

## Divorced Me 711

### Chapter 711

Aveline found herself at a loss for words, left only with silence in response.

Russell smiled faintly and stood up, saying, "I'll be going now. Get some rest. If you ever run into any problems, just give me a call."

He rose from his seat, and Aveline followed suit, watching as he left. When the door closed, she couldn't help but sigh.

How did things end up going in this direction?

She sat back down on the sofa, taking small sips of juice, her thoughts drifting back to everything that had happened since she met Russell. It all gave her a bit of a headache.

She owed him a lot. But she didn't know how to repay it.

Aveline sighed again and stood up, heading to the study.

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In a beautifully set restaurant, Selena held up her phone, taking photos. Her makeup was flawlessly done, her face bright and lovely, and her eyes sparkled with light as she looked into the camera.

Aaron sat across from her, lounging casually in his chair, a diamond necklace around his neck reflecting a dazzling light under the restaurant's glow.

As Selena finished her selfies, she reviewed the photos and asked, "So, what do you want to talk about?"

Aaron gazed at her, asking, "Have you thought about the thing I asked you before?"

Selena glanced up at him and replied, "What thing?"

"Playing dumb, are we?" Aaron chuckled lightly. "Selena, you know you can't escape this no matter what, so you've started pretending to be clueless? But you should also know that playing dumb won't solve anything." Selena, satisfied with her photos, saved them before putting her phone down. A faint smile played on her lips, and there was a glint in her eyes, almost like a hook.

"I told you before, I won't be anyone's mistress."

Aaron replied, "That's not a problem anymore. I won't be getting engaged."

"Oh?" Selena looked at him with curiosity. "Don't tell me you defied your family's arranged marriage for me? Don't do that-I don't want to be put on some high-society hit list or hunted down. That would be way too scary."

Aaron replied calmly, "You're overthinking it. In any case, I won't be getting engaged now. Selena, you have to be my woman."

He no longer hid his determination, as if she already belonged to him.

Selena picked up her wine glass, swirling it gently, and sighed helplessly, "Alright."

Aaron's expression froze, his heart seeming to pound even faster in his chest. "What?" he asked.

Selena continued, "We can be together, but I have one condition."

Aaron looked at her. "Name it."

There was nothing he couldn't achieve. As long as her request wasn't too outrageous, he'd consider it, especially since he still felt a sense of novelty about her. After all, a woman typically only desired certain things.

Selena took a sip of her wine, then set the glass down and said, "Aaron, I think you're only interested in me for the moment, and honestly, I'm not interested in you at all. So, how about this:

let's try being together for three months. If after three months you're still interested, we can continue. If not, we'll part ways without any hard feelings. What do you think?"

Aaron's brows furrowed at her words, not expecting her to make such a proposal.

His mood darkened suddenly, his eyes taking on a cold glint as he looked at her. "Selena, you have no right to set conditions for me."

Chapter 712

"Ha!" Selena looked at him, utterly incredulous. "Aaron, if that's how you feel, then what's the point of us talking? Why don't you just drag me back, chain me up with a couple of locks, and be done with it? After all, I have no right to negotiate with you." She was genuinely angry now!

What was wrong with this man? Could he not have a proper conversation? What did he mean by saying she had no right?

It was he who insisted on pursuing her and wanting to be with her. How did she suddenly have no say in the matter? Selena stood up, ready to leave.

"Stop," Aaron's tone grew colder, his brows furrowing as his expression darkened. "Sit down!"

Selena looked at him. "Can we talk properly?"

Aaron was silent for a moment before saying, "But what kind of condition is that?"

Selena smirked slightly. "Why wouldn't it be a condition? Aaron, I don't really want to get too involved with you, but I also don't mind being with you. However, there should be a time frame, right? Given your status, you'll eventually have to get engaged or married. So, what happens to me then?"

She leaned forward, supporting herself on the table with one hand, her gaze fixed on his handsome face, her expression both alluring and provocative. "So, why don't we set the rules from the start? That way, if anything changes in the future, neither of us will be caught off guard."

After witnessing the tangled mess between Lucas and Aveline, Selena had come to her own conclusions.

She could enjoy life but should always stay clear-headed. Never let herself get too deeply involved, or else, it would always be the woman who ends up losing.

Aaron watched her face, with its hint of a smile. She always knew how to play to her strengths. Her manner was casual but never frivolous, showing just the right amount of charm.

His Adam's apple bobbed slightly.

Perhaps it was this very energy that drew him to her, made him want to explore more. But that was the extent of it.

"Well?" Selena asked again when he remained silent.

This time, a hint of impatience crossed Selena's face. Why was a grown man being so indecisive?

Suddenly, Aaron reached out,

grabbed her arm, and pulled her onto his lap. Wrapping his arm around her slender waist, he said, "Alright, three months. But during that time, you listen to me.

"No, no, no." Selena shook her head again, her hands looping around his neck, a playful smile on her lips. "For these three months, we're boyfriend and girlfriend. I'm not your caged

bird, and you're not my sugar daddy. We're equals. Haven't you ever dated a girlfriend before? Don't you know how a proper relationship works?"

As she finished speaking, a look of surprise crossed her eyes, as if she couldn't believe that someone like him had never dated anyone before. "What kind of joke is that?" Aaron's grip on her tightened slightly. "I own a film company. If I lined up my girlfriends, they could reach all the way to F Country."

"Oh, really..." Selena stretched out

her words with a teasing tone, then added, "Then could you ask one of your girlfriends in line in F Country to bring me back a bottle of perfume? There's this really niche one tike, and I can't find it here in the country."

Aaron was speechless.

This woman!

She was truly something else!

Without further ado, Aaron pressed his lips against hers in a fierce kiss.

Selena's breath trembled for a moment, but she didn't pull away.

He had booked out the entire restaurant; there was no one else around. His kiss was aggressive as if he wanted to consume her whole.

Chapter 713

"You really are pushing your luck," Aaron muttered against her lips, his hand gripping her waist as if he wanted to pin her down on the dining table right then and there. Selena's breath was uneven, and it took a moment after he released her for her to catch her breath.

"So, does that mean you agree?" she asked, still a bit breathless.

Aaron lazily curled his lips into a smile. "Alright, girlfriend."

Selena smiled back, getting up from his lap and settling back into the seat across from him. She pushed her plate of steak towards him and said, "Cut this for me."

Her spoiled demeanor made Aaron's heart itch. His Adam's apple bobbed again.

He had almost no experience with relationships, while she acted like a seasoned expert. It only made him feel more frustrated. If he didn't know that her first time had been with him, he might have felt even more conflicted right now. Selena watched him cut the steak, amusement dancing in her eyes. The recent kiss had smudged her lipstick a little, making her lips look all the more enticing, tempting anyone to wipe it away.

As Aaron sliced the steak, he remarked, "You're the first woman who's dared to order me around."

Selena raised an eyebrow, propping her chin on her hand. "How can it be an order when a boyfriend does something for his girlfriend?"

Aaron glanced at her, then placed the neatly cut steak in front of her.

Selena picked up a piece with her fork and brought it to his lips. "Here, for your hard work."

Aaron's eyes flickered for a moment before he opened his mouth and ate it.

For some reason, the steak tasted especially good.

Selena continued to eat in small bites, occasionally glancing out at the riverside view. The night shrouded the city, a ferry glided slowly across the river, and the lights were bright and captivating a picturesque scene. Aaron said, "Why don't you stay at my place tonight?"

Selena shook her head at his suggestion. "Not tonight, maybe tomorrow."

She didn't reject him too harshly-after all, they only had three months. She didn't mind staying with him.

After all, his skills were improving each time, and she rather enjoyed it.

Aaron's brows furrowed slightly as he looked at her. "Selena, you better not play games with me."

Selena laughed at his comment. "What games could I possibly play with you? We are, after all, dating." Halfway through her sentence, Selena paused, her gaze at him carrying a hint of something inscrutable. This man...

He probably really hadn't been in a proper relationship before.

Thinking about his previous lackluster attempts, she found it almost amusing.

Realizing this, a flicker of delight crossed her heart, even though she wasn't entirely sure why.

"What's with that expression?" Aaron asked, frowning.

Selena shook her head. "Nothing. I was just thinking that you don't have to be like this. I'll keep my word."

Aaron stared at her for a moment before deciding to drop the subject.

After finishing their meal, the two of them boarded the ferry.

With a single command from Aaron, the ferry was cleared out once again.

Selena stood on the deck, the breeze tousling her hair and fluttering the hem of her red dress, which accentuated her slender figure. As she turned her head, she looked stunningly beautiful, an allure that seemed to come effortlessly.

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Aaron walked over, wrapping his arm around her waist, and kissed her.

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Selena hooked her arms around his neck, responding to his kiss. Their breaths mingled, hot and intense, pushing away the chill in the air.

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By the time Selena returned to

Maple Garden, it was already quite late, and she found Aveline sitting in

the living room watching a movie.

"Ave, why are you still up?" Selena asked as she walked over, a hint of curiosity in her voice.

Chapter 714

Aveline replied, "Couldn't sleep, so I just kept watching movies."

Selena moved closer, sat beside her, hugged her arm, and rested her head on her shoulder.

"Ave, I'm dating Aaron now," she announced.

"What?" Aveline looked at her in shock.

Selena then recounted what had happened, finishing with a light laugh, "I didn't expect him to agree so readily."

Aveline frowned. "Have you really thought this through?"

Selena shrugged. "What choice do I have if I haven't? I can't really afford to piss him off; if I do, I'll be the one facing the consequences. If I can enjoy myself instead, why should I suffer?"

Aveline pondered for a moment and nodded. "You have a point."

Selena noticed Aveline's serious expression and chuckled, "Oh, come on, don't worry about me. I know what I'm doing. Who knows, maybe in three months, we'll actually develop feelings for each other. If Aaron ends up insisting on marrying me, wouldn't I be the winner then?"

Aveline was silent for a moment before saying, "I hope everything goes as you wish."

Selena laughed, got up, and said, "I'm going to take a shower. You should get some rest soon too."

"Okay."



Aveline nodded, watching her as she went into her room. Her feelings were mixed.

With Rina and Russell getting married and Aaron not needing to be engaged for now, on the surface, it seemed like there were no obstacles for them to be together.

But would Aaron really keep his word?

Would he truly let Selena go after three months?

A faint unease swept through her heart.

Aveline found herself running back and forth between the hospital and home quite often. seemed she had a special connection with the hospital; maybe she should have gone into medicine back then.

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Annie's arm was recovering well,

and she had gained a bit of weight, looking healthier and more vibrant.

Every time she saw Aveline, Annie's

eyes sparkled with joy.

One day, as Aveline went to the doctor's office to inquire about the follow-up recovery of Annie's arm, she unexpectedly ran into Sidney.

"What are you doing here?" Aveline asked, surprised to see him.

Sidney seemed just as puzzled.

"A friend of mine was injured and is staying here. I came to check on them. What about you? Are you hurt?" As he spoke, a hint of worry crossed his face, and he quickly looked her over.

"I'm fine." Aveline quickly shook her head to avoid any misunderstanding. Sidney visibly relaxed and said, "Good, I'm glad you're not hurt."

Aveline explained, "There was a bit of an accident earlier. I accidentally hit a young girl with my car, so I come by every day to check

on her."

Sidney asked, "Was she badly injured?"

"She has a fractured arm," Aveline replied.

Injuries involving bones were always serious.

Sidney said, "Is there anything I can do? Just let me know."

"No, it's alright. I've already arranged for a nurse to take care of her." Aveline smiled, then asked, "By the way, how is your mom?" Sidney's expression darkened slightly. "She... isn't doing too well. She's been talking about you a lot lately."

Aveline responded, "Then I'll come with you to see her."

"Are you sure?" Sidney's eyes lit up a bit.

Aveline smiled. "Of course, I just need to speak with the nurse first."

Sidney said, "Thank you, I appreciate it."

After saying goodbye to Annie and giving the nurse a few instructions, Aveline left with Sidney.

At the hospital under the Skyler Group's care, as they reached the door to the ward, Sidney hesitated, his face showing a hint of discomfort.

Chapter 715

"What's wrong?" Aveline looked at him, puzzled.

Sidney pressed his lips together, then released her hand and said, "Aveline, my mom's condition is not very stable. She gets confused sometimes, so if she says anything, please don't take it to heart." Aveline's brow furrowed. "Is her condition that serious? Have you discussed it with the doctor?"

Sidney gave a helpless smile. "Her health wasn't great to begin with. After everything she's been through, it's only gotten worse. The fact that she's still holding on is thanks to the hospital care here." His voice was slightly hoarse, his eyes filled with deep, unshakable sadness.

Aveline could feel that sadness as well.

She nodded. "I understand."

Sidney tried to force a smile. "Thank you, Aveline."

She responded, "Let's go in."

"Alright."

The door to the hospital room opened.

A voice came from inside, "Is that you, Sid?"

"Yes, it's me," Sidney replied, opening a bag he held and taking out some of his mother's favorite fruits.

"Mom, I bought some fruit for you. Have a little," Sidney said gently.

Aveline saw that Ruth looked much different from when she had last seen her. Back then, she had a spirit about her.

Now, she lay in the hospital bed, looking incredibly frail, her eyes clouded and unfocused.

With a pained expression, she said, "Why spend money on that? I don't want to eat."

Sidney coaxed her softly, "But I've already bought it, and I can't return it."

"Then you eat it," she insisted.

Sidney chuckled. "Mom, don't you remember? I don't like these."

"You...", Ruth sighed with resignation.

Under his gentle persistence, she eventually sat up and took a few bites.

"Ma'am," Aveline greeted at just the right moment.

Ruth turned to look at her, her eyes brightening. "Is that Miss Young?"

Aveline nodded, taking hold of her extended hand. "Yes, it's me, Ma'am. You look great today; I'm sure it won't be long before you're discharged."

Ruth was delighted by her words. "Miss Young, I'm so glad you came. I hope I didn't make you miss any work?"

Aveline shook her head. "Not at all. I'm on vacation right now."

Ruth nodded approvingly. "I've always wanted to say, we're so grateful to you. Without you, Sid wouldn't have found such a good job. You two are colleagues, right? If you ever run into any trouble, just look for him. He's a big guy, he can handle anything."

"Alright, I'll keep that in mind," Aveline replied with a smile.

Ruth patted the back of her hand, then suddenly asked, "Miss Young, do you have a boyfriend?"

Aveline was momentarily stunned, and Sidney quickly interjected, "Mom, try another bite. See if it's sweet."

Ruth obediently took a bite, nodded, and said, "It's sweet. Miss Young, would you like some?"

Aveline shook her head. "No, thank you, Ma'am. You should eat more."

Ruth nodded with a smile, her eyes still studying Aveline. "You're so beautiful, Miss Young. I'm sure you'll find a boyfriend who will love and cherish you in the future."

Sidney's expression froze for a moment; he glanced at his mother.

But she didn't look at him. She

continued, "And if that boyfriend ever mistreats you, just tell Sid. He's

younger

than you, so treat him like a

younger brother, boss him around however you like." FindNovel

"Alright," Aveline agreed with a grin, then turned to Sidney. "Little brother, did you hear that?"

Sidney chuckled, a hint of embarrassment mixed with amusement. "Yes, I heard it."

Chapter 716

Sidney's face showed a hint of helplessness. "My mom's just joking, and you're joining in?"

Aveline raised an eyebrow, "Aren't you younger than me?"

Sidney looked at her seriously. "Only by a year."

Aveline smiled. "Still younger."

Sidney was speechless.

He stopped arguing and thought he would let it go as long as it made her happy.

Ruth watched them with a cheerful smile, though a faint sadness lingered in her eyes. However, with Aveline there, chatting with her for a while, her mood visibly improved.

It wasn't until Ruth grew tired that Aveline stood up to leave.

Outside the hospital room, Sidney looked at her intently. "Aveline, really, thank you."

Aveline gave a reassuring smile. "There's no need for such formality between us. Your mother's health should be your priority right now. Why don't you let Maria know that you don't have to be chained to the studio? You could easily work on your designs here at the hospital too."

Sidney nodded. "Yeah, I'll do that."

He escorted her to the elevator.

"Go on back, I'm leaving now," Aveline said to him.

Sidney looked deeply at her. "Goodbye."

"Goodbye."

The elevator doors slowly closed, shutting out his gaze, and the emotions in his eyes nearly spilled over.

He closed his eyes briefly, then returned to the room to find his mother, who had been resting with her eyes closed, now awake.

"Mom, why aren't you sleeping?" Sidney asked as he sat beside the bed.

Ruth gazed at him and asked, "Sid, you like Miss Young, don't you?"

Sidney lowered his eyes slightly. "There really isn't anything I can hide from you."

Ruth sighed softly. "I like her too, but Sid, we're not a match for her."

For a moment, Sidney said nothing.

"I'm in this poor health, and our family's situation is what it is. I believe you could make her happy, but she deserves a happiness far greater than what we can offer, right?" en FindNovel

How could Ruth not see through Sidney's feelings?

He had hoped that his mother might persuade Aveline to stay with him, knowing that Aveline was a kind-hearted woman. Even if it was just an act, she might agree.

But precisely because she was so kind, they shouldn't pull her into their troubles.

Ruth voiced all her concerns, letting

out a soft sigh. "Sid, when I'm gone, I

won't interfere in your affairs

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anymore. But right now, we can't drag a good girl like her into a mess like ours."

Sidney's throat felt dry. "Mom, stop saying that. Just rest, okay?"

Ruth looked at him with a serious expression. "Don't do anything foolish, understand?"

"Yes, I understand," Sidney quickly replied.

He felt a sense of self-loathing. Fortunately, Ruth was clear-headed and had stopped things before they reached a point of no return.

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Aveline had been spending a lot of

time at the hospital, and it was starting to affect her. She felt an overwhelming sense of unease, like a cloud constantly hanging over her, much like the weather lately gray and overcast, making it hard to relax.

The villa had contacted her again, asking when she would come for the inspection.

With a sigh, Aveline called Lucas.

"What is it?"

After three rings, the call was answered. His deep, magnetic voice came through, betraying no emotion.

"When are you planning to inspect the villa?" Aveline asked.

"I'm on a business trip," Lucas replied.

Aveline's brow furrowed. "When will you be back?"



"Three days, maybe," Lucas responded.

"Alright, I'll contact you in three days," Aveline said, preparing to end the call.

"Aveline."

Chapter 717

Lucas called out her name.

"Yes?" Aveline replied, confused.

Lucas asked, "Did you miss me?"

Aveline was speechless.

She hung up the phone, her face expressionless. What was wrong with this man?

How could she possibly miss him?

Moments later, her phone vibrated. She looked at it.

Lucas texted, "I miss you, a lot, very much."

Aveline's eyelid twitched. She quickly put away her phone, her heart inexplicably racing out of control.

She took several deep breaths to calm herself, suppressing the strange emotions rising within her. Only after regaining her composure did she exhale with relief. What on earth was that about?

Three days passed quickly.

Aveline dialed Lucas' number again, "Are you back?"

There was silence.

"Lucas?" Aveline called out his name again, glancing at her phone.

"Yeah," Lucas finally replied, "I'm at the Tudor estate. Come here."

Then he hung up the phone immediately.

What was that about?

Why did she have to go to the Tudor estate? Couldn't they just meet at the villa construction site?

But knowing Lucas' unpredictable nature, she decided not to overthink it and just do as he said.

Her car had been repaired, so she drove over to the Tudor estate. Once she arrived at the gate, she sent him a message. Aveline sent a message, "I'm here."

After a moment, the passenger door opened, and Lucas' tall figure slid in, bringing a gust of cold wind with him. Aveline glanced at him and started the car. But a second later, he took hold of her hand.

His hand was warm, enveloping her smaller one, the heat seeping through her skin.

Aveline frowned slightly and tried to pull her hand back. "What are you doing?"

Lucas' eyes stared straight at her. "I'm a bit cold. Warm me up."

"Ridiculous," Aveline muttered, pulling her hand away and starting the car toward the construction site.

As they got closer, the outline of the villa came into view. Lucas stared at it, then suddenly asked, "Are you satisfied with your masterpiece?"

Aveline carefully studied the structure of the villa and nodded. "Yes, I am."

When she worked, she didn't let personal feelings interfere; she always aimed for the best and most perfect result.

She secretly liked this villa a lot.

Lucas opened the car door and got out, heading straight toward the villa.

Aveline followed him, observing the outline of the courtyard. Once everything was one up, she was sure it would look beautiful.

Lucas examined everything closely

while Aveline followed him, her notepad in hand, sketching and taking notes. By the time they had finished inspecting everything, two hours had passed.

Aveline was genuinely tired.

Lucas checked the last area and turned to her, his gaze deep. "Not bad."

Aveline handed him the documents in her hand. "Then sign it."

Once he signed, the final payment could be made, and the project would be complete. Then she could submit her resignation and prepare for the upcoming court case. If she won, she could leave Cloudflare City behind.

Thinking about it, the future seemed genuinely bright.

Lucas looked at the documents in her hand, then suddenly grabbed her wrist, pulling her close.

"What are you-"

Aveline gasped, but before she could finish, he cupped the back of her neck and pressed his lips to hers. "Mmm!"

Her eyes widened in shock, every muscle in her body tensing up.

But the kiss was brief, like a swift wind passing by, and it was over as quickly as it started.

Lucas released her and, seeing the resistance building in her eyes, quickly said, "Aveline, I missed you... I couldn't control myself. I'm sorry."

Chapter 718

Aveline's eyes widened in disbelief as she stared at him.

Did he really just say that? Was he possessed or something?

"You don't have to look at me like that," Lucas said, almost as if he could read her thoughts.

A faint smile tugged at his thin lips. "In the past, I only thought about how much I liked your scent, your body, and having you by my side. Even if you were reluctant, as long as you were with me, I felt at ease. So, I never cared about your feelings or whether you wanted to be here or not I just kept you by force."

He continued, "Of course, I still feel the same way. But I think maybe if I try a different approach, I might have a chance to keep you here... to save this marriage of ours that's on the brink of collapse."

As Lucas spoke, he kept his gaze on her, his deep, dark eyes holding a hint of tenderness.

A wave of bitterness rose in Aveline's heart. She couldn't quite describe how she felt.

If he had done this sooner, would things have turned out differently?

Aveline lowered her gaze slightly. "But, Lucas, you're a little late in realizing this."

A piece of paper that's been crumpled and then smoothed out can never be the same. It would always bear the creases and folds.

But Lucas replied, "We're still young, not in our seventies or eighties, too creaky to make a move. So, it's not too late."

Aveline's eyelashes fluttered, and the cold wind seemed to blow through an empty space inside her, filling her with a deep sense of sadness.

Lucas looked at her intently. "Aveline, won't you give me a chance?"

She met his eyes and said, "No."

"Alright, I'll take that as a yes."

Aveline was speechless.

It appeared he was still living in his own world. No matter what others said-even the one he claimed to be pursuing-he only heard what he wanted to hear.

Aveline turned and began to walk away.

Lucas followed behind her, his long strides effortlessly matching her pace. The black coat draped over his broad shoulders only accentuated his height and commanding presence. en  
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He asked, "Don't you want me to sign the documents?"

Aveline paused, biting back her frustration, and handed the papers to him.

Lucas didn't do anything else this time. He picked up a pen and signed his name on the document.

Aveline watched his every move closely, worried he might try something again. When she saw that he had actually signed, she felt a bit incredulous.

Lucas handed the document back to

her. She carefully examined it and, after confirming everything was in order, said, "Once I get back and the contract is fully processed, we will have nothing to do with each other anymore."

"We are still married."

Lucas' dark eyes locked onto hers.

Aveline looked at him. "Your health is no longer an issue, so I'll tell the lawyer that we can proceed with the court hearing. I hope you attend."

With that, she turned and walked away, her slender figure exuding a determined defiance.

She was resolute, clearly not willing to give him another chance.

Lucas' gaze deepened. He pulled a cigarette from his pocket, lit it, and let the smoke rise around him, only to be blown away by the wind moments later.

It felt like there was a fire burning in his heart, needing water to extinguish it. Yet the water he longed for wanted nothing to do with him.

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Aveline returned to the studio, only to hear some strange noises coming from the office.

Chapter 719

The others were nowhere to be seen, and Aveline had no idea where they had all gone. She glanced suspiciously in the direction of the office; at this time, Maria should have been there. "Hmm..."

Just as she was about to walk over, another sound reached her ears. She paused, stopped in her tracks, and left directly.

Inside the office.

Maria was gripping Sidney's tie, looking at his furrowed brows. She teased, "What's wrong, little Sidney? Did you have too much to drink at lunch? Want me to help you?"

Her eyes were sultry, her soft body brushing lightly against his.

Sidney's body tensed instantly, the veins on his forehead standing out, his refined, handsome face showing a hint of restraint. His breathing became heavy as he abruptly pushed Maria away.

"What... are you doing?"

Seeing him trying to keep his composure while also holding on to his self-control, Maria couldn't help but look at him with newfound interest. "Can't you see?" Maria's eyes seemed to draw him in, staring straight at him. "I want to take advantage of you. Are you willing to be my target?" The veins on Sidney's forehead throbbed. "Get lost!"

He had sensed something was off earlier. Maria had been paying him too much attention lately. And now, she wasn't even bothering to hide it.

He was furious and embarrassed, but Maria wasn't angry; instead, she smiled coyly and said, "Sidney, I saw someone put something in that drink of yours. By the look of you, it seems to be taking effect. Going to the hospital now won't help much.

"You could try soaking in cold water or just endure it, but doing that might cause significant damage to your body. You're still so young-what will you do if you can't function well in the future?"

She didn't approach him again but continued to analyze the situation rationally, with a mix of threats and temptations.

"I can help you. In return, you listen to me, and I promise to give you the life you want. How about it?"

Maria offered an enticing deal.

Where others might have faltered or

paused to consider, Sidney stood unwavering Though his body betrayed him, thrumming with barely contained energy, his eyes told a different story. They remained glacial, unyielding pools of frost that belied the storm raging within.

"I want to resign..."

He insisted, then turned, opened the door, and walked straight out.

Maria watched Sidney's retreating figure and shook her head with a sigh.

"Such a hopeless romantic," she murmured.

"I know you like Aveline, but she loves Lucas. You don't stand a chance," Maria began to jab at his heart.

Sidney's hands clenched into fists. "They will get divorced."

"Will they?" Maria chuckled. "If they

were going to divorce, it would have happened long ago. How could they still be entangled like this?

Remember, Lucas sent her a divorce agreement every single day, yet she never signed it. Why do you think that is?"

Sidney's figure wavered, nearly losing his footing.

Maria approached slowly, her voice smooth as silk. "They love each other. It's just a misunderstanding between them. Once that misunderstanding is cleared up, they'll naturally reconcile. But you... you're just an outsider."

She rose on her tiptoes, her sweet



breath brushing past his ear.

Sensing the changes in his body, her

smile deepened. Her manicured

fingers lightly touched his chest, and

she continued her seduction,

"Sidney, stop thinking about Aveline. Think about yourself first. You can consider everything else after today..."

The string of reason, taut and stretched, finally snapped under Maria's relentless provocation.

Chapter 720

Aveline was downstairs, sipping her coffee. When she casually glanced up, she caught sight of Maria and Sidney leaving together. A trace of doubt flickered in her eyes. They were heading out again?

She didn't think much of it and waited for a while before finally heading back to the office. After finalizing the contract, she received word from the finance department that the final payment had been settled. She let out a big sigh of relief. Taking out her phone, she contacted Myron. After explaining the situation, he assured her that he would inform her once the date was set.

Sitting in front of her computer, Aveline felt a weight lift off her chest, like a string that had finally come loosened.

...

Nearly a week later, Juliet's subordinate came to her with the results of their investigation. Juliet was shopping in the mall, and upon hearing the news, her expression shifted dramatically. She never would have guessed that Lucas' wife was Aveline!

Whatever thoughts crossed her mind, she quickly instructed her subordinate, "I want all the current information on Aveline."

"Yes, ma'am."

Just then, her phone rang. Juliet checked the caller ID, and a smile spread across her face.

"Hello, Gernard."

Gernard's gentle voice came through, "Finished shopping?"

Juliet replied, "Not yet. Gernard, come join me. I'm so bored all by myself."

Gernard responded, "I'm not done with work yet. If you're tired, head back to the hotel first. I'll take you out for something nice to eat later."

Juliet, however, insisted, "Gernard, where are you right now? Can I come to find you? I promise I won't cause any trouble."

Gernard said, "I'm at the Tudor Group. You're not interested in these things, so maybe it's better if you don't come."

"No, I am interested! Even Dad said I should learn from you and Gavin. If you don't take me with you, I'll tell Dad!" Juliet pouted, knowing that Gernard could never refuse her. She was the little princess of the family, and they were always willing to give her whatever she wanted.

"Fine, but when you come, don't cause any trouble," Gernard warned.

"Mm-hmm, don't worry," Juliet replied, hanging up the phone.

She handed her shopping bags to her bodyguard and left the mall, heading straight for the Tudor Group.

Gernard had someone waiting downstairs to escort Juliet directly to the conference room. It was just a routine meeting, and outsiders were allowed to observe.

As Juliet entered, she chose a seat in the corner her gaze immediately finding Lucas sitting at the head of the table His handsome face was calm, his eyelids slightly lowered, concealing any emotions that might be reflected in his dark eyes. No one could read what he was feeling at that moment.

Gernard sat diagonally across from Lucas, discussing the details of their next cooperation. The Cooper family and the Tudor Group already had ongoing collaborations, and with Lucas now in control of the Tudors,

Lpartnership would continue

uninterrupted.

Business was business, and personal matters were separate.

Gernard admired Lucas' intelligence and business acumen, but he did not approve of how things were going between Lucas and Aveline. He was firmly on Aveline's side. He couldn't explain why, but every time he saw her being mistreated or hurt, his

heart ached for her.

The meeting didn't last long, wrapping up in just forty minutes.

Throughout, Juliet's heated gaze remained fixed on Lucas's face, something Gernard noticed all too well. Feeling a bit helpless, he waited until Lucas had left before speaking to her. "Juliet, what are you doing?" he asked.

Juliet was straightforward. "I like him, Gernard. Help me."

At her words, Gernard's brows furrowed tightly. "He's married, Juliet. You shouldn't even entertain that thought."

Juliet, however, was unconcerned.

"But people can get divorced even after they're married. You're the one who spoils me the most. Help me, please?" she pleaded.