

Flirtacious 431

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"I bet the person you are waiting for won't show up for the time being, so it's probably fine for you to come back after dropping Genev off," replied Johanna. "Come on, Armand. You and Timothy are such good friends, so I'm sure you won't abandon his wife's BFF, right?"

Without saying another word, Armand got out of the car and waited until Genevieve put all her bags into it. He closed the door, circled around the car, and gave Steven some instructions.

"It's not safe for Johanna to hail a cab all on her own and get home like that. Go with her."

Steven understood that Armand wasn't actually worried about Johanna getting into trouble or anything, but he didn't say anything. He simply got out of the car.

After Armand and Genevieve left, Johanna received a phone call.

"Steven, my friend is waiting for me in the parking lot over there, so I'll be heading home in her car. Bye," said Johanna who was actually giving a random excuse just to leave quickly.

She waited until Steven was no longer within earshot before she called the person back.

"How did it go?"

After a brief conversation, Johanna said, "Thank you for your hard work. I will wire the money to you soon."

She hung up the call and was in a daze for a moment, but she regained her footing quickly. Hence, she looked like any regular pedestrian when she stepped on the zebra crossing.

The Maybach was driving down the road. No one spoke, so all anyone could hear was the wipers clearing the raindrops away.

the guy sitting behind the wheels whenever she looked up. She noticed how his enormous arm, which was

the watch I gave

Armand's phone,

call up and put it

lady with a melodious voice from the other end of the line. "My manager said that he saw your car parked

reply before saying, "I was going to pick you up, but I have to drop a friend off now, so please

or throw a tantrum. She didn't ask any other questions, either. "Okay. Drive

were when she was shopping earlier. She overheard some of the customers say that a company

in question is Sylvie? It's even more surprising to know that the person Armand was picking up was actually her. What an a*shole! A friend? Puh-lease! She is so much more than a simple friend! She'd be the mother of your child if

she leaned closer and rested her arm on the side of the car. After that,

need to share an insignificant detail like

right about that. Sylvie didn't need to worry since I would not have bothered hanging

must be very happy, Mr. Faulkner," commented Genevieve through gritted

its way into the underground parking spot in Regality

all. He didn't drop me off at the entrance and make me run in the

the car. Instead, she leaned closer to him and said, "I need a housekeeper to cook and keep the place clean. Have

will get someone to work for you," replied Armand to

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The way she put her hands on the back of his neck, the tone she used... Everything was seductive.

When Genevieve caressed Armand, he felt himself burning up. His breathing became uneven as well, but the glow in his eyes remained clear. He put his hand on Genevieve's neck and pushed her away.

Unfortunately, she would not relent and crawled back onto him to kiss him.

Without warning, she mercilessly bit his lower lip until he bled. Only then did she leave him be.

"You bit my lip last night and made it impossible for me to even put on lipstick today. I have to get revenge for that now, don't I?" said Genevieve as she wiped his blood from her lips. "Have your housekeeper come to me tomorrow. Just tell me what you want in return, okay?"

Armand pushed her wandering hands away and replied, "If you can afford to give me what I want, then it's a deal."

"Don't worry, Mr. Faulkner. I will pay whatever price you name," replied Genevieve as she grinned.

She opened the door and got out of the car before retrieving everything she bought that day.

When she saw the cologne she had with her, she handed it to Armand and said, "The tips I gave you this morning are lacking, so here. This should make up for it."

Armand was so irritated that he couldn't help chuckling a little in exasperation.

He didn't leave, even after she had entered the elevator. He stood there and unboxed the cologne. same brand he

Just as he was about to drive though, he felt something underneath the pedal. That something turned out to be

was Genevieve's, and it fell off
earring.
for breakfast the
just finished preparing everything when
aside, she jogged a little to answer the
door were Steven and a middle-aged
house's cleanliness from now on,"
bowed and greeted, "Good morning,
she had Rosa make her some pasta. The ingredients were all
Steven to the living room when she
him. "The rain was heavy yesterday, so I didn't get the chance to catch up with you. How have you
been? Have
"No," replied Steven.
that Steven was a few years older than Armand,
was Steven's personal matters, though, so Genevieve wasn't in a position

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Steven stared for a long time before he put his cup down and got off the couch. "I pray that you will keep your word. I should go now."

Genevieve walked him out.

After closing the door, her smile turned upside down right away. She sighed internally. *It's true that I won't butt in on Armand's love life or his marriage, but if he were to remarry, then he and I will have truly come to an end...*

"Ms. Rachford," shouted Rosa who was in the dining room. "Breakfast is ready. I'll go clean the bedroom now."

Genevieve came back around and hurried to the dining room. "You don't need to work so hard. Please sit. I'd like to chat with you."

Genevieve sat down at the dining table and picked up her fork to chow down on the pasta. She complimented Rosa's cooking, then asked, "How long did you work at Swallow Garden?"

"Three years," answered Rosa honestly.

Before she even came, Armand made it clear to her that Genevieve would be the boss from now on.

All Rosa had to do was obey Genevieve's words.

Genevieve murmured a reply before she nonchalantly asked, "So, uh, have you ever seen Mr. Faulkner coming home with any women?"

it before replying, "No. He always comes home alone. He would be away from home for a few weeks

Clasen never

that celebrity?" said Rosa. "No, she never came

dark cloud looming over Genevieve's heart finally faded

was that the women featured in the gossip magazines were

relief didn't last long. Rosa continued by saying, "I have, however, heard Mr. Sullivan say that Mr. Faulkner often has dinner with Ms. Clasen. He would stay out overnight

be bland, so she put her fork

housekeepers at Swallow Garden enjoyed gossiping during their time off, so Rosa knew that Armand used

two and two together and realized

had more to share with Genevieve, but the sudden scowl and the way Genevieve slammed the fork on the table frightened

I say something wrong,

feel unwell," replied Genevieve. She waved her hand to dismiss Rosa

substitute when she first learned that Sylvie had been staying by Armand's side for the

the last two days in the country and learning what Armand had been doing for Sylvie all this time made Genevieve

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Genevieve wore a gray formal outfit that day, and the aura she exuded made it clear that she was a powerful woman. Her brows, despite being stunning, inspired admiration and fear.

The receptionist quickly recognized Genevieve and realized that the latter was the new CEO.

"Good morning, Ms. Rachford."

Soon, a secretary came to greet Genevieve and take her to the conference room.

Every employee had already been notified about the change of the CEO via e-mail.

That was why the secretarial department was able to set up a meeting quickly.

The secretary introduced the top managers to Genevieve after the latter entered the conference room. Everyone exchanged some simple pleasantries after that.

The meeting started with Genevieve getting an update on the progress of all ongoing projects.

In order to fully utilize the resources they had with them, the company would produce two TV series and one movie every year.

When the assistant manager responsible for production was giving an update, Genevieve read up on their previous projects.

to ask. "Why has Sylvie never been

said TV series would be exponential. There was even a chance that the project would garner fans and would be trending even before the series made it on screen. It might also bring more viewership

she is rather busy since she has to shoot

"She is featured in a single movie every

sent her secretary to get Sylvie's schedule for the

quietly watched as she did

roles for a TV series that

together was shared, and

the company had implicitly admitted that the rumor

where she didn't bother showing up anymore and would pretend to have neglected some of the more daunting tasks that the company assigned

answer her phone for her and claim that she was busy

for Genevieve Orsi, but Armand was the one who invested in most of the movies. His powers and her association with him inspired so much

everyone stopped demanding

take long before the secretary returned to the conference room with

any of the company's events or activities in the past two years! She didn't even train a single newbie. My gosh, it's as if she was the

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After getting out of the conference room, the vice president allocated some projects and activities for Sylvie, then contacted Sylvie's manager, informing her that it would mean termination if Sylvie continued to disobey the company.

Sylvie had signed an eight-year contract when she joined, with a contract termination fee of a hefty four-digit sum, something that she would not be able to fork out even if she lived a considerably good life.

As such, she had no choice but to accept all kinds of gigs the company arranged for her.

Upon receiving the message sent by Sylvie's manager, the person in charge instantly heaved a breath of relief. *Well, Genevieve is still impressive after all. Only she can take down someone like Sylvie!*

But in no time, trouble approached.

The company was preparing for their self-produced drama and had chosen the male and female leads—the former role given to a newbie with great potential, while the latter to Sylvie.

However, just as the drama's official Twitter released the first set of characters' images, Sylvie's fans began making negative comments, including how the male lead was too ugly and was not a good fit for Sylvie. All in all, they requested a change in the male lead.

It did not take those fans much difficulty to bring Genevieve Orsi Productions up on the trending list with their criticisms.

On Thursday morning, Sylvie headed to Baykeep according to the company's arranged schedule for a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Because of unrigorous security, the ardent fans below the stage found an opportunity to rush up, pounce on and kiss Sylvie like a pack of hungry wolves. That inadvertently caused her to fall to the ground, thus sustaining severe injuries to her legs.

The accident at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, coupled with the dissatisfaction toward the company for ignoring their requests to make the male lead for the drama, led to the eruption of emotions in Sylvie's fans.

of fans gathered outside the entrance of Twilight Tower, holding onto banners and chanting how Genevieve Orsi Productions was a terrible

people began to gossip on

Our beloved Sylvie is a movie actress. Are you blind? Did you not see the awards and achievements

how do your other artists make a living? Can the company possibly earn the recognition

But why the heck did you choose that guy

the agency's CEO, and it was

the fans upon learning about the secret. They immediately headed

was settling

was only after receiving a phone call from the agency's vice president did she found out that Sylvie was at the hospital after

call. Concurrently, a creaking sound of wooden floors being stepped on resonated into

years old, came down from upstairs with a

that she might fall, Genevieve hurried up to

a head full of gray hair, and her wrinkly face had a few faint scars, making

not seem too agile as she placed the metal box on the table with her

could not pry open the box after a long while, Genevieve took the box from

was a stack of photos, which had a slight yellowish tint, possibly

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The old lady grabbed her sleeve to wipe her tears. “She went to look for Cesar, but he's nothing but a useless and irresponsible brat. He said he never thought about marrying her and broke up with her. Ms. Valentine bawled her eyes out while standing by the door, reluctant to leave. I had no choice but to drag her with me. But on our way back, the car got stopped by someone...”

During then, two black cars surrounded their vehicle. Several men got out, broke their windows to open the car door, and took Charice away by force.

She could not muster an ounce of energy as she insisted on heading out to look for Cesar even though she had just given birth.

To protect her, the old lady fought persistently with those men. Unfortunately, they pushed her to the ground, and as a result, her face pricked straight into the broken glass shards, leaving her unconscious at once.

Only after she regained consciousness did she learn about the news that a car explosion occurred by the hillside, and a female body was found near the venue. It was reported that the female victim had just given birth not too long ago.

Convinced that the body belonged to Charice, the old lady broke into tears as she watched the news.

After staying in the hospital for about six months, the wound on the old lady's face finally recovered. At the same time, a man visited her at the hospital and ordered her to leave Xedells after handing her two cases of money and a fake identity card.

With the money in hand, she departed to Baykeep, which was not too far away from Xedells, and settled down to date.

“Actually, Ms. Valentine didn't die back then,” Genevieve revealed.

If she's dead, she wouldn't have appeared at Dartan and even got married with kids.

lady was shocked by that piece of news. “W-What... what did

right; she isn't dead.” Genevieve bobbed her head. “She went to Dartan and lived there for many years. She only passed away unexpectedly

Perplexity consumed the old lady. “I saw

Genevieve muttered. “That dead body could have been put at the scene purposely by somebody, in an still could not be sure if the culprit

had learned from Jack and this old lady that Cesar had

the photo on her phone and passed it to the old

news previously. I recognize this man!” she exclaimed nervously. “Is he really the child Ms. Valentine gave birth

Genevieve nodded.

did it dawn on the old lady that she had yet asked for Genevieve's name. "How did you know about my relationship with Ms. Valentine?

someone to run a check for me. That's how I found out that you're Charice's

the old lady stared at the man in the photo for a long time. Tears

matters to tend to, she bid her

left, she told the latter that she hoped to take the photos with her. Luckily, she was

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Sylvie's manager, Joyce, was also in the ward.

When she saw the resemblance between Genevieve and Sylvie, a look of surprise instantly crept over her face.

She was always following Sylvie around, so she knew the resemblance wasn't obvious when the latter went makeup free.

After the professional makeup artists had worked their magic on Sylvie, however, there was no doubt she'd bear a much more striking resemblance to Genevieve.

That said, even with a full face of makeup, Sylvie would still pale in comparison to Genevieve, especially now that the latter was both her boss and the CEO of Genevieve Orsi Productions.

"Oh, it wasn't Sylvie's fault," Joyce hastily explained after catching the hint in Sylvie's glance. "The event organizer didn't provide enough security guards, so they couldn't stop the fans from storming up the stage."

The next second, Joyce rolled up Sylvie's pant leg, revealing the big, nasty bruise on her fair skin. "Look how badly she fell. Her calf is all bruised. The doctor said Sylvie will need to stay in the hospital for at least two weeks, which means we'll have to put her work on hold..."

Genevieve winced at the gnarly leg bruise and said sympathetically, "Yes, the injury sure looks bad. Have a good rest, then. I'll let the assistant manager know about it."

Rachford, I wanted to ask you something..." Joyce replied. "As you know, Sylvie has been starring in movies since she joined the entertainment industry, and her latest works earned her critical acclaim. You may not be aware of this, but there's a big difference between doing movies and TV dramas. Don't you think letting her act in a drama would be

the woman on the hospital bed and smiled. "Sylvie, can't you speak for yourself? Why

"But I'm her manager—"

one of the managers working for our company. She

Joyce ducked her head and said

attention back to Sylvie. "Are you unhappy with my arrangement? Do you not want to be of making a movie is faster than a TV drama, so I'm just worried I might not be used to the latter and mess things up.

shooting a TV series is far too tiring, and you don't

you really are a brilliant actress. Your acting chops are way better than the young lady I met a few days ago. Next time, though, remember to

narrowed her eyes. "Ms. Rachford, I

and it won't be wise to mess with me. You can either

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Genevieve strolled up to the man and scoffed, "Wow, Mr. Faulkner, you must really care a lot for your lover. She just got hospitalized, yet you've already put your work aside to visit her."

"Like you said, she's my lover. Shouldn't I show her some care and concern?" Armand replied in a deep voice.

A scowl instantly crept into Genevieve's face. "Oh, yes! Of course, you should! It'd be even better if you brought her some supplements so her leg can heal faster!"

"Okay," Armand answered with a gentle nod. "Thank you for your suggestion, Ms. Rachford."

Genevieve was still holding back her anger when her phone started ringing. After seeing who the caller was, she broke into a smile and answered it while walking toward the elevator.

"Hello, who's that?" she piped up.

After a while, she added, "Of course, I've missed you! I miss you every second of every minute of every day. Sorry, darling. I've been so busy recently that I haven't had the time to call you."

Genevieve's voice was so saccharine-sweet that it was as though she was trying to soothe the caller and wishing she could be with him.

It didn't take long for Armand to guess who the caller was, and his calm demeanor began to crack as he felt himself tensing up.

A few seconds later, however, he regained his composure and strode into Sylvie's ward.

Joyce greeted, utterly shocked that Armand would even show up

poured him a glass of water immediately,

and walked up to Sylvie's bedside. "Where

lifting her pant leg to

voice full of pity. "Even when Sylvie was filming on set, she had never been injured this badly. The doctor said she won't be able to get out

stay here during this time and take

She also wants me to return to the office tomorrow so she can assign me new

said nothing as he listened intently, speaking up only when Joyce had finished

has to follow the company's

expression darkened at

the truth is that I prefer making movies. TV dramas are out of my expertise, so I don't want to mess anything up. But Ms. Rachford

"How much is it?"

sum and added, "Once I've joined another production company and made money from the movies, I'll definitely pay you back with

the termination fee isn't a small amount," Armand mused. "I'll need a few days

he had essentially agreed to help her, Sylvie beamed with joy. "Thank you, Mr.

this stroke of luck! Once I leave the company, I shall strike out on my

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Cooper's deep, booming voice suddenly rang out. "Ms. Clasen, you'd better remain in Genevieve Orsi Productions for the duration of your contract. If you get Armand to pay your termination fee, I guarantee it'd spell the end of your acting career. Not even Armand would be able to help you then! If you don't believe me, go ahead and try it!"

Sylvie was so terrified by Cooper's threat that she began shaking uncontrollably.

She looked up at Armand, hoping he'd put in a word for her, but unfortunately, he was indifferent about it.

"I won't offend a business partner for a woman," he said calmly.

After hearing Armand's promise, Cooper snorted and hung up the phone.

"I want to help you terminate your contract, but you know the relationship between Mr. Sutton and your company's new CEO," Armand explained. "My company has a lot of projects with Specter Corporation. I can't risk that."

Then, in an attempt to appease Sylvie, he continued, "If there are any movies you're interested in taking on, I'll try my best to help you."

Left with no other choice, Sylvie nodded and forced a smile out. "Thank you, Mr. Faulkner."

Since he still had work to do, Armand barely stayed in the ward for ten minutes before taking his leave.

Joyce promptly returned to the table

Valentine wrapped around her finger. From what I've heard, Mr. Valentine has a lot of influence in Dartan and is the real decision-maker in Helt Corporation!" she said as she emptied almost half her glass and sighed. "Not only does she have the looks, but she's also insanely

around and saw Sylvie scowling away, she

Rachford family's adopted son and has a very close relationship with Genevieve. He has dealings with Mr. Faulkner daily, so I can understand why Mr. Faulkner doesn't want to offend him," Joyce coaxed. "Don't break your contract with the company in a fit of anger, Sylvie. Mr. Faulkner treats you very well. I'm sure he will finance the movies you're interested

he?" Sylvie replied with a bitter smile. "Don't you know

was aware

Sylvie's side and handled everything from the

yet Armand would always insist

was a womanizer, Sylvie continued to stick by

only Joyce knew the truth. Sylvie had occasional meals with Armand, but that was all. She spent

for Sylvie, but Armand was adamant that she limit her public exposure.

gotten embroiled in scandals with any male artists since her debut. Even when she went on

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When Armand didn't pop out of his room, Sylvie's heart sank. She knew there was no longer any point in waiting and decided right there and then to leave the hotel.

She couldn't believe that after all the effort she had put in, Genevieve was the one to benefit from it.

When Sylvie's gaze fell on the fruit basket on the table, her expression turned a shade darker.

"It was nothing. I didn't feel like staying in the hotel anymore."

Thankfully, Joyce caught the drift and knew better than to probe further. "All right. I have to report back to the office tomorrow morning. Once you've worked with your new manager for a few days, you can give an excuse about not being used to them. I can then use that reason to be transferred back to you."

Sylvie's the biggest star in the company, and she has Armand backing her up too. Why would I want to work with other newbies and tire myself out?

"Use this time to rest and recuperate," Joyce added as she placed Sylvie's glass on the table. "Even if Genevieve is our boss and wants you to star in TV dramas, that'd all be at a later date. Right now, she has enough fires to fight with the news making headlines."

The next second, Joyce leaned in closer and whispered, "Besides, you still have your fans. They are the ones who decide what TV dramas you get to be in."

weren't for Jack Valentine, I doubt she'd have gotten the management rights to the production

hate to admit it, Genevieve has Lady Luck shining on her.

that, Sylvie waved Joyce over and uttered, "Once everything's settled,

the idea, Joyce nodded. "Leave it

Sylvie getting injured during the event had yet to subside, and it didn't take long before a blogger made another post on

with a rich girl in Jadeborough, whose parents later

capitalize on that to make money. She had been married three times and received a divorce settlement power in her hands, she'd

One of her company's artists had gotten close to her

she even mentioned that with her there, the artist could forget about getting good projects in the began flooding in. People

discussion spread like wildfire on the forum and gradually moved to