

Chapter 112 Our Daughter Should Look Like You

What? Cathy's grip around her phone instantly tightened. The Shaw residence was the last place she had expected the pendant to be, let alone in the hands of Dorian! But...

The woman calmed herself with a deep breath. "Mr. Shaw, how do I know you're not lying to me? That jade pendant was lost way before I stepped foot into the Shaw residence. And now you're telling me you found it lying around the house?"

Dorian snorted, almost hissing his next words. "Doesn't matter where you lost it. What matters is that this pendant is quite important to you, I believe?"

A 'ping' followed seconds later, and Cathy brought her phone down to check the message. It was a photo sent by Dorian, and in it was a pendant that had the same patterns as the one Chris had given her.

Cathy's heart sank, seething rage evident through the tension in her jaw. She dipped her voice low with intimidation and glowered through gritted teeth. "What do you want?"

"What do you think?" He snapped, completely unfazed by her. "It's late and Emmy's still at the police station. She's a woman with class. She doesn't belong in a shabby and filthy place like that. I want her home."

While he spoke, Cathy took a glance at Adrian, whose brows were furrowed with concern as he watched her. As if reading his mind, she gave him a silent nod and pressed a button on her phone. In an instant, a deep smug voice blared out the speakers, echoing through the quiet walls of the corridor.

"Don't get me wrong Cathy, this isn't a threat," Dorian continued, "but finders keepers, so this pendant belongs to me now. If you want it, you have to do as I say. After all, isn't this a precious memento of your mother whom you've never even met? It'd be a shame if I were to accidentally break it amidst my fretting over Emmy-"

"Then break it." Adrian rudely interrupted his monologue. "Mr. Shaw, I suggest that you just break the pendant right here right now."

Cathy's eyes widened in shock. But before she could even register what was happening, Adrian took the phone from her grasp and spoke into it with an almost imperceptible growl. "Mr. Shaw, correct me if I'm wrong, but this jade pendant seems to be the only thing that you and your family have as leverage against Cathy, am I right? In that case, why don't you just go ahead and break it? That way, we can ensure that nothing will stand between Ember and the place she deserved to be."

The line fell silent for a long time. Dorian was not expecting to be called out so ruthlessly, especially not by Adrian whose presence already served as a shock. As damning as it was, Adrian was right. In fact, despite his threats to do so, Dorian had never planned to break the pendant. He was merely using it to reach a compromise.

Seeing as Dorian wasn't speaking anytime soon, Adrian continued his calm but brutal assault. "If I were you, I would do everything in my power to please Cathy. And instead of cheap, pathetic threats like breaking her pendant, I would offer something far more valuable in exchange for Ember's one-night sleeping comfort."

On the other end, Dorian had already begun to tremble. He glanced at the jade pendant perched safely on the coffee table, suddenly feeling a great sense of relief that it was still in one piece. He had heard about Adrian before; the third heir of the Bolton family feared by many, and now he understood why. This man had completely stripped him down to the core in just a matter of seconds, and over the phone no less. It was the first he had experienced such a strong and dignified presence that it made him cower.

Another long minute passed before Dorian's voice finally buzzed through the speakers. "Mr. Bolton," he began slowly, sounding a lot humbler than before, "I'd like to request for Ember's safety with this pendant."

Adrian sneered. "You're going to need something more than that to make this a fair trade. Ember's life is worth nothing to me, but that piece of jade could lose its value just as quickly. It may be an irreplaceable keepsake. But as long as I'm here, know that finding Cathy's mom will be a walk in the park, regardless of whether she's still alive. And when the time comes, your jade pendant will be rendered completely useless."

"Then what can you give me in return for this pendant, Mr. Bolton?" Dorian rasped. "If it's not up to my standards, I won't hesitate to break this right now."

"As I said, do it. Ember's case has nothing to do with me, so I have no reason to intervene. However, if you leave a scratch on that pendant, I'll have every right to make her life a living hell."

Dorian's lips twitched with helpless irritation. Wasn't the pendant supposed to be Cathy's prized possession? And the fact it was within his grasp should've helped him gain the upper hand. So how did it turn out this way? He was driven beyond the losing end with no control over Cathy nor his daughter's freedom.

Was this... the wrath of Adrian Bolton?

"So, what do I do?" Dorian asked, biting his tongue lest he dug a deeper grave for himself.

"Keep that memento safe, and one day, you might be able to get what you want. But keep this in mind, you are in no position to make demands from me."

With that, Adrian hung up the call, not bothering to wait for a response. Passing the phone back to Cathy, he noticed her goggling at him with stunned surprise. "You look silly," he chuckled.

"Mm-hm" was all Cathy could manage while nodding heavily. Perhaps it was because she had gotten used to Adrian's gentleness that seeing this side of him again had left her in awe. And this time, it was done for her sake.

"Let's go back. There's still a lot to do tomorrow." Adrian patted her head, to which she nodded fiercely. Flashing her a smile, he took her hand and led her towards the elevator.

On the ride back home, Cathy couldn't help but sneak glances at Adrian from her peripherals. The man was sound asleep next to her, his beautiful features highlighted by the faint moonlight streaming in from the car window. Even with his eyes closed and body relaxed, he never ceased to exude a domineering aura that could subdue anyone in his proximity. This man... really oozes nobility.

"Do I look that good?" Adrian smirked through half-lidded eyes.

Cathy let out a small squeak and looked away in embarrassment. "I-I just think... you're amazing." And she wasn't lying. The phone call from earlier had given her a newfound admiration for this man.

"You get used to it after a while," the low voice replied.

Somehow that made her heart ache a little. She turned back to look at him. "Do you get threatened a lot?"

The man was silent for a moment. Then, his lip curled up into a faint smile. "When you're in this line of work, you'll find that these things are very common."

Right. Cathy nodded in understanding. Adrian was a successful businessman with a thriving business. It's no doubt that others would want to take advantage of that.

Seeing the slight furrow in Cathy's brows, Adrian swiftly changed the subject. "That girl, Ariel Jasper. Is it her birthday today?"

"Yes." Cathy nodded, raising her brows slightly in surprise. She didn't think that someone as busy as him would remember a random little girl he met for only a short while. "You remember her."

"Of course." Adrian pulled her into his arms. "She looks a lot like you."

Cathy blushed as she snuggled up into his warmth. Moments later, his magnetic voice sounded again from above her head. "It'd be nice if our future daughter looked like you."

She let out a hum, shifting herself a little in his embrace so that she could see his face. "But she better have a brain like yours. Witty and intelligent."

Not at all like hers.

The man laughed. "You're right."