

Divorced Me 781

Chapter 781

"Okay," Aveline murmured softly, her gaze lowered.

Only after Lucas turned and left the room did she slip on the robe and head to the bathroom to freshen up.

When she emerged, she found Lucas setting breakfast on the dining table.

She looked at him, puzzled. "Is this place one of your properties too?"

Lucas nodded. "Just one of them. It's close to the Tudor Group, so I come here occasionally when it's too late to go home."

The apartment was a spacious 300-square-meter flat with a minimalist design. There were no plants or decorations, and the overall atmosphere felt quite cold and empty. Aveline sat down at the table and took a sip of the corn soup.

Lucas asked, "Do you like it here?"

"It's fine," she replied.

He continued, "I'll have it transferred into your name later. You can stay here whenever you like."

Aveline glanced at him but said nothing.

Lucas' lips curved into a faint smile. "What's wrong? Are you so moved you don't know what to say?"

Aveline rolled her eyes internally. "This man could set up a dye shop with all the colors he's painting himself in!"

She quietly finished her meal, and soon after, they headed out to the hotel.

When they arrived, the tension in the hotel was palpable, the atmosphere heavy and strained.

As the elevator doors opened, everyone turned to look at them, their expressions filled with displeasure.

"What's the deal? They were allowed to leave last night, so why are we still being held here?"

"Yeah, why could they go, and we couldn't?"

"What exactly happened? Can someone give us an explanation?"

Everyone left behind had been guests at the previous night's ball, mostly heirs and elites from influential families. After being kept there all night, none of them looked pleased. "Ave!"

Selena hurried down the stairs, spotting Aveline as she entered. She quickly ran to her side, asking, "What on earth happened?"

Last night, Selena tried to find Aveline but was told that she had already left. When she tried to leave herself, she was stopped. She immediately sought out Aaron for answers.

Aaron had said, "I've been with you all night. How would I know what happened?"

And he had a point.

Selena's suspicions only grew, her gut telling her that something had indeed gone wrong, and it had to do with Aveline.

She thought about asking Russell,

but he was too busy to see her. Desperate, she tried calling Aveline, but all her calls went unanswered. If Aaron hadn't reassured her that Lucas was with Aveline, she might have jumped out of a window to go find her!

Aveline nodded and said, "Yes, something did happen."

Selena instantly tensed up. "What happened?"

Aveline replied, "Let's find Russ first."

"Alright!"

They made their way upstairs, and as they approached one of the rooms, the door opened, and Russell stepped out.

His gaze immediately fell on Aveline. "Are you okay now?"

"I'm fine," Aveline responded. "Russ, did you find out who drugged me?"

Russell nodded. "Come inside."

He led them into the room, and the bodyguards at the door promptly shut it behind them.

Inside the large room, three people were tied up in the center.

Aveline vaguely recognized two of them. She pointed to a girl in a red dress and said, "You were the one who suggested I go upstairs to rest last night."

The girl's face turned pale, and she quickly retorted, "I only suggested it because you seemed unwell. You didn't have to go. I was just trying to help, and now you're treating me like this! On what grounds?"

Chapter 782

The girl looked aggrieved, her expression defiant.

Aveline watched her calmly. Seeing that the girl had spent an entire night detained yet remained so composed, without a hint of guilt, Aveline turned her gaze to Russell. "Bring it over," Russell instructed his men.

One of his subordinates approached with a laptop, the screen displaying a surveillance video.

He hit play, and the footage showed the girl entering the banquet hall, her eyes immediately fixating on Aveline. Wherever Aveline went, the girl followed at a discreet distance, as if waiting for something. Finally, the footage showed Aveline drinking a glass of juice. About five minutes later, the girl casually walked past Aveline, feigning concern and asking a few questions.

The surveillance camera's audio quality was surprisingly good; other background noises were filtered out, leaving the girl's voice clear as she suggested Aveline go upstairs to rest.

As soon as Aveline left, the girl took out her phone and sent a message.

The video ended there.

Seeing this, the girl's eyes flickered with a hint of panic, but she still forced herself to remain calm.

"This video doesn't prove anything," she argued. "I was watching her because I thought her dress was beautiful. Is that a crime?"

She paused and continued, "I wasn't the only one curious about her last night. Why do you think I'm the one who did it?"

One of Russell's men stepped forward, holding the girl's phone. "You were thorough in deleting your messages, but our software detected traces. You sent a message saying, 'She's gone upstairs.'" The girl's face turned pale, bit by bit.

"I....."

Russell interjected, "Still trying to deny it?"

His gaze shifted to the other two individuals. "If I could find out what she did, despite how careful she was, what makes you think your tracks are any harder to follow?"

The two other captives flinched, exchanging a nervous glance.

The waitress among them finally broke, blurting out, "I'll talk! I'll tell you everything!" Everyone's attention turned to the waiter, waiting for his confession.

The waitress swallowed nervously and began, "My brother is very ill, and I desperately needed money. That's when someone offered me a large sum-to light some incense in the guest room and make sure Mrs. Tudor was brought there. If P succeeded, they promised to pay me two hundred thousand dollars."

"Who was it?" Aveline asked.

The waitress shook his head. "I... I don't know. Whenever we met, he always wore a hat and a mask, but I could tell it was a man."

Aveline's eyes were filled with uncertainty. Who could it be?

The waitress asked, "I've told you everything. Can... can you let me go now?"

Russell looked at Aveline. "What do you want to do?"

"Let her go," Aveline replied.

The waitress immediately looked at her with gratitude. "Thank you, Mrs. Tudor, thank you!"

She was released, but as soon as she was out of sight, the bodyguards quietly took her away again, unbeknownst to the people in the room.

Seeing the waitress let go so easily,

a flicker of hesitation crossed the

girl's face. After a moment, she said, "I've told you, I had nothing to do with this. Don't try to frame me!"

Even now, she refused to admit anything.

However, the evidence they had wasn't enough to prove the girl's direct involvement. Her explanation, for now, was plausible.

Chapter 783

Right now, the most critical link was this girl; she might be the only one who knew who was behind all of this.

But without concrete evidence, there wasn't much they could do to her.

The banquet hall manager, trembling with fear, was sweating profusely.

"Mr. Skyler, Mr. Tudor, I swear I know nothing about this! With such an important event, how could I possibly be reckless enough to allow something like this to happen?" Selena let out a cold laugh. "And yet it did happen. Saying that, doesn't it make you feel the least bit ashamed?"

The manager nodded repeatedly. "It's my fault, my incompetence. I'm willing to take responsibility, but I genuinely have no idea what happened. I'm innocent!"

Selena crossed her arms, glancing between the girl and the manager. "You both claim you have nothing to do with it. Then how did it happen? Did it just come out of thin air?"

The girl gave a sidelong look at Russell and said, "Maybe Mrs. Tudor and Mr. Skyler had something going on. Last night, with so many people around, it would have been the perfect cover. After all, being locked in a room together for so long... who knows what might have happened?"

"I think you have a death wish, talking like that!" Selena snapped, stepping forward and slapping the girl hard across the face.

"Did you see it with your own eyes? Did you witness the whole thing? Or maybe you knew what would happen, which is why you dare to speak so recklessly?"

The girl's face turned red with anger after being slapped. "Do I need to see it with my own eyes? Everyone knows Russell and Aveline have a complicated history!"

Selena, fuming, raised her hand to slap her again, but Aveline stepped in and held her back.

"Let me deal with her, Ave! I'll smack her so hard she'll regret every word!" Selena said, her fury barely contained.

Aveline replied, "Even if you beat her to a pulp, it won't solve anything."

Selena was still seething but reluctantly took a step back, refraining from further action. Aveline walked over to the girl, meeting her furious gaze with calm composure.

"I don't know who you're working for," she said coolly, "but it seems you're targeting me. If that's the case, why not just come out and face me directly? Playing these dirty tricks only makes you seem like rats hiding in the gutter. No matter how polished your appearance may be, deep down, you're still nothing but low and disgraceful."

"You...!" The girl's face twisted in anger at Aveline's words. She looked like she wanted to snap back, but a glance at Russell and Lucas seemed to make her think twice, and she held her tongue. The atmosphere in the room grew tense and heavy.

"Is everyone finished?"

Lucas' deep, magnetic voice broke the silence.

Aveline turned to him. "Do you have something to add?"

He shifted his gaze to the girl and spoke evenly, "Your family, the Slater family, runs a food company. But with increased competition in recent years, your business has been struggling.

A faint smile curved Lucas' lips. "Of course."

"In the past six months, you've been

facing a cash flow crisis, and the

company is on the brink of bankruptcy. Your father suffered a stroke and is hospitalized, your mother lacks any business acumen, and your brother is in prison for assault..."

He let out a mocking laugh. "And then someone offered you money to save your family's business,

promised to bring in the best doctors in the world for your father and hire top-notch lawyers to defend your brother.

"With such tempting terms, it's hard not to waver, isn't it? Once you took the bait, you couldn't easily betray them-after all, your entire family's lives are now in their hands."

Chapter 784

Linda Slater's eyes widened in disbelief. "How... how do you know all this?"

Lucas looked at her as if she were a fool. "Was your identity that hard to uncover?"

Linda's face instantly drained of color, and her body seemed to lose all strength.

She stared blankly ahead.

It's over... everything is over.

She had thought that if she just denied everything, she would be fine, and her family would be safe. But Lucas was far more terrifying than she had imagined!

Her family, who could be used as leverage by the man behind all this, could just as easily become pawns in Lucas' hands!

Lucas watched her expression and said calmly, "It looks like you've finally figured it out."

Linda closed her eyes, and after a long pause, she spoke, "I'll talk. You can punish me however you want, but please, spare my family. They are innocent." Lucas replied, "Start talking."

Tears streamed down Linda's face as she pleaded, "Mr. Tudor, I beg you, please let them go."

Lucas' sharp and handsome face held a hint of mockery. "I'm not a philanthropist. Your tears won't suddenly inspire me to go out and save the needy. If you don't have anything valuable to say, the Slater family will be erased from Cloudflare City."

His voice was deep and magnetic, calm and measured, but with every word, a sense of intense pressure filled the room, dropping the temperature by several degrees.

Selena leaned closer to Aveline, whispering, "Is this the infamous CEO aura?"

Aveline's lips twitched slightly as she looked at her. "Doesn't Mr. Fletcher act like this?"

"Him?" Selena scoffed. "He's just an idiot."

Aveline was speechless.

Linda's body trembled, fear slowly creeping into her eyes. She had thought Lucas would be as easy to deal with as Russell. But she hadn't expected his heart to be so cold and ruthless!

Russell finally spoke up, "Go ahead and talk. I'll consider helping your family."

Lucas shot him a cold glance. "Well, looks like we have a philanthropist in the room." His tone dripped with sarcasm.

Russell ignored Lucas' taunt and kept his focus on Linda.

Hope flickered in Linda's eyes as she began, "I know she's from Larbor City. She was a girl who contacted me a week ago and made me an offer. She wanted me to drug Mrs. Tudor and guide her upstairs → 4t supposed to be involved in anything else."

"What did she look like?" Russell asked.

Linda shook her head. "I couldn't see. She was wearing sunglasses and a mask, covering herself very tightly." Russell continued, "Where did you meet?"

"In a park," Linda replied, "specifically one without any surveillance cameras."

Russell's brow furrowed. The trail had gone cold again.

"That's it?" Lucas' cold voice broke the silence.

Linda's body trembled. "That's all I know, I swear! I'm not lying, please believe me!"

"Heh," Lucas scoffed, his tone filled with disdain.

He pulled out his phone, tapping the screen a few times before holding it up toward Linda. "Is this the park you're talking about?"

On his phone screen, a surveillance video played, clearly showing Linda's face as she sat next to another girl. The girl was indeed heavily covered, her face obscured by sunglasses and a mask.

Chapter 785

Linda's eyes widened. "You..."

This man-was he the devil himself? How had he even found this out?

What made it even more terrifying was that he had just stood there, watching her lie, likely filled with disdain and mockery. It was like a slap across her face, draining her of all strength.

"I thought you might have something useful to say," Lucas remarked, tucking his phone back into his pocket. "Looks like I was expecting too much."

He turned to Aveline. "Ready to go?"

Aveline, still processing everything, nodded. "Yes."

She looked over at Russell. "Russ, thank you for all your help. I'll get to the bottom of this. In the meantime, you should let everyone go."

Russell's gaze was conflicted as he glanced from Aveline to Lucas. "Just how much have you found out?"

Lucas shot him a brief look. "Enough to know who's behind it."

Russell was speechless.

The comment was cutting, filled with irony.

Selena's eyes widened with curiosity. She quickly leaned forward, asking, "Who is it?"

Lucas glanced at her. "And why would I tell you?"

Selena retorted, "Because I'm family! When you have your wedding, I'll be walking her down the aisle. Whether I give her hand to you is entirely up to me!" "Oh," Lucas replied nonchalantly, "still not telling you."

Selena dropped her pretense, pointing at him. "You sneaky bastard!"

Aveline sighed. "I'll know soon enough, so what's the rush?"

Selena suddenly calmed down. "You're right. Just make sure I'm the first to know."

Aveline nodded and then turned to Lucas. "What else did you find out?"

Lucas looked at her intently, his lips moving as if he wanted to say something but hesitated, remaining silent.

Aveline stepped closer. "Let's talk while we walk."

Lucas followed behind her as they left the hotel.

The crowd had dispersed, and the once noisy banquet hall had now settled into a calm silence. Thanks to the explanations given earlier, no damaging rumors had spread about the events of the previous night.

Once they were in the car, Aveline glanced at Lucas, waiting for him to continue.

Lucas had intended to keep up a bit of mystery, but her intense gaze

made Kim relent. "You keep looting

at me like that... makes me think you want to kiss me."

Aveline scoffed. "Didn't you get enough of that last night? Don't push your luck!"

Lucas raised an eyebrow. "I asked for your opinion last night, and you agreed."

"I don't remember," Aveline replied.

"Are you trying to play dumb, or do you want to settle the score?" Lucas teased.

Aveline cut straight to the point, "I want to know who's targeting me."

Lucas chuckled softly, deciding not to prolong the suspense. "The same person behind the orphanage fire-Juliet."

Aveline paused, her expression tightening. "So, she really can't stand the thought of me. In that case, I should go directly to Larbor City." Lucas looked surprised. "To reclaim your family?"

Aveline nodded. "That's exactly what she's afraid of-me going back to the Cooper family. After everything she's done, if I don't make a move, wouldn't that be letting her off too easily?"

Lucas laughed under his breath. "Aveline, you've learned to play dirty."

She glanced at him. "A person is shaped by their company."

Lucas took her hand and brought it to his lips, his intense gaze fixed on hers.

"How about we don't get divorced?"

Chapter 786

Aveline paused, pulling her hand away. "Lucas, I expect you to keep your promise."

A flicker of disappointment crossed Lucas' eyes, and his lips pressed into a thin line.

He looked at her calm yet distant face, unable to understand how, after the passion they shared last night, she could now be so cold.

It was just like they said-once the deed was done, she acted like he was a stranger.

The atmosphere in the car grew tense and heavy, neither of them saying a word.

Aveline hadn't slept well the previous night. When she got back to Maple Garden, she called Maria to take the day off and lay down to rest. But with so much on her mind, she couldn't find peace, tossing and turning in bed. After half an hour of restless sleep, she finally gave up and got up.

When she arrived at the studio, the first thing she noticed was Sidney coming out of the office, looking rather troubled.

"What's going on?" she asked casually, sensing something was off.

Sidney's eyes flickered when he saw her.

After a brief hesitation, he said, "It's nothing. I'm heading out of town with the boss for a while."

Aveline raised an eyebrow. "Out of town?"

Business trips had never been Maria's forte, especially considering her tenuous foothold in Cloudflare City. Yet here she was, contemplating expansion. Was she really so eager to spread her wings this soon? "Yeah." Sidney nodded, his expression complicated as if he had something more to say.

Aveline blinked. "What is it?"

Before Sidney could respond, Maria's voice rang out from the back, "Sidney, get our things together. We need to leave now."

Sidney swallowed whatever he was about to say.

"It's nothing," he muttered, turning to follow Maria's orders.

Sidney murmured a quick response and brushed past her, returning to his desk.

Aveline's eyes narrowed with curiosity.

Why was everyone acting so strangely?

Maria approached, noticing the fatigue etched on Aveline's face. "Didn't you take the day off? You don't look too well. You should be resting at home."

Aveline replied, "I can't rest properly at home either. Might as well work-keeping busy should help me sleep better tonight."

Maria nodded. "Makes sense. I'll be

out of town with Sidney for about a

week. During this time, just focus on

finishing the design drafts;

worry about anything else

don't

"Got it," Aveline agreed, though she knew she still had to find a replacement designer before she left. She needed to settle on a candidate before moving on.

Returning to her desk, she opened

her computer and began working on the design plans. Fortunately, Patrick had no objections to

net'

drawings. He was fine with following

her vision, which made out

easier.

It seemed the renovation of the vineyard could start soon. Once that was underway, she could hand over the remaining work to the new designer and head to Larbor City herself. en FindNovel

But before that, she needed evidence.

She couldn't just accuse Juliet without proof; no one would believe her. Worse, they might think she was making baseless accusations or trying to stir up trouble. However, the evidence was currently in Lucas's possession, and getting it from him wouldn't be easy. After considering her options, Aveline made up her mind. That evening, she bought groceries and prepared dinner at home.

As she finished cooking, she called Lucas.

"Hello?" His deep, magnetic voice answered quickly.

"Dinner at my place tonight?" Aveline suggested.

Lucas sounded genuinely surprised. "Well, this is unexpected. You're actually inviting me over for dinner?"

Chapter 787

Aveline could hear the teasing in his tone and tried to stay calm, her voice turning even colder. "If you don't want to come, then forget it."

"I'm coming, absolutely," Lucas replied immediately, his tone overly enthusiastic. "Even if I were on a plane right now, I'd tell the pilot to turn around so I could have dinner with you."

Aveline felt a shiver run down her spine, rolling her eyes. "Cut the crap. Keep talking like that, and you're bound to get struck by lightning."

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

Lucas chuckled softly at the dial tone, glancing over at the cabin door that was just about to close.

"Cancel the flight," he ordered.

The flight attendant blinked, confused.

Desmond, sitting in the front row, immediately turned around. "Mr. Tudor, this trip to the States is to discuss a strategic partnership. If we back out now, the other side will definitely be upset. It might be tough to negotiate a deal later." Lucas replied coolly, "Then find another company."

He stood up and left the business class cabin without another word.

Desmond was speechless.

Oh, God! Mr. Tudor was getting more unpredictable by the day!

But Desmond had a pretty good guess. The only person who could make Lucas drop everything was probably Aveline.

For someone who always claimed he didn't care, didn't like her... Well, looks like he'd been proven wrong!

...

Nightfall arrived.

Aveline sat at the dining table, staring at the food that was growing cold, her perfectly shaped brows furrowing in frustration.

She glanced at the clock. An hour had passed.

What was this? Was he not coming at all?

And without even the courtesy of a call.

Her expression grew even colder as she reached for her phone, ready to invite Selena over for dinner instead.

Just then, the doorbell rang.

Aveline got up to answer it, and

there stood Lucas, wearing a black overcoat over a dark gray business suit, his matching tie impeccably in place.

"Sorry, got caught in traffic," Lucas said, his striking eyes fixed on her.

Without waiting for a response, he stepped inside, slipping off his coat and handing it to her.

Aveline felt a wave of exasperation but still took the coat and hung it on the rack by the door.

Lucas glanced at the table full of food, a faint smile appearing in his eyes. "So, what's the catch?"

Aveline looked at him. "You knew there'd be strings attached, and you still came?"

Lucas replied, "It's not every day I get to eat a meal you cooked. A few conditions are worth it."

Aveline paused for a moment, then said, "Let's eat first."

Thankfully, the food was still warm. They ate in silence.

Her cooking had improved quite a bit, he noticed.

The taste was even better than before, and he couldn't help but eat more than half of what was on the table. Aveline had just one plate, then put down her utensils, quietly watching him as he finished.

A moment later, Lucas set down his utensils and wiped his mouth with a napkin.

"Now, let's hear it," he said.

Aveline got straight to the point, "You have the evidence that Juliet ordered the arson and the drugging, right?" Lucas nodded. "Yes."

"Hand it over," she demanded, extending her hand toward him.

Lucas glanced at the now-empty dining table and raised an eyebrow. "You think a single meal is enough to trade for something that important?"

Aveline frowned. "What more do you want?"

Lucas looked at her pale, soft palm, then reached out and took her hand. "Same deal as before."

Aveline instantly pulled her hand away and stood up, leaving the dining room.

"Clean up!" she snapped over her shoulder, not sparing him another glance.

Frustrated, she muttered to herself regretting the invitation. She should have known better-might as well

have fed all that food to a dog!

Chapter 788

Aveline sat cross-legged in the living room, hugging a pillow as she watched TV.

The warm, soft light illuminated her, casting a gentle glow over her, making her look like a serene figure in a painting.

Lucas entered that painting.

He had shed his suit jacket and rolled up the sleeves of his shirt, meticulously cleaning the dining area and kitchen before joining her.

Sitting beside her, his gaze shifted to the television. It was a historical fantasy drama with impressive costumes and solid acting. She seemed thoroughly engrossed.

Lucas, however, was far less interested in the show. His eyes drifted back to her face. He thought, rather than watching TV, there were much more enjoyable things they could be doing.

"Have you thought about it?" he asked, his deep voice cutting through the dialogue between the male and female leads on the screen.

Aveline's eyelashes fluttered slightly. "After I finish this episode."

Lucas chuckled softly, wrapping his arm around her shoulders.

She tensed for a moment, then gradually relaxed against him.

The episode ran for 45 minutes, during which Lucas even chimed in occasionally with comments about the plot.

For the first time in a long time, there was an unexpected tranquility between them, a gentle warmth that seemed to flow between their two bodies.

Lucas felt a fleeting sense of illusion-like this was their everyday life, filled with calm moments and a deep bond.

When the episode ended, Aveline took the remote and switched off the TV. She set the pillow aside, then unexpectedly straddled his lap and pressed her lips to his, almost mechanically, without a trace of emotion.

Lucas narrowed his eyes slightly, watching her, letting her take the lead. Her kissing had improved; he could see traces of his own influence.

As her tongue brushed against his lips, his hands moved, one cupping the back of her head, the other steadying her waist, deepening the kiss.

Outside, the night had fully fallen, and the stars began to sprinkle across the darkened sky.

The room was filled with a charged, ambiguous tension. Even though they were sharing the most intimate of acts, their hearts seemed separated by an unbridgeable chasm.

When it was over, Aveline was exhausted.

Lucas carried her to the bathroom, washed her gently, and helped her into her nightclothes.

Back in bed, she stretched out her hand again. "Give it to me."

Lucas pressed her hand back down. "It'll be in your email."

Hearing this, Aveline finally felt at ease, closing her eyes to sleep. "You can leave now... and remember to lock the door." Lucas was speechless.

He suddenly wondered who was truly getting the better end of this arrangement-him or her?

Thinking about the way she had seemed lost in the moment, he fell silent, pondering. But then again, how many more times would he get to be this close to her? He should savor each chance.

Leaning down, he kissed her forehead softly. "Goodnight."

Then he stood up and left.

The door clicked shut, and Aveline opened her eyes.

In the darkness, her gaze was sharp, like the walls around her heart were starting to crumble, bit by bit.

The next morning, Aveline checked her email.

It contained all the evidence the entire chain of events of the arson and the drugging, with Juliet's involvement clearly highlighted.

She couldn't help but wonder, if she presented these facts to the Cooper family, would they believe it?

After all, Juliet was the daughter

they had nurtured and cherished for

so many

years. Would they really be

willing to cast aside all those years of devotion?

Chapter 789

Aveline wasn't sure what to do, so she decided to keep the evidence safe for now, knowing it would be a while before she could head to Larbor City. She kept herself busy for several days.

The final designs were approved, and the winery project had started.

She began interviewing designers, but after several rounds, none of the candidates stood out.

Many had creative ideas, but they were impractical-imaginative concepts that would be difficult to bring to life.

One day, Selena invited her out for a meal.

The fondue pot simmered, filling the air with a mouthwatering aroma of melted cheese and garlic. Aveline took a bite of her bread, but her attention was quickly drawn to Selena, who let out yet another sigh. "What's wrong? You've sighed twenty-eight times since we got here."

Selena looked at her in mock surprise. "You were actually counting? I had no idea you loved me so much!"

Aveline replied, "Cut the crap. What's going on?"

Selena sighed again. "I got called in for a talk with the Fletchers."

Aveline paused mid-bite. "What?"

Selena continued, "It happened a few days ago. After Russ' wedding, the Fletchers saw me with Aaron. They intercepted me afterward. The whole conversation was basically them hinting that I'm not suitable for Aaron, that his future wife needs to be someone who matches their status."

Aveline was silent for a moment before she asked, "So, what are you sighing about?"

Selena sighed again. "I just didn't expect the Fletchers to be so stuck up. Do they call in every girl Aaron dates for an interview? What century is this? Ever heard of freedom in love and marriage?"

Aveline looked at her carefully. "Do you want to marry Aaron?"

"Absolutely not!" Selena quickly denied it. "I've never thought about it that way!"

Aveline responded, "Then why are you so bothered? You've always been clear that you're only seeing him for three months. So, whatever they say, it shouldn't matter to you."

"Right!" Selena suddenly looked like

she had an epiphany. "I'm not

planning to marry him, so why

swnyel

should I care about what they think?"

Aveline studied her with a more probing look, sensing something more beneath the surface.

Was it really just that she hadn't thought about it? Or had she started to waver, feeling unsure over time?

Judging by Selena's glowing complexion, Aaron had been treating her well. It would be hard not to fall into that kind of sweetness.

Aveline lowered her gaze, pushing her thoughts aside and keeping her feelings to herself.

These were matters that Selena would need to face on her own.

Of course, she hoped Selena could find happiness-happiness that surpassed her own by a hundredfold.

"Eat up; the food's ready," Aveline said, placing some in Selena's bowl.

"Thanks, darling! Love you, muah!" Selena blew her a playful kiss.

After finishing the meal, they headed to a karaoke bar.

The room was lavishly decorated, with over-the-top gold

embellishments and impeccable

service. A group of male model

came in to deliver their drinks and snacks, and some even stayed to sing with them.

Selena was in high spirits, pulling one of the models close to sing a duet.

Aveline watched from the side, feeling a bit helpless.

Singing inevitably led to drinking, and by the latter half of the night, Selena's awareness had begun to blur.

"You all can leave now," Aveline said to the models.

The men filed out of the room.

"Hey, don't go! We haven't finished yet! Let's do another one-'Because of Love Selena reached out to stop them, but Aveline gently held her back. "It's late. We should go

Selena looked at her for a moment, and then, suddenly, she said, "Ave, I think... I might actually like Aaron."

Chapter 790

Aveline paused, looking at Selena. "You figured it out this quickly?"

Selena's arm draped over Aveline's shoulder, her tipsy face flushed a soft pink under the flickering lights, her gaze unfocused as she stared ahead.

"When I met with the Fletchers, they made quite the impression. They left me waiting in the conservatory for two hours before they saw me. And when they finally did, they didn't even say what they wanted. They just handed me a stack of debutante photos and asked me to help pick Aaron's future wife. Can you believe it?"

Her voice wavered, and tears began to stream down her face. She wiped them away with a quick swipe of her hand. "Ave, I thought I'd never fall for Aaron. I thought I could laugh off their little power play, but I couldn't. I felt humiliated in a way I didn't expect."

She looked at Aveline, her eyes red, and continued, "They didn't say anything directly, they didn't insult me, but I still felt small... ashamed. Ave, am I in too deep?"

Aveline replied, "Yeah, you're in deep."

Selena groaned dramatically and hugged her tight. "So, what do I do now? Am I doomed to a messy love-hate cycle with Aaron? That would be such a cliché."

Aveline studied her for a long moment before saying, "Let's get you home. When you're sober, I'll tell you what to do."

Selena pouted and clung to her neck, looking up with a pitiful expression. "Can't you just tell me now?"

Aveline shook her head. "No, you're not thinking straight. Decisions made in this state are usually impulsive." Selena's lips quivered. "Fine, but you have to stay with me tonight."

"Alright," Aveline agreed, guiding her out.

But as they stepped out of the karaoke bar, they spotted a silver Maybach parked at the curb.

Aaron, wearing a camel-colored coat, was standing beside the car, phone in hand, watching the entrance.

As soon as he saw them, he spoke briefly into the phone before hanging up and walking toward them.

"Why is it that every time you two get together, it ends with drinking? She always comes home and starts acting up. I guess I'll need to keep a closer eye on you two from now on," Aaron said in a half-joking tone, reaching out to take Selena from Aveline. But Selena pulled away from his grasp. "You're not getting me into bed tonight!"

Aveline blinked. "I'll take her home with me. We haven't had a proper catch-up in ages."

Aaron raised an eyebrow. "Girls' night or just a roast session?"

Aveline chuckled, unable to help herself.

He wasn't wrong-every time they got together, it seemed like it

into either a roast of Aaron or eat

No one was spared.

"Ave, let's go home," Selena whined, clinging to her.

Aveline nodded and gently led Selena to her car.

Thankfully, she hadn't been drinking and could drive.

After settling Selena into the passenger seat, she got in herself, started the car, and drove away.

Aaron watched them leave, then pulled out his phone and dialed Lucas.

"What do you want?" Lucas' tone was flat and distant.

Aaron replied, "Two guys down on

their

how about we don't stop until we drop tonight?

Lucas let out a cold laugh. "What happened? Did your girlfriend dump you?"

Aaron snorted. "She wouldn't dare! Not in a million years. Where are you?" "Meet me at The Haven."

Back at Maple Garden, Selena had sobered up a bit but stayed

her

that's seemingly