

Jolie immediately opened the gallery, only to be rendered speechless by what she saw.

What kind of terrible photography skills were these?

In the

stiff boto, she stood awkwardly

window, one of her eyes even half-closed. And he actually took the picture like that?

What had he been thinking?

Jolie stared at him, her face blank. "Gavin, I've discovered your weakness."

Hearing this, Gavin frowned slightly. "I don't have any weaknesses."

"Ha!" Jolie scoffed mercilessly. "You can't take pictures!"

Without hesitation, she deleted the photo. It was unbearable-an eyesore!

Noticing her clearly displeased expression, Gavin paused for a moment, then quietly took out his phone and sent a message.

