

Illusions 61

Chapter 61

Lizetta felt a hit on the back of her head and stopped in her tracks. Whirling around, she crossed her arms and looked at Evelina.

“Don’t forget! It was you who invited me. You love comparisons and outshining others so much, I was just being kind, satisfying that whim of yours. Why are you fury? Is it because you are ugly, so that you are justified?”

Evelina was fuming, ready to blow a gasket. She stormed up to Lizetta, raising hand to strike.

But Lizetta was quick on the draw. She firmly grabbed Evelina’s hand.

“Enough, Evelina!”

Evelina snorted with contempt. “So, what if you’ve attracted all the attention? Remi still danced with me, didn’t he? Lizetta, don’t you forget, without the Hawthorne family, without me, you’d be nothing but a street rat from the slums, with no chance of rubbing elbows with someone like Remi. Oh, and you showing up in that dress left by my grandma? Don’t you find yourself ridiculous? Is that your grandma or mine? Clearly, it’s mine!

Without my grandma’s nostalgic affections, would Fiona cherish you? Would the Dashiell family have taken you in? Without my granny, you’d be a big fat nothing!”

Evelina shouted with suppressed anger. Lizetta clenched her teeth, her body trembling slightly.

“If thinking that way

way makes you feel superior, then go right ahead,” Lizetta said coolly, shaking off Evelina’s grip.

Lizetta turned to leave again, but Evelina couldn’t stand her aloof and disdainful attitude.

What gave Lizetta the right?

Evelina grabbed Lizetta again, “You stole my life and became Mrs. Dashiell. I’m just asking you to give it back, what’s wrong with that? Remi never loved you; he’s always loved me!”

Evelina was like a madwoman, relentlessly pestering.

The night air was chilly, and Lizetta felt a cold shiver.

She flung Evelina away, “I already said, think whatever you want, but let go! Do you want everyone to come out and watch this farce?”

Evelina cooled down a bit upon hearing that.

Lizetta pulled her hand back and sighed in relief, but then Evelina spoke again.

“It’s not that I want to think this way, but that Remi truly loves me more, Lizetta, do you dare to verify that? Because I do!”

Lizetta was still puzzled by Evelina’s meaning when suddenly Evelina let out a yell and lunged toward her.

Lizetta stumbled, and with a couple of splashes, both women fell into the pool nearby.

Unprepared for the fall, Lizetta swallowed some water and felt a cramp in her calf.

As she calmed herself intending to swim upward, she felt a weight around her waist – Evelina was clinging tightly to her in the water, dragging her down.

Lizetta had never imagined Evelina could go this crazy!

Holding her breath, she

in her chest grew scacked and pulled, but couldn't shake Evelina off. Bubbles escaped her mouth as the air

This wouldn't do. Lizetta clenched her fist and struck Evelina on the head.

That's when Evelina let go.

Survival instinct made Lizetta kick Evelina away, swimming in the opposite direction, afraid of being entangled again. She didn't see that, as Evelina sank, an agile figure was swimming towards them.

As Lizetta turned her head again due to a cramp in her calf, she saw Remington holding Evelina, swimming towards the light above the pool.

Lizetta felt a sharp pain in her chest, unable to determine if it was from severe lack of oxygen or something else.

Struggling to swim upward, her legs cramping, she panicked and swallowed water again.

Losing control, Lizetta sank deeper into the cold, dark depths.

The water was freezing, overwhelming.

With her eyes open, she could no longer see Remington or Evelina.

Left alone, she faced death in solitude.

Lizetta gave up the fight, tears rolling from the corners of her eyes as she closed them.

Brother, you promised to protect me, always.

You promised.

Remington emerged from the water with Evelina and was about to leave her,

But Evelina clung to him, crying out, “My child. Lizetta kicked my stomach, my child.”

Evelina had recently shown signs of a miscarriage, causing Remington to hesitate in his return to the pool.

He had seen it all.

With two more splashes, two more people jumped into the pool.

Lizetta was a great swimmer, she didn’t need saving and could have made it out on her own.

“Remington, what are you waiting for? Take Eve back, get the doctor, hurry!”

Elara urged anxiously, and Remington quickly carried Evelina away.

But he didn’t see that just behind him, Lizetta was being lifted from the water, her face deathly pale, silent and

still.

Chapter 62

After being vigorously pressed on her chest, Lizetta suddenly choked and coughed back to life.

Leaning against the person behind her, Lizetta was in a daze, with near-death memories flashing back as she saw through her bleary eyes Remington carrying Evelina away at a brisk pace.

He didn't look back.

"Lizetta! You're faking it, right? You're like a fish in water, come on, speak up."

The person who rescued Lizetta from behind patted her face, bringing her back to her senses as she looked at him.

She was surprised to find it was Cassius Sterling.

He was Remington's brother, from the Sterling family, long-time acquaintances of the Hawthorne family. Cassius treated Evelina like a sister and always thought Lizetta was a gold digger who had delayed Remington's life, and therefore, he had a low opinion of Lizetta.

"Thanks, cough cough."

Lizetta apologized, feeling grateful despite everything since he saved her life.

Cassius just huffed and ran his fingers through his drenched hair.

"Don't thank me; I didn't save you out of any personal regard, just basic human decency. If I'd known it was you, I wouldn't have bothered getting wet! You sure you're okay?"

He looked at her with pure distaste, and Lizetta gave a self-deprecating laugh.

"A scourge like me can survive a millennium; what could possibly happen to me?"

Already humiliated enough, she had no desire to seek sympathy from someone who loathed her.

Cassius sneered, pushed Lizetta away from him, and got up to leave. Lizetta didn't say another word.

There

ere were still onlookers: Kevin was frowning and staring at Lizetta with a stern look.

"Liz, you pushed Eve in, didn't you? You really are... never mind, you're not welcome here. Just go."

He then apologized to the other guests, "Sorry for the scare. Let's go inside, I'll apologize with a drink."

He ushered everyone away, leaving Lizetta alone, drenched and kneeling by the poolside.

A servant, taking pity on her, sneaked over and tossed her a big towel.

"Ms. Gardenia, better get going."

Lizetta thanked the servant and wrapped herself up, stumbling away.

Upstairs, in Evelina's room, several servants and Elara were fussing over her.

Someone was fetching hot water, someone else was drying her hair, others were checking on her condition.

Evelina was leaning pathetically against Elara, clutching a cup; seeing she was all right, Remington turned to

leave.

But Evelina suddenly raised her voice, “Mom, it was sister who pushed me! She dragged me into the water, I can’t swim, I was so scared! Sister didn’t save me; she hit my head, kicked me. It was terrifying, too terrifying. I thought I’d never see you again!”

Elara stood up enraged upon hearing this.

“This is attempted murder, call the police! I’m calling them right now!”

Remington stopped in his tracks; Evelina saw this and a gleam of laughter flashed in her eyes, though her crying

intensified.

Remington walked back, snatched the phone from Elara’s hand.

Elara looked at him in disbelief and demanded, “Remington, what do you mean by this?!”

Remington coldly replied, “They both fell in together, no one saw Lizetta push her. How can you claim attempted NôvelDrama.Org content rights.

murder?”

Evelina looked hurt as she gazed at Remington, “Remi, you saw it! You must have. She was hitting me in the water, how could you?”

Her tears flowed profusely, partly acting, partly genuinely heartbroken.

At that moment under the water, she fell in with mental preparation. Naturally, she was much more composed than Lizetta, who choked and panicked immediately upon falling.

She also saw Remington coming out then, which is why she and Lizetta fell into the water together, and only let go of Lizetta after seeing Remington swim towards them.

She was convinced that Remington had seen Lizetta hit her.

But to Evelina's dismay, even after witnessing Lizetta's wicked acts, Remington still unhesitatingly defended her. Evelina was dead with envy!

"I didn't see anything! You were just panicked and imagined things, right, Evelina?"

Remington came to the bedside, looking down at Evelina from above. He was asking her, but his tone was declarative.

He was defining the situation, warning her to drop it.

With red eyes, Evelina clenched her cup and grabbed Remington's sleeve.

"Remi, stay with me, and I won't press charges. I'm really scared."

"No, we must call the police," Elara insisted, clearly dissatisfied.

Chapter 63

Remington gave a cold look.

"Lizetta's my wife. Are the Hawthorne family and the Dashiell family, including me, Remington, picking a fight?"

His voice was cool but the threat in it sent chills down one's spine.

Elara trembled all over, her complexion turning ugly.

With a mix of grievance and forbearance, Evelina looked at her, “Mom, maybe it was just my illusion. Sister wouldn’t do such a vile thing. Let’s just drop it, okay? Please apologize to the guests for me. It’s enough that Remi stays by my side.”

Elara had no choice but to leave, and Evelina reached to move Remington’s hand down to hold his.

He slipped out of his sleeve, saying.

“I’m going to change.”

He was still wet, and Evelina could only say, “Yeah, Remi, hurry and don’t catch a cold.”

He left, and the driver was waiting at the door holding a complete set of replacement clothes from the car.

“Where’s the missus?” Remington didn’t take the clothes, but frowned and asked.

The driver, Christ, was taken aback, “The missus? She’s probably bathing and changing clothes.”

Remington then took the clothes and was escorted by a servant to a guest room to change.

Christ went downstairs and, finding a servant, urgently inquired about Lizetta, only to be told she had already left.

Christ was surprised and hurried to drive out of the Hawthorne family residence, just in time to see Lizetta hailing a cab and getting in.

Christ didn't pursue further and drove back.

It wasn't until the next morning that Lizetta saw Remington again. Coming out of the hallway, she saw the familiar car parked under a tree nearby.

The man stood by the car, smoking. Seeing her, he crushed the cigarette butt and threw it into the trash, then started walking towards her.

Lizetta pretended not to notice and walked past him.

Remington frowned, "You didn't get sick last night, did you?"

The weather was cold; Evelina had developed a fever last night, and because she was pregnant, she couldn't take medicine. With the servant taking care of her all night, Remington couldn't leave.

He called Lizetta, but this woman had blocked him, leaving him no way to check on her.

Lizetta had a slight fever last night, but she was in good health and had herself some hot water and felt much better by morning.

She turned around sarcastically, "Mr. Dashiell, coming to show concern now? Isn't it a bit late? Oh, that's right, I remember now. Mr. Dashiell, you were busy last night taking care of your sweetheart, how could you bother with me? Luckily, I'm like a weed, not as delicate as those noble flowers, so I've got resilience on my side! I'm doing just fine, no need for your concern!"

After speaking, Lizetta turned to leave.

He didn't want her anymore, and she didn't need his pretend concern now.

But Remington suddenly gripped her shoulder tightly.

“Lizetta! Do you really have to talk to me like this? You pushed Evelina into the water, you did something wrong. and let others clean up the mess, and you still think you’re right?”

“I didn’t push her!” Lizetta retorted, struggling.

Remington said sternly. “Evelina can’t swim. Would she jump in by herself?”

Lizetta felt as if her heart was being squeezed, struggling to breathe, and she didn’t want to argue anymore.

She knew he wouldn’t believe her; she just knew.

Exhausted, she said, “Whatever, if you think I was the one wicked enough to push her, you don’t need to pretend to care now. Let go.”

She forced her emotions in check, pushed Remington away, and walked forward step by step.

Remington rubbed his temples and caught up with her again.

“Add me back!” he commanded sternly.

He was done with the anxiety of not being able to reach her like last night.

He insisted, and Lizetta didn’t want to tangle with him further. Silently, she took out her phone and added him back.

“Can I go now?”

She asked, her whole demeanor rebellious and unyielding.

Remington was exasperated. He hadn't slept all night and had been waiting here since before dawn, not wanting to keep arguing with her, and he had lost the patience to coax or care for her.

He slowly let go of her hand.

Days flew by, and Lizetta hadn't seen Remington again.

She had added his number, but he hadn't contacted her either, it seemed they had an unspoken cold war.

That day, after finishing her performance at the mermaid-themed restaurant, Lizetta emerged dripping wet from

the water.

She went to the changing room to shower and change and was about to leave when the manager came over

with a smile.

"Ms. Gardenia, that regular customer Mr. March over there would like to buy you a drink. He's a friend of the boss, so do him a favor."

Lizetta frowned and said coldly, "Entertaining with drinks is not part of my job."

She stepped forward to leave, while the manager was in a dilemma, a figure blocked Lizetta's way.

It was a man in his mid-twenties, sharply dressed, looking pretty decent but with an air of "I'm so handsome" plastered all over his face. His forced suaveness was off-putting.

“Ms. Gardenia, right? I really enjoyed your performance. Do me the honor of joining me for dinner, and this will be yours.”

He flicked a BMW keychain, swinging them, his eyes scanning Lizetta from head to toe.

Chapter 64

Lizetta kept it simple and classy, rocking a plain white tee and jeans without showing an inch of skin. Yet somehow, her no-frills getup took on a whole new vibe on her, making her look effortlessly chic.

Flashes of her frolicking in the water just moments ago crossed his mind – her glorious, golden mermaid tail, her skin as smooth and flawless as frosted snow, and her posture gliding through the water with grace, like a legit deep-sea mermaid princess – it was alluring, innocent, and seductive all at once.

You’d never guess the knockout figure hidden beneath that oversized white tee if you hadn’t seen it with your own eyes. And let’s not forget the supple and lively feel of those legs, usually wrapped up in a fish tail, tumbling through the water, which must feel absolutely mind-blowing wrapped around a man’s waist.

“Back off!”

Lizetta’s expression turned icy as the guy ogled her a bit too obviously.

The manager frowned, “How can you talk to Mr. March like that.”

Daniel March just smiled as he stepped aside, all charm and grace; he even gave the manager a reassuring wave to show he didn’t mind.

As Lizetta walked away, Daniel watched her until she was out of sight, savoring the moment before turning back and patting the manager on the shoulder.

“That’s the spice I’m talking about. It’s only tasty if it’s got a kick. Send me her part-time schedule here.”

Stepping out of the mermaid-themed restaurant, Lizetta could still feel that creepy, clingy vibe on her back like she was being watched.

Feeling annoyed and fed up, she figured her days working this gig were numbered.

But when it rains, it pours. Right on cue, her phone rings – it's Jolin.

Picking up, Lizetta is hit with Jolin's piercing cries.

"Where the hell have you been, you good-for-nothing? Your brother and I are about to get kicked out of the hospital. If you don't show up, we might as well drop dead together!"

Rushing to hail a cab, Lizetta also called Yolanda.

Yolanda, hearing about the trouble with Thaddeus, soothed Lizetta and headed to the hospital herself.

They bumped into each other right outside.

The scene outside Thaddeus' room was a hot mess, with Jolin tussling with a couple of nurses.

Upon seeing Lizetta, Jolin made a beeline for her and grabbed her arm.

"Liz, why the heck are they throwing us out? Doesn't the Dashiell Group own this hospital? I'm telling you, I'm the mother-in-law of your honorary chairman!"

She snapped at the nurses and then pushed Lizetta, "What are you zoning out for? Call Remington, now!"

Jolin's voice was loud, drawing weird looks from everyone; people were probably wondering which rock this Mrs. Dashiell crawled out from under.

Embarrassed, Lizetta stood there as Yolanda stepped in to pull Jolin away.

"What kind of mother are you? Other than hitting up Liz and the Dashiell family for money, what have you ever done? For the past year, Liz has been the one taking care of Thaddeus while he's bedridden. How many times have you shown up? Don't you feel any shame?!"

Jolin staggered back from the force of Yolanda's words and turned on her with a finger pointed.

"What's it to you how I talk to my daughter?!"

"Do you even consider Liz your daughter? Where were you when Hans hit her?

Where were you when she was starving, searching through trash cans for food in her bare feet? Now after she's taken in by the Dashiell family, you suddenly want to see your daughter every month and have the cheek to show up for cash. You let everyone label her a leech, and how dare you call yourself her mother! Do you only remember you have a daughter every time when there's trouble?"

Yolanda was shaking with anger, recalling the first time she met Lizetta.

The poor girl went from rich kid to nobody's problem, burning her hand while boiling water, with nothing to eat at home, and Jolin nowhere in sight.

Kicked out by a drunken Hans in the dead of winter, she was scavenging through the neighborhood trash bins in just her thin clothes.

When Yolanda found her, Lizetta looked like a drenched Persian cat, with her expensive fur all soaked; she scared and helpless.

was

Yolanda couldn't understand it. Jolin wasn't Mother of the Year, but she used to fight with Evelina and Hans.

Was it because Lizetta was only brought home at six that there were no feelings, completely disregarding her own flesh and blood?

Jolin, confronted by Yolanda, turned a sickly shade of green; her face was a mix of awkwardness and embarrassment as she looked at Lizetta.

"Liz, I'm just so worried about your brother, and you must be too. Please, ask Remington what's going on."

Thaddeus' life depends on the hospital equipment, and Lizetta has plans to send her brother abroad for treatment. She can't let anything happen to him now, not when there's hope on the horizon.

She thought of reaching out to Hogan to smooth things over, but the nurses told her he's off on a medical aid mission for about half a month.

Remembering Remington mentioning replacing her senior brother, Lizetta had her suspicions grow that he's behind all this.

Taking out her phone, she dialed Remington; her fingertips were icy.

Remington knew he's the only blood relative she cares about, yet he dares to use her brother's life to manipulate

her.

Is he trying to force her back?

Or is this payback for Evelina?

Chapter 65

This call just wasn't getting picked up, no matter how long it rang.

Lizetta kept dialing over and over, but got no answer from the other side.

Couldn't tell if he just didn't see it, or if he was purposely giving her the cold shoulder as a lesson.

"Badass Remington not picking up the phone? Just like him!" Yolanda gritted her teeth.

"Did you tick off Remington or what? Spit

it out!" Jolin was so anxious that she started shoving Lizetta around.

Lizetta stumbled from the push; her bag hit the deck, and out tumbled a divorce agreement. Text belongs to NôvelDrama.Org.

It was a fresh copy she'd made, signed and ready to be slapped in Remington's face the next time she saw him. to make him sign it.

Jolin picked it up and stared at Lizetta in disbelief.

"What the heck did you do to get dumped by Remington? The sky is falling! Go beg him to take you back, get on your knees if you have to, go!"

Lizetta was just so drained, and this was her own mother.

Her daughter's getting divorced, and she's not worried about the hurt but about losing the glitz and glam.

Lizetta shook off Jolin, “Go kneel yourself!”

Jolin stumbled back; as she was about to blow a fuse, she locked eyes with Lizetta’s steely gaze and froze.

She was the type to bully the weak but cower before the strong, so she chickened out.

But Lizetta couldn’t just stand by and watch her big brother get kicked out of the hospital, so she grabbed Yolanda’s hand.

Yolanda immediately said, “You go ahead, I’ve got this. I’ll make sure nothing happens to your brother.”

Only then did Lizetta clutch her phone and rush out of the hospital.

In the evening, Maplewood Club.

The biggest den of iniquity in Zion City, where all the high rollers hang out.

Lizetta asked for Timothy and heard that Remington had a shindig here tonight.

The club was no place for just anyone; Lizetta waited outside, and Timothy showed up pretty quick.

He was decked out in a wine-red V-neck suit; his hair was not as slick as usual, with bangs covering his devil-may-care brows – oozing nobility that only comes from rolling in dough; utterly charming.

“Timothy, thanks a million.”

Timothy smirked and raised an eyebrow, “Little Liz, you look even prettier than two years ago. Come on, let me sneak you in.”

Soon enough, they were standing at a secluded VIP room door.

Timothy paused and filled her in.

“I gave the guys downstairs a heads up. From now on, you can come straight to this VIP room. It’s just for the bros to hang out, not open to the public. Wanna see Remi? You won’t go wrong here.”

“Thanks, Timothy.”

Lizetta smiled her thanks, but she didn’t really think she’d be coming back to find anyone.

Once she and Remington were done, their worlds would be totally different.

A server pushed open the door, and out spilled the music and chatter.

“Ha, Lizetta in the same league as Evelina? Remi would pick Evelina for sure. Lizetta’s been on the receiving end of his cold shoulder because of Evelina for years.”

“Well, that’s not a given. Lizetta’s like his own flesh and blood. Even if there’s no love between them, there’s sibling affection, right? Remi used to spoil her rotten, promising the moon and stars.”

Lizetta’s feet froze at the door.

The voices inside kept going, dripping with endless mockery.

“Pssh! That’s just Remi being protective! Even his pets get the royal treatment. Right, Remi?”

Lizetta recognized it was Cassius’ voice.

She held her breath, hoping to hear a retort, but all she got was a man's mocking, indifferent tone.

"If you know I'm protective, then zip it!"

Lizetta felt the icy voice slice through her skin, and the blood it drew was as cold as ice.

Hanna said she wasn't even as good as the Dashiell family's dog, but it turned out in Remington's eyes, she, Lizetta, was just his best-kept pet.

And she was openly judged and mocked by his buddies as a bit of banter.

Lizetta's face turned pale, and by then, the room's occupants finally noticed them.

"Yo, Timothy's here, and he's brought a new flame. Must be a knockout. Come on, let's get a look!"

Someone called out and pulled Timothy aside, exposing Lizetta to everyone's gaze.

Her eyes locked with the man lounging on the VIP room sofa.

Lizetta's gaze swept past the delicate figure beside him, and she flashed a smile.

Oh, Evelina was there too.

Sorry to interrupt, she thought. Sorry to crash the party.

The room went from buzzing to dead silent.

Evelina's eyes darted around, filled with envy.

Lizetta was just too stunning. Without any makeup, she'd stand out, like the first red plum blossom on a winter's day effortlessly stealing the scene.

"Liz? Come in and take a seat."

Evelina quickly walked up to Lizetta, reaching to pull her in as if nothing had happened in their past.

Lizetta sidestepped, leaving Evelina with an awkward expression, her ha

Chapter 66

"Who is this chick? Not giving Ms. Hawthorne any respect, huh? Not afraid her high horse will throw her back out?" Celebrity Lulu chimed in.

Since Evelina was Remington's date, she looked to butter her up and earn some good karma.

The vibe instantly got more awkward.

Lizetta gave Remington an icy stare; not intending to go in, she just said, "Can you come out for a sec?"

Remington's lips were tightly pursed, and his eyes were frosty.

The dude was sitting there, with his legs crossed, idly swirling his wine glass and not budging an inch.

The place was lit up, booze flowing, with beauties and gents everywhere, and there he was, sitting like he owned the place, his sharp feature exuding this exclusive aura – he was definitely the center of attention.

He didn't say a word, didn't move, and nobody dared to make a peep.

The tension was worse than before, and this unbearable silence made Lizetta wish she could just turn around. and bolt.

But Thaddeus was counting on her rescue, so walking away wasn't an option.

With her lips pressed together, she tried again: "I kinda need to..."

That's when Remington finally spoke up, "Who told you to come here? If you've got business, we can talk later."

His words might as well have been "You're not welcome here, now scram."

Lizetta felt a chill creeping up her spine. She shouldn't have come, and this was utterly humiliating.

She was Timothy's plus one, and he didn't expect things to go south like this.

He raised a hand, trying to put it around Lizetta's shoulder to keep her there, but he felt a death glare and stopped short..

Balling his hand into a fist, he coughed lightly and said. "Little Liz, you had a spat with Remi? No wonder he's been sulking all night. Now you can't leave, right? Come on, I've got high EQ, and let me mediate for you guys."

Someone teased, "With the speed at which Timothy's girls come and go, you trying to offload Remi too?"

"Get lost!" Timothy shot back with a laugh.

Evelina lowered her head down, with her eyes flickering. She knew exactly why Remington was being so cold to Lizetta.

She grabbed Lizetta's arm, holding her back, "This is Lucian's welcome back party. It must've been Lucian himself who invited you. After all these years, you and Lucian are still close. You never come out to these things, but for Lucian's return, you show up."

Lucian's welcome back party?

Lizetta was clueless, she knew from the news that he was returning to the country, but she didn't realize it was tonight. She missed Lucian, as she hadn't seen him in two years.

With Thaddeus' thing tonight, she had to sort it out, so she let herself be half-dragged to the couch.

Evelina sat next to Remington, "Sit by me, sis. Let's chat."

She pulled Lizetta down, planting herself between her and Remington.

Remington's whole vibe got even colder, and his grip on the wine glass turned his knuckles white.

He treated Lizetta like she was invisible, and she sure as hell didn't want to throw herself at him.

She shook off Evelina's hand, strode over to a solitary armchair on the edge, and said, "Keep it going, will ya? Who picked this song? Not gonna sing?"

The song that was cut off was Lulu's claim to fame; she stood up and started to sway gracefully, as if she was ready to wow everyone.

The music started again, and the room came back to life, but there was still an odd undercurrent.

While everyone was having fun, they were also discreetly watching the trio.

Lizetta grew up in the Dashiell family but, being invisible from the very first, she was never really one of them.

Until she was twelve, when Remington almost killed a guy over her, and the Dashiell family had to pull some strings to hush it up.

Remi had a sister, who was drop-dead gorgeous and precious, and Zion City knew it.

But Remington was protective, and with the age difference, he didn't bring Lizetta out much. The young gents there might've seen her once or twice at most.

Eventually, the little orphan girl from the Dashiell family became the future mistress of the house, in a not-so-glamorous way.

The taboo and scandalous gossip made Lizetta the talk of the town behind closed doors.

But with Remington being abroad for the past four years and having barely been seen with Lizetta, the whispers died down over time.

Today, the rarely seen couple was in the same room but not together, with Remington sitting with an ex-girlfriend instead.

And considering they'd been married for two years without a proper wedding.

Evelina went abroad, and Remington followed her to expand his empire in a foreign country, so the unspoken understanding grew. The looks towards Lizetta ranged from pity to disdain.

Lizetta was well aware of it and have been used to it by now.

She grabbed her phone and shot a message to Yolanda.

[Bit of trouble here, might take longer.]

Yolanda sent back a meme.

A knife stuck in a dog, with the dog's head photoshopped to Remington's.

Lizetta's lips curled up, but then Evelina piped up.

"Are you messaging Lucian? When's he getting here?"

Chapter 67

Feeling totally fed up with being pestered by her, Lizetta glanced over with irritation.

"Are you really that curious? Want me to hand over my phone to you?"

Evelina's eyes reddened, "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to pry into your privacy."

Snorting with a smirk, Cassius poured himself a full glass of red wine and approached Lizetta.

"Evelina's been taking good care of you, and here you are not giving a damn and being all passive-aggressive. You've hijacked Evelina's life, and now you can't even drink a glass of wine as an apology? It doesn't seem too much to ask, does it?"

With a different kind of rough-and-tumble good looks, Cassius had a rugged charm.

Especially when he was putting someone on the spot, that wild vibe was suffocating.

Lizetta, looking at the full glass of wine with a cold gaze, said, "I'm allergic to alcohol, can't drink it."

"My sister's allergic to alcohol? Since when. Oh no, wait!"

Evelina called Lizetta out, and her face was panicked as she covered her mouth.

Such a novice at playing the innocent – it wasn't that her skills slipped, but that she was sure Cassius would believe her.

Sure enough, Cassius scoffed. "Allergic? Pull the other one. Even if you were, you'd drink it. If anything goes down, I've got your back."

If a real allergy took a life, someone like Cassius could certainly handle it; in their eyes, what do other people's joys and sorrows matter?

Just like Remington could put her on a pedestal one moment and throw her into the mud the next.

Remington sat there, watching coldly. It was Cassius who was giving her a hard time, but wasn't it also Remington who put her through hell?

Would drinking this glass get Remington to back off and quiet down the hospital ordeal?

But did he know that she was pregnant?

Lizetta gave a bitter laugh, and her smile was tinged with paleness.

She took the glass and stood up.

"I'll drink this. I was out of line today, showing up uninvited. I'll settle my own dues."

She held the stem glass with her delicate hand, tilted her head back, with her hair cascading down, and downed

the drink with finesse.

After finishing, she flipped her wrist to show Cassius the empty glass, "Happy now?"

Her red lips were stained with the drink of the night, making her stunningly beautiful and breathtaking.

Cassius caught his breath.

Lizetta tossed the wine glass onto him, and he caught it in a daze.

Grabbing her bag. Lizetta walked out with long strides.

Remington's deep eyes followed her retreat, and a cold fissure seemed to tear through his gaze.

She said she was an uninvited guest.

He slammed the wine glass on the table, not too hard, but the sound unnervingly tightened everyone's chest.

Remington stood up and followed her out, leaving a bunch of people looking at each other, clueless about what just happened.

As soon as Lizetta left the private room, she dashed straight into the restroom and made herself throw up.

It was so agonizing that it felt like her entire stomach was being churned upside down.

But she had to do it, to make sure the baby wasn't affected.

Once Lizetta felt like she was about to vomit bile, she flushed the toilet, sat on the bowl to catch her breath for a while, and then walked out sweating profusely.

She washed her hands and face at the sink, and coughed violently from the throat irritation caused by vomiting. with her wet hair messily stuck to her face.

“Litchi?”

A familiar male voice came from behind, and Lizetta turned around to see a handsome young face.

The man was tall, not wearing a suit but a baseball cap, a loose jacket, and jeans that perfectly showcased his great physique and long legs.

The young race car driver exuded a vibrant, fiery hormone aura.

His deep-set eyes bore some resemblance to Remington, highlighting their cousin relationship.

“Cough... Lucian, you... cough cough!”

Lucian patted Lizetta’s back. “In the few years I haven’t seen you, you’ve picked up a stutter? Never heard of that being an acquired condition.”

Lizetta caught her breath with his help, “Lucian, long time no see.”

Lucian flicked her forehead with a rogueish grin.

“Ouch! Lucian! You didn’t go abroad for racing, but to learn the Iron Finger technique!”

Lizetta protested, and Lucian gave her a resigned smile.

Seeing her disheveled hair, he reached out to help her tuck it behind her ear.

Before his hand touched her, another large palm abruptly grabbed his wrist.

Lucian turned his head and saw the indifferent man. He reached out his arm with a smile.

“Remi.”

The two cousins hugged briefly, and then Remington pulled Lizetta into his arms.

Lizetta wasn’t about to let him hug her.

She frowned and struggled, but Remington held her tight, while telling Lucian.

“Everyone’s waiting for you, so if you’ve arrived, better go join them. Your sister-in-law isn’t feeling well, and I’ll

take care of her.”

Chapter 68

Lizetta stood there, with hands on her hips, silenced and stiff as a board after Remington’s warning, and she gave Lucian a reluctant nod.

“Alright, I’m heading in.”

As Lucian walked away, Lizetta immediately gave Remington a stomp on the foot and shoved him hard.

“Back off!”

She had managed to make herself throw up in time, but the alcohol had infiltrated her system, causing her to wobble a bit.

Remington pulled her back and cradled her slender waist with his large hand, plopping Lizetta onto the sink counter and enveloping her with his arms.

Remington had a stern look on his face, with his gaze fixed on her, and his thin lips curled up in an indescribable

sneer.

“What’s the matter, am I cramping your style and interrupting your little walk down memory lane?”

Lizetta was enveloped by his breath, the familiar cool scent mixed with sweetness, unmistakably Evelina’s perfume.

The nerve of this guy, acting like she was the third wheel to his little fling, and now he has the gall to turn the tables on her.

Lizetta tried to back away in disgust. “Yes, I’ve already cleared the way for you by hiding out here. You got your awkward moment, and I’ve had my drink, so what more do you want, chasing me down to this spot?”

The mirror on the wash basin cast a cold light on Lizetta’s pale face, making the hints of red flush from the alcohol on her cheeks look unnaturally vivid.

Remington reached out to tidy her messy hair behind her ear, then used the back of his hand to touch her sweaty forehead, frowning.

“Why so pale? Did I force that drink on you?”

Lizetta nearly laughed in exasperation, “Am I some kind of masochist, eagerly downing that drink on my own?”

She turned her head away, not wanting to look at him, but he grabbed her chin firmly and turned her face back to his.

“I was sitting right there; you’re Mrs. Dashiell, and who would dare to force a drink on you?”

If she had just softened up to him, or even just given him a look of pleading, wouldn’t he have cared for her?

After messing it up, she hadn’t asked about his arm injury for days, and today she had the nerve to show up at the welcome party. He hadn’t even blown up at her yet, and here she was acting all high and mighty.

As Remington saw the impatience and disdain in her eyes, and thinking about how she had lit up at another man just moments before, a chill grew in the depths of his eyes.

“You’re asking for it!”

Lizetta glared at him, trying to kick him away with both legs.

But Remington caught her squirming legs and stepped forward, forcing Lizetta to lean back and, in a panic, wrap her arms around his neck.

Her chest heaved, “I deserve it? Are you saying I should have thrown that drink in Cassius’ face to truly live up to the title of Mrs. Dashiell?”

In the earlier situation, with Evelina cozily sitting next to him, it was clear who he was protecting.

Wouldn’t Lizetta look ridiculous trying to pull rank as Mrs. Dashiell?

“You could always give it a try.” Remington raised an eyebrow.

Lizetta was seething, but she also arguing pointless. She was still worried about her brother.

Swallowing her pride. Lizetta looked at him and said. "I'm feeling a bit off, and I want to go home. Consider that drink as my apology to you, and while you're at it, can you please spare my brother?"

Remington's brow furrowed slightly. "What are you talking about?"

When Lizetta saw his genuinely puzzled expression, she was taken aback.

"Don't you know that the hospital is pulling the plug on my brother's medical equipment and medication?"

Remington's face darkened, and his tone was cold.

"We don't need to discuss this matter right now."

Lizetta froze, "What do you mean?"

"Pack your things, move back to Oakridge Heights, and behave. Your brother will be fine!"

Lizetta had thought maybe she had misunderstood him, but no, it was indeed his doing.

Tears burned in her eyes, and her heart felt as though it was being ruthlessly squeezed in his grip.

"Remington, you can't do this!"

"Why can't I? Your brother's hospital is funded by the Dashiell family, and the special care unit he's in is exclusively for the Dashiell family. Since you so clearly disdain being Mrs. Dashiell, your brother has nothing to do with the Dashiell family anymore. Why don't you go and ask around? There are plenty of

people in Zion City who call me Remington the Grim Reaper behind my back. Do you hear anyone calling me a philanthropist?"

He tried to ask nicely, but she wouldn't budge.

Since she's convinced he's the bad guy, then he might as well live up to her expectations. It seems force is more effective.

There's no way he's letting her go and divorcing her right now!

Chapter 69

Lizetta was biting her lip so hard that she could taste the sourness and bitterness right there in her mouth,

Remington's brow furrowed as he pinched her chin, forcing her to let go.

She did let go, but then she lunged forward, wrapping her arms around his neck and chomping down.

She wished she could draw blood like last time and make him hurt, but all she got was Remington's cool voice in her ear.

"I step out with you for a sec and you spice things up with an injury? If anyone asks, don't expect me to cover for

you."

Lizetta froze, suddenly not so keen on biting down, but she wasn't about to give up.

Just then, a couple of shadows flickered in the hallway and soon retreated, with hushed voices carrying through.

“Dude, talk about intense.”

“That guy’s got legs for days, and the girl’s gorgeous! They’re like mismatched perfection!”

“Man, we just walked into a soap opera scene in the making.”

“Let’s bounce, downstairs.”

As their voices and footsteps faded away, Lizetta’s pale face blushed crimson as she shoved the man away.

tril

” go back with you just call the hospital first.”

Remington set her down gently on the ground.

T have Cedric take care of the hospital arrangements later.”

He tried to take Lizetta’s hand to leave, but she yanked it away.

“Call Cedric now.”

Finding that she clearly didn’t trust him, Remington had his face grow darker.

He held back, but eventually, his patience ran thin, and his large palm pressed hard against the back of her neck. Lizetta stumbled teetering on her toes before crashing into Remington’s chest.

He was rock solid, and as she reeled from the impact, he bent down and bit her neck.

His body was noticeably warmer, the hot, damp sensation made Lizetta stiffen, and she had her eyes tightly shut. Text belongs to NôvelDrama.Org.

shut

She braced for his revenge and for the pain.

But the pain didn't come. Instead, he was sucking hard, and the burning touch sent tingles down her spine.

Realizing how rigid she was, he had his grip on her neck softened to a gentle caress, and his nibbles became light and teasing.

His deep breaths grazed her ear, every whisper was an invasion, and a tantalization.

Lizetta was defenseless, her body melted into his embrace, with her hands clutching at his collar.

Her compliant snuggling pleased Remington, whose lips curved into a faint smile; he had his hand rest on the small of her back as he took out his phone and called Cedric.

"Take care of Thaddeus."

He hung up and finally released Lizetta.

"Happy now?"

She nodded, but as Remington reached for her hand, she yanked it away and stormed off. "Go hold hands with Evelina since you couldn't care less about me anyway, no need to pretend in front of others."

But Remington yanked her back, with his brows knitted.

“What do you mean I don’t care if you live or die?”

“In the pool, you saved Evelina and left me behind.”

Lizetta scoffed, and Remington pursed his lips, “I taught you how to swim, and I know how good you are. Didn’t you swim up and kick Evelina? Did you really need my help?”

Lizetta paused, so he had seen her kick Evelina?

It wasn’t that he didn’t save her; he just didn’t realize she needed help too.

This made her feel a bit better, but the damage had been done.

“Even so, you chose to save Evelina! You were with her all night, did you ever care about me?” Lizetta choked up. Forget it, she didn’t want to argue anymore.

The memories of that night were painful to relive.

In her dreams these past few days, she was struggling in the water in a dark abyss.

She tried to leave again, but Remington mocked, “You dare bring that up! Evelina wanted to call the cops; the Hawthorne family’s cameras caught you two fighting by the pool. She can’t swim; if I hadn’t stayed to clean up the mess, were you waiting to be dragged to court?”

Lizetta was stunned again; he stayed that night because Evelina threatened to call the police?

The nerve of Evelina!

She hadn't pushed Evelina, so why would she fear her calling the cops?

Lizetta clenched her fists, wanting to lash out at Remington for not trusting her, for being fooled by Evelina.

But then two more people entered the restroom, and Remington, without a word, dragged Lizetta back to the private room.

The atmosphere was lively as everyone was toasting Lucian.

Remington pulled Lizetta over to the couch, sat down, and tried to pull her next to him.

Lizetta wriggled her wrist free from his grip, "I'm sitting with Lucian."

With that, she strode over to Lucian, thinking 'Remington wants to have his cake and eat it too? As if!'

Remington was caught off guard by her sudden move, and his handsome face turned icy.

Lizetta casually took her seat beside Lucian.

Lucian declined a couple of drinks and sat down, then he snapped his fingers to summon a waiter, and gave an

order.

Chapter 70

"I'll have a warm glass of milk."

The server was on the ball and quickly brought over the warm milk.

Lucian grabbed it and handed it straight to Lizetta, “Stomach acting up just now? How come I didn’t know you had a bad stomach?”

Lizetta took the milk and sipped it.

With the warm milk hitting her empty stomach, she felt a lot better.

She turned to Lucian with a grin that reached her eyes, “Lucian, look at you all grown up and caring for others. When did that happen?”

Lucian was barely two years older than Lizetta and they had gone to the same school from elementary through high school.

Back in middle school Lizetta skipped a grade and they even shared a class. By high school, she became Lucian’s senior, but their relationship was always pretty rocky.

They couldn’t stand each other as kids, and Lucian often bullied Lizetta on the sly.

The ice only broke between them in the half-year before Lucian went abroad; they got closer back then because they’ve grown more mature and also due to some incidents.

The Lucian in Lizetta’s memory was self-centered and wouldn’t bother to care for anyone.

“Underestimating me, huh? I’m now a ladies’ man with fans all over the globe. Think I haven’t changed?”

Lizetta raised an eyebrow and clinked her glass against his.

“Milk instead of booze, here’s to you, Lucian, for chasing your dreams!”

There was genuine happiness in Lizetta's eyes, but also a touch of melancholy. Her dream of dancing was cut short four years ago.

After her affair with Remington, Hanna was so ashamed that she hardly let Lizetta step out of the house for two

years.

After she married Remington, the idea of dancing in public was even more out of the question.

Lucian smirked, ruffling Lizetta's hair playfully.

"You can dow

too."

"I'm afraid it's too late."

"Chasing dreams is never too late. Trust me, believe in Lucian."

He downed his drink in one go, and Lizetta laughed again.

The two of them chatted away in a cozy and affectionate manner.

Remington leaned over to grab a cigarette case from the table, and leaned back lazily against the leather chair.

He licked the bottom of the case, knocking out a cigarette which he pinched elegantly between his fingers and tossing the case back on the table with a clatter that briefly stilled the atmosphere around them.

But the pair engrossed in conversation didn't even look up.

Remington let out a cold snort; he was about to look for a lighter when Evelina, by his side, already had a flame ready, "Remi, let me."

Remington's cool gaze fixed on her, and from up close, the man's stunningly handsome face was mesmerizing.

His indifferent eyes seemed to look through you, but were never really seeing you.

But the desire to conquer isn't unique to men, and such men are fatally attractive to women.

Evelina's heart raced, and her fingers holding the flame trembled slightly. Just when she thought Remington would refuse, he leaned in towards the light and took a deep drag.

His cheeks were hollowed slightly, sharpening the already chiseled lines of his face, making him even more strikingly handsome.

Evelina blushed: her heart was burning hot..

But in the next second, she saw Remington casually adjust his tie and turned his head slightly as he exhaled

with a look of distaste.

The exposed part of his neck revealed a deep kiss mark.

Evelina's heart, once hot, felt doused with cold water, and her expression soured instantly.

She didn't have to guess who left that mark, and it wasn't there before, so they must have been passionately kissing just while they were outside?

Evelina glanced at Lizetta instinctively, who was wearing a white V-neck T-shirt with a noticeable hickey on her swan-like neck.

Evelina was close to exploding with anger and jealousy.

When Lizetta looked up, she caught the scene of Evelina lighting Remington's cigarette; for a moment they were

so close to each other.

From her angle, it seemed like Evelina was about to kiss Remington.

The comfort Lizetta had felt in her stomach turned to discomfort again.

Their eyes met, and the man's thin lips exhaled a swirling cloud of smoke, blurring his gaze but not hiding the faint sneer on his lips.

Lizetta looked away, out of sight, out of mind. But someone wasn't willing to let her be.

"Ms. Gardenia, Ms. Hawthorne, why so quiet? Let's play a game, shall we?"

It was Lulu, who had planned to wow everyone with her singing, only to be upstaged by Lizetta.

"Sure! How do we play?" Evelina chimed in eagerly.

“Let’s keep it simple, roll the dice. Whoever gets the lowest number loses. Losers drink or answer a question.”

Lizetta thought it was boring, not to say that Evelina was pregnant and couldn’t drink anyway.

She figured Evelina would decline, but to her surprise. Evelina agreed without hesitation and even threw at challenging look at Lizetta.

“Liz, you’re not chickening out, are you?”