

Married in a Flash Embarking on the Journey to Wealth

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Lucia glanced at Aurelia, puzzled. “Ms. Simmons, what do you want then?”

Aurelia pulled out her phone and tapped on Eva’s Instagram account. “Ms. Hanks, using her IN Magazine Fashion Director certification, keeps posting personal attacks and slander against me. Yet your company hasn’t intervened. Can I assume you’re condoning her actions?”

While she aimed to leverage Lucia to eliminate Eva, wasn’t the magazine publisher’s indifference to Eva’s actions equally harmful to her?

Trying to shake off Eva now wasn’t as easy as she thought.

Lucia glanced at Aurelia with a hint of surprise. She had initially pegged her as someone with just a bit of cleverness. But, it seemed she was actually quite impressive, holding others accountable right after utilizing them. Her courage had nothing to do with her adorable face.

Even so, Lucia couldn’t help but admire Aurelia. With a bit of guidance, she was destined

for success.

Lucia remained composed. “So?”

Aurelia had prepared something of her own. She immediately took out a proposal from her bag. “Ms. Lawson, please take a look.”

When Lucia saw the proposal, both she and Leslie were stunned.

Aurelia was undoubtedly the most passionate worker Leslie had ever encountered among women. Despite being fired, she hadn’t abandoned her plans.

Aurelia added, “I’m aware your magazine publisher has been organizing a charity event for women lately. But if allegations of slandering women, or even coercing confessions, were to surface now, I question whether this event should proceed.”

Upon hearing this, Eva pointed angrily at Aurelia. “Who **do** you think you are, trying to threaten us like that, Aurelia?”

Aurelia glanced at Eva and spoke calmly, “Ms. Hanks, I could either be the mediator for this meeting or the one who’s been wronged. It’s up to you how you want to approach this.”

“You!” Eva gritted her teeth and glared at Aurelia. “Aurelia, do **you** think you’re all that?”

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Just because-

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“Wait a moment,” Lucia interrupted Eva abruptly. Then she pointed to the proposal **on** the table. “**Ms. Simmons**, did you actually write this?”

“Yeah, but it’s just a first draft.” Aurelia nodded.

“Share your thoughts.” Lucia gestured.

“Okay,” said Aurelia.

After Aurelia finished speaking, Eva stepped forward to intercept Lucia. “**Ms. Lawson**, are you out of your mind? She’s here to make trouble, and you’re actually backing her?”

Lucia spoke firmly as she accused Eva of reckless behavior, “Ms. Hanks, let’s face it. Most of the trouble seems to be coming from you, doesn’t it?”

“The police have already issued an investigation notice. Do you really think those influencers you reached out to will still have your back at this point? They’re probably too busy trying to protect themselves.

“And trust me, it won’t be long before angry netizens come banging on the magazine publisher’s door. Do you really want the president to come back and find his hometown under siege? Or do you have a better plan?”

Even with Eva's background, nobody dared to support her.

With no response from anyone, Eva, feeling frustrated, resorted to a sneaky move.

She tried threatening again, "This is IN Magazine's turf. If we catch Aurelia trying anything fishy, what can she do to us? If she doesn't sign the liability waiver agreement today, we'll..."

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Lucia grabbed a cup of coffee from someone nearby and splashed it onto Eva's face. "Are you feeling calmer now? If you keep talking nonsense, I won't hold back!"

Eva's face was drenched in coffee. Despite her anger, Lucia's words left her stunned.

Lucia turned to Aurelia and nodded. "Ms. Simmons, my apologies for the interruption. Please go on."

Aurelia didn't pay attention to Eva's fiery glare. She remained calm as she said, "It's easy to settle this peacefully. First, I need Ms. Hanks to apologize publicly, and I also require the magazine publisher to apologize to me."

"Ms. Simmons, while Eva is with the magazine publisher, the people she hired online aren't connected to us. We didn't join in on her personal attacks against you," Lucia

countered.

Aurelia stood her ground, facing Lucia and her team with determination. "Ms. Lawson, isn't simply standing by a form of involvement? You're all in the media business. You were aware of your employee's mistakes but chose not to intervene. Isn't that the same as condoning it?"

"A magazine that claims to support women's rights, yet allows its employees to bully an ordinary woman. Isn't that considered as taking part?"

Aurelia continued, "Don't forget, your charity event is supposed to help people

understand how hard it is for women. But if you can't even stick up for women's rights when it happens near you, then why bother dreaming big?

"Women's struggles ain't fixed just by

ving money. It's when they suffer quietly, are taken for granted, ignored, silenced, and pushed to compromise. The charity event isn't just about giving cash and love, but about pushing women to rise from the mess."

Aurelia calmly and confidently suggested, "I propose to use myself as an example. Before the charity event, I'll agree to an interview with you and reveal everything that's happened recently.

"I'll encourage women like me, those who are slandered and face salacious rumors, to speak up. Doesn't that sound better than spending millions on advertising campaigns?"

When she finished speaking, the entire meeting room fell silent. That was until Lucia applauded, followed by those around her.

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Lucia approached Aurelia and reached **out**. "I've underestimated you. I thought you needed Mr. Synder here to negotiate with us directly. That was my mistake. Would you be interested in joining the charity event?"

"But... I've been fired," Aurelia said hesitantly.

"Individuals matter here. We're just focused on what you can do, not the size of your company," Lucia assured.

"Alright, but we need a contract. It has to specify that your company is hiring me directly and that the pay will match market rates," Aurelia said.

Lucia's serious expression softened with a smile. "No problem. With Mr. Synder

supporting **you**, we won't mess around with the contract. I'll arrange interviews and live broadcasts about this incident in the next few days. Be prepared."

"Sure thing." Aurelia shook Lucia's hand, then winked at Leslie.

Leslie glanced at Aurelia with a hint of surprise in his eyes. He knew she wasn't one to just sit around and wait for things to happen.

But Eva was unhappy with the outcome. "I won't accept it. There's no way I'm apologizing to Aurelia!" she complained.

"Ms. Hanks, it seems you're not in control here," Aurelia said. "I've been trying to settle the necklace issue amicably. But if it goes to court and I demand a public trial, you won't only **be** blamed in court. You'll also have to pay me. It's up to you."

"You..." Eva's face turned pale as she stammered.

Lucia ignored Eva and said, "Ms. Simmons, don't mind her. I'll walk you out."

"Thanks, Ms. Lawson," Aurelia responded.

And with that, Aurelia and Lucia left Eva in the meeting room and went down the stairs

together.

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Outside the building, the online influencers were puzzled when they saw Lucia walking Aurelia down the stairs.

After saying goodbye to Lucia, Aurelia thanked Allen before getting into Leslie's car.

Before the car **even** started moving, Aurelia anxiously said, "Mr. Synder! What's going on? How come I'm the one who owns the necklace?"

Leslie struggled **to** get the words out. He was about to explain when Aurelia interrupted him and said, "Oh, I get it! Your boss is the one who secretly owns the necklace, right? **Is** that why you went to beg him again?"

After pondering for a moment, Leslie replied casually, "Yeah."

Aurelia looked at him with urgency. “If Eva doesn’t want this to blow up, she’ll have to pay up. I’ll give you both sums once I get the money from the collaboration with IN Magazine Publisher.”

Leslie frowned and asked, “Why?”

Aurelia explained, “You should hand it over to your boss. He must really trust you to bother getting it notarized and hiring such a tough lawyer. Just these expenses alone are no small sum. If you owe him too much, you’ll feel troubled.

“I know you don’t like being controlled, so let’s not dwell on it too much. I’ll return the money from the necklace, and we’ll figure out the rest of the favors as we go.”

Leslie stared at Aurelia in disbelief. Even at the lowest market price, she should’ve known that collaborating with IN Magazine Publisher under her own name would still rake in at six-figure income after this event.

And yet, she was handing everything over to him just so he wouldn’t owe his boss any

favors.

Sensing Leslie’s gaze, Aurelia looked at him, puzzled. “What’s wrong? Is it too little? But

I’m broke.’

“It’s alright, keep the money,” Leslie said.

“No, we’re married. We should...” Aurelia stopped herself mid-sentence, accidentally letting slip the word “married”.

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“What should we do?” Leslie was eager to hear her continue.

“Help each other,” Aurelia replied.

“Is that all?” Leslie didn’t like the awkward atmosphere, but he knew he had been pushing Aurelia away all this time. So why did it feel like he was suddenly being friendly?

Aurelia didn't understand what he meant. Even with close relationships, financial clarity still mattered. Shouldn't fake spouses be even more accurate with their divisions?

As she was about to answer Leslie's question, a reckless online influencer approached

their car with a phone in hand.

Aurelia quickly covered her face. "Hurry, let's get out of here! These people will do anything for fame."

With a frown, Leslie glanced at the person by the car window. Then, he hit the gas and sped away, leaving a trail of dust for those behind them.

Leslie was about to ask his question again, but Aurelia's phone ringing interrupted him.

Aurelia answered the call. "Hey. Really? Okay, I'll be there right away."

After ending the call, she breathed a sigh of relief and turned to Leslie. "Mr. Clark nabbed Seth at the airport and found tons of face-swapped videos and photos of me on his laptop. That settles it, then. Mr. Clark wants me to swing by," she explained.

"Alright." Leslie nodded and began heading toward the police station.

As soon as Aurelia and Leslie stepped into the lobby, they heard Seth's voice echoing loudly throughout the space. "It wasn't me! Kimberly was the one who reached out to me!" he said.

"Bullshit! Seth, if you didn't have that idea, would you have agreed so easily? And you even swapped faces with Aurelia overnight!" Kimberly snapped from the next room.

Just then, Megan Grant, the cop handling the case, rushed over. "Aurelia, you're here. You heard it all. There's no need for questioning. They revealed everything during the argument," she explained.

"When can I publish the face-swapped photos online?" Aurelia asked.

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“Anytime. We’ve got all the evidence gathered already, so feel free to provide whatever evidence you have. But we’ll still need to make the written format no tice though,” Megan explained.

Then, Megan walked up to Aurelia and gave her a thumbs–up. “You’re the coolest woman. I’ve handled in **cases** like **this**.

“Way to go. Here’s to hoping more **girls** take after you in the future.”

Aurelia quickly suggested, “We’ve got an interview about women’s rights lined up, and I can see that you’ve had your fair share of cases like this. So, how about teaming up for the interview and spreading some awareness among women on how to deal with these situations?”

“Well... I’ll need to check with our captain first. If he’s **okay** with it, then I can **g****et** some info together here to help out,” Megan replied.

that case, could you please get back to me as soon as you can? You should have my number,” Aurelia said.

“Yeah.” Megan nodded. Then, she seemed to remember something and said, “Oh, and about those four guys we caught at the subway station. They mentioned wanting to apologize and are willing to compensate.

“What do you think?”

“No way I’m letting them off the hook. I deserve compensation for what they did. They

need to face the music.

“Their ‘four_subway_heroes’ account already has over 300 thousand followers, and they’ve started making money off of it. Who knows who’ll be their next victim?”

“Yeah, that sounds good. I’ll go get busy now. I’ll catch you later to sign some paperwork.

Megan smiled.

“Sure, thanks.”

After Megan left, Aurelia and Leslie sat down at some chairs nearby.

Then, Leslie took out his laptop and uploaded a recording.

A few minutes later, Aurelia’s phone chimed. **So**, she checked it and saw that Leslie had

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sent her a recording.

After playing the recording, she was surprised to find that it was actually a recording of the four men from the subway station.

She looked at Leslie in surprise and asked, “When did you record this?”

Leslie typed on his keyboard as he nonchalantly replied, “Am I that useless?”

Aurelia pursed her lips. “I didn’t say that. What are you doing anyway?”

Leslie then hit the “Send” button, and Aurelia received an email from him.

Upon opening it, she found a detailed presentation slide. It was laid out like a professional business pitch—clearly organized with the background, causes, and consequences all outlined .

Leslie had anticipated almost everything that Aurelia could have thought of, and even some things she hadn’t. What’s more, he’d even provided a summary of it all.

“When did you make these presentation slides?” she asked.

“This morning. It took me about half an hour,” Leslie replied.

At this, Aurelia frowned and remained silent.

Perhaps some people were just naturally good at these things.

After all, even with two hours, Aurelia wouldn’t be able to finish such a detailed

presentation slide even if it were details pertaining to herself.

“Don’t stress about it. But this is all I can do for you. After all, if you can’t calmly handle the media pressure, even the most detailed presentation slide won’t do any good,” Leslie

remarked.

are you

“Wait a second, Mr. Synder, giving me a compliment?” Aurelia asked, pleasantly surprised.

“Yes. You did great dealing with Ms. Lawson today. You fought for it yourself,” Leslie said in approval.

Upon hearing this, Aurelia was warmed. Strangely, Leslie’s words brought her more **joy** than any praise she’d received from her previous bosses.

Then, Leslie curiously asked, “When did you draft the proposal?”

Murella immediately regained her confidence and said, “When it comes to

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brainstorming, you’re definitely better than me. But when it comes to drafting

proposals, I’ve got the edge. I dreamed about it last night and spent 29 minutes on it when I woke up in the middle **of** the night.”

“Aurelia.” Leslie raised an eyebrow.

“Okay. It took me an hour.”

Couldn’t she enjoy a moment of pride among the intelligent folks for just a minute?

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Leslie smiled and cleared his throat before speaking, “The presentation slides and the written notice from the police can be posted now. The truth is finally out.”

Aurelia nodded. Then, she opened her phone to edit the email from Leslie before posting it on all her social media platforms.

The TikTok accounts reacted the fastest, instantly attracting numerous netizens.

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“We got tricked! Those Subway heroes? They’re just robbers!”

“I heard they got busted, and their account’s been wiped clean too.”

So, being emptied out like that probably meant that they had no more clout left.

Initially, the Subway Heroes were aiming to make it big by riding the wave of their

account’s clout.

“Just wiping the account clean is all they’re gonna do? They better come out and apologize! Can you believe they tried to make a fortune by falsely accusing a woman?”

“Weren’t they confidently presenting their statements, claiming there was no deception? Turns out that it was all lies!”

“Now that the rumor-mongers have been caught, everyone’s trying to act innocent. But back then, it wasn’t just the Subway Heroes who wanted Aurelia to pay.”

“From this incident, we’ve learned that ex-colleagues can be as scary as ex-boyfriends...”

From now on,

let’s not jump to conclusions online until we have all the facts.”

“Spreading rumors is easy. But when it’s time to debunk them, they try to avoid it.

Aurelia even had to use a presentation slide to defend herself, and that just shows us how

despicable those rumor-mongers are.

“But Aurelia has really impressed me. She stayed calm, negotiated with IN today, and even tackled the salacious rumors. She’s setting a great example.”

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“Does anyone know how her negotiation with IN went? Does she have to pay 50 million?”

As the discussion peaked, Lucia had someone post a statement on social media. After all, being in the media industry herself, she knew just when to step in.

First, Lucia apologized and clarified that Aurelia wasn’t responsible for the necklace expenses. Then, she attributed everything to Eva’s errors at work and indicated that Eva

would cover the costs.

Afterward, Lucia seized the opportunity to announce an interview with Aurelia about women’s rights while also bringing up the charity event.

this series of actions combined with the promotion of the charity event proved Aurelia

right—it was indeed more effective than inviting celebrities.

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In the age of the Internet, the public was already accustomed to celebrity scandals. But what interested them more were the things that directly affected themselves.

Meanwhile, Eva’s apology only came after Lucia’s statement.

However, her apology paled in comparison to Lucia’s heartfelt one.

She only vaguely cited misunderstandings with Aurelia due to certain reasons before shifting most of the blame to Kimberly. Then, she claimed that it was all unintentional and expressed her willingness to own up to her mistake and apologize.

Basically, she was okay with taking on some of the compensation, but she put the rest on Kimberly.

Kimberly was really in a mess this time.

If the necklace could be fixed, it might not cost too much. But if it couldn't be fixed, aside from Eva's compensation, Kimberly might need to get her wealthy husband involved.

But whether or not their marriage would proceed was still uncertain.

In Eva's perspective, she'd thought that she could trick the netizens, but she didn't expect everyone to see through her scheme.

"When she accused Aurelia, Eva regularly posted lengthy statements. But now that she knows she's wrong, her apology barely even amounted to two sentences, and most of it was just shifting blame. Is that even considered an apology?"

"From this incident, it's clear that the upper management at IN lacks consistency. Just look at how Lucia handles things. Whenever there's a mistake, she owns up to it. She even arranged a special interview for Aurelia."

"Is Eva fit to be the fashion director? Does IN not have any other better choices?"

"Boycott! Boycott!"

When **Eva** noticed everyone boycotting her, she got angry and turned off the comments.

However, that only made everyone think that she was hiding something.

As the focus shifted, netizens then began uncovering details about Eva and revealing her

past.

Surprisingly, many individuals who were bullied by Eva during high school stood up to boycott her.

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“Eva, don’t think that moving to Carlino means that we’ve forgotten about what you did overseas. Whenever she and her bestie saw a girl prettier than them, they’d mess with her on purpose. She’s been playing the blame game for ages. I still have the old texts. from back then.”

In the texts, there was a girl who was pressured by Eva to meet up. Then, when she refused, Eva brought some folks to harass her downstairs at her apartment.

After that, the girl reluctantly went outside. However, she ended up being falsely accused of theft by the folks and taken to the local police station.

And because the girl was from an elite school, even a hint of wrongdoing was unacceptable. Hence, the girl was promptly expelled.

“Eva’s parents showed up at my place to intimidate my parents into silence, and it was all to stop me from speaking up. I’ve even got the video to prove it.”

The girl’s family was only considered middle-class overseas. So, she’d worked hard to gain admission into the elite school. And since her parents dared not act recklessly, they could only be controlled by Eva’s parents. Hence, after being threatened by them, they could only silently bow their heads to them.

“I’ve also been bullied by Eva and her bestie too—just because I bought a bag they didn’t have. That day, my bag was slashed, and the CCTV just happened to be broken. But the truth was, someone saw them messing with my bag, yet nobody dared to speak up about it because of who they were.”

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“The guy that Eva had a crush on confessed his feelings to me. So, she trapped me in the boys’ restroom with... well, a chubby dude. And ever since that day, rumors about the chubby guy and I have been spreading everywhere.”

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As more and more of Eva’s past bullying incidents came to light, information about her parents was also uncovered, and this reportedly started affecting their careers too.

Just then, someone noticed that Eva’s verification as the IN fashion director had disappeared.

It looked like she might’ve lost her job.

But who was Eva’s bestie? And why wasn’t anyone talking about her?

Aurelia flipped through a couple of pages, but she shrugged it off when she didn’t see anyone mention this.

Although, she did feel a bit nostalgic about it all.

“Who would’ve thought that someone like Eva used to be a spoiled rich kid? No wonder her gaze felt so familiar. I’ve been through this kind of stuff in high school,” Aurelia

reflected out loud.

“What kind of stuff?” Leslie asked.

“It’s when a girl gives you a hard time for no reason. For example, she picks on you. But forget it. You’re good-looking and smart—like the school’s popular kid—so nobody should mess with you.”

“My classmates were older than me, so they weren’t really into messing with me,” Leslie said as he kept the laptop.

“Why? Did you go to school at an early age or something? But even if you did, they’d only be a year or two older than you, right?” Aurelia asked, surprised.

During her schooling days, there were quite a few classmates who were a year older than her, but none of them stood out to her as particularly mature.

Then, Leslie stood up and looked down at Aurelia. "I skipped grades."

Aurelia remained silent.

She basically embarrassed herself!

Leslie skipped grades at Seacester's youth class! So basically, when his peers were in middle school, Leslie was probably already in college.

Aurelia remembered her middle school days where she'd pulled all-nighters for three math exams.

Meanwhile, Leslie might've already been working on his papers.

Leslie's cold stares finally made sense to Aurelia.

Was that the look for someone he considered a fool?

Awkwardly, Aurelia chuckled and quickly looked at her phone, ending the conversation.

Fortunately, Megan approached them at that moment and asked Aurelia to sign some documents.

It gave her a chance to break free from Leslie's gaze.

"The next step will be to just follow the procedure. It might take two or three months, but just make sure you find a good lawyer," Megan advised Aurelia.

"Okay, got it," Aurelia replied.

Then, after she signed the documents, the four subway guys happened to walk out as well. However, their faces turned pale at the sight of Aurelia.

But Aurelia didn't want to bother with them. After all, the evidence was conclusive, so she would simply follow the procedure on what to do next.

But just as she turned to leave, a woman wearing a hat and carrying a child in her arms rushed straight toward her.

Her name was Ann Grayson.

Aurelia felt nervous watching Ann wobble as she rushed over with the child. But fortunately, Leslie acted quickly and grabbed Ann's arm to prevent the child from falling.

Aurelia then glanced over to Ann and saw that the child in her arms was a newborn. What's more, Ann's appearance suggested that she hadn't fully recovered from childbirth.

Then, without saying a word, Ann looked at Aurelia and prepared to kneel down.

She said, "Ms. Simmons, I'm begging you, please let my husband go. Our baby was just born. If something happens to him, what will we do?"

John Goode, one of the four men, rushed over and grabbed Ann's hand, completely ignoring her unrecovered body and their baby in her arms.

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"Get up! What are you doing? If anyone outside catches wind and shares this online, I'll be the butt of the joke," John scolded.

Ann paled as she looked at John in disbelief. "Did you even realize that you'd gotten fired by the company because of this?"

"So what?" John seemed unaware of his mistake.

Aurelia glanced at **John** in disbelief.

Despite having seen Ann on her knees pleading, he showed no sign of remorse or guilt. And instead, he was actually blaming **her**.

Then, upon closer inspection, she realized that John was the same guy from the subway station that tried to take advantage of her.

So, he was definitely not a good guy.

Ann staggered at John's words, her arms almost giving way, and the baby nearly slipping from them.

Luckily, Aurelia reached out and caught the baby. She then angrily glared at John. "Let her go!"

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Perhaps because Aurelia's voice was too loud, John felt embarrassed. So, he raised his hand as if to slap Ann.

Since Aurelia was holding the baby, she couldn't intervene. But fortunately, Leslie reached out to assist Ann and helped her step aside.

"What are you guys doing? My dealings with Ann are none of your business! Even the cops can't meddle in my family affairs!" John snapped, his pride stung.

Leslie gave him a cold stare. Then, instead of arguing back, he casually remarked, "Seems like useless guys like you enjoy hitting women. Are all your buddies here to back you up too?"

Mockery coming from the same gender could sometimes cut the deepest.

So, John's hand, initially raised, clenched into a fist before relaxing.

Then, Aurelia seized the moment to pull Ann aside and asked, "Are you okay? Why are you out so soon after giving birth?"

She thought that Ann might feel somewhat comforted by these words. But to her surprise, Ann fiercely glared at her and snatched the baby away. "Why did I even bother coming out? If you hadn't gone after John and gotten him fired, I'd be lounging in bed and living the good life!"

"You..." Aurelia was rendered speechless at Ann's accusation, and she didn't know how

to respond.

"Haven't you ever wondered if you were the issue? If you weren't so provocative, would those men have bothered you? Everyone knows men can't always control themselves. Yet, you deliberately dressed like that to seduce them.

“Of course, they couldn’t resist!” Ann, who had just begged Aurelia to spare John, was now blaming her instead.

Upon hearing this, the four men laughed, as if this was the right thing to do.

At this, Aurelia seethed with rage and felt her chest tighten.

But suddenly, Leslie stood in front of her and shielded her from their gazes.

He then coldly looked at Ann and said, “So, going by your logic, **if** John isn’t being

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considerate toward his wife who’d just given birth to his baby and ended up being impulsive with other women, then perhaps you’re the issue too.

“Guess you can’t handle your man, huh?”

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Ann’s eyes widened. “How dare you... say that to me? I’m still recovering from childbirth!

Leslie retorted, “Then why did you say those things about my wife? Being beautiful isn’t a fault, and admitting that John is a jerk who still tried to touch other women while you were recovering from childbirth isn’t either!”

Ann then bit her lip, paling as she lost her composure. “Can’t I apologize on his behalf? Can’t you just let him off? My baby and I still rely on him.”

“Nope,” Aurelia firmly asserted. “Your apology doesn’t do a thing for me. Besides, John hasn’t shown any regret. And not only did he try to take advantage of me, but he also spread lies about me online.

“I bet you were aware of it. But instead of stopping him, you’re here trashing my name. You and John really are birds of a feather.”

“You!” Ann glared at Aurelia.

“You don’t have to glare at me. You’re just worthless. Even if I spared John today, he’ll still go after other women.

“Are you planning to pull the same stunt with your baby again in the future? How about instead of butting into my business, you focus on your own life instead?”

“This type of man... You better hold onto him tight and make sure he doesn't get back out there.” Aurelia didn't care about Ann's feelings anymore. If her words could help her realize the truth about John, it wouldn't be too bad of a thing anyway.

Upon hearing what Aurelia had to say, Ann simply remained silent.

But on the other hand, John couldn't contain his anger. He pointed at Aurelia and shouted, “Hey, where are the cops? Isn't this considered verbal assault?”

But the cops were busy, and there'd been quite a few troublemakers causing a scene in the night market recently. So, who had the time to deal with him?

However, Megan, who was nearby, had overheard everything. Yet, she didn't bother with John and simply picked up her phone—that wasn't even turned on—and pretended to make a call. “Hello? Yes, I'll be right there.”

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Seeing as how no one paid him any attention, John felt the stark contrast between his recent online influence and his current situation.

It made him feel disheartened.

Enraged, John then tried to punch Leslie, but it was only to be knocked down by him.

instead.

After that, Leslie flicked his hands and said, “The CCTV will prove that I didn't lay a finger on him. He ran into me all on his own. Who knew he was so weak?”

Meanwhile, John's other friends remained silent.

As John groaned in pain, Megan walked over and said, “You dare **to** cause trouble at the police station? Get up! You're not getting away today!” she asserted.

“L... She insulted me first.”

“Don’t worry, we’ll record everything. Nobody’s getting away,” Megan said.

“I...” John finally realized that he was in trouble. So, he looked at his friends and pleaded, “Help me, guys.”

However, the three other men didn’t say a word. They clearly didn’t want to get into trouble themselves.

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John finally realized that his friends had ditched him. So, he was eventually taken away while Aurelia and Leslie both made a record of what had happened. Then, they signed the necessary documents and left.

As Aurelia walked through the lobby, she spotted Ann.

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She was seated and holding her baby with a vacant expression in her eyes.

Meanwhile, John’s supposed buddies—the Subway Heroes—had already disappeared.

But Aurelia didn’t approach Ann this time. Instead, she turned on her heels and exited the police station.

Once she was **in** the car, Aurelia let out a deep sigh. “I wonder how things will turn out

for her in the future.”

“Sometimes you gotta be a little cold-hearted. Saves a lot of time. Besides, it’s her choice. Adults should take responsibility for their decisions,” Leslie said.

“I know, but that baby... It’s a pity.” Aurelia helplessly shook her head.

Upon hearing this, Leslie didn’t say anything. After all, he never had much interest in the people and things around him anyway. So, after starting the car, he immediately changed the subject, saying, “I need to stop by the company first.”

“Alright. But do you mind if I tag along to the office?” Aurelia inquired.

“It’s fine. Just make some nice food for the weekend,” Leslie replied.

“Yeah, I almost forgot about that. I need to check out what to cook.” Aurelia remembered her promise to host dinner for Leslie’s colleagues over the weekend.

So, she quickly looked up the recipes that she’d planned to cook. Then, she jotted down each ingredient on paper to ensure that she wouldn’t miss anything when she went grocery shopping the next day.

Soon, they arrived at Leslie’s company.

Upon entering the building, the receptionist warmly greeted them as usual, “Hello, Ms. Simmons, you did a great job. We’ve been supporting you all this while.”

“Thank you,” Aurelia replied. But just as she raised her hand to wave, a voice cut through and instantly shifted the atmosphere.

Chapter 378

“Do you think you’re a mascot or something? Smiling at everyone? You should be more professional,” Cynthia remarked.

She then gave the receptionist a stern look, prompting the receptionist to tighten her lips and stop smiling.

Aurelia glanced over to Cynthia.

Cynthia gave Aurelia a brief nod before shifting her gaze to Leslie.

“It’s time for the meeting,” she said.

“Okay.” Leslie nodded. Then, he turned to Aurelia and said, “Wait for me here.”

“Sure. Go ahead,” Aurelia replied with a smile.

Leslie then turned to the receptionist. “Please, serve Aurelia, Marie.”

“It’s Maria!” the receptionist corrected him.

Leslie just replied, “Hmm.”

Meanwhile, Maria was left speechless.

Upon observing such an interaction, Aurelia couldn’t help but chuckle. But then, she noticed that Cynthia was giving her a strange look.

“It’s almost time,” Cynthia urged.

So, Leslie finally left.

Then, as soon as Leslie and Cynthia were out of sight, Maria glanced around before leaning in

closer to Aurelia. “Ms. Simmons, you better keep an eye on Leslie.” “What’s going on?”

Chapter 379

Aurelia caught a hint of gossip lingering in the air. And even though she wasn’t a fan of gossip, the relaxed atmosphere in the office piqued her curiosity for some reason.

Unconsciously, she shifted her position on the couch and made space for Maria and Jessica, the other receptionist.

Maria and Jessica didn’t hesitate to take their seats either, one on each side of Aurelia.

“Ms. Simmons, don’t you have a bit of crisis awareness? Right now, Leslie’s the most popular programmer in the industry.

“He’s handsome, and he’s in charge of developing new products too. And do you know

what's the most crucial?"

"Hmm... Not losing hair?" Aurelia seriously replied.

Maria and Jessica were left speechless at her response.

Aurelia's expression turned solemn. "Is there someone who has a crush on Leslie?"

Maria nodded. "Of course! Don't you know how sought after he is? Girls from all over the building are lining up for him."

Jessica chimed in, "Do you know which group of people added me on WhatsApp the most on my first day at work?"

Aurelia shook her head.

"It was all girls asking if I could introduce them to Mr. Synder. We gained five pounds this month from all the snacks they'd kept sending us. They wouldn't stop even when we refused. I don't know how to deal with them," Jessica said.

"Yeah, we really can't afford to gain any more weight. How about finding a way to let everyone know that you two are married?" Maria suggested.

"So, you want me to intervene because you've gained weight from all the snacks being sent?"

Both Maria and Jessica nodded in distress.

Aurelia couldn't help but chuckle, struggling to hold back her laughter.

Then, Maria gently nudged her and said, "Why are you laughing? Even though Mr.

Chapter 379

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Synder isn't into other women, Ms. Whitlock is an exception. She's the only woman by Mr. Synder's side, and she treats him with great care."

Jessica nodded. “Yeah, she’s only been back for a week, but she’s already glued to Mr. Synder. There’s no way she doesn’t have some sort of ulterior motive.”

Aurelia slightly furrowed her brows and recalled the hostile glare Cynthia had given her.

It had indeed been full of animosity.

Maria observed Aurelia’s silence and assumed that she didn’t believe her. So, she decided

to be frank.

She said, “Ms. Simmons, we’re really rooting for you and Mr. Synder. And don’t underestimate Ms. Whitlock. She’s attractive, well-educated, successful in her career,

and she’s right by Mr. Synder’s side.

“She could easily influence Mr. Synder’s future. And if you don’t act fast, Mr. Synder might fall under her sway.”

“Do you... have faith in us?” Aurelia pointed to herself in disbelief, surprised that they

had confidence in her and Leslie.

Aurelia had thought that the high-level white-collar workers in this building wouldn’t pay attention to someone like her. After all, she was just a regular worker.

“Of course! You won’t believe it, but when we first got here, Mr. Synder’s face was as expressionless as a cartoon character. Although he looked good, he had no emotions. **He** was like a mannequin, and we had to be careful whenever we talked to him,” Maria explained.

“But ever since we found out about you, he’s been changing every day. The office’s atmosphere went from dull and lifeless to lively,” Maria remarked.

“We were ready to quit on our first day, but when we saw Mr. Synder defending the lunchbox you made him, we changed our minds,” Jessica chimed in.

Aurelia listened to them, surprised. “He defended the lunchbox I made?”

“Yeah, that blue box. He takes it out every day when everyone’s having takeout. It’s really childish.” Maria chuckled. “But it’s also because of this that we think this place is actually pretty good. It’s easygoing. We sit for six hours a day, smile, and make ten grand a

month.”

“Wait a minute!” Aurelia suddenly interrupted loudly.

Chapter 370

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“Do you also think Mr. Synder is childish?” Maria laughed.

“No way. You guys get paid ten grand a month to just sit here?” Aurelia was stunned. Was this for real?

“Yeah. Isn’t that normal?” Maria asked.

Aurelia was left speechless.

Was it even considered normal? Her base salary at Young was only four thousand, and the rest of her earnings came from her tireless efforts of hustling for performance bonuses.

Chapter 380

Yet, Aurelia ended up with just a little over ten grand.

She glanced at Jessica and Maria. “Are you guys still hiring?”

Jessica asked, “By the way, you got fired by Young, right? Don’t worry, we’ll check if other companies in this building are hiring.”

“But first, tell us about your qualifications. Where did you graduate from? How many languages do you speak? Normish, Jalish, and Fradish are pretty common here. Oh, there are lots of Germono clients upstairs lately too.”

“I’m okay with Normish. Basic communication isn’t a big deal,” Aurelia replied.

“What certifications do you have?”

“Just a college English test level 4.”

“Heh, are you joking? Almost every college student can pass the college English test level 4. What kind of certification is that? It’s the proficiency test certifies in foreign

languages that matter here.” Maria chuckled.

Aurelia pursed her lips at Maria’s words.

Then, upon realizing that Aurelia wasn’t joking, Maria quickly apologized, “Ms. Simmons, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean anything by it.”

“No worries, it’s on me,” Aurelia awkwardly said. She was aware of her lack of brilliance. And despite graduating from a decent university, she felt that it was just luck.

After graduation, Aurelia joined Young and always believed that her skills could pave the way for success. But little did she know, her abilities weren’t even that of a stepping

stone for others.

Maria then tried to comfort Aurelia. “Ms. Simmons, I know it might not be what you want to hear, but it’s the truth. With Young’s current status, there isn’t much room for advancement even if you’re skilled. It would be a shame for someone as capable as you to stay here when there are bigger opportunities out there.”

Jessica chimed in, “In small companies, it’s all about getting the job done, but in big companies, it’s about building relationships. You’ve just faced so many issues at Young because the company’s internal workings are chaotic, and it doesn’t make sense to stay when it’s not a good fit anyway.”

Aurelia observed the two receptionists.

They truly embodied the essence of white-collar workers in this building. Despite only being receptionists, their understanding of corporate dynamics far surpassed hers because they'd been exposed to the workings of large companies.

"Thanks for the advice, I got it," Aurelia said. She was surprisingly jolted into a awareness by their words, and perhaps it indeed was time for her to rethink her career path.

Initially, she had been considering finding another advertising company similar to Young, given her experience. But now, she realized that she'd inadvertently boxed

herself in.

At just 25 years old, what couldn't she do? What couldn't she learn?

As Aurelia pondered these questions, a commotion erupted from inside the meeting room. So, she promptly stood up to see what was going on with Leslie.

Then, just as she stood up, Aurelia saw Cynthia stepping out of the meeting room.

She had a pad in hand and was walking alongside Leslie. They were both engrossed in the pad, as if they were **on** a video call. They were also effortlessly and openly chatting between themselves.

Aurelia couldn't understand a word, but Jessica and Maria beside her muttered, "The Framano clients are coming again. Looks like we'll have some busy days ahead."

The stark contrast left Aurelia speechless, and before she could even greet Leslie, Cynthia blocked her path. Then, Aurelia simply watched as Leslie walked past her.

After a moment of hesitation, Aurelia turned to Jessica and Maria. "Um... Where did you guys learn your foreign languages? Could you recommend a place?"

"I'll recommend a place where the teachers have authentic accents."

"Thanks."

“Don’t worry about being polite with us. Just go ahead and shut down those thoughts from the girls upstairs and downstairs,” Maria said in exasperation.

“Yeah, we can’t keep eating those snacks. Otherwise, we’ll need new uniforms soon. Besides, you could also put a stop to Ms. Whitlock’s interest **in** Leslie, right?” Jessica

winked at Aurelia.

“But... I don’t have a clue.” Aurelia bit her **lip**.