

## **Illusions 201**

### Chapter 201

“Granny, I was also going to...”

As Remington took off, Lizetta was getting ready to say her goodbyes and follow suit, but Fiona grabbed her arm.

“Liz, hang on a sec, I’ve got something.”

Fiona glanced over to Tina standing by, who nodded and went off to do her bidding.

Lizetta was a bit puzzled, but soon enough she saw Tina dragging Shirley over, who was putting up quite the fight and looking as sick as a dog.

“Let go of me, Tina! I can walk by myself!”

Shirley was brought over; as soon as she spotted Lizetta sitting next to Fiona, her face soured even more, and she shot Lizetta a death glare.

It was all Lizetta’s fault.

She had come over to the old house to chill today, but Granny happened to overhear her poking fun at Lizetta with her girlfriends on the phone.

Granny was steamed. Shirley was supposed to hit the mall with her squad, but instead. she got grounded, with her cellphone confiscated, and was ordered to spend the morning in reflection.

“You’ve been ‘reflecting’ all morning, and for what, right? It’s been a complete wash. Now apologize to your sister-in-law, and make it snappy!” Fiona said sternly to Shirley.

Lizetta hadn't seen it coming that the old lady had asked her to stay just to make Shirley apologize to her face; it warmed her heart.

But Shirley was fuming; with tears welling up in her eyes, she retorted, "Granny, I'm your flesh and blood! How can you do this to me!?"

Fiona shot back sharply, "Liz is my flesh—and—blood granddaughter—in—law. Don't play the victim here. I'm fair and square and I only judge by what's right and wrong!"

Shirley, not about to say sorry to Lizetta that easily, stubbornly clamped her mouth shut.

Fiona lost her cool, "No apology, no mercy. Get back to your room and reflect some more! I'm cutting off your credit cards, so you can't go around causing trouble all day long!"

Hearing that her credit would be cut off, Shirley quickly swallowed her pride and said to Lizetta, "I'm sorry, alright?"

Not willing to let it slide so easily, Lizetta said with a smirk, "What's that? Sorry, who? I didn't quite catch it."

you, I'm sorry!" Shirley spat out the words through clenched teeth, before she ran off crying.

After exchanging a few more words with Fiona, Lizetta also said her goodbyes.

As she left the villa, Shirley caught up to her, seething, "Lizetta, you're something else! Over the years, what have you done besides running to Granny to tattletale? Granny's just soft-hearted and feels sorry for you, and that's why she treats you decently. Don't get too full of yourself!"

Lizetta didn't give her the time of day, not even turning her head.

Shirley grabbed her arm, "In a family like the Dashiells, even a stray dog picked up off the streets would be treated well, but no matter how fancy the treatment, it's just a plaything! Let me tell you, Eve is carrying Remi's baby now, and you'll soon be the ex-wife! We'll see how cocky you are then!"

Lizetta shrugged off Shirley's grip, "Done barking?".

She strode off briskly, treating Shirley as if she was indeed just a yapping dog, not worth her time to argue with an animal.

Shirley stamped her foot in rage, "Who's barking?! Don't think I didn't get that you just called me a dog, you wench, you vixen!"

From a distance, Tina watched them go their separate ways, and then headed back to the

villa.

After all the commotion, Fiona, not in the best of moods, went to lie down.

Tina brought her a plate of food, trying to coax her to eat.

The old lady took a few bites and then pushed it away, sighing, "I'll never hold a great-grandbaby in my arms in this lifetime. Lost my appetite."

Tina ventured, "Madam, I think I overheard Ms. Shirley Dashiell saying."

"What now? Spit it out!"

"It seems like Ms. Hawthorne is pregnant with Mr. Remington Dashiell's child."

"What?" Fiona was taken aback; frowning, she instructed Tina, "Get on it and find out if there's any truth to this, and make it quick!"

Tina left, and the old lady sat there deep in thought.

## Chapter 202

She bet this was the real reason Lizetta's hell-bent on getting a divorce. The old lady still can't believe Remington would do something so ridiculous.

Gotta hustle to get to the bottom of this and keep these lovebirds from splitting for real.

In no time at all, Lizetta wrapped up her last gig before heading abroad; she finished her stint as the choreographer for the boy band's sizzling routines.

"Hey, cutie, let's hit the town tonight to celebrate our new album drop!"

"Yeah, I wanna buy Liz a drink too."

"Back off! Is it your turn to treat Liz? Get in line!"

"Why should I be behind you, huh? Not cool, I challenge that!"

After leaving the dance studio, Lizetta was followed out by a bunch of the band members. The youngest was only seventeen, the oldest barely twenty-one. These idol trainees, each with their own killer looks and charm, had the power to whip fans into a frenzy and that youthful cockiness to boot.

When Lizetta first took on the role of their choreographer, she faced all sorts of skepticism and nitpicking.

But after bonding over the past twenty-plus days, she had won them over with her skills and already become their friend, someone they knew well.

Hamilton, being the last one to leave the studio, saw Lizetta surrounded by a pack of young hotties; he stepped up with a cool face, and pulled two kids aside to stand protectively in front of her.

“Enough already. We’re hitting the studio for real tomorrow. You think now’s the time to booze up? Stay sharp, we’ve got more practice tonight!”

Hamilton, being the leader, had that natural-born authority about him.

The guys toned it down, and said their goodbyes to Lizetta, promising to keep in touch; then they left with their arms around each other, joking and laughing.

Once they were gone, Hamilton tilted his head and looked at Lizetta, clearly unimpressed.

“Kids these days, so flighty, they’re all about stirring things up, feeding girls lines, but not much of it’s for real! If they bug you, just block ‘em, easy peasy. Work’s done, right, cutie?”

Lizetta raised an eyebrow at him and nodded, “You’re right, so I guess I’ll block you too.”

“No way, I’m not like them!” Hamilton was quick to protest.

Lizetta chuckled, “How are you any different?”

“I’m your die-hard fan, for starters! We didn’t meet through work; it’s different. If you block me, I’ll go on Twitter and make a scene, begging my fans for a judgment call.”

Lizetta laughed at his faux desperation, “Alright, I’m off to settle accounts and then I’m out of here.”

Feeling pretty exhausted, she just wanted to head to the finance department to get her pay sorted out.

Then, it was off to catch up on some much-needed sleep..

“I’ll walk you,” said Hamilton.

Lizetta declined, “Didn’t you just say it’s not time to relax? As the leader, you should be all the more exemplary. I’m off, good luck!”

Waving at Hamilton, she left without looking back.

Hamilton watched her easy departure, clicking his tongue, “Ice cold, my idol.”

He’d been pursuing her on the down-low for nearly a month with zero progress.

It was enough to make him start doubting himself.

Little did Lizetta know of Hamilton’s frustration. In her eyes, he was just another fickle and playful younger brother.

After settling her finances and checking her bank account on the way home, she felt incredibly relieved.

Three million in the bag, all through her own effort.

Feeling exhaustion wash over her like a tide, she slumped against the car window, drifting off to sleep with her phone in hand.

The next day, she woke up refreshed, ate breakfast, grabbed her bag, and headed out.

In the car, she shot a message to Remington.

Chapter 203

[Let’s meet up.]

At the time, Remington was at The Starlight Group's tech division, listening to the chip team rattle on about their latest gizmo. They'd been pouring cash into this thing for over two years without seeing a dime in return.

A few board members were at each other's throats over whether to keep throwing money at the project, while the techies were making their case with gusto.

Remington had this icy vibe going on, but when his phone buzzed, a quick glance had him visibly mellowing out.

He picked up his phone and double checked the message, then a smirk flickered across his lips.

That smirk was totally out of place, leading the the noisy boardroom to go dead silent; the mood got all sorts of weird.

Remington shot back a speedy reply.

[Sure]

He stood up and said, 'Innovation ain't something you achieve overnight. And you're all bickering like it's doomsday? What, if we don't see results by next year, you're gonna flip the table? So here's the deal: I'll buy your shares right now for 20% above market value. Anyone who's lost faith in seeing a return, you can cash out with Cedric right here and now Mr. Kris, President Warner, shall we start with you?'

The two named were the most vocally opposed, they exchanged looks and managed an

awkward chuckle.

"Mr. Dashiell, we're not in a rush."

"Yeah, I mean, if Mr. Dashiell is this confident and bold, what are we scared of? Let's keep the investments rolling!"

Remington nodded, "Alright then, meeting adjourned."

As he walked out, Mr. Kris and President Warner cornered Cedric, fishing for info.

"Remington's usually a tough nut to crack. Why's he all sunshine and rainbows today?"

"Has The Starlight Group got some new trick up its sleeve? Spill the beans, Cedric."

Cedric was stumped.

How could he tell them that, despite looking all business, Mr. Dashiell was deep down a hopeless romantic, and his sudden good mood was all thanks to Mrs. Dashiell finally giving him the time of day after so long?

Talk about a buzzkill.

Lizetta had to swing by the hospital today.

She had her flight booked for three days out, but before she left, she had to ensure Thaddeus Gardenia was safely on his way abroad.

Given Thaddeus's condition, he needed medical staff with him every step of the way to Astoria, and Lizetta still had to hash that out with Hogan.

She was planning to head straight to the hospital after meeting with Remington.

So, the spot she picked to meet Remington was a coffee shop near the hospital.

But Lizetta didn't expect to run into Hogan before Remington even showed up.



“Hogan, what brings you here?”

Hogan walked into the coffee shop solo, catching Lizetta by surprise.

He, also looking startled, managed a smile, “A friend wanted some medical advice, so we agreed to meet here. What about you?”

Since they’d bumped into each other and Remington wasn’t there yet, Lizetta offered with a smile

“How about I treat you to a coffee first? We can chat about my brother’s situation.”

Hogan grinned, “I’d love to.”

He sat opposite Lizetta, and just as the waiter brought their coffee, a figure charged over, grabbed a cup from the table, and hurled it at Lizetta.

“Shameless, home-wrecker!”

“Look out!”

Hogan, being quick on his feet, stood up and shielded Lizetta.

Most of the coffee ended up on Hogan, with only a few drops splattering on Lizetta’s

hand.

“You okay?”

I

Hogan turned around and checked Lizetta's hand.

That's when Lizetta came to her senses and frowned at the scene before her.

Shirley, who was yanked away by Hogan, had crashed into a nearby table and was now glaring at them, her eyes red with fury..

Seeing Hogan holding Lizetta's hand, Shirley was so pissed off that her nostrils were flared with anger.

10.03

Hogan, is it because of you that Lizetta's been making divorce noises with Remi?"

When Shirley was in a car accident a year back, Hogan had happened to be passing by and rescued her from the vehicle, even performing first aid.

Chapter 204

She totally fell for him when he followed the ambulance all the way to the hospital to make sure she was okay.

Today, she brought over some homemade cupcakes to see Hogan, but happened to catch him coming out of the hospital, so she tagged along.

She didn't expect to walk into Lizetta and Hogan on a date – just the two of them, clearly a romantic outing.

Watching Hogan fuss over Lizetta made her green with such envy that she yearned for going over there and scratching Lizetta's face off.

“What the heck are you talking about!” Hogan frowned, visibly ticked off.

Shirley’s eyes welled up with tears as she turned her anger towards Lizetta.

“Lizetta, how could you be such a flirt, seducing men all over the place? You’re dragging the Dashiell family’s name through the mud. Ah!”

Before Shirley could finish her rant, Lizetta grabbed the coffee mug in front of her, stepped forward, and splashed it right back at her.

Shirley’s face was streaked with coffee, and her makeup became a total mess.

Lizetta glared at her coldly, “Shirley, jealousy looks so ugly on you.”

“Jealous of you? As if! Hogan just doesn’t know the kind of trash you really are, or he wouldn’t have fallen for your act. You dared to drug my Remi at eighteen and climb into his bed, leaving him

bedridden for three days.”

Thinking of Evelina’s words about Hogan having a thing for Lizetta four years ago. even sending Helen White to propose to the Dashiell family on his behalf, Shirley got even more furious, so much so that she lost her cool and started to yell like a fishwife.

and

Although the café wasn’t crowded, everyone turned to look..

Lizetta’s face went pale as a sheet, and she slapped Shirley across the face with a resounding smack.

Shirley glared at Lizetta, and her expression turned even more crazed.

“Where did I go wrong? You even ended up in stitches and got hospitalized. You’re nothing but a woman played out! Rémi was so disgusted that he left the country for a year and never came back!”

As Shirley swung at Lizetta’s face, Lizetta grabbed her hand and, with the other hand, delivered another slap.

“Shirley, if your mouth is that filthy, you might as well keep it shut to avoid polluting the air

100

around us.

Lizetta was about to slap her again when a familiar, large male hand reached out and grabbed her wrist.

A familiar, cold voice came from above Lizetta’s head, “Lizetta, what are you doing?!”

Lizetta looked up to see Remington.

He must have just walked in. The grip on her wrist was so strong that his brow furrowed with an edge of severity.

“Remi! Lizetta’s blatantly cuckolding you, and when I just asked her about it, she hit me! Look at what she did to me, Remi!”

Seeing Remington step in, Shirley instantly saw him as her knight in shining armor; her tears fell as she rushed to his side to sob out her tale of woe.

Remington glanced at Shirley; compared to her pitiful mess, Lizetta indeed seemed like the bully.

His gaze then shifted to Hogan who stood behind Lizetta, and a shadow crossed his eyes. He thought Lizetta was meeting him today, but she had brought another man along.

What was she trying to pull?

Was she about to formally introduce her next beau to him?

“Explain,” Remington said with a heavy voice, and turned his eyes back on Lizetta.

But his words, loaded with accusation and irritation, seemed more like he was defending Shirley and siding against Lizetta.

Thinking of the nasty things Shirley had just said, Lizetta felt like her heart had been hollowed out and stuffed with ice, and her lips were quivering.

She forcefully shook off Remington’s grip and stepped back; then she grabbed her purse, pulled out a bank card, and handed it over coldly.

“I have nothing to explain. Here’s the 3 million I owe the Dashiell family. Please have Mr. Dashiell check it.”

Chapter 205

Remington’s eyes landed on the bank card being passed to him, and for a moment, they

froze over.

The dude didn’t take the card; he just looked up, locking eyes with Lizetta.

“So you hit me up today just to give me this?”

His voice was laced with suppressed rage.

He had spent the whole trip wondering that maybe she had a change of heart, and didn’t want to make a scene anymore.

Or perhaps she had a rough patch outside, ran into some trouble, and needed to lean on him.

He even toyed with the thought that maybe she just missed him.

All revved up with anticipation, he’d urged Cedric to step on it, but what he didn’t see coming was her showing up to drop a cool thirty mil on him, and with another guy, no less.

She sure knew how to drop a bombshell now, didn’t she?

The guy was freezing cold, but Lizetta didn’t flinch a bit.

All she wanted was to get out of there pronto, not keen on seeing Remington and Shirley even for a second more.

“Yeah, the agreed three million, to the last dime. Take it, will ya?” she rushed him, and seeing Remington wouldn’t take it, she tried to stuff it into his hand.

But Remington didn’t bite; instead, he pulled his hand back as if she was offering him a death warrant instead of a hefty sum.

Lizetta frowned, “What’s your deal?”

Remington fired back with a chilly voice, “Lizetta, haven’t I made it clear? I don’t just grab any dirty money that comes my way.”

His gaze pointedly swept over Hogan, who was standing behind Lizetta.

The message was crystal: hé thought Lizetta got the cash from Hogan.

Lizetta's pale face flushed red with humiliation and anger.

She had sold years of her creative work, and had toiled from dawn to dusk to earn this money fair and square just to pay back Remington and the Dashiell family.

She was done being looked down on, done being the Dashiell family's charity case, and certainly done with people like Shirley thinking they could walk all over her.

10.04

But here was Remington, trivializing her struggles and efforts, not even bothering to ask or check, just assuming her money was dirty.

Tears of frustration welled up in her eyes as she glared at Remington, "This three million, every penny is hard-earned by me! I've got records of every transaction, clear as day. Seet for yourself."

Lizetta pulled out a ledger from her bag, and pushed it along with the card toward Remington.

Remington's face was a picture of disgust, but he still didn't take it; he was frozen solid.

Lizetta, in a fit of pique, threw it at him, "Remington, we're square now!"

The ledger hit him right in the chest, the bank card flying up and smacking his proud and icy face before they both landed at his feet.

Remington's expression was stormy; he closed his eyes, radiating malice.

Shirley stared at Lizetta in disbelief, "Lizetta, have you lost your mind? How dare you throw stuff at Remi!"

Lizetta was definitely the first and surely the last one to ever chuck a bank card at Remington.

Without looking back, Lizetta said to Hogan, "Hogan, let's bounce."

Hogan nodded, and they headed out.

But as Lizetta walked past Remington, the man who hadn't budged suddenly grabbed her wrist.

Lizetta tried to shake him off, but he was clamping down hard, not letting go.

She yanked with all her might, which was so uncaring; her wrist even throbbed with pain, and quickly reddened.

Remington looked down, saw it, and reluctantly let go.

Lizetta stormed off, while Hogan hung back a step; he paused next to Remington before addressing him.

"I came to see a friend and ran into Liz by chance. Also, Mr. Dashiell, before you flex your muscles, make sure you get the full story; please ask Ms. Shirley Dashiell what exactly she's been up to."

Chapter 206

Remington locked eyes with Hogan, and their gazes collided.



One was deep and boundless, yet seemed to be carrying a blade so cold that it could cut to the bone.

The other was smirking with sarcasm, not giving an inch, an open challenge.

Between the flashes of blades, they almost wished they could tear each other apart.

Remington's lips curved slightly, "She's my wife. If you really wish us well, you should mind your boundaries."

Hogan cracked a smile too, "The future is long, and today doesn't define tomorrow."

The implication is clear: today Lizetta might be Mrs. Dashiell, but who knows.

Remington got the message loud and clear.

Shirley, of course, understood it too. Her tears instantly fell as she rushed forward to grab Hogan's arm.

"Hogan, do you really fancy Lizetta?"

She couldn't stomach it. How could the man she liked, the one out of her reach, be content playing the lover to a woman she couldn't even stand?

It was a huge blow to her.

Hogan pulled his arm away, "Ms. Shirley Dashiell, whoever I like is none of your business, and I definitely wouldn't fancy someone who's got a trash mouth, insulting and snarky."

Hogan calling her snarky?

It was Lizetta who spilled coffee on her, and it was Lizetta who slapped her!

How could Hogan be so blatantly biased? Shirley was close to losing it, with tears streaming down while Hogan already made a swift exit.

She stamped her foot, turning to Remington with a pout, "Remi, Lizetta and Hogan...

She didn't finish her sentence as Remington turned his head to look at her.

His gaze was icy, sending shivers down her spine. Shirley clamped her mouth shut, and her face turned pale.

"What did you just do?" Remington's voice was cold.

Shirley's head dropped guiltily, "What could I have done? I went to the hospital looking for Hogan and just happened to see Lizetta on a date with him, so I asked a few questions, that's all."

Shirley licked her lips nervously; Remington seemed calm, but she felt like she was facing a demon from hell.

"My face is hurting and I'm a mess; I'm going to leave."

She tried to leave, but Remington raised his hand to block Shirley's way, and instructed Cedric,

"Keep an eye on her, get to the bottom of this."

With that said, he bent down to pick up the planner and the bank card from the ground, before striding towards the door.

Shirley clenched her fists; her face grew even paler as she rushed at Cedric blocking her way.

“I need to go to the hospital to check my face, to clean up and change, let me through.”

Cedric gave Shirley a smile, “Ms. Shirley Dashiell, are you going to come clean yourself, or should I have our bodyguard watch you while we ask the waitstaff?”

As Lizetta stepped quickly out of the cafe, the cold wind made her face feel icy.

She raised her hand to wipe it, only to realize she had unknowingly started to cry.

She rubbed away the tears forcefully, while lifting her head to keep them from falling. again.

Hogan followed her out, and silently offered her a tissue; then he said with a soft voice. “Go ahead and cry; it’ll feel better once it’s out. I’ll block for you, and no one will see.” As he spoke, he stepped closer, while unbuttoning his coat and spreading it open. Lizetta, standing at the corner, now had a small private space thanks to his gesture. Lizetta had been determined not to cry, but now she couldn’t help it. She squatted down, hugging her shoulders, and her whole body trembled silently.

Hogan looked down at her, his expression filled with exceptional tenderness and pity.

Remington emerged from the cafe and searched quickly. When his eyes fell on them, his gaze sharpened like a knife, and his hand unconsciously clenched.

A snapping sound.

The bank card broke in the palm of his hand; the force cut into his flesh, and droplets of blood spilled onto the ground.

## Chapter 207

After having herself a good cry and let it all out, Lizetta felt a ton lighter.

She got to her feet, feeling a tad sheepish to look Hogan in the eye.

With her head down, she caught sight of the coffee stain on Hogan's chest.

If he hadn't stepped in to shield her earlier, she'd have been the one wearing that coffee, and now she felt even more embarrassed.

She looked up, "Hogan, I'm really sorry about today. Let me make it up to you with a new shirt and coat, okay?"

"Sure, let's go," Hogan quickly chimed in.

Lizetta froze, not quite catching on..

Hogan gestured at himself, "I can't head back to the hospital looking like this, can I? Weren't you going to make it up to me with new clothes? Aren't we hitting the

together?"

mall

Truth is, he had his own office at the hospital with plenty of spare clothes. After all, when doctors got busy, it's round-the-clock work, so they often crashed at the hospital.

But Lizetta didn't think that far. She just nodded, "Yeah, no problem at all. But don't you have some friends to meet?"

Hogan replied with a smile, while giving a wiggle of his phone, "Can't meet them looking like this, can I? It wouldn't be polite. I'll just call and reschedule."

Lizetta felt even worse. She pointed across the street.

"There's a mall just across the road there. I've bought clothes for my brother there before. It's not loaded with fancy brands or anything, but if that's cool with you."

Hogan cut her off, "I'm not fussy about brands. Let's just head there."

"I'll wait for you by the road then."

The mall wasn't far across the street, so Lizetta headed to the curb to wait for Hogan's ride.

She pulled out her phone to check messages when suddenly a car screeched to a halt beside her. Thinking it was Hogan, she was about to look up when she felt herself being lifted off her feet.

Before she could react, she was bundled into the back seat.

The culprit slammed the door shut with a bang and the car took off.

Lizetta scrambled up from the seat, glaring at the man who'd kidnapped her.

10.04

"Remington! What the hell are you playing at? I need to get out; I've got stuff to do!

Remington sat there, ice-cold, ignoring Lizetta's rants, and his gaze skimmed the rearview mirror.

Seeing Hogan pull up in another car, get out, and start searching around, Remington smirked. But Hogan was never going to find her.

With a mocking lift of his lips, Remington finally turned to Lizetta.

"Let you out so you can run off with another guy? Do I look like the kind of man who's that. generous?\*

Lizetta gritted her teeth, "No, you don't. You're biased, arrogant, and a total brute. At least you're self-aware."

Remington let her mock, while keeping unfazed.

"Got any other names for me? Let's hear them."

Feeling at her wits' end, Lizetta could do nothing but have her chest heave with anger. She sat back down.

"Don't want to let me out? Fine, let's go straight to the civil affairs office. I've cleared my debt today, and I'm in a good mood, so I'm treating you to a divorce. I'll cover the fees."

Remington chuckled coolly, "Can't do that."

"What do you mean?" Lizetta frowned, and suddenly turned to glare at Remington.

Looking at her anxious face, he gritted his teeth, and pulled out a card from his pocket, tossing it to Lizetta.

“The card’s busted, and I didn’t get the 3 million.”

Lizetta stared at the broken bank card on her lap, and her whole body cannot stop shaking.

“How could it break!”

“Who knows? So fragile, it could be a fake for all we know.”

Lizetta was fuming, with her teeth clenched, “I set up online banking. I’ll transfer it to you right now.”

She took out her phone, but as she was about to unlock it, that chilling voice of the man beside her piped up again.

## Chapter 208

“Are you sure you can transfer 3 million in one go?”

Lizetta froze. There were daily limits on bank transfers, and to send 3 million all at once, she’d need to get permission from the bank in advance, which she hadn’t done.

She snapped, “Then send your driver to the bank right now, and I’ll get a replacement card sorted ASAP”

“I don’t have time to wait on you getting your act together.”

Lizetta finally got the picture. Remington was just dragging his feet, clearly not interested in taking the 3 million or going through with the divorce.

She felt like a complete idiot for being so busy and busting her butt this past month, totally played for a fool by him.

Her eyes reddened, "Remington, are you messing with me? You have no intention of letting me go, do you? You promised, you even signed the divorce papers. How can you be such a jerk? How can you do this?"

She'd already cried her eyes out once, and now her eyes were brimming with tears again, swollen and bloodshot.

Remington's gaze fixed on those angry, despairing eyes. He felt as if an iron grip had seized his heart, making it hard for him to breathe..

He looked away, unable to bear her gaze, and adjusted his tie before speaking.

"You're so desperate to get divorced, is it because of Hogan?"

Lizetta retorted angrily, "Keep Hogan out of this! Do you think everyone's like Evelina, shamelessly homewrecking?"

Seeing her defend Hogan, and recalling the image of her crying under Hogan's coat, made the veins on Remington's forehead pulse.

Suddenly, he reached out, snatching Lizetta by the waist and pulling her into his arms.

= 5 |

He looked down at her, "You get all fired up just mentioning him, and you say it's not about him?"



Lizetta gave a bitter laugh, tears streaming down her face.

“So, not only do you look down on me, but you also think I’m loose, just like Shirley said, a despicable, shameless woman with no morals.”

Her sad, tearful face etched itself into Remington’s memory, his pupils constricting as if to imprison her image deep within.

He barely cracked a smile. The feeling’s mutual. In your eyes, I’m no good either.”

Lizetta opened her mouth but was at a loss for words. After a moment, she managed to speak.

“But you are a cheater, as clear as day. The proof’s in Evelina’s belly, and there’s no denying it!\*

Remington’s expression darkened for a moment. He had said before, the child wasn’t his.

But obviously, she didn’t believe him.

Remington closed his eyes, fearing he might lose control and hurt her.

But Lizetta suddenly reached out, grabbing his sleeve. Her face pale, lips quivering, she looked at him with pleading eyes.

“We’ve lost all trust in each other, staying together is just mutual torture. Remi, please let me go. Consider it one last act of kindness for me, okay?”

Remington opened his eyes, his gaze deep and unreadable, as if shrouded by layers of mist, concealing his emotions.

He saw her eyes full of pleading hope and felt as if by simply shaking his head, she would shatter like glass in his arms.

She had always been clever, understanding and knowing exactly how to hit where it hurts, to make him cave.

Suddenly, Remington released his hold on Lizetta's waist and said coldly.

"Lizetta, once we're divorced and you leave the country, don't come back."

Lizetta bowed her head, tears falling. She choked back sobs as she slowly sat up from Remington's embrace and moved to the side, only managing a soft "okay" after a while.

"Let's go."

Remington commanded in a cold voice.

## Chapter 209

Lizetta let out a sigh of relief when she heard his command, but at the same time, tears. started flowing uncontrollably again.

The driver didn't dare to make a peep.

With a limited interior space, even though Lizetta didn't want to sob out loud, you could still hear her intermittent sniffles.

Remington was visibly annoyed, he turned his head to give her a cold look and said, "Lizetta, if you don't stop crying, I might just change my mind!"

If he refused to divorce her, she would cry.

If he agreed, she was still crying.

She couldn't possibly be crying tears of joy, right?

The thought crossed Remington's mind and his handsome face turned even more sour.

His hand, resting on his knee, clenched into a fist, making a slight creaking sound.

Lizetta, scared by his reaction, immediately stopped crying. She blinked her red eyes and shrank like a frightened bunny next to the car window.

"Don't be mad, I've stopped crying," she said in a muffled voice, while Remington felt his anger stuck in his chest, unable to vent it.

He snorted coldly and thought, "This is me being mad?"

Heartless thing, she'd never seen him really lose his cool.

Remington closed his eyes, as if even another glance at her would be too annoying.

Lizetta exhaled quietly, pulled out a tissue, and started dabbing at her face. She sneakily fetched a mirror and took a look at herself.

Seeing her red, puffy eyes and disheveled appearance in the mirror, she started to feel frustrated.

Divorce wasn't going as she had imagined.

They didn't hold a spectacular wedding ceremony. She had thought that the divorce should be taken seriously, dressed to the nines, graceful and dignified.

But things had gone south.

Lizetta sighed silently and started fixing her hair in the mirror,

Remington was half-asleep when his phone rang. Opening his eyes, he saw Lizetta fussing with her reflection in the mirror, her easy-going demeanor making the chill in his

10.04

eyes grow colder.

He thought, “She really seems over the moon, can’t wait to get rid of me, huh?”

The call was from Cedric, and Remington was about to give him orders, so he picked up

“Mr. Dashiell, Ms. Shirley was just in the café...”

Cedric was reporting about things happened at the coffee shop, but Remington cut him off mid-sentence, ordering, “Head over to the old house, grab my personal information and marriage certificate, and bring them to the civil affairs office.”

Cedric on the other end was all confused, understanding every word but unable to make

sense of them.

“Mr. Dashiell, what did you say?”

Remington’s voice was icy, “Are you going deaf?”

Cedric could feel his anger through the phone, but he didn’t dare respond.

The civil affairs office wasn't supposed to handle anything other than marriages and divorces. Was Remington going to get a divorce?

But hadn't Remington been wooing his wife recently? Why the sudden divorce?

If Cedric agreed, and Remington later pinned the blame of his divorce on him, what kind of future would he have?

And what if Remington was on speaker and was actually being cornered by his wife, just waiting for a way out?

As a clueless assistant, if Cedric caused Remington to really get a divorce, he'd be done

for.

In a matter of seconds, Cedric had a brainstorm.

Sweating palms clutching the phone, he blurted out loudly, "Hello? Hello! Mr. Dashiell, what did you say, I've got a bad signal, hello?"

Under immense pressure, Cedric yanked the phone away and hung up.

All was quiet in the car, and Cedric had been so loud that even Lizetta heard him.

Lizetta, worried about more complications, wondered if Remington had secretly signaled Cedric to pull such a stunt.

She looked at Remington with suspicion and concern, frowning, "Cedric isn't on a business trip in the boondocks, how could he have a bad signal? If your documents are at the old house, should I call the driver to deliver them? Or we could go back to get them,

there's still time."

## Chapter 210

Remington's cool, detached gaze swept over the woman who was frantic to the extreme.

His grip on the phone tightened a notch, and with a cold smirk, he said, "No need."

"What do you mean 'no need'? Are you going to flip-flop again? Why won't you agree to a divorce? With the way you're acting, I'm starting to think you've fallen for me and can't let – go!" Lizetta blurted out in desperation.

Remington's expression was momentarily unreadable, and he raised an eyebrow, "If I said I loved you and couldn't live without you, would that stop the divorce?"

Lizetta felt like she'd been sucker-punched, her mind thundering with his words.

She stared at Remington, his mocking smile and the icy calm in his eyes snapping her back to reality.

No one confesses love with that look, certainly not with such a sarcastic tone.

Besides, how could Remington possibly love her and not bear to part with her?

Hadn't two years of a cold, loveless marriage clued her in?

Lizetta clenched her fists, "What's done is done, there's no turning back now. We're getting divorce today."

She fixed her gaze on Remington.

On that strikingly handsome face, there was no sign of sadness or the embarrassment of being rejected, just endless mockery and nonchalance.

He tapped on his phone casually, "Of course, we'll divorce."

He flipped the phone in his hand and redialed Cedric.

The phone rang again, and Cedric, like he was handling a hot potato, dared not ignore it.

"Do you

need a raise for all this drama you're stirring up?"

Remington's voice was deep and carried an ominous displeasure for Cedric's meddling.

Cedric hastily replied, "Mr. Dashiell, I'll get it immediately and bring it to you."

After hanging up, Remington glanced at Lizetta with a look that seemed to say, "Don't flatter yourself, you're overthinking things big time."

Lizetta felt embarrassed and bit her lip, turning to look out the window.

The car fell into an awkward silence until they stopped at the civil affairs office.

Cedric hadn't arrived yet, and the driver, probably feeling the heavy air, took the opportunity to make a quick getaway as soon as he parked.

Now It was just Lizetta and Remington in the car, he leaned back to rest with his eyes closed, while she couldn't help but sneak glances at him.

Even without the romance, he was still the most important man in her life.

He had played too many roles in her story.

Her savior, her light, her idol, her guide, he was like a brother, like a father, and also the lover she yearned for but couldn't have.

For the rest of her life, Lizetta knew, even if time healed all wounds and taught her to love someone else, it would never be as deep and unforgettable as her love for the man before her.

No one would ever etch their name in her heart with such vivid strokes as he did.

Never again.

With that thought, it felt like a thousand arrows piercing her heart.

Lizetta almost blurted out her desire to not go through with the divorce and give it another try.

"Seen enough?" Remington suddenly opened his eyes.

As he turned his head to look at her, Lizetta quickly blinked away her sorrow and hid it behind a smile.

"Remi, your tie's crooked, let me fix it for you."

She knelt on the seat, leaned over, and without asking, grabbed hold of Remington's tie.

He had just loosened his tie and undone a couple of shirt buttons.



Lizetta straightened the tie, carefully adjusted the collar, fastened the buttons, and then started to retie the tie from scratch.

Remington looked down at the woman close to him, resembling a dutiful wife doting on her husband.

He thought she might not be as eager to leave as she seemed, and he raised his hand to grasp Lizetta's wrist, asking in a deep voice.

"Liz, is there anything else you want to say?"

It was not too late to call it off, even if it was just a foolish impulse.