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Chapter 751

“Christopher!”

“Instead of dwelling on your suspicions, Mr. Salvador, have you considered how you’ll explain this to the Hoffman family and your good friend, Ryan? Ms. Hoffman is an innocent young lady. If such an incident happened, wouldn’t it be difficult for the both of you to move on without getting married?”

Christopher squinted his eyes and had a sly smile on his face.

“Chris, that’s enough. Let’s go.”

Bella felt a sharp pain piercing through her heart. She felt a strong urge to run away. The farther away she was from Justin, the better.

As they turned around, Justin asked in a hoarse voice, “Did you spend the entire evening with him? Were you together all along?”

“Yes, all night long,” Bella replied in an indifferent tone, turning her back to him.

“Bella... is he really that important to you? Is he more important than me?” Justin asked shakingly.

“Justin, what’s the point of asking such questions now?” Bella chuckled softly, her gaze dimming. “To be frank, you’re making a fool of yourself. Let’s end our relationship here. I’m begging you.”

With those words, Bella and Christopher vanished from Justin’s tearful gaze.

Bella never looked back.

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Justin stood alone in the snow, losing all sense of time as the snow gradually covered him. He collapsed to the ground.

Ian hurriedly approached and asked, “Mr. Salvador! Where’s the young madam? Did she leave?”

Justin lowered his head like a defeated soldier. He picked up the ice cream she had thrown at him with tears rolling down his cheek, one drop at a time. ‘Bella has never trusted me. She can choose not to

love me, but how could she not trust me? Do I still need to prove

myself to her? Is it really necessary?

A luxury car raced toward the hospital. Inside, Bella sat side by side.

with Christopher in the back seat..

The air in the car was dense.

“Bella, are you upset with me?” Christopher turned toward her. His gaze filled with deep concern as he

observed her from the side. “I’m sorry, I was just so worried about you, and...”

“I was the one who wanted to meet Justin, and no matter what

happened, it wasn’t your fault. You don’t need to blame yourself.”

Christopher’s breath hitched, clearly sensing some resistance toward

him. In frustration, he clenched his fist.

Bella was devoid of expression. She lowered her eyelids and took out

her phone, checking her call history. However, no record of Justin’s

name appeared.

She recalled what Justin had said earlier. 'I called you multiple times

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tonight, and you didn't answer! I thought something happened to you,

and I was worried all night!'

Bella contemplated the sincerity of his concerns. Even if it were a lie,

would he go through the trouble of calling her with a different

number?

Suddenly, a realization struck Bella. Holding her breath, she checked

the list of blocked numbers on her phone. When she saw Justin's

name in it, tears immediately welled up in her eyes.

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"Bella, is there something wrong?" Christopher asked with genuine

concern as he noticed the change in Bella's expression.

"I distinctly remember that I have never blocked Justin's number. Why is he on my blocked list? Bella's

sharp gaze slowly shifted to

Christopher's innocent face.

"Bella.."

"Did you do it?" Bella asked bluntly. "Aside from you, I haven't had any private contact with anyone

tonight. Justin told me he couldn't reach

me all night."

Christopher clenched his fingers on his knee, a cold gleam flashing

through his gold-rimmed glasses.

"I recalled that my phone only left my side when I went to the

restroom at the restaurant earlier. So, did you block him?" Bella

squinted her almond-shaped eyes.

"Bella, are you doubting me?" Christopher's eyes remained innoce

and clear.

"I'm only stating facts, not doubting you," Bella replied bluntly.

Christopher felt a heavy weight on his chest, making it difficult for him to breathe. "Bella, I admit it was

wrong of me to mess with your

phone. I only did it to avoid Justin ruining our date. I've been looking forward to today for so long. It was selfish of me. I'm sorry."

He added, "This is the last time. It will never happen again."

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Bella was mentally drained from everything that happened tonight and lacked the energy to argue further.

"My issues with Justin are my personal matters, and I prefer to keep them private. Even after our divorce, I haven't completely cut ties with him. After all, there might be future business collaborations. As long as I'm emotionally detached, that's what matters. Unnecessary actions only prove that I haven't moved on from him entirely."

Christopher, who had been anxious, found a glimmer of hope in her words, "Bella, have you truly moved on from him?"

Bella nodded slowly.

“That’s great, Bella.” Christopher’s excitement surged through his body, and his hands trembled with excitement. “Now that you’ve let go of Justin, can you give me a chance to be with you? I want to stand by your side, supporting you through thick and thin. I wasn’t there in your past, but I want to be part of your future.”

“Chris, I’m not ready for a relationship right now,” Bella said in an exhausted voice. “I’m too tired, and I’m not ready to open myself up to love again. I’m sorry.”

“With me, you just need to allow yourself to be loved.” Christopher gaze intensified as he leaned closer, his breath growing heavier.” Bella, can we give it a go? Give me a chance to love you.”

Bella hesitated, struggling for words. “Dating isn’t like online shopping, where you can return something within a week.”.

“You don’t have to do anything. Just let me love and protect you.” Christopher spoke, bracing himself against the car window.

His eyes were filled with affection that almost overwhelmed Bella. “I’ll always be there for you, no matter what. If you think I’m worth it, I’ll always be by your side.”

“Chris, thank you for saving me tonight. But please don’t take such

risks in the future.”

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Bella frowned, unable to express the strange feeling in her heart. “I’m not worth risking your life for. It’s

not too late to stop now.”

‘Stop now?’ Christopher’s hand slowly curled into a fist. His eyes gradually turned red. Those words

struck him harder than “I don’t love you”. It filled him with shame.

“Everyone’s love is valuable, and I don’t want you to end up like me. All my love was wasted on Justin.”

When Justin returned to the car, it was late at night.

Ian bought a cup of hot coffee from a nearby store. When he handed it to Justin, he noticed Justin’s

hands were completely frozen, unable to even hold the cup. Ian promptly turned up the heater in the

car, took off his coat, and wrapped it around Justin.

“Mr. Salvador, there’s a hospital nearby. Let’s go and get your hands

checked.”

“How did it happen?” Justin stared at his phone, his tone cold an

mechanical.

Ian was surprised. "Mr. Salvador, what do you mean?"

"The photos were on my phone. No one touched it, not even myself.

How were the photos deleted?" Justin spoke through gritted teeth.

"Could it be a virus on the phone?"

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Ian recalled something from a technology course he attended with

Justin. "I remember learning that advanced hackers can hack your phone with just your number and

phone model. They could delete the content that isn't stored in an encrypted mailbox. So, usually, you'd

use self-destructing messages or store important documents in encrypted mailboxes, never on your

phone. Could someone have hacked into your phone?"

Justin gasped heavily, wiping the sweat from his forehead. Indeed, he had learned about hacking

techniques in military school. How could he forget? Although the content in the text message could not

be tampered with, it could be deleted!

The content in the text message, while not secure from tampering, could have been deleted.

“Go and investigate.” Justin’s face was drained of color, and his jaw was clenched. His voice was solemn. “Go to the hotel where Zoe was tonight and check the surveillance footage. You have to find that woman who looks identical to Bella.”

“Identical? How is that possible?”

Ian was shocked, wondering if Justin had lost his mind from the “Young Madam is stunningly beautiful. Who could compare to her alone be identical? It’s simply not possible!”

“Stop questioning and start investigating,” Justin ordered. He recalled the unsettling resemblance in the photo, sending shivers down his spine.

That woman was definitely not Bella.

But if someone with such a striking resemblance to Bella was out there, he feared she might cause Bella harm.

Finding that woman was no longer just about unraveling a conspiracy.

“As for how the message disappeared, I’ll trace it back myself.”

Chapter 754

The scandal between Zoe and Justin continued to stir up a storm on the internet.

Both the Hoffman and Salvador families sent their PR teams to manage the scandal, but it had escalated beyond control. Although the trending topics were removed, the rumors couldn’t be silenced.

When Claire saw the news, she dropped her phone in shock, lost her footing, and tumbled down the stairs. Luckily, the carpet softened the fall, but she was still injured.

Horrified, Ryan immediately rushed his mother to the hospital.

In the hospital room, Claire lay on the bed with an IV drip. She held Ryan’s hand tightly, with tears in her eyes.

“Ryan, what should we do? Zoe is only 22 years old. How will she face

the world in the future? How will I face your grandfather and father?"

Claire said, unable to hold back her tears.

Ryan sat next to the bed. He tried bitterly to comfort her. "Mom, I

handle this."

"How will you handle it?! There are photos and even videos of ther

Your sister is not married yet. Now that this scandal has blown up

will any man from a decent family still want to marry her?"

"Zoe is my sister. If anyone dares to speak ill of her, I'll make them

regret it." Ryan clenched his teeth, his eyes burning with anger.

"Public opinion can destroy one's reputation! Twenty years ago, our

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family could do as we pleased in Savrow, and not even the police

would intervene. Now, we live in a society governed by law. How can

you actually handle this?" Claire cried out, slamming her fists on the

bed with all her strength.

Ryan's expression turned cold. The Hoffman family started off in the

underworld. Ryan's grandfather, Logan Hoffman, had amassed his initial wealth through fights and

schemes with his brothers. But as

the times changed, Logan cleaned up the family's image, steering

them away from their criminal past.

When Ryan's father took over as the CEO of the Hoffman Group, the company had mostly shed its

shady reputation and focused on legitimate business. However, traces of the family's old ways

remained.

This was a source of conflict between Ryan's father and uncle. Ryan

felt that his father was too lenient and somewhat self-righteous. He

believed that if his father had been more assertive, the family's power

would have long been in his hands. His cunning and ruthless uncle

wouldn't have been able to be in control for so long.

"And what about your so-called good friend? The whole thing ended because of him, yet he hasn't come

forward to say a word! D think he can just act like nothing happened?!" Claire cried harde

almost fainting.

"Mom, please don't speak of Justin like that. He's not that type of guy!" Ryan fervently defended his

good friend.

"So many reporters captured this scene. How can he still deny it?!"

"There must be a reason for this. Justin has never shown any interest

in Zoe, and he loves someone else. He would never hurt Zoe like that." Ryan insisted.

With tears in her eyes, Claire bitterly exclaimed, "Zoe is your sister! She's been wronged, but you're

defending an outsider!"

"Mom! I..."

"Now, there's only one way to solve this. We have to make Justin take

responsibility for Zoe!"

Ryan's expression darkened. "Take responsibility? What do you mean

by that?"

“I’ll get discharged from the hospital as soon as possible. I’m going to propose an arranged marriage for Zoe and Justin!”

“You can’t be serious! Even if you forced him, Justin wouldn’t marry Zoe!” Ryan shot up from his seat, shouting in anger.

“It’s not up to him to decide.” Claire’s eyes turned cold, instantly transforming from her usual frail appearance. “A man must take responsibility for his actions! If he refuses to marry Zoe, he’ll be going against our entire family. Even if I don’t take any action, do you think your grandfather will ignore this? Don’t think the Hoffman family won’t intervene just because he’s Gregory Salvador’s son!”

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Similar to Nigel Salvador, Logan Hoffman did not live with his sons.

Instead, Logan lived in his own manor. Although it was slightly smaller compared to the Salvadors Tideview Manor, it could still be considered one of the top ten estates in the country.

By now, the entire Hoffman family was aware of the scandal. Even the servants gossiped about Zoe’s

scandal during their tea breaks.

With Justin and the Salvador family keeping quiet, it made Zoe seem like a cheap product discarded after use. She was stripped of her dignity as the Hoffman family's cherished heiress.

"Hey, has Ms. Zoe arrived?" The maids whispered among themselves.

"She's here in Old Master Logan's study, crying her eyes out."

"What good will crying do? As the heiress of the Hoffman family, she should understand the importance of upholding her reputation. A woman's reputation is very important. It seems that she has an illicit relationship with Mr. Salvador. She was even photographed naked by the reporters! Who would risk marrying a woman with such a tarnished reputation in the future?"

"Mr. Salvador will surely take responsibility. After all, they even booked a room together. Now that it's out, he'll have to step up."

"Hmph! I doubt he'll take responsibility. He hasn't shown any sign of it yet. It seems like he's trying to avoid the problem."

“Mr. Ryan and Mr. Salvador are still good friends, right? It’s going to be awkward when they meet.”

“Shh! Stop talking. Mr. Liam is coming!”

The servants quickly backed away, bowing respectfully. “Good day,

Mr. Liam!”

He had neatly groomed hair and was dressed in a stylish navy-

colored designer suit. His eyes gleamed with intelligence. This was Liam Hoffman, Logan’s second son and Ryan’s uncle.

As Liam walked past them, he flashed a smile and left them with a playful warning. “I can ignore your gossip, but if my nephew catches wind of it, you might lose your tongues.”

The maids fell silent, trembling.

“Grandpa... Grandpa! You must stand up for me! I can’t show my face in public now!” Zoe cried, throwing herself into Logan’s embrace.

“Don’t cry too much, dear. It will only make your eyes swollen.” Logan

comforted Zoe, gently patting her back. His heart ached for her.

Don’t worry. If your mother and Ryan can’t handle this matter,

Grandpa will speak up for you! Our family has always been respect

We will not tolerate such injustice!”

“Dad, you’re absolutely right,” Liam affirmed as he entered the room

with a serious expression. “Zoe is my brother’s precious daughter

You’ve always favored Zoe the most. We can’t just let it slide with the

Salvador boy.

“Uncle Liam..” Zoe sobbed even harder.

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From a young age, Zoe had always seen her uncle as kind and generous. Unlike her father, who was

strict and limited her spending,

her uncle was different. He often spoiled her with gifts and a

generous allowance, which boosted her self-esteem. This positive impression of him remained

unchanged over the years.

Logan's expression turned sour. "Liam, you're aware of the situation too?"

Liam sighed heavily. "Dad, you know the extent of our family's

influence in Savrow. Even minor issues will stir up the entire city."

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"In my opinion, we should let Justin marry Zoe." Liam lazily sat on the sofa, casually picked up an orange from the tray, and began to peel it.

Logan's thick, gray eyebrows shot up suddenly. Zoe, who was still hiding in her grandfather's embrace, smiled slyly when she heard Liam's suggestion.

"The eldest son of the Salvador family is sickly. He is hardly suited to inherit the family business. Although Justin is an illegitimate child with a somewhat questionable background, sooner or later, the Salvador family will fall into Justin's hands. If Zoe marries him, she'll become the young madam of the Salvador family, which isn't such a

bad arrangement after all.” Liam crossed his legs and casually

popped a slice of orange into his mouth.

“Uncle! What are you talking about...?” Zoe asked nervously, her

cheeks flushing.

“I’ve given it some thought. We could say that Zoe and Justin have

been in a relationship for some time, but both families kept it private

to avoid public attention. Since both of them are unmarried, it’s perfectly normal for them to spend

some private time together in a hotel room. There’s no need for the public to overreact. Look at how

scared Zoe is!”

Liam, who owned an entertainment company and a public relations firm, was highly skilled at managing

public image and reputation.

“Uncle Liam, your ability to improvise and spin stories is very impressive. As your nephew, I aspire to

learn from you.” Ryan

remarked sarcastically as he entered the study. His imposing

presence filled the room with an intimidating aura.

“Ryan...” Zoe’s heart skipped a beat, and she quickly sought comfort in Logan’s embrace.

The smile on Liam’s face froze for a moment. He accidentally crushed the orange in his hand into a

pulp. “My dear nephew, are you

in a bad mood? You always seem to find joy in teasing your uncle

whenever you see me.”

“Ryan, mind your manners when speaking to your elders,” Logan

scolded, his tone tinged with irritation.

Ryan’s handsome face was cold as he faced Liam. His smile was both mocking and dangerously

attractive. He sneered. “Since you became the CEO, you have expanded the business widely. Now

you’re even interfering in the affairs of the household. Uncle Liam, are you trying to act as a father

figure because you don’t have children of

your own?”

Liam seethed with anger, and his eyes reddened. He had been

haunted by the curse of being childless. Although he blamed his wif

for being barren, the reality was that he was infertile. Despite his anger, he could only suppress his rage in front of Logan.

“Ryan! How dare you speak to your uncle like that? You’re being too disrespectful!” Logan slapped the armrest of the sofa.

“Grandpa, I was just teasing Uncle Liam. He’s always cherished me the most since I was little. How could he bear to be angry with me?” Ryan immediately put on a childish look, smiling playfully at Liam.

Liam still wore a smile on his face, but in his mind, he had already cursed his nephew to death.

“As for Zoe’s marriage, you don’t need to worry about it, Uncle Liam. I will find her a suitable husband, but one thing is for certain-it will never be Justin.” Ryan’s words hung heavily, and the atmosphere in the room became tense.

Zoe’s smug expression faded into gloom.

“Ryan, your words baffle me. If Zoe doesn’t marry Mr. Salvador, then

who will she marry?"

Liam's expression turned serious, saying, "Things have escalated to this point. If the Salvador family rejects Zoe, it will tarnish our family's reputation. Are you saying that your sister is merely cheap entertainment for Mr. Salvador? Does he think that we are chumps?"

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Before Liam could finish speaking, Zoe burst into tears again and cried out. "Grandpa... Uncle Liam... I can't bear to show my face in public anymore! I'd rather die!"

"Don't cry, my dear! Grandpa will definitely stand up for you!" Logan,

known for being an authoritarian, couldn't contain his anger and

smashed a nearby teacup. "Justin wants to fool around and then

shirk responsibility, huh? He must be tired of living!"

"Ryan, is your mother also injured because of this? Is she in the hospital right now?"

Ryan's throat tightened, rendering him speechless.

"Once your mother is discharged, the two of you are to go to the

Salvador family to propose marriage. If you don't, I'll take matters into

my own hands!”

“Grandpa! Calm down!” Ryan’s frustration boiled over. His eyes wer

ablaze with anger at the thought of Logan causing trouble with th

Salvador family.

“Ryan, if I recall correctly, you and Mr. Salvador are like brothers,

right?” Liam spoke casually, crossing his legs. “If Zoe marries Mr.

Salvador, it’ll bring both our families closer. I don’t understand why

you’re so against it.”

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“It’s precisely because of my close relationship with Justin that I

understand him.” Ryan retorted coldly, his desperation evident.

Justin is in love with someone else-Bella Thompson, Wyatt

Thompson’s daughter.”

At the mention of Bella, the air in the room turned dense. Even Logan, the ruthless patriarch, showed a

hint of fear in his eyes.

“Zoe, haven’t you confessed to Justin multiple times before? Haven’t

you

tried every means possible? Has it made a difference? Has Justin ever shown any interest in you?”

Ryan confronted Zoe. His gaze was icy, and his voice was low and menacing.

Zoe shuddered. “Ryan... What are you talking about?”

“You’ve tried every trick in the book, yet Justin has never given you a second thought. How could he

possibly agree to meet you in a hotel room? Zoe, do I need to spell it out for you like this? When will

you ever learn?!” Ryan grew angrier as he spoke, the veins on his forehead

throbbing with anger.

He could tolerate Zoe’s arrogance and stubbornness, but not her

deceit and manipulation.

“Grandpa... Grandpa, look at what Ryan is accusing me of!” Zoe went all out, determined to play the

victim. “I’m his biological sister

look at how he speaks of me. He thinks I’m just some slut who

seduces men! Yes, I do have feelings for Justin, but it takes tw

tango. If he really didn't want me, then what happened that night

wouldn't have..." Her voice trailed off, and her cheeks flushed as tea

welled up in her eyes.

The implications of her unfinished sentence were clear.

"Even if, as you claim, Justin has feelings for Bella, I doubt their

relationship will end well."

Logan lightly patted Zoe's head and gritted his teeth. "Since Zoe admires that Salvador boy, there's

nothing more to discuss. She's my only granddaughter, and I will make sure she gets whatever she

wants!"

Zoe was in tears, but inside, she was thrilled.

"Grandpa!" Ryan clenched his fists with rage.

Liam chuckled. "If our family could form an alliance with the Salvador family, that would be great!" Liam

stood up nonchalantly and bowed to Zoe. "Congratulations in advance, Zoe! I will present you with a

generous gift when the time comes."

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As soon as Liam left Logan's mansion, his expression darkened.

His secretary followed closely behind him and asked in surprise, "Mr. Liam, I overheard your conversation with Mr. Ryan in the study. Why would you support Ms. Zoe's marriage with Mr. Salvador when you clearly know..."

"Do you really think that Justin will marry Zoe?" Liam asked with a playful smirk.

"Justin has caused so much trouble for Ms. Thompson. Just recently, he almost sacrificed his life for her. They have a lot of history, and it's clear to anyone with common sense that my niece is overestimating herself by trying to win over someone who has rejected her."

He continued, "Justin will never marry her. I'm backing Zoe's marriage to Justin because I know he won't fall easily for her tactics. This is the only way we can create chaos and put a strain on Ryan and Justin's relationship. The more chaotic the situation, the better for us."

"You're so wise!" Liam's secretary exclaimed in admiration.

Liam's eyes flashed with a cunning glint. "Since ancient times, t

best way to turn brothers against each other is through women. Eve

legendary figures like Mark Antony and Julius Caesar fell victim to it Brotherhood? What a joke!"

As he was about to descend the stairs, he suddenly remembered something and asked in a hushed

tone, "By the way, what was the

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name of the Salvador girl that Zoe mentioned earlier? The one Ryan is

dating?"

"Carrie Salvador!"

"Yes. Keep an eye on her. When the time comes, she could prove to be a valuable card for us to play."

"Ryan! Let go of me! It hurts!" Zoe screamed in pain.

Ryan's face was as cold as ice, and his eyes were raging with anger.

He dragged Zoe by her arm to an empty room. Once inside, Ryan swung his arm forcefully, throwing

Zoe to the floor.

“Ah!” Zoe fell awkwardly and cried out in pain. She felt the pain from the impact and had a noticeable bruise forming on her arm.

“Zoe, tell me the truth. What happened at the hotel the other day?!” Ryan suppressed his anger with all his might. If it were someone else, he might have snapped her neck.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about!” Zoe remained stubborn, despite the pain she felt.

“Someone must have helped you plan this. With your brains, you couldn’t have done it all alone!” Ryan leaned in closer and stared into her red eyes. “Tell me! Who set you up? Who planned all this behind the scenes?!”

Zoe’s heart raced, and cold sweat dripped down her face. How could she possibly tell Ryan? Besides, she was only following someone else’s instructions. She didn’t even know who that person was!

She gritted her teeth and lied, “Nobody helped me. It was all my idea!”

“Zoe! Why are you still lying to me?” Ryan shouted, his voice filled with anger.

Zoe smirked mockingly, provoking him further. “What’s wrong? Are

you not satisfied? Are you going to hit me? Or are you going to kill

me?”

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Zoe’s brazen and malicious laughter, coupled with her unscrupulous actions, have repeatedly challenged Ryan’s bottom line.

Ryan never fathomed that he would see his sister behave in such a manner. When did his beloved sister become such a degenerate?

“I’ll ask you again. Who is behind all of this? Who is pulling the strings?!” Ryan roared hysterically at Zoe.

“Nobody is manipulating me. You can ask me a million times, and my answer will remain the same.”

Zoe asserted herself as she slowly stood up. She straightened her designer dress and casually flipped her brown, wavy hair.

“Ryan, I’ll marry your best friend soon and become the young madam of the Salvador family. I will be the wife of Salvador Corporation’s president. You know Justin’s character better than anyone. Despite your plans to introduce me to a wealthy suitor, I’ve been in love with Justin for as long as I can

remember. I won't settle for anyone

Shouldn't you be happy for me if I marry into such a prestigious family? Aren't you the one who doted on me the most? Was your affection for me not genuine?"

"Zoe, what nonsense are you spouting?" Ryan felt like every word s
uttered was stabbing his heart, fueling his already raging emotion

"Oh, right. You no longer care about me. You've found someone new
to replace me. What am I to you now? Probably less important than Carrie, right?" Zoe laughed
hysterically and burst into tears.

"Let me make it clear. Justin will never marry you. Stop being
delusional!" Ryan was furious. "Also, Carrie has never been your enemy. She is..."

"My future sister-in-law? How can a retarded person be my sister-in-
law?!"

Zoe sneered disdainfully, "Even if I accept it, Mom and Grandpa will never accept Carrie as your wife.

Face it, Ryan. No matter how much you love her, she'll always be a mistress, hidden away without any

status or recognition. Do you really think Chairman Salvador would ever allow you to marry Carrie? I

think you might be better off marrying Bethany.”

Ryan’s heart ached, and his breath was heavy. “My marriage and love life are my own decisions.

There’s no need for your concern or

anyone else’s!”

“The same goes for you. My marriage is none of your business,” Zoe replied, rubbing her bruised arms

before heading toward the door.

“Zoe, you’re taking the flight back to Inalia tonight. Without my consent, you’re not allowed back to

Savrow!” Ryan’s eyes were filled with anger and disappointment. He slowly turned to look at her. you

don’t leave, I’ll make you leave.”

“Haha! Ryan, do you really think you can control me at this point? Zoe leaned against the doorframe,

raising her chin arrogantly.” Grandpa wants me to stay here until I’m married off to Justin. Do you really

think you can control me before that happens? Don’t even think

of sending me away.”

“Zoe.” Ryan took a deep breath. His face turned solemn. “From now

on, you're not my sister anymore."

Zoe's eyes turned cold, devoid of any emotions. "If you can't stand by me as my brother, then I'm better off without you!"

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Savrow was buzzing with another scandal that was spreading like wildfire across the city. The scandal involving a wealthy family was far more interesting than any minor celebrity gossip.

However, Bella paid no attention to such matters, as she had far more important issues to attend to.

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"Bella, you're incredible!" Ralph exclaimed.

In the cafe within the KS World Hotel, Ralph was sitting in a corner with Bella. He laid out several photos in front of her. "Just as you

suspected, that thug had a secret room in his house, filled with photos of Shannon."

"It's clear that he's not just a casual fan of Aunt Celeste, as he claimed. I think his obsession with her has taken a twist."

Bella pressed her crimson lips together and spoke in a hushed tone. Ralph, have you uncovered any

other significant clues?”

Ralph hesitated briefly before pulling out a plastic bag from his pocket. Inside the bag was a necklace made of white gold and adorned with diamonds. The design appeared outdated, and the quality seemed less than stellar. “I found this in his house. It was carefully stored in a box, so it must be important to him.”

Bella had an excellent memory and never forgot anything she s

She recognized the necklace immediately and quickly searched through the photos. “Isn’t this the necklace Shannon used to we The resemblance in the photos is striking,” Bella said as she pulled out a picture.

Her keen eyes left Ralph-an experienced detective-feeling

inadequate. “Bella, you’re wasting your talent by not being in my line.

of work!”

Bella smirked. “I can’t handle it. I have a bad temper and might just

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take matters into my own hands with the suspect.”

Ralph remained silent and listened to Bella.

“It seems that Shannon has a close relationship with this man. If she’s giving him her signature necklace, do you think there’s something suspicious going on between them?” Bella’s beautiful eyes narrowed slightly.

“Even if there is, it’s all in the past. This only suggests that they knew each other, but it’s not evidence that Shannon conspired with this man to harm Aunt Celeste,” Ralph said solemnly.

“I understand. But with the current evidence, it’s enough to put Shannon in a tight spot,” Bella replied.

She picked up the necklace and examined it under the light. Her eyes shimmered with determination.

“Ralph, you’ve interrogated him, but he won’t talk. If he’s truly working for Shannon, there won’t be any suspicious transaction records between them. We can’t solidify the charges of her attempted murder.”

Bella continued. "So, what I need to do now is leverage this

information to gather more evidence and strike Shannon where it

hurts the most."

Ralph widened his eyes in anticipation. "Bella, what do you have

mind?"

Bella leaned back. Her slender figure radiated both grace and authority as she tapped her fingertips

slowly on the table.

"I'm going to pay a visit to Tideview Manor and have a chat with

Shannon."

After parting ways with Ralph, Bella received a call from her older

sister, Camilla.

Camilla informed Bella that she would be flying back to Sentania the

next morning. With that, Bella and Steven immediately hurried back to

Yara Park.

Mila held Camilla's hand in the living room. Both mother and daughter were on the verge of tears as they spoke intimately.

"Mom, you're being dramatic," Camilla said cheerfully, though her eyes were red. "Sentania isn't that far. We're still on the same continent! You can visit me anytime."

"The last time I visited, I stayed for three days, but I didn't even get to see you once! You're always busy with your husband." Mila tightly gripped her daughter's hand, her voice choked with emotion. "I deeply regret it. You've become so estranged after marriage!"

"I'm sorry, Mom. Edward had a sudden work arrangement, and a wife, I had to accompany him."

Camilla admitted her fault, feeling guilty and uneasy.

"Camilla!" Bella rushed in, her eyes brimming with reluctance. "Can you stay a little longer? I barely got to spend any quality time with you!"

"There's plenty of time in the future, Bella," Camilla reassured her, getting up quickly. The sisters held

hands. "After the election, I'll bring your brother-in-law back to Hatchbay. We'll stay for a few more days and have a joyful reunion."