

LEAVE ME ALONE, MR SHAFFER

Chapter 11

Chapter 11

As soon as Isabella stepped into the house, she was greeted by a warm and inviting fragrance throughout the house. The feminine aura seemed to cling to every corner of the building.

“What’s up? Your sc*mbag boss finally got bored of you?” Natasha poured Isabella a glass of water and casually sat beside her. With both slender legs crossed, she exuded a seductive allure.

Accustomed to Natasha’s straightforwardness, Isabella lifted the cup and took a hearty sip. “I decided to leave him.”

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Chapter 11 Struggling in Exile

In the middle of towel-drying her hair, Natasha paused her movements and let out a surprised gasp. “You suddenly grew a backbone?”

Isabella pulled her lips into a wry smile. “I’ve gotten enough from him.”

Natasha frowned, not particularly fond of the way Isabella phrased it. She had a feeling that something had happened.

Isabella didn’t hide anything and briefly explained what had happened these two days.

After drying her hair, Natasha tossed the towel aside and reached under the coffee table for a cigarette. She had even lit the lighter when she

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suddenly remembered Isabella was there and immediately discarded it. “What are you planning to do next?”

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Shrugging, Isabella feigned nonchalance and said, “I’ll get through the next three months first. Once the contract is terminated, I’ll establish a small agency. It should be enough to support my mom. and me.”

Natasha furrowed her brow as she thought it might still be difficult for Isabella to terminate the contract after three months. However, she didn’t voice her thoughts and glanced at Isabella, suggesting, “Three months is still a long time, and idling away won’t do you any good. Although it’s just selling cars, this field encompasses all walks of life. Who knows? You might unexpectedly make a valuable connection.”

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Upon hearing that, Isabella fell silent. Having been around Seth for so long, she seemed to have

developed a misconception that the economic environment of establishing her own company was the same as at Shaffer Group.

It was not. Shaffer Group had been with the Shaffer Family for four generations and had several generations of political accumulation before it, making it a real multinational integrated conglomerate. Even if she pressed hard to aim for that, she wouldn't be able to achieve it in this lifetime.

Seeing her lost in thought, Natasha reminded her, Bigo Live

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The people you re going to meet while selling cars might as well be your future connections when establishing your own business.”

Isabella rubbed her temples, suddenly enlightened but also felt pitiful for herself. Though she self-proclaimed to have worked in a large enterprise for five years, she still had to start from the bottom up after leaving.

Looking up at Natasha, Isabella said, “Natasha, thank you. I'll work hard starting tomorrow.”

Being a righteous friend, Natasha gave Isabella the master bedroom, woke up early the following day to make breakfast, and even drove Isabella to work.

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On their way there, she even started sharing her experience in sales. “When working in sales, it’s the same everywhere. Don’t put yourself above others; flatter them however you can.”

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Isabella massaged her throbbing temples, suddenly feeling very pressured. “I wasn’t even this nervous during my interview at Shaffer Group.”

Natasha parked the car in front of Isabella’s company, leaning leisurely against the seat.

“Leaving that guy isn’t a bad thing. If you stayed with him until you turned thirty, then you’d truly be considered a good–for–nothing.”

Isabella felt something stirring inside her heart.

Those words were both painful and liberating, stimulating her brain cells into action. After closing Chapter 11 Struggling in Exile

the door and bidding farewell to Natasha, she confidently strode into the company. She couldn’t afford to lose her first battle for the day.

Upon entering, Jonas, who had his arm around Abigail’s shoulder, released her and walked toward Isabella with a smile. “Isabella, you’re back to work so soon?”

Tugging her lips into a faint smile, Isabella explained, “It’s not a big deal, and I can’t delay my work, right? You’re here early, too, so it wouldn’t be appropriate for me to slack off because I’m sick.”

She had put on airs just yesterday, but now her words were more tactful and pleasing. Jonas needed a moment to adapt to her change and soon felt delighted, thinking Isabella was trying to

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curry Tavor with him.

“Those who had been executive secretaries are quite different, it seems.” Jonas laughed heartily and wrapped his arm around Isabella’s shoulder.

“Though we salesmen can’t compare to them, it’s still a promising career if you work hard.”

Isabella walked toward her desk and smoothly dodged Jonas’ hand while asking, “Mr. Wallace, is yesterday’s sale closed?”

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“It is.” With a wave of his hand, he nodded at Abigail.

“It was all thanks to Abby. She worked tirelessly yesterday afternoon.”

The others around them were savvy gossip mongers, and any topic involving performance

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would gain their keen interest. They were eagerly waiting to see Isabella’s reaction.

Holding a folder, Abigail gave a sweet smile and said, “It was nothing. I was just helping out a colleague. A little effort goes a long way.”

Isabella smiled, retrieving a cup from her bag to pour some tea. "That's sweet of you, but I can't let you help for nothing." After taking a sip, she added, "How about we split this deal between us?"

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Abigail's expression fell, and she fell silent.

"Isabella, you're too modest. We're all colleagues.

There's no need to be so particular about individual deals." Jonas chuckled, trying to ease the situation while giving Abigail a nudge with his shoulder,

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urging her to step aside. He casually chatted with

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Isabella. "You're the senior here, so you should look out for Abby more."

After that, Isabella was clear that the commission would probably all wind up inside Abigail's hands.

She said those things earlier to tell everyone she was no fool and they shouldn't think about taking advantage of her.

"Sure." She nodded and gave Abigail a meaningful glance. "Let's look after each other in the future."

Still hugging her documents, Abigail stuck out her tongue, pretending to look innocent, and then skipped toward the reception desk.

If Isabella hadn't met all sorts of people in the

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workplace, she might have thought that Abigail was just an innocent and naive rookie who had just started her career. She sighed in relief and checked the time on her phone but inadvertently noticed a headline in the entertainment news.

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‘Shaffer Group Acquires Ingemium Media. Young Mr. Shaffer Thriving Both in Career and Love.’

Isabella casually clicked on the article. In the image, Seth held a champagne glass while accompanied by the leading actress of Ingemium Media, Briana Farrell. They looked like a match made in heaven.

After a sneer, she breathed out to dispel the Bigo Live

Chapter 12 Heating About His Romantic Affairs. displeasure inside her and searched her phone contacts, ready to fight.

Since it was 9.00AM, the secretaries should have clocked in, so Isabella called Fiona. The call was soon answered. “Fiona?”

“It’s me.” Fiona sounded hesitant. “Isabella.”

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Picking up her cup and heading to the pantry, Isabella whispered, “I just resigned and am afraid You might have some trouble with work, so I cided to call you and ask if you need anything.”

Fiona let out a long sigh, and her emotions immediately surged inside her. “Isabella, you know me so well. It’s total chaos without you here.”

Chuckling, Isabella lowered her head to fumble

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with her fingers, suggesting with assurance, “How about this? Come by my company if you’re free this afternoon, and we’ll have lunch together.”

Shaffer Group’s headquarters was in the city center, while the small company Isabella was at was almost on the outskirts of the city, so it was quite far away. Fiona hesitated for a moment. “This afternoon? It’s so far, so I’m afraid I won’t make it back in time.”

With a click of her tongue, Isabella said, “That’s unfortunate. I have some notes that compose Mr. Shaffer’s daily habits and several points of attention. I’m afraid it won’t be clear if I explain them over the phone.”

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Chapter Hearing About His Romantic Affairs

Isabella was making a gamble. She was betting that everyone in the office would be competing for the position of executive secretary, including Fiona.

Anyone would be attracted to the notes she, the former executive secretary, had compiled.

“Sure. I’ll be there.” As Isabella expected, Fiona had only hesitated for a while before immediately agreeing.

With a confident smile, Isabella hung up.

Inside the empty and quiet pantry, she felt ironic while looking out of the glass walls. Even though she kept saying she wanted to be rid of Seth, she was still trying all she could to assert authority by using his reputation.

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Just as she was lost in her thoughts, the door to the pantry opened. When she turned around, she saw it was Alex Young, who had a cold and indifferent expression. Just like her ambiguously androgynous name, she gave off an unapproachable vibe.

Isabella simply nodded at her, but the other only responded with a slight glance. But just as Isabella was about to leave, Alex spoke up. “You can forget about yesterday’s sale. That b*tch Abigail has crawled into Jonas’ bed long ago.”

Those words rendered Isabella slightly shocked as she didn’t expect the woman to be so frank and indiscreet with her words. “I understand. Thank you for your reminder.”

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After scoffing, Alex leaned against the water dispenser and replied, “I’m not helping you. I’m just curious about you. You don’t look like someone who

has been a secretary for five years.”

Withdrawing her hand, Isabella turned back to look at Alex. “What should a secretary look like?”

Alex raised a brow before looking outside the glass window. “Like Abigail. Spreading her legs to win over others.”

Isabella choked as those words had hit the nail on the head. She and Abigail weren’t much different. Their only difference was that Seth was way better than Jonas, and Seth was a generous man, which was why she didn’t act spoiled. It was because Seth would give her everything she deserved without Bigo Live

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needing her to ask discreetly for them.

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Just as the atmosphere was at its most tense, there was suddenly a commotion outside, so Isabella and Alex looked outside.

“You b*tch! How dare you try to make a move on my man? Are you looking to die?”

“Ahh-”

When Isabella and Alex exited the pantry, they saw a brightly dressed woman hitting Abigail with a Hermes handbag.

The bystanders around them tried to mediate, but it was clear that this woman came from an

extraordinary background. In that sense, no one
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Chapter 12 Hearing About His Romantic Affairs
dared to offend someone powerful for Abigail.

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Meanwhile, Isabella took a look and immediately
recognized the woman. Summer Woods, daughter
of Woods Realty and Lara's friend.

She instinctively wanted to mediate the situation
but withdrew her leg immediately after taking one
step forward. Since Summer knew her and had
always looked down upon secretaries, she couldn't
be sure if the former would humiliate her as well.

Moreover, Abigail clearly deserved this. Who else
would suffer other than her after she attempted to
seduce Summer's man?

Moving away from the crowd, Isabella returned to
her desk.

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The situation outside remained chaotic, and Jonas
had to deploy his acting skills before Summer
calmed down a little.

According to their conversation, Isabella
discovered that Abigail had asked Summer's
husband to buy two more cars than he intended to
and then received several slaps from Summer.

“You want to marry someone wealthy, eh? Why don’t you look in the mirror and see if you’re worthy of that?”

“Even if he decides to divorce me to marry you, do you think you’ll survive until that day?”

“F*cking wake up from your dream.”

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Hearing About His Romantic Attars

Summer chastised Abigail for a long time.

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Back in the office, Isabella felt a headache coming from listening to the arguments. While others didn’t think much of what was being said, she had somewhat done the same thing as Abigail, so she felt quite uneasy. Shaking her head, she tried to dispel those negative emotions and think of a way to sell cars.

Time went past quickly. The little incident during the morning had just cooled down, and lunchtime arrived.

Isabella went into the bathroom to touch up her makeup and received Fiona’s call right after coming out.

Chapter 13 The World Still Turns

Fiona drove a Mercedes–Benz and wore Channel–branded items from head to toe.

Standing in the car retail department, she stood out from the crowd.

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Chapter 13

Isabella went to welcome Fiona, and a lot of people saw that.

“I can’t believe you quit your job just to work here, Isabella.” Fiona sat down, looking uncomfortable.

She looked at her surroundings with contempt.

Isabella got her glass of water. She forced herself to look relaxed. “Office job almost dulled my skills. I got another job so I can gain enough experience to set

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up my own shop.

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“I see.” Fiona looked like realization had struck her. She held Isabella’s arm. “I thought it was weird that you left when Mr. Shaffer needed you so much.”

Fiona wasn’t subtle with her comment, so everyone got what she was saying, but Isabella didn’t argue.

Instead, she picked up the notes that she had sorted out and told Fiona about Seth’s preferences.

Isabella did this on purpose. Through Fiona, she was telling everyone she wasn’t exiled but sent here to see what the lower echelons were like.

Fiona listened intently and stayed until lunch break was over. Before she left, she stood at the doorway and spoke to Isabella. “You have to come back

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sooner or later. Mr. Shaffer has a ton of stuff to deal with, and we have to help him out.”

You want me to go back? For what? So, you can bully me again? Isabella knew this was just a fake courtesy, and she played along. “Oh, you don’t need me. You’re a veteran, too. I’m sure you can be the head secretary. I trust you.”

Fiona had a smug look in her eyes. She made small talk with Isabella before she drove away.

After Isabella came back from sending Fiona off, many people came to curry favor with her. Even Jonas made small talk with her.

Isabella answered them courteously.

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Chapter 13 The World Still Turns

Not too long after that, Abigail brought Isabella a cup of milk tea. Her cheeks were still swollen, but she simpered. “Isabella, I’ve thought about it. The credit should go to you, not me.”

Isabella despised people like her, and she sardonically said, “Oh, it belongs to you. You’ve worked hard the whole afternoon, after all.”

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“I can’t. You’re my colleague, and a new one at that. You need the credit more than I do.” Abigail blinked.

When she looked down, a drop of tear rolled down her cheek. If she hadn't pulled the rug out from underneath Fiona, I could have taken all the credit. I hate putting on this act.

Isabella acted like she was hesitating before she

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sighed. "Fine. I'll take it, then."

"That's good to hear." Abigail patted her chest and wiped her tears away. "It wouldn't sit right with me otherwise."

Yeah, right. A hint of scorn flickered in Isabella's eyes. She then poked a straw into the cup of milk tea. "Get back to work."

"See you."

Isabella saw her off and rolled her eyes.

Isabella was trying to come up with a marketing plan when her phone vibrated. It was a text from Alex Young. The gist of it was that there was an evaluation at the end of the month.

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The fact that Isabella was an outside hire was

already not sitting well with the office. Things would be bad for her if her performance weren't up to par. The sales she made the day prior were due to sheer luck. A newbie salesperson like her couldn't have closed a deal on her first day.

Now that she was feeling the stress, she was motivated to do better. Isabella quickly set aside her thoughts about Seth and put all her focus on work.

It was about six. Fiona ordered Seth's usual food as per Isabella's tips. Once the food arrived, she carefully took them into the office. "It's late, Mr. Shaffer. You should eat dinner first."

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Chapter 13 The World Still Turns

Seth was behind his desk, frowning. The air around him was sharp and icy. He signed another document fluidly, not even raising his head.

Fiona felt a chill running down her spine. It was risky, but she asked, "Are you sure you're not eating?"

Seth skewered Fiona with a sharp, icy look. If looks could kill, she would have died.

Feeling slightly wronged, Fiona muttered, "Isabella said your gastric would act up if you didn't eat."

Seth's gaze turned icier than ever. He capped his pen. "She told you that?"

"Yes." Since Seth was interested, she continued, "I

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“Yes.” Since Seth was interested, she continued, “I met with her earlier in the afternoon, and she told me so much about you.”

A slight sneer curled Seth’s lips. He tossed his pen away and got up to straighten his collar. Slowly, he walked to the coffee table. There were fried fish filets, orange chicken, clam chowder, and aglio olio there. There’s more than one type of cuisine here. She obviously ordered them from multiple restaurants.

Nervous, Fiona observed the look on Seth’s face.

“Mr. Shaffer?”

“You believed everything she said?” Seth shot her an icy look.

Chapter 13 The World Still Turns

Fiona froze. “I-”

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“What the hell is this? You think I’d eat these?” Seth’s face fell. He was furious as he enunciated, “I don’t want to see anything this stupid anymore.”

Fiona was flabbergasted. She had seen what Isabella ordered previously, and these were indeed on the menu.

“Isabella’s nothing. You think the secretary

department can't run without her?" Seth hissed coldly.

Fiona felt like crying. She hated Isabella for telling her all this. I shouldn't have even gone all the way there. That place was filthy.

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Seth scanned the food on the table coldly. Then, he walked to his desk and called HR. "Issue a public notice. We're hiring a head secretary."

Fiona was flummoxed.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14

Isabella had been busy all afternoon, making several calls, but received no responses. Although she had thought of trying those previous "connections," she decided against it because there was no point in humiliating herself before them. With mounting pressure, she couldn't afford to dwell on messy affairs.

She had no business matters to attend and wasn't

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in the mood for overtime. After all, sales wasn't just about sitting in an office and doing paperwork. So, she grabbed her bag and left. She had to stay at Natasha's place for the next few days. Before heading back, she decided to call and ask if Natasha wanted her to buy groceries.

Isabella dialed the number, and Natasha picked up. “Hey, I’m going to buy some groceries. Is there anything specific you’d like?” Instead of a response, she heard a bustling commotion on the other end of the line.

This struck her as odd since Natasha managed a bar, and it wasn’t late enough for such a lively atmosphere. Isabella repeated her question a couple of times, but Natasha remained silent, and suddenly, screams echoed in the background

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“Natasha?” Isabella called repeatedly, but Natasha abruptly hung up.

Natasha managed Goldland Lounge, one of Imperia’s top bars with a powerful backer, so trouble was rare. Still, Isabella’s concern grew, prompting her to head to the bar.

As evening approached, the lights illuminated the surroundings. Luxury cars were a common sight near the bar since it was surrounded by other entertainment venues frequented by wealthy people.

After getting out of the car, Isabella hurriedly entered the bar. Since she had been here a few times before, the waitstaff at the entrance

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recognized her. “It’s been a while since you last visited, Miss Symons.”

Isabella followed the waiter inside. The lighting was dim, but everything was neat and orderly.

Performers were on stage, singing softly, and there were no signs of trouble.

“I’m here to see Natasha. Is she busy?” Isabella inquired. Just then, she saw Natasha standing on the second-floor crystal corridor, which relieved her.

Natasha also noticed her from above. She spoke to the man she was with before descending the spiral staircase.

“Why are you here?” She asked, somewhat

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surprised, as Isabella wasn’t typically fond of places like this.

Waving her phone, Isabella explained, “I heard some commotion when I called earlier and thought something might have happened to you.”

Natasha clicked her tongue and patted Isabella’s head. “I was too busy and didn’t even check who was calling when I answered. Some troublemaker knocked my phone away before I could respond.”

Isabella looked around and saw no signs of trouble.

It turned out that everything had already been taken care of.

Natasha put her arm around Isabella's shoulder and led her upstairs. "Since you're here, come to my room. We'll leave together when my shift ends."

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Though Isabella wasn't too keen on it, she didn't want Natasha to think she looked down on places like this, so she silently followed her.

Natasha took Isabella to the third floor but didn't take her to a room.

"Dariel brought some people over, so I need to meet him downstairs. Go to my room by yourself. It's the one at the end with my nameplate."

Not wanting to trouble her, Isabella agreed. "Alright, you go ahead."

Natasha swiftly descended the stairs, clearly not wanting to offend someone named Dariel.

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Meanwhile, Isabella walked to the end of the corridor and approached Natasha's room, which had a large "M" engraved on the door. However, she realized she had forgotten to ask for the room's password. With no other option, she decided to

wait, assuming Natasha wouldn't be gone for long. The luxurious carpet beneath her feet felt expensive. She estimated that its cost could cover the expense of a new bathroom. So, she took a few steps and felt more at ease. Soon, she heard hurried footsteps coming up the stairs, seemingly from more than one person.

Isabella intentionally turned away, not wanting to recognize anyone or be recognized.

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To her surprise, the footsteps drew closer until they were right behind her. Unable to contain her curiosity, Isabella turned around, only to be met with a glass of strong liquor thrown in her face.

"You wretch, trying to seduce my husband, are you? Do you want to die?!"

If it weren't for the liquor stinging her eyes, Isabella would have asked the person responsible why she was behaving like she had caught her husband's mistress.

Before Isabella could react, the woman slapped her, causing her to lose her balance and fall backward.

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“What are you waiting for? Get to it!” The woman, clearly unsatisfied with dousing Isabella with liquor and slapping her, swung her purse at Isabella’s head and even enlisted her friends to join in. Shocked and bewildered, Isabella tried to reason with them while shielding her head. “You’ve got the wrong person! I’m just waiting for someone.” However, her pleas fell on deaf ears as the women attacked her like a pack of frenzied dogs, verbally assaulting and physically targeting Isabella’s face. One of them slapped Isabella, causing her ears to ring.

Isabella curled up, protecting her head and enduring the chaotic onslaught of insults and

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blows. A mix of despair and fear swelled within her as she bitterly thought, Bad luck sure comes in threes. I came all this way only to get beaten up.

“What are you doing?” A male voice intervened, abruptly stopping the women’s onslaught. Their

rapid and intense pounding stopped abruptly.

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The woman had a tight grip on Isabella’s hair, but when she suddenly released her hold, it caused the

back of Isabella's head to hit the floor. Even with the cushioning of the carpet, Isabella ended up with a mild concussion.

"Bella!" Natasha immediately recognized Isabella as the victim and rushed to her side. When she saw

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Isabella's face, her heart sank.

With Natasha's assistance, Isabella managed to get back on her feet, but her mind was still foggy.

"Natasha?"

"Who are you people? How dare you cause trouble in the Goldland Lounge?" Natasha's anger flared as she helped Isabella lean against the wall and stood

1. up.
Amidst her daze, Isabella opened her eyes and recognized the leader of the assault. Dressed in light yellow and with an assertive demeanor, the woman was unmistakably a young lady from a wealthy family. She was Seth's cousin—Caitlin Hunter.

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"Drop the act. Where's my husband?"

"You couldn't control your husband, so you came here to beat someone up? Who taught you manners?" An icy voice tinged with displeasure

spoke up, sending a shiver down everyone's spine.

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Isabella was momentarily stunned and then turned to look toward the staircase, only to find herself speechless.

Under the crystal chandelier's dappled light, Seth's face seemed even more sinister and forbidding than usual. He stood there, looking down from above and sweeping his gaze across everyone as though watching a joke.

"C-Cousin?" Caitlin's face turned pale, and she

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Chapter 15 He Alu

instinctively took a step back. "I'm just here to find Harold."

"Find Harold? To me, it looks like attempted murder."

His tone was mocking, and he exuded an intimidating aura, silencing everyone in the corridor.

In the ensuing silence, someone quickly ascended the stairs. "What's going on?"

As soon as the newcomer appeared, Caitlin burst into tears and pounced on him, hitting him while crying, "Why did you take so long..."

Isabella couldn't help but tug at the corner of her lips. There was a hint of irritation in her eyes as it was clear that she was the one who had been hit,

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yet Caitlin's cry made it seem like she was the
victim.

With Harold's arrival, the truth came to light. He had
come here to talk to Seth and Dariel about
something, and they had agreed to meet on
Dariel's turf. Caitlin, probably influenced by some
malicious gossip, thought her husband was having
an affair with the female boss of Goldland Lounge
and mistook Isabella for Natasha, leading to this
scene.

"Mr. Banks, do you think you can brush it off as a
misunderstanding after your wife beat my friend
like this?" Natasha's face was cold as she stood
beside Isabella, clearly wanting an explanation.

"What else do you want? Should I let her beat me
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up?" Caitlin's eyes were swollen from crying, and
she suddenly raised her head from Harold's
embrace, resuming her aggressive stance.

Harold's expression stiffened, and he quickly pulled
her back. "Watch your words!" He glanced at the
woman in the corner and immediately recognized
her as Isabella. Combined with Seth's words, he
knew this would be tricky.

"It's inappropriate for us to gather in the corridor,
don't you think?"

Isabella recognized the voice—the man who had intervened earlier—so she raised her head and looked in his direction.

It was Dariel Wells. One of the few friends Seth had.

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With a captivating appearance, the man had a slight red tint at the corners of his eyes. When he smiled, there was a cunning glint in his eyes, and he leaned casually against the wall, watching the situation as if it were an amusing spectacle.

“Babe, help your friend up. Let’s go inside and talk.”

Natasha was Dariel’s woman, so she reluctantly suppressed her anger and helped Isabella up after hearing that.

Meanwhile, Isabella was sore all over, and getting up suddenly made her feel like her brain was about to explode. She leaned on Natasha and watched as Harold took Caitlin inside. Then, Dariel also strolled leisurely to the room.

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Chapter 15 He Always Sees Me at My Worst

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the crystal chandelier and casting a large shadow on them.

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Inside the room, there were three rows of couches.

The first three were already seated, with Dariel leaning lazily against one. He beckoned Natasha over to him. "Babe, come here."

Natasha hesitated momentarily because she had planned to help Isabella sit down first.

"There's an empty seat next to Seth. Let your friend sit there and come over."

Whether intentionally or not, Dariel threw Isabella a curveball as soon as they met, leaving her in a predicament about whether to sit down.

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Unexpectedly, Seth didn't hide that he knew her and gave a mocking sneer. "Will sitting down kill you?"

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Gritting her teeth, Isabella let go of Natasha's hand.

"I'll sit with Mr. Shaffer."

Natasha had no choice but to help Isabella sit down and join Dariel.