

# A Love Forgotten (Arianna and Elijah)

## Chapter 201

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I was shocked "When did he get a warning?"

Mr. Lewis glanced at Elijah. "You didn't know he got a warning? That's stran You should. Mrs. Linden was here last time

Elijah's face darkened. "No. My mother didn't know either. It must've been....."

I suddenly understood the situation. That little rascal Evan must have paid someone unrelated to pose as a parent to deal with the school's warning

Forgetting that Elijah was still there, I turned to Mr. Lewis. "Til talk to Evan again. Could you please speak with the other parent and let them know we're willing to cover any damages?" Before Mr. Lewis could respond. Elijah frowned at me. "What gives you the right to decide for him

Holding back my frustration, I froze as I finally asked, "Mr. Linden, do you think I'm overstepping?"

Elijah looked at me intently. "Veu'se bis-sister-in-law. It's not exactly overstepping."

His response left a bitter taste in my mouth. I shot back coldly, "If that's how you see it, then I'll have a serious talk with Evan

Without another word, I turned and walked out. I heard Elijah call out, but I pretended not to.

I rounded the cones, heading straight toward the elevators.

The moment he showed up, I'd made up my mind to stay out of this mess. I was no step into sort this matter out.

I was no saint

and only came here because of my relationship with Evan. No

Ewan. No one would blame me even

en it I did

But I couldn't shake my worry for Evan. I was worried that he would get expelled this time. I also wondered if anyone in the Linden family cared about him,

Lost in thought, my pace slowed I decided I still needed to speak with Evan. The Linden family might have been full of eccentric characters, but Evan wasn't one of them.

I turned back, only to see Elijah slip out of the office. He spotted me and walked straight over. The moment he saw me, he immediately came over.

Great. Just my luck.

I turned around to walk the other way.

"Wait!" Elijah called from behind.

I pretended not to hear him and picked up my pace.

"Ari, are you going to abandon Evan?"

I stopped and looked at him, frustrated.

He approached me and studied me carefully, his gaze landing on the diamond ring on my finger. He stared, sharp with recognition.

"Did Logan give you that?"

I instinctively drew my hand back, hiding the

ring under my sleeve. "It's not of your lines, Mr. Linden," I said icily.

His expression shifted a mixture of anger, resignation, and something like an urge to reprimand me.

"If you have nothing else to say, I'll be going. Evan well, he's your brother. You should look after him."

"Wait, Ari." Elijah quickly stepped in front of me, forcing me to back away.

Upon seeing my guarded expression, a flicker of regret crossed his face. Quietly, he said, "Ari, I didn't expect you to still care about Evan." Turning my head, I replied coolly, "I've used to know each other. He's like a brother to me. His gaze grew thoughtful. "But you two always argued. Evan never liked you,"

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I feigned indifference. "He was just a kid who didn't know any better. Now that he realizes his andstake, I don't mind considering him my brother again."

Elijah seemed moved by my words, stepping closer. ", it seems like you've changed. You've become more mature and forgiving"

I took a step back in disgust. "Mr. Linden, if you have something to say, just say it, but keep your distance."

The light in his eyes dimmed slightly upon hearing my words "Ari, I.. wanted to explain ju's pregnancy and how it happened...

\*?" I covered my ears. "I'm not interested!"

I glared at him, finally losing my patience. "Mr. Linden, don't think I'm so broad-minded that I'd listen to any filth you bring to me. I don't need to know very sordid detail.

"How many times have I told you? I don't love you anymore, and we're over. I want a divorce! I don't care about you and Jocelyn one bit!"

Elijah

(was taken aback by my outburst and stared at me strangely. "Ari, do you really not love me anymore? If you don't, then why did you come here today!"

His words made my eyes sting with frustration. "I'm here because I care about Evan. This has absolutely nothing to do with you.

Elijah latched onto that. "No, Evan is my brother. How can it have nothing to do with me? Art, you still care about the Linden family, don't you?"

I laughed bitterly at his twisted logic. Coming here was clearly a mistake. If I could go back in time, I'd slap some sense into myself before setting foot here.

I took a deep breath to calm my anger and spoke slowly and clearly. "Listen carefully, Elijah. I care about Evan because he was like a little brother to me growing up. I can't just watch fall apart

"Evan is his own person, and so are you. The Linden family stands on its own. Do you understand?"

Elijah looked at me intently. "So, you're willing to see Evan but don't want anything to do with me? Not even a little?"

Before I could respond, a voice interrupted us. Evan's voice rang out. "Eli, give it a test Arijs way out of your league"

He walked over to me and took my hand. "Ari, I don't want to study here anymore. I'm leaving with you."

I was taken aback by what Evan had just said I was completely shocked, and so was Elijah.

After a few seconds of tense silence, asked. "Evan, do you know what you're saying?"

Wiping the blood from the corner of his eyes, Evan said, "I'm almost 15. My mom never cared about me, and my brother didn't either. Only you did. You've been treating me so well all this time, but I let myself get manipulated by Jocelyn" He swore fiercely, "I just made a vow. I'm sticking with you, Ari You're my real family now. None of you matter, not one bit!" He directed his words at Elijah.

Elijah snapped, "What nonsense are you talking about! This is no time for your tantrums.

Evan's gaze was filled with disdain. The whole internet's talking about your aftale. You've let me down, Eli

no

The blow from Evan seemed to shatter Elijah's composure, his face a mix of shame and anger. Pointing a finger at Evan, he stammered. "You you

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But he couldn't form a single word

I grabbed Evan's arm, gently saying, "This isn't the time to fight with your brother. Let's go to the hospital and settle this matter

He pulled his hand away from my grasp. "I'm not going, you shouldn't go either. The family of the guy I hit has connections. They're not going to accept my apology. They'll just use it as a chance to push you around." Evan nodded. "Yes! Don't go I'd rather take the school's warning"

Elijah lost his temper. "So you really don't care about school anyone then! Just wait. You'll see how I handle this."

With that, he stormed off in anger.

The world felt quieter with him gone. I led Evan out of the school. The two of us stood at the

just outside, both feeling a bit lost.

Act Fast Free Bonus Time is Running Out!

With things turning out like this, both Evan and I felt a bit lost.

After the initial shock wore off, Evan excitedly grabbed my hand. "As of now, I'll stick with you."

"Stick with me? I chuckled. "You're not even 15 yet, Evan. Your mom and brother are still around. It's not my place to be responsible for you, really."

Evan waved it off. "They don't care about me anyway. Whether I live or die doesn't matter to them. So, I'll just follow you"

He looked determined, almost like he found his new path. "Ain't no work, I'll find a job, earn my own money, and support myself. You don't have to worry about giving me anything

I sighed. "Don't talk nonsense. Remember, you're still a minor. Your mom and brother could take you back at any time."

Nevertheless, Evan just shrugged, looking as unconcerned as ever. Seeing that nothing was getting through to him, I decided to take him

for lunch

It was a good reminder of how much a teenage boy could eat. I took him to a foreign restaurant, where he devoured two steaks, a bowl of corn and mushroom soup, a huge salmon salad, and a large drink all by himself

Finally full, he looked at me with a satisfied grin. "Ain't no work, I'll start making money soon. Next time, lunch is on me"

I laughed. "Alright, but stop talking about making money. You still need to go to school. If that school's not a fit, we'll find a good private one

"But as for the fees. I thought for a moment before saying, "I'll cover it for now. Whatever happens, you need to go to college."

Evan's fall."Æ\_D

I held up a hand. "This is non-negotiable. I won't take you in if you're unwilling to pursue your stud you, even if it's reluctantly."

He had no choice but to agree, his young face looking reluctantly resigned

I sighed inwardly, wondering how I abys managed to land myself in these thankless situations.

get your mom and your brother in take you back. But if you're willing to help

Alay lunch, I brought Evan back to my place. He walked around the apartment, eyes wide with amazement.

"Ari, did you win the lottery? This place is amazing! It's even nicer than Elijah's villa'

I laughed. "This isn't my place. It's "Before I could finish, I decided against explaining further.

Evan headed into the guest room, delighted. "Can I stay in this room?"

besitated, and he immediately looked hurt. "Ai, are you saying you don't want me here?"

I quickly reassured him "No, it's just this place isn't actually mine.. I needtocheck."  
Believed,

continued exploring the apartment with a smile, cheatly unfazed by my explanation

Sighing i retreated to my room to call Login I figured it was best to let him know had brought a 'plus one' home.

Later in the afternoon, after a short rest, Camden ved Evan was still mapping, so I asked softly, "Is it possible to get him into a private school?" Camden adjusted his glasses and unilet. "With enough funding, yes, though it'll be a tét costly,' 1 falt both anxious andembarrassed. "L. This was really overstepping is Mr. Wood upset?"

With a professional smile, Camden reassured me. "Wir. Woodpect? Not at all. After all, the Wood Group has donated to many schools in this city. Gi school isn't a problem."

I quickly flattered him, "Yes, of course Mr. Wood is so generous and mobile."

Camden couldn't hold back a chuckle at my response

Getting him into a decent private high

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Camden cleared his throat. "But, Ms. York, are you certain you want to help Evan? He's under a, and both his custody and guardianship are with the Linden family. This could end up being a

I put on a sheepish smile. "I know, but I plan to help him find a school first

find a school first and then suggest he talk it over with his family.

"He's at that rebellious stage, and I can't just let him go off the rails. If I do, he's bound to ruin himself."

My worry deepened as I spoke, and Camden gave me a complex look. "You're genuinely kind-hearted, Ms. York, Elijah losing someone like you... it's truly his loss."

I managed a small, strained smile in return.

With Camden's help, we quickly selected a school. It was an international school with a solid 20-year reputation, offering both a prestigious high school curriculum and direct guidance for studying abroad after graduation. In short, this school was a surefire path to studying overseas.

The tuition was so thousand dollars per year, plus another 30 thousand dollars for miscellaneous fees-altogether, so thousand dollars a year.

Over three years, along with an additional year of early prep, it totaled around you thousand dollars

Though I had the funds, the Linden family's approval wasn't guaranteed just because I was willing to pay

After talking with Camden, we decided to take Evan to the school tomorrow to see the facilities and gauge his interest. Then, he could return to discuss it with his family.

Just then, Evan came out of his room, having woken up from his nap. He stopped shouting when he saw Camden. "And.. you are?"

With a polite smile, Camden introduced himself. "Mr. Linden. I'm Mr. Wood's assistant. You can call me Camden"

Evan, polite as ever, bowed slightly. "Nice to meet you, Mr Russell"

Tilled Evan in on the plans that Camden and I had discussed. His brows furrowed upon hearing that the fees totaled 300 thousand dollars.

"Ari, don't spend all that money on me. I

Tout him off before he could finish. "That's enough. You either go to school ur forget about having me as your sister."

He quickly gave in. "Alright. I'll call Elijah. He should agree to it." Then, he headed back to his room to make the call.

After about half an hour, he reappeared, his face beaming. "Ari, Elijah agreed. He said he'd cover the tuition."

I let out a long breath, smiling in relief. "How did you get hirm to agree?" I asked.

Evan thought for a moment, then said, "I told him if he didn't let me stay with you, I'd drop out and become a

e a street punk"

I felt that there had to be more to it. Evan was clearly holding something back, but decided not to press him. Taking on

on this responsibility was already out of the ordinary for me as it was

The following werk was a whirlwind of school tours, meetings with teachers, and handing the atler math of his light at the previous school.

Alter countless conversations and red tape, we finally secured his withdrawal from the old school. Amid it all, I had to delay my start at Halton University for a few days just to get everything Norted

When Teri found out about me taking Evan in, she was anything but sympathetic.

"Aalana, have you lost your mind! Why are you getting involved with Evan? He's Elijah's brother, for heaven's sake."

I sighed. "I know, but I can't just ignore him."

Teri scoffed. "Haven't you read the gossip lately? Elijah and Jocelyn have been parading around together. He's more in love with his new flame than his own family."

I sighed again. "It seems like he's living without a care."



Teri's voice turned sharp. "Exactly! He's living it up with his beauty while you're left babysitting his brother. Ariana, are you serious? How can you be this naive?"

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I was caught off guard by the whole conversation. After a moment, I laughed uncomfortably, saying "I know. I realize this is a lot, but, honestly, what else can I do?"

On the other end, Teri fell silent for a while before finally trying "Whichever. The kid's not too bad anyway, but Azlana, you really don't owe the Linden family anything more, okay?"

I nodded quickly, "Believe me, I know. This is the last thing I'm doing for them"

Satisfied with my answer, Teri asked, "By the way, Silverwood is having its second annual band showcase tomorrow, and the designer asked for your contact info. They said they tried calling but couldn't get through. Tasked, "What's this brand showcase about?"

"Oh, right. You lost your memory." Teri said, almost as if she'd forgotten

"A few years back, you invested in a small startup brand, and it's done really well. They've asked you every year to attend these shows since you've been their top sponsor. I remember you pay the sponsorship fee every year." I had absolutely no memory of this, but Teri spoke with such detail that it sparked a thought.

Tasked, "Did I sponsor them under the name of Linden Group?"

Teri thought for a moment. "Probably. Back then, you wanted to make a name for Elijah, so you sponsored all kinds of random things

"Honestly, a lot of people mocked you for being so eager to make an impact. Your investments and sponsorships were often seen as impulsive. I wasn't too optimistic about it myself. Time either.

"However, the brand Silverwood has actually been doing really well. You probably have some equity in it. And there are a few other brands I need to think about and look up.

"Check your old posts on Instagram or do a quick search online, because, hey, the internet remembers everything"

A spark went off in my mind. "So, are you saying I might actually have shares in quite a few brands?"

Teri, reminded by my question, replied quickly, "Yes, definitely! You should go to the showcase and see if you can pick up any insights. You might uncover all kinds of info on brands you invested in. She got excited. "Denim styles have been all the rage these past few years, and Silverwood has been killing it. If you sponsored them early on, you must have some kind of partnership with them."

"Wow, Ari, I've gotta say, sometimes luck follows you in the strangest ways. If you have a contract with Silverwood, you might be in for a windfall!"

Feeling energized by Teri's words, I quickly looked up the brand online.

Sure enough, I saw that Silverwood's sales had exceeded 10 million over the last three years. Even after labor and operational costs, it had earned hundreds of thousands in profit each year. Silverwood had also moved forward with a successful livestream marketing strategy.

I rushed to sift through the pile of documents I'd brought over from Elijah's villa. And there it was—the partnership agreement with Silverwood, followed by another contract, and another. I paced around the room in excitement, my head spinning. This cursed amnesia—how could I actually have to my name if my memory returned?

For a fleeting moment, the past seven messy, embarrassing years felt like they'd been worth it.

Two days later, Silverwood's brand showcase began.

Teri and I dressed in carefully chosen outfits. To match the theme of the show, I picked a fresh, light-wash denim jacket with subtle embroidery and paired it with a soft, ivory pleated skirt. I wore the emerald bracelet my grandmother left me on my wrist, and around my neck was a pearl necklace with a touch of jade. My hair was styled in a sleek, classic updo.

The whole look was simple and elegant, almost like a portrait from a vintage painting. Teri wore something similar, but she went with a modern, tailored denim dress.

As soon as we arrived at the venue, a brand representative came to greet us. Her name was Dixie Camacho. She lit up when she saw us. "Ms. Linden, Ms. Stuart! You've finally here!"

She looked me over, visibly impressed.

"Mrs. Linden, you look stunning today. I didn't expect denim to suit you so perfectly. We'd always thought..." She abruptly stopped herself mid-sentence.

I could guess what Dixie was about to say. Back then, I probably piled on whatever was expensive without caring about how it matched or fit the theme.

Realizing her slip, the host quickly changed the subject. "Max Linden, please follow me. We've reserved VIP seats for you.

I suddenly spoke up. "From now on, call me Ms. York, not Mrs. Linden"

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Dixie hesitated briefly but quickly recovered, saying smoothly, "Of course, Ms. York, Ms. Stuart, please come with me. The founder of our company and a few directors are waiting over there.

A macking voice cut through the an. "Oh, so she's not Mrs. Linden anymore? That was quick. Not long ago, she was bragging everywhere that she was the real Mrs. Linden."

I turned, my gaze sharpening Jocelyn, dressed in a loose-fitting dress, was protectively cradling her belly, her arm licked with Elijah's. The one making the sneering remark was none other than Evelyn. Evelyn hovered next to focelyn, her eyes glancing at me with an amused plint

When Jocelyn noticed me, her eyes briefly widened before she nested closer to Elijah with a delicate, almost fra

"Elijah," she said sweetly, "why didn't you tell me ts. York would be here?"

Elijah, clearly not expecting me, frowned. "What are you doing here?"

I raised an eyebrow, matching his tone. "And why are you here? This brand showcase wasn't supposed to invite you, was in?"

Thated that I couldn't remember everything If my memory were tact, 1 would've known exactly how to make Elijah leave. This pair could never leave me alone.

Iped at Tek, hoping to steer clear of them, but she stood her ground, a smirk tugging at her lips as she stared at Jocelyn.

"Oh, Mr Cornell," Teri said with a sarcastic smile, "how's that injury on your forehead?"

Jocelyn, early uncomfortable with the confrontation in such a public setting, touched her forehead and murmured, "It's much better. The doctor said it almost affected my brain.

Terilet out a cold chuckle. "Well, it's good Mr. Linden rushed you to the hospital. Any later, and your injuries might have healed on their own."

Jocelyn's face teisted, caught between embarrassment and resentment.\_

Elijah's eyes flashed, and he spoke in a low, irritated tone. "Ms. Stuart, if there's nothing else, don't block the way "

Teri wain't one to back down, especially when provoked. With her hands on her hips, she steered. "Mr. Linden, I didn't even get to ask why you brought this mistress to a brand showcase."

Jocelyn gasped, swaying slightly as her eyes filled with tears. "Elijah.. she... she called me a mistress....."

Ignoring her, Teri pressed on, her gaze fixed unwaveringly on Elijah. "Well, Mr. Linden? I'm still waiting for an answer.

Elijah scowled. "The FR department at Silverwood called my office, inviting me to attend. So, here I am What's it to you, Ms. Stuart?"

Teri turned to Dis. "Excuse me, but is it possible that your PRteam invited the wrong person? Ms. York is the sponsor for Silverwood's brand showcase, so since when did Mr. Linden become the VIP?"

By now, guests invited by the be and were beginning to arrive, and several people looked over, curious about the commotion at the entrance.

Elijah's expression darkened, his eyes blazing as he looked at me."Ariana, do you really have to make a scene right now?"

I felt a wave of nausea rise within me. Making a scene? At this point, Elijah still thought I was trying to create drama for his beloved Jocelyn

I shot back coldly, "M Linden, this isn't about making a scene.

ga scene. I am the sponsor for Silverwood. I hand their brand showcase every year.

"When Silverwood called Linden Group, I thought it might be a good PR opportunity for your company. But to clarify, this is not your company's sponsorship. In other words, you don't have any right to be here."

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Elijah was taken aback, clearly having no clue about the real purpose of this brand show. As for Jocelyn...

I glanced at her. Sure enough, she averted her eyes nervously.

Tjah turned to Jocelyn, frowning. "What's going on?"

Jocelyn locked up at him with a fragile expression. "Are you blaming me, Elijah? I really didn't low. been invited to attend

She put on a tearful face. "You k

Sidory, told me Linden Group sponsored a brand showcase and that we'd

know how much I enjoy fashion and artsy wins...I didn't know what was going on with this event."

Her explanation soothed Elijah's anger, and he patted her shoulder. "It's okay, I'm not blaming you, I just. Never mind. It's not your fault."

He turned back to me, his gaze filled with irritation. "Ariana, what exactly do you want?" He fidgeted with his tie as he spoke, clearly uncomfortable.

With more guests gathering around, I kept my tone cool "I just wanted to clarify that this brand show is sponsored by me persouully. It doesn't have anything to do with Linden Group However

I paused for effect and then continued, "Since Mr. Linden is already here, why not join us inside? I'm not that petty."

Under normal droumstances, his pride would have had him turn on his heel and leave, but with Jocelyn by his side, he wouldn't walk away and risk losing fare.

Dixie, relieved that I wasn't making a fuss, quickly chimed in, saying, "All of you are honored guests of our brand. Pease, come right in!"

Elijah gave me a cold look before leading Jocelyn through the VIP entrance.

Teri grabbed my arm, gritting her teeth. "Why'd you let them in? You could've had them kicked out!"

Treassured her. "Since they're here, let's just enjoy the show."

She looked parried. "What are you planning?"

I gave her a slight smile and led her through the VIP entrance

The venue was tastefully arranged, blending vintage with modern elements. A live jazz band played softly in the background, the gentle notes creating a warm, sophisticated atmosphere.

Teri and I met with the brand's founder-a young, energetic designer with a clear passion for her work. Her name was Crystal Trenton

Her eyes lit up as soon as he saw me. "Mas Linden! It's been too long!"

I felt a pang of embarrassment-I genuinely didn't remember her and had no idea about my past relationship with this rising star in the fashion world

I quickly extended my hand with a polite smile. "Hello, Ms. Trenton It's impressive to see how much you've grown in just a year."

She looked at me, her expression admiring "Mrs. Linden, your outfit today is absolutely stunning! You look amazing! Jamie, quick, get some photos of Mrs. Linden's look! I'm feeling inspired

Several assistants pulled out their phones at her command and started taking photos of me from every angle. A mix of embarrassment and delight.

Thankfully, all the effort I'd put into picking the perfect outfit and styling myself had paid off, I'd done a deep dive into Ms. Trenton's aesthetic preferences before coming, and it seemed like my choice of attire was already making a positive impression As she showered me with compliments, Ms. Trenton eyed me curiously.

"By the way, Mrs. Linden, you seem a bit different than I remember. I thought you used to have a different style..."

I quickly smiled, "Well, over the past couple of years, I've become a fan of your designs. The more I explored vintage styles, the more I realized how well they suit me."

Ms. Trenton's smile blossomed "Wonderful! That's exactly our brand's philosophy. Mrs. Linden, let's sit down and have a proper chat after the show.

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Seeing that my plan had been successful, I quickly agreed.

Ime Ariana or M. York"

As I turned to leave, remembered something and said to Ms. Trenton, "Oh, by the way, I'm Mrs. Linden anymore. You can just call me Ariana or Ms. Trenton paused, surprised. "What?"

Her assistant leaned in and whispered a few quick words into her ear. Then, Ms. Trenton's eyes filled with sympathy as she sighed and took my hand. "Ms. York, I truly admire your courage."

Just then, she turned and noticed Elijah and Jocelyn approaching, her expression quickly shifting to visible disgust. "What's this scumbag doing here? And he even brought

I took the opportunity to excuse myself. "Ms. Trenton, let's chat in detail after the show. "With that I turned and returned to my seat.

Behind me, I overheard Elijah politely greeting her. "Ms. Trenton, your setup here is quite unique."

Jocelyn chimed in eagerly, "Ms. Trenton, I've heard that your designs have won international awards. Would there be any chance you could design a costume for me? Ms. Trenton's tone was icy. "I'm sorry, but I generally don't take on custom orders. I simply don't have the time." There was no mistaking the hostility in her response.

Elijah's voice took on a restrained tone "Ms. Trenton, your company has a promising future. Have you considered scaling up? Linden Group would be interested in investing

He didn't even finish before Ms. Trenton let out a dry laugh. "Mr Linden, as you mentioned, our company's future is promising. So, why would we need outside funding to expand?

"We have plenty of interested investors. Skybridge Capital alone has approached us over a dozen times."

I held back a laugh. Ms. Trenton's reputation was well-earned. Her straightforward, sharp personality was just as people described online.

Her background was tragic. Growing up with a single mother who had pulled her from a trash bin after her father discarded her for being a girl.

Her mother had frantically searched through every bin until she found her and raised her alone through incredible hardships.

Ms. Trenton had grown into a force to be reckoned with, a woman fiercely independent and resilient. She despised irresponsible men and loathed the land who abandoned

their partners. The assistant must have filled her in on the story between me, Elijah, and Jocelyn, which explained her hostility toward them

Settling into my seat, I flashed Teri an "OK" sign.

Teri stifled a laugh. "Ari, how did you manage that? Look at Ms. Trenton's reaction to Elijah and Jocelyn. She can't stand them! They look like they're about to slick back to their seats

I kept my expression neutral. "Just focus on the show. If things go as planned, I'll discuss our potential partnership with Me Trenton after the show."

Teri's mouth dropped open. "Ari, you're finally over him? Look at you-you're amazing!"

I quickly covered her mouth

The show began. As lights danced across the runway, models stepped out wearing pieces that ranged from vibrant to elegantly subtle. Each outfit was a masterpiece, a blend of vintage and modern that was simply breathtaking

1. Trenton was indeed a rising star in the fashion design industry. Each garment was brimming with creativity.

Guests murmured their admiration all around, and I couldn't help but take photos, one after another.

During the intermission, I felt an intense gaze on me. Frowning, I glanced and saw Elijah sitting a few seats away, his eyes fixed on me with a dark intensity

My heart skipped a beat-what was his problem? why was he staring? Did I have something on my face? I met his gaze briefly, then turned back around with a deliberately indifferent expression.

"Elijah, what are you looking at?" Jocelyn's soft, affected voice drifted over. "Do you want to go talk to York?"

Djah's voice was distant. "No. Don't overthink it. I'm watching the models."

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Jocelyn was stunned into silence by Elijah's response, her gaze turning forlorn as she looked at him. But Elijah's attention wasn't on her at all

(my direction. Amused, I simply turned away and refocused on the runway show.

I noticed Jocelyn biting her lip, her eyes brimming with resentment as she shot a furtive look in my

direction. Silverwood's brand showcase was a resounding success. When the lead designer, Ms. Trenton, took the stage for her closing remarks, the applause lasted for over ten minutes.

A swarm of journalists surged forward for interviews while the invited sponsors were led backstage to a lounge for a brief rest.

Teri and I sat in the lounge, excitedly discussing the outfits we had photographed and admiring some of the stand-out designs

Teri's passion for fashion had always run deep. She'd even studied fashion design courses in college. Her enthusiasm and keen eye had led me to sponsor Silverwood's brand showcase in the first

place. Now that the company was flourishing, Teri was overjoyed.

As we talked, a figure appeared in front of us. I looked up, my expression darkening. It was Jocelyn again.

She clutched her hands together, visibly uneasy. "Ms. York. I just wanted to apologize."

I hadn't even opened my mouth before Teri, pretending not to hear her, raised her voice, "What? Are you asking Ari to give up on Elijah?"

Jocelyn froze, and I was stunned. Teri's voice had captured the attention of everyone in the lounge, and now all eyes were on us

Jocelyn's face flushed a deep red under the scrutiny. Her feigned discomfort from a moment ago now seemed all too real, especially with several people in the room who recognized both Elijah and her, thanks to the recent viral drama. Jocelyn quickly tried to regain her composure, her eyes glistening with tears. "No, M. Stuart, you misunderstood. That's not what I meant..."

Her voice still loud. "Oh? You mean you are not asking to give up on him, but you want them to get a divorce quickly?"

Teri feigned surprise, her voice

Tel saw the shocked expressions around the room and went in for the dill. "Oh, I get it- you're already pregnant with Elijah's baby, and you're getting impatient."

A collective gasp rippled through the room, and murmurs began to spread. People pointed at Jocelyn, their expression laced with disdain. Jocelyn's face went pale, and she swayed as if she

I subtly tried to pull Teri back, but she brushed me off, leaning close to whisper, "Don't stop me. Watch how I handle this drama queen"

Under the seething gaze of the crowd, Jocelyn covered her face and started to cry softly. At that moment, Elijah, mingling and chatting nearby, noticed the commotion and quickly strode

to Jocelyn, glaring at us. "What did you say to her?"

He wrapped an arm

around her

Teri put on an innocent face. "We didn't do anything. We were just sitting here when Ms. Cornell came over and told Ari to hurry up and divorce you, saying she's pregnant and can't wait any longer" Jocelyn's tear-streaked face looked up at Elijah, her voice trembling with emotion. "That's not what happened, Elijah. You have to believe me. I just..."

Teri didn't allow her to explain, loudly interjecting, "50, Ms. Cornell, are you or are you not pregnant?!"

Jocelyn's attempt at a response faltered, the words stuck in her throat.

Teri continued, "If you're pregnant, then just focus on that, What's the point of coming over here to bother Ari?"

Jocelyn finally found her voice, "I just wanted to apologize to Ms. York..."

Looking at her with pity, Elijah murmured, "No, there's no need to apologize. You did nothing wrong"

## Chapter 210

Chapter 210

Upon hearing Elijah's reassurance, Jocelyn's tears flowed even harder, a

(, a full display of "damsel in distress."

Teri scoffed, taking my arm. "Let's go. This place reeks of bad energy." Then, we turned to leave

"Wait!" Elijah called out

I stopped, frowning at him. Elijah seemed to want to say something, perhaps to warn me, but realizing it was neither the time nor place, he simply said, "All, stop picking on Jocelyn for the sake of the child" I let out a cold laugh. "Child? Whose child?"

Elijah's face flushed red, then turned pale. "Ari, don't be unreasonable." The last few words came out weakly, lacking conviction.

I smirked. If there was one change in Elijah's demeanor since my memory loss, it was this. Drece, he'd cheated with brazen confidence, even blaming me. Now, all he had left was guilt and a faltering voice. why she so eagerly came

Not wanting to waste any more breath on him, I replied icily, "Mr. Linden, why don't you ask your precious Jocelyn why she so

With that, I walked away with Teri without waiting for his reaction.

Behindus, murmurs from the guests filled the room.

"So that's Elijah and the mistress? Wow, what a scene. Mistresses are getting bold these days."

"Unbelievable! Bringing a baby bump to make demands? In public?"

"She's crying like she's the victim here. V

Who's buying that?"

"That young pianist? I don't care how cultured she claims to be-this is shameless behavior."

Teri and I navigated through the crowd, overhearing the whispered judgments. Once we reached the restroom, Teri let out a sigh of relief.

"What a headache. At least that two for act didn't work this time"

I smiled at her. "Thanks to you

She waved it off with a grin, "No need to thank me! That's what best friends are for. Let me tell you, the only way to deal with a fake like her is to go all in."

I was a little lost. "Go all in how?"

eats just to stir up trouble?-

"Get ahead of her by taking the moral high ground?" Teri explained "Every time Jocelyn pulled her stunts with you in the past, you always took the hit because of your patience." Ashadow crossed my eyes, "I guess I really was clueless before"

Teri sighed. "It wasn't cluelessness. You just cared too much about that jerk, Elijah. Now that you no longer care, they can't hurt you anymore."

At that moment, the restroom door opened, and Dixie spotted us, visibly relieved

"Thank goodness! Ms. York, M. Stuart, Ms. Trenton has asked to see you both."

Teri and I exchanged a quick, excited glance

A few minutes later, we were ushered into an office on the second floor where we met Ms. Trenton, who had just wrapped up a round of mingling with the press.

With a smile, she extended her hand to me "Hello, Ms. York I invited you here to discuss our partnership"

I was both surprised and delighted. "Ms. Trenton, are you really open to collaborating? Wait are you actually interested in my investment?"

She pulled out an old, slightly yellowed contract and smiled.

"About three years ago, Silverwood was just a tiny operation with maybe ten people, including the owner and employees. You were the first to believe in us enough to sponsor one of our brand showcass"

Her heartfelt recollection tired memories for me-t had forgotten it all since the memory loss. But thankfully, Teri remembered perfectly.

"Tes!" she said, thrilled. "Back then, we saw Silverwood's potential from a mile away. I tried so hard to convince her wait, no. It was actually you who had the vision to sponset you."

Ms. Trenton glanced at Teri with a knowing smile. "Yes, Ms. Stuart, I remeinter you quite vividly."

I felt aware of gratitude, not just toward Ms. Trenton for offering me the partnership but also toward Teri, my best friend, who truly had my back

After all, it had been bidea all along to push me into sponsoring Sherwood in the first place