

Masked In Nobility: Secrets Of Mrs. Chavez Chapter 211

As Wyatt and Zane pushed open the door, they instantly understood the situation upon seeing the quiet office hall, where even breathing seemed amplified. Wherever those three stood, the air felt heavy with their presence.

Now that they were in the police station, Zane quickly took charge, politely inviting them into his office and instructing his subordinates to bring the truck driver to the interrogation room

Zane was respectful but didn't fawn over Jeremiah and the others. After getting them some water, he sat down on the couch with a gesture that made Wyatt even more pleased with him.

Wyatt thought, "This guy knows his boundaries. If he had started sucking up to Jeremiah just because of his status, he would never make it far in the political world. Knowing when to push and hold back is a real lesson in life and leadership.

Andrew sprawled on the couch with one leg crossed over the other and took a sip of his water. He turned to Yvette and said, "That truck driver is quite tough. We've questioned him at least ten times this morning, and all he keeps saying is that it was an accident, claiming he was just exhausted from overworking. It's obvious someone coached him. He knows how to dodge the serious charges. By the way, who the hell did Mr. Chambers cross? This wasn't just brake failure; they used a huge truck to try to kill him. It's clear someone wanted him dead."

Yvette frowned with sharpness in her gaze. Her fingers lightly tapped on the armrest and her features were stunningly elegant while her half-closed eyes held a flicker of mischief. She said slowly, "Overworking?"

Wyatt nodded with a serious look. He had been part of the entire interrogation. "The driver is clever, way too sharp for someone of his supposed background. Throughout our questioning, he didn't even flinch. He even asked for a lawyer, like he had prepared for this, confident he wouldn't face heavy charges."

Zane remained silent. He had worked his way up from the bottom, struggling for years before Wyatt noticed him and brought him into this position. He also thought that the truck driver was definitely not an average guy.

Jeremiah casually inserted the straw into Yvette's drink and handed it to her. She took a sip and, just as naturally, placed it back in Jeremiah's hand.

The three men across from them felt speechless, thinking, 'Really? Is showing off like that necessary?'

A chill flashed through Jeremiah's eyes. In the midday sunlight, his handsome, calm profile seemed to glow with a golden hue. He said in a cold and sharp voice, "Have you checked his background?"

Zane knew it was his turn to speak, so he respectfully said, "We have. His name is Eric Wilson, just a regular guy and nothing special. He's from a small town. We contacted the local police station where he was born and found that his parents passed away a few years ago. He has an older brother who left for work over twenty years ago and hasn't returned since. Eric has been driving trucks ever since and keeps to himself with no wife and no kids. That's all we could find."

Andrew let out a mocking laugh. "He does look like that."

Jeremiah's expression remained indifferent. "Where's his brother? What does he do?"

Zane froze for a moment. They had focused solely on Eric's background and hadn't checked his brother. His brother hadn't shown up in over twenty years. It seemed that he couldn't have anything to do with Zachary's accident.

Zane shook his head. "We haven't looked into that yet. I'll arrange for someone to dig into it right away."

Yvette propped her elbow on the table, having a mischievous smile on her face. "Don't bother. Let him tell us himself."

Wyatt and Zane exchanged glances, unsure of what she meant. Based on the previous interrogation, getting Eric to talk was very difficult, let alone having him spill everything about his brother.

Andrew felt curious and leaned in. "Do you know how to make Eric talk, Yvette?"

Yvette nodded seriously, her gaze lazy but with a hint of something fierce, full of rebellious energy, and an almost playful indifference. She said, "Getting him to talk is easy. Just beat him tip until he speaks."

Andrew nodded in agreement, thinking. What's the big deal about roughing Eric up a bit? After what he did, trying to take someone's life, a few punches aren't going to hurt him!

Jeremiah gently squeezed her wrist, saying in a soft voice, "Do you really want to do that?"

Yvette tilted her head and stared at him, her eyes sparkling like stars.

Wyatt pressed a hand to his chest, feeling speechless. He thought, Are these three discussing this right here? If this keeps up, my heart's going to explode! Besides, how can Jeremiah ignore the law? In ancient times, that would make him a tyrant.'

Zane was stunned for a moment, forcing himself to look at Yvette cautiously. "Ms. Zeller, this... It might not be the best idea. How about we try something else?"

Wyatt also looked at Yvette, trying to look sincere. "Yeah, Zane is right. Let's go with another plan, Ms. Zeller. Beating someone up at the police station is not appropriate."

Yvette withdrew her gaze, turning her head to see both of them looking nervous. She half-closed her eyes with a playful smile, tapping the armrest with her pale, delicate hands. Raising an eyebrow, she said lazily, "Just kidding. Peace matters here. We shouldn't fight violence with violence."

Wyatt and Zane were both speechless, doubting her words.

Andrew slumped back on the couch, clearly disappointed. He thought, 'It looks like we're not going to rough him up, right?'

Just then, there was a knock on the door. Lachlan, who had already figured out the situation, brought Eric to the interrogation room.

"Come in," Zane said.

Lachlan entered with his head slightly lowered. "Eric has been brought to the interrogation room, Mr. Chappell. We can start whenever you're ready."

Zane glanced at Jeremiah and Yvette, asking for their opinion. "Mr. Chavez, Ms. Zeller, shall we head over together?" Inside the interrogation room, Eric sat with a defiant look on his face, like he didn't care what was going to happen to him. Across from him were the two officers who had been questioning him since morning.

He let out a derisive snort, thinking, "They're nothing but a bunch of useless cops. What new tricks could they possibly have up their sleeves? As long as I stuck to my brother's story and insisted it was just overworking, who could hold me guilty?"

His brother was right; the law had its loopholes. As long as he could exploit that, he could evade serious consequences even if he killed someone. In the worst-case scenario, he would get a few years in prison. After that, he would still be free as a bird. The door to the interrogation room swung open, and Eric squinted against the sudden light. Once he saw who had entered, a look of intense surprise flashed in his eyes as he leered at the girl.

Lachlan scolded Eric sharply, "Behave yourself." Then he motioned for the other two officers to follow him out, leaving Eric alone with Yvette.

With one hand casually tucked in her pocket, Yvette strolled to a chair and sat down leisurely. She squinted, resting her legs on the table, exuding a rebellious, confident aura. She didn't say a word.

Eric's gaze was fixed on her, waiting for her to speak. However, half an hour passed, and aside from a few glances in his direction, Yvette remained silent.

Eric's frustration grew, not knowing what she was doing.

On the other side of the interrogation room, Jeremiah, Andrew, Wyatt, Zane, and the two younger officers, along with Lachlan, were all watching the proceedings unfold on the screen

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Eric grew increasingly frustrated. He glared at Yvette and asked "Who the hell are you? You're not even wearing a uniform. You're not a cop, are you?"

Yvette, with her legs casually draped over the table, opened her eyes. There was no warmth in them, just a cold, sinister glint in the corners. She said slowly, "Didn't the person who hired you to kill tell you that Zachary has another daughter?"

Without thinking, Eric blurted out, "No."

Seeing this, Andrew clapped his hands and cheered. He had been there throughout the morning's interrogation, but Eric had been stubborn and refused to admit anything. Finally, it seemed that he couldn't hold any longer. "Yvette is incredible.. How did she only spend half an hour getting Eric to talk?"

Standing beside him, Zane studied the monitor intently, saying, "It's psychological tactics. We were too focused on getting answers. We interrogated him over and over again, but we didn't realize that we were the ones in the weaker position. From the moment Ms. Zeller walked into the room, she made Eric aware she was different. She didn't waste a single minute. By spending half an hour just observing him, she slowly chipped away at his psychological defenses. Therefore, when she spoke to him for the first time, his mind was already in a very fragile state."

Jeremiah raised his head, casually glancing at Zane. "Have you done any research on such tactics?"

Zane was overjoyed when he heard Jeremiah's words, and Wyatt also showed some excitement. It seemed that Jeremiah was impressed by Zane.

Zane respectfully responded, "I haven't studied it, but a few years ago, I worked on a case with a psychological consultant hired by the police station. I just know a little about it."

Jeremiah nodded, not saying more, his gaze focused on Yvette in the surveillance.

Meanwhile, in the interrogation room, Yvette's smile deepened, and her eyes grew darker. Her serious look and powerful aura forced Eric to shrink back in his seat.

Under Yvette's gaze, Eric panicked as he realized that he had let something slip. Flushed with shame and anger, he slammed his hand down on the table, raising his voice. "Stop trying to fool me. No one hired me. I've said a hundred times that I was just tired from overworking. What are you? You're not even a cop. Why are you here interrogating me? Is this even legal? I want a lawyer, and before that, I have the right to remain silent. I won't say another word from now on."

If it had been anyone else, he might have been helpless when he heard Eric's words. However, Yvette was different. She slowly stood from her chair and put her hands in her pockets. Then she moved lazily as she walked over to Eric, stopping just across the table from him.

Yvette tapped on the table with her fingers, her smile wicked. Eric didn't know why, but an intense sense of unease overwhelmed him.

Sure enough, the next second, without a word, Yvette yanked him up from the chair. She effortlessly lifted him off the ground with one hand. Eric was stunned, and then he felt a choking sensation.

Yvette tightened her grip on him slowly. Eric struggled desperately, his face turning purple. As he fought, he caught a glimpse of her eyes, feeling bloodthirsty energy rushed toward him. She looked like a demon from hell, her gaze cold, deep, and merciless. For a moment, Eric felt like nothing more than an ant in front of her.

Eric had been so bold because he knew they were in the police station and no one would dare to lay a hand on him. There was no evidence that he caused the accident on purpose.

However, the situation now was far beyond what he expected. He felt that he couldn't breathe, and his consciousness was fading. He just couldn't escape the grip tightening around his neck.

Eric didn't even have the strength to beg for mercy. He was truly terrified when he realized that Yvette really wanted him dead.

The scene in the interrogation room was visible to everyone in the other room, and their expressions varied.

Andrew wore an excited and admiring expression. "As expected, Yvette is quite tough."

Wyatt's heart raced, feeling a little unwell at the sight, but when he glanced at Jeremiah, who was sitting calmly on the chair, he didn't dare to say anything.

Shocked by what Yvette did, Zane didn't know what to say. He thought, 'Wasn't she supposed to be an artist? How did this matter turn into this? Eric was a grown man weighing 170 pounds, and yet she was lifting him like a chick.'

Zane was afraid that Yvette might go too far, so he braced himself to say to Jeremiah, "What do you think, Mr. Chavez? Should we go in?"

Jeremiah raised his head, his eyes cold and deep like a frozen lake, his expression intense and commanding. He said indifferently, exuding an aloof aura, "She knows what she's doing."

Zane didn't dare to argue further after hearing Jeremiah's words. As he watched Eric's face turn pale on the monitor, he quietly looked away, wiping the cold sweat from his forehead.

Zane could only silently pray that Yvette truly knew what she was doing and stopped while she still could.

Andrey tutted and made a mocking noise. Seeing Zane's concerned expression, he smirked and added, "Don't worry. Yvette is just scaring him. She won't kill him."

Zane forced a bitter smile, his eyes still fixed on the monitor. He couldn't help but wonder what they should do if she killed him.

Just when Eric was on the brink of passing out, Yvette finally let go of him.

Eric collapsed to the floor, gasping for air. Once he regained his strength, he scrambled to the corner, staring with terror at Yvette.

His only thought now was to get as far away from her as possible.

He was truly terrified. Just moments ago, he had thought he was going to die.

Yvette sat back in her chair, shifting into a more relaxed position. Resting her chin on her hand, she crossed her long legs and unwrapped candy, eating it calmly while watching Eric, who was still gasping for air in the corner with fear. "Who sent you?"

Eric froze. He trembled as he raised his head. He wanted to keep silent, but after recalling what he had gone through just moments ago, he didn't dare to. He figured that being in prison was still better than falling into Yvette's hands.

However, when he thought of the person who hired him, he was torn with inner conflict. He wasn't going any further, but he didn't want the Wilson family to be done.

A few minutes later, Eric raised his head, a resolute expression on his face. His voice weakened once more as he looked at Yvette. "No one hired me. I did it because hate rich people. I can't stand seeing someone like Zachary living a good life. Why do they get to have money and power while I'm struggling for survival? I could only eat instant noodles every day. No woman wanted to be with me. As soon as they heard about my situation, they ran away. Why is my life so miserable? I crashed the car that Zachary was in on purpose. Do whatever you want with me and I'll take the punishment. I'm telling you again, no one hired me. I did it on my own."

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Eric trembled, trying to slip through with a mix of truth and lies. He lowered his head in guilt, not daring to look at Yvette.

Yvette smiled faintly and said in a soft voice, "Sit back down."

Eric froze, thinking he had misheard her. He hesitated and asked uncertainly, "W-What did you say?"

Yvette's brow twitched in slight impatience. Seeing her gesture, Eric instinctively recoiled against the wall.

He knew he hadn't misheard her. Crawling back onto the chair in the interrogation room, he sat still, not daring to move.

Yvette took an old-fashioned pocket watch out of her pocket, its cracked surface making it look worn with age.

Eric saw the pocket watch and felt puzzled, wondering what she was planning to do.

Yvette stared at Eric, and her delicate hand gently swung the old pocket watch. As Eric stared at the watch, his eyes began to lose focus, and everything around him seemed to blur, including Yvette's exquisite face.

The watch swung faster and faster until Eric completely lost consciousness. His eyes went vacant, losing all sense of sanity. Yvette pursed her lips, put the watch away, and softly asked, "Who told you to crash into Zachary's car?"

Eric's eyes were blank and his voice was dull. "It was my brother, Jason Wilson. He told me that Zachary's brakes had failed. All I had to do was wait at Marine Road's middle section, wait for his car to come out, then crash into it. Afterward, I just had to pretend it was a case of overworking at the police station. He promised that he would get me the best lawyer to defend me and even offered me 1.5 million dollars to buy a house and marry a wife back home."

Yvette, with her pale hand resting on her face, casually leaned back, nonchalantly asking, "Does Jason have a grudge against Zachary?"

Eric's face turned pale as he shook his head. "No. It's because of the Smith family. Jason is the Smith family's butler, Jason Davis. No one knows that his real name is Jason Wilson. He's been working for Dennis for years. He knows that the Smith family went bankrupt because of the Chambers family, so he's been trying to find ways to get revenge on them. The brake failure was also his doing."

Yvette's eyes were indifferent. Slowly, she snapped her fingers.

Eric suddenly snapped back to reality, but he couldn't remember anything from earlier. He just felt like his mind had been blank for a few minutes. He looked up at Yvette, still unaware of everything he had just confessed. He stubbornly said, "You don't need to investigate further. I did it on purpose. No one hired me."

Yvette sneered, crossing her legs and raising an eyebrow. "Is your brother Jason Davis or Jason Wilson?"

Eric stared at Yvette, shocked. His face drained of color and he struggled to deny it. "What are you talking about? I don't understand."

Yvette had already obtained the information she wanted, so she lost interest in continuing the interrogation. She stood up and walked toward the door. Then she paused for a moment, her voice laced with coldness. "You know that your brother is just using you. If he really cared about you, you wouldn't be in the situation you're in now, not even able to marry a wife. Do you know how much the gardener at the Smith family makes a month?"

After that, Yvette pushed the door open and left. Behind her, Eric's cries echoed as if his last hope had been taken away. He collapsed onto the table, crying uncontrollably.

He had known all along that since childhood, Jason had been looking down on him. When he failed the exams, Jason went to university and left their hometown, not returning for twenty years. When he finally did come back, he asked him to harm others. Eric had desperately clung to that fragile sense of familial bond, but now, he regretted it. The very family affection he longed for had ruined his life.

In the room next door, they had witnessed the whole process. Seeing Eric hunched over the table, crying his heart out, Wyau sighed. He felt that Eric was indeed a pitiable man, used by his brother, still trying to protect him. He didn't expect the Smith family's involvement in this case either.

Not long ago, the Smith family's bankruptcy had caused a negative impact on Seacurity's economy. Zane didn't know the history between the Smith and Chambers families, but he thought the family grudges here were truly terrible. He didn't expect that a butler

would end up harming others for his employer who had already died. What surprised him even more was that Yvette knew hypnotism.

A few years ago, he had discussed hypnotism with a psychologist he had worked with on cases. He knew that timing, environment, and the hypnotist were all important. The human mind was the most complex thing, and hypnotism wasn't as easy as it seemed. Looking at Yvette, he thought, 'Sure enough, Jeremiah's woman can't be an ordinary one!'

Andrew pinched his chin, his eyes gleaming with curiosity. He turned to Jeremiah, saying with a flattering smile, "Yvette is so impressive. I always thought that hypnotism was something you only saw on TV. I didn't expect that she could do it. How did she hypnotize him? Was it just with a pocket watch? I've got to ask her where she bought it. I might get one for myself."

Andrew's words made Jeremiah smile with pleasure.

After Yvette left the room, Jeremiah turned his gaze away and tilted his head. Shadows flickered across his face as he spoke. "From the moment she entered the interrogation room, she was already laying out everything step by step. She guided Eric's emotional changes all along. In the end, when Eric's mental defenses collapsed, she seized the perfect opportunity to hypnotize him."

As Jeremiah spoke, he chuckled softly, wondering just how many surprises Yvette still had in store.

Zane looked at Andrew and added, "Hypnotism is a technique that uses psychological suggestions to communicate. It bypasses the conscious mind and enters the subconscious, where verbal or non-verbal cues are used to influence the individual. It's a form of psychological suggestion. The practitioner uses language, voice, gestures, and eye contact to plant these suggestions into the subject's subconscious, ultimately changing their thought patterns and behaviors. The depth of hypnosis varies depending on the individual's sensitivity to hypnosis, as well as the practitioner's authority and skill."

Zane paused for a moment, his face full of admiration as he continued, "I've seen this a few times during investigations, but those psychologists usually need a lot of tools and time to get a suspect into a deep state. The speed at which Ms. Zeller hypnotized Eric with just an old pocket watch impressed me."

Zane's words were full of genuine praise. He thought that if Yvette were willing to help the police with such a skill, surely there wouldn't be any case they couldn't crack. However, he knew that would be impossible. He dared not even mention it.

Zane's explanation was quite professional, showing that he had some research and understanding of hypnotism. Andrew understood it after listening to it. Right now, he

only knew that Yvette was incredible, and everything else didn't matter. As Yvette stepped out of the interrogation room and was about to knock on Jeremiah's door, she saw it open. Jeremiah stood in the doorway, taking her hand and rubbing it gently. He said in an intoxicating voice, "Hypnotism, huh?" Yvette paused for a moment, letting Jeremiah hold her hand. "I just know a little bit," she said.

The other three got it. She was just being modest.

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Andrew took a step forward. "Should we go after that guy? Wait, what's his name again? Jason Wilson? No, Jason Davis."

Zane immediately added, "Mr. Chavez, Ms. Zeller, I'll send people to look into Jason right now. If he's still in Seacurity, it shouldn't be hard to find him. Once we locate him, we'll make sure to capture him immediately."

Jeremiah nodded, lowering his head and casting a side glance at Yvette, "Are you hungry?"

Yvette said with a faint smile on her face, "Okay, let's have steak."

Seeing her expression, Jeremiah smiled and immediately agreed, "Sure. Should we go to the place near the school again? I'll also order some milkshakes. Would you like extra sugar and cream?"

Andrew's mouth twitched, his tone dripping with sarcasm. "Don't you feel sorry for us, Jeremiah?"

Wyatt and Zane, knowing their place, didn't dare to make fun of Jeremiah. They silently stayed to the side, not saying a word.

Jeremiah shot a glance at Andrew, his expression indifferent as he held Yvette's hand, walking toward the door. "Not really."

Andrew choked back his words, thinking, 'Fine. I knew Jeremiah wouldn't feel sorry for us.'

Yvette paused, turned around, and looked at the three behind her with raising eyebrows. "Do you want to come with us?"

Zane and Wyatt answered in perfect unison, "No need.". Having Jeremiah around, they didn't think they would be at ease when they ate.

Jeremiah was speechless.

Andrew jogged up, dramatically pointing at Jeremiah. "I know you're the best, Yvette. Look at Jeremiah, he doesn't even want to bring me along for steak. Anyway, I won't have more than you can afford."

Yvette glanced at Andrew and said in a casual tone, "I was asking them, not you."

Andrew felt extremely upset when he heard that.

Zane walked over and gave him a reassuring pat on the shoulder. "Mr. Chavez just thinks you're disturbing them, Andrew."

As soon as Yvette, Jeremiah, and Andrew entered the steakhouse, they caused quite a stir. Most of the eyes in the room immediately turned toward Yvette.

The place was mostly filled with Argrol University students, and almost every one of them knew Yvette.

In just a month since she transferred to Argrol University, she had been involved in a lot of crazy incidents for even the most unaware people to recognize her. After she took a leave from school about two weeks ago, there were already people on the forum counting the days until she came back. And there were tons of comments below the post.

Now, seeing her suddenly show up in the steakhouse, some people seized the opportunity to snap a few photos of her and quickly posted them on the forum, where they were immediately pinned to the top.

The students snapping photos of Yvette had no idea how much buzz she would create. Just ten minutes after posting, there were already hundreds of comments piling up, with fans of her beauty and career equally enthusiastic.

[Is my goddess back? Finally! I miss her so much!]

[She still has that stunning beauty! I love that indifferent look! But seriously, those sneaky shots are terrible.]

[Hey, the shots are still pretty good!]

[Let's be clear, this isn't just good; she's absolutely attractive!]

[You're quite good at flattering.]

[This legendary is finally back! Do you guys think she was off at some international art exhibit or something? She's been gone so long. She must have something amazing to show us!]

[Now you've got everyone excited!]

Bonnie had just stepped out of the library, feeling pretty down. Her scholarship had been unexpectedly canceled by Patrick and given to another male student in the physics department. It didn't make sense to her because her grades were better.

When she confronted Patrick, all he said was it was a "comprehensive evaluation" and told her not to make a fuss.

Today, while accompanying some students to Seacurity Hospital, Bonnie spotted Zachary being carried off an ambulance. She quickly called Yvette to let her know the news.

Bonnie thought for a moment before pulling out her phone to check in on Yvette. Just as she did, she received a message from her. [I'm at the steakhouse near the school.]

Bonnie cheered up. Grabbing the book she had borrowed from the library, she headed straight to the steakhouse.

In the private room, Jeremiah had ordered his usual dish while Yvette had three different flavors of milkshake in front of her. There were strawberries, cantaloupe, and mango.

Andrew felt a little nauseous just looking at it.

Yvette lounged in her chair, sipping the cantaloupe milkshake while playing with her phone, waiting for the food to arrive. There was a playful defiance in her delicate features as she said, "Bonnie will be joining us."

Jeremiah didn't say anything, but Andrew clearly became excited.

Jeremiah glanced at Andrew and joked, "You seem very happy."

Andrew and joked, "You seem ve

Andrew blinked, nodding vigorously. "I'm bored here, okay? Having her will make me feel much better."

Jeremiah paused, then with a blank face, cut the steak for Yvette. Just as Yvette was about to put her phone away, she received a message from Simon. [Someone posted photos of you being at the steakhouse on the forum. When are you coming back to class?]

She stared at the screen for a few seconds before replying, [The day after tomorrow.]

Simon responded immediately, [Okay, come to the office when you're back.]

Yvette texted, [Okay.]

In the principal's office, Simon logged out of Argrol University's forum before sending a text back to someone in Betrico.

During the past half month that Yvette was away, James had been sending him messages almost every day, checking on Yvette's whereabouts. Now that she was back, he could finally reassure him.

As soon as Bonnie pushed the door open and spotted Yvette sitting in the steakhouse, she rushed past Andrew without a word. "You're back, Yvette! I missed you so much!"

Jeremiah casually glanced at Bonnie who was tugging at Yvette's shirt, but didn't say anything.

Yvette rubbed Bonnie's head, squinted with a smile, and said slowly, "Take a seat. I ordered your favorite dish."

Bonnie happily sat next to Yvette, pulling her chair a bit closer to her. Then she turned to Jeremiah, completely carefree. "Hi, Jeremiah."

Andrew, feeling a bit left out as Bonnie ignored him and focused only on Yvette, cleared his throat to grab her attention. "Didn't you see such a charming guy like me here, Bonnie?"

Only then did Bonnie turn her head, giving him a quick look of disdain. "I see you, but I don't think you are as charming as you said."

Their banter instantly fell into a familia

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After finishing their steak, Yvette and Jeremiah left, and Andrew walked Bonnie back to school. The two of them bickered and teased each other all the way.

Maple Villas was the closest neighborhood to Argrol University, where most people couldn't afford the luxury houses. As Jeremiah's Jeep approached the gate, the security guard recognized it and opened the gate without checking who they were.

He had only seen Jeremiah once before, but he remembered that he was tall and handsome. Most unforgettable, though, was how he bought five villas in one go without hesitation.

There were plenty of handsome guys and rich ones in the world, but men with both two traits were rare. That was why the security guard recognized him.

Yvette was lazily curled up in the passenger seat, her pale resting on her delicate hand. Jeremiah had taken off his jacket, and his collarbone and Adam's apple gave him an irresistibly s****y vibe. With one hand on the steering wheel, he radiated a certain air of elegance in the dim light.

Yvette glanced at his lips, having a weird feeling as she quickly looked away, feeling a bit awkward. She thought, 'Seriously, how could a guy look so tempting?'

Jeremiah noticed her shyness and smirked.

They entered the villa complex and finally stopped in front of one of the villas. Yvette didn't rush to get out. Instead, she casually rested her arm on the door while tilting her head slightly to look at Jeremiah. "When did you buy those houses?"

Jeremiah parked the car, turned off the engine and replied in a deep voice, "Right after I got back from Mysonna."

Yvette's sharp eyes fixed on him, a slight smirk forming at the corner of her lips. After a pause, she asked, "Are you thinking about living with me?"

Jeremiah's fingers tightened on the steering wheel, a faint blush creeping up his face. She always had a way of catching him off guard. He forced himself to act nonchalant as he answered, "Yeah, I've been thinking about it."

Yvette gently laid her fingers on Jeremiah's chest, and through his shirt, she could feel how fast his heart was beating.

Jeremiah's body tensed for a second. He thought, 'Didn't she know she can't just touch a guy's body like that? It would turn me on.' He mentally chastised himself for being so helpless in front of her.

Yvette pulled her hand back, her expression indifferent. After a few seconds, she lazily sank back into her seat and said, "Let's get out of the car." Then, without waiting for a response, she unbuckled her seatbelt and got out.

Jeremiah sat in the driver's seat, confused. He thought, 'Was that a yes or a no?'

Seeing her out of the car, Jeremiah quickly unbuckled his seatbelt and followed her.

The villa had a modern-industrial design. It looked simple and clean. The entrance was equipped with facial recognition, and the entire house featured the latest smart home system customized from Mysonna

As soon as Yvette approached the front door, it opened automatically.

Yvette stood at the door, one hand casually in her pocket, not in a rush to go in. Jeremiah quickly caught up. From inside the house, a robotic voice suddenly chimed, "Welcome home, my dear master. I'm your favorite assistant, Jerry! What would you like me to do for you?"

A faint smirk appeared on Yvette's face. She tilted her head slightly and raised her eyebrows, saying lazily, "That's crazy, Jeremiah."

Jeremiah's mouth twitched. He knew Andrew wasn't reliable, but he didn't expect him to be so ridiculous. "I feel the need to explain. Andrew designed this robot. It has nothing to do with me."

Yvette glanced up indifferently. "Oh, okay." She turned and walked inside, leaving him standing at the door.

Jeremiah rubbed his thumb, staring at her back while thinking about a hundred ways to get back at Andrew.

Jeremiah stood outside for about two minutes before finally going in. By the time he walked in, Yvette was already sitting on the couch, sipping a glass of juice. As soon as he sat down, that familiar robotic voice rang out again.

"Hello! What would you like to drink?"

"Cleaning mode on. Jerry is at your service."

"Lighting mode on. Jerry will adjust the lights for you."

Yvette lowered her gaze, a faint smile playing on her lips.

Jeremiah, with a stern face, pulled out his phone and quickly found the app to shut off the system. Finally, the villa fell silent.

Trying to shake off his awkwardness, Jeremiah said, "Do you want to check out upstairs?"

Yvette nodded, and the two of them headed up to the second floor together.

The second floor had the master bedroom in the center, flanked by a custom art studio on one side and a fully soundproofed music room on the other. In the middle of the music room sat a sleek black grand piano, which Jeremiah had specially imported from the West Auction House. It was one of a kind in the world.

After showing Yvette around, they returned to the couch in the living room.

Jeremiah went to the fridge and brought out some desserts he had prepared, placing them on the table. "Are you staying over tonight?" he asked casually.

Yvette, who curled up on the couch, barely looked up from her mobile game as she responded, "Sure."

Jeremiah's eyes darkened as he watched her fingers move across the screen and her slender waist. Desire simmered in his gaze.

He almost said the next line—"My room is just next door. Call if you need anything."

Fortunately, he held back. For once, he was glad that he wasn't the type to act on impulse.

After Yvette finished her dessert, they headed up to the second floor. At the door to the master bedroom, Yvette turned, her chin slightly raised and lips curving into a playful smile. She said in a low voice, "Goodnight." Then she stepped into the bedroom and closed the door behind her.

Once again, Jeremiah found himself left at the doorway. He lowered his head with a faint smile. He stood there for a moment before heading back to his own bedroom next door. He knew Yvette wouldn't let him into her room that easily.

What she didn't know, though, was that the two bedrooms were secretly connected by a hidden door. However, without her permission, he wouldn't open it.

At the Carter residence, Winona abruptly opened her eyes in the middle of the night. She glanced sideways at Victor, who was fast asleep beside her, and carefully lifted the blanket, sliding her feet into slippers before quietly opening the door.

As soon as Winona left the room, Victor's eyes snapped open. He squinted his eyes with fierceness, feeling angry. A few minutes later, he closed his eyes again, though his fists clenched so tightly at his sides that the veins bulged.

Winona made her way to the corner of the second floor, where someone suddenly pulled her into a dark corner. She showed no surprise or fear because she knew it was Robert.

They had been meeting each other like this for a long time. Recently, however, her pregnancy symptoms had started to show, so they hadn't been able to indulge as freely in their secret meetings.

Robert found himself deeply in love with Winona, to the point where he considered making their relationship public. He didn't care if people would scorn them. Anyway, Winona had been pregnant with his child and they had confirmed it was a boy.

Moreover, Victor was not favored by Claude, so if he could have another son, he would be valued more by Claude.

Robert held Winona close, gently stroking her belly with a voice dripping with sweetness. "Has the baby been troubling you?"

Winona, preoccupied with her thoughts and eager to make a phone call, brushed him off with a casual response. "No, he's been good. Why aren't you with Yulia? Didn't she come back today?"

Yulia had recently been staying at her mother's house, helping her brother prepare for his wedding, which had given Robert and Winona more opportunities to meet in secret while Victor was constantly away.

Robert snorted and said, "Don't mention her. She makes me sick. Come here, babe. I want to kiss you."

Winona suppressed her disgust, though her face remained as radiant as ever, her voice soft and delicate as always. "Stop it, Victor isn't fully asleep yet. What if he finds out?"

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Robert hesitated when he heard Winona's words. He reluctantly withdrew his hand, muttering, "So what if he finds out? Im his father. What's he gonna do about it?"

Winona, while internally dismissive of him, gazed at Robert with an adoring expression. "I know you're not afraid, but you still have to think about me and the baby, don't you?"

Robert was easily swayed by Winona's gentle demeanor, and he slid his hands under her clothes again. The two of them kissed in the corner for a while longer until Winona finally told him to leave.

The moment Robert was out of sight, Winona's expression darkened. The Carter family was her last chance, and being Robert's mistress was her only option now. Everyone had forced her down this path. However, in her mind, it wasn't her fault; it was all Yvette's fault. If Yvette hadn't shown up, none of this would have happened.

Zachary must be dead by now, right? The thought brought a wicked smile to Winona's face.

If Zachary was gone, Yvette would lose her strongest support. Then, Winona could use the Carter family's help to crush her and make her life a living hell.

With her hands on her belly, Winona slipped into an empty room. After carefully checking her surroundings to ensure no one was watching, she swiftly shut the door and pulled out a hidden phone, calling someone.

As soon as it went through, a gruff voice came through.

Winona went straight to the point. "How did it go, Mr. Wilson? Is Zachary dead?"

Victor had been with her all day, so she had no idea what had happened outside. However, she knew Jason's plan very well. In fact, without her urging, Jason would never have come up with such a thorough plan.

As long as everything went smoothly, Zachary, the man she had called "father" for over two decades, would be done.

Winona didn't feel sorry at all. She hated Zachary because he destroyed her dreams and stripped away her status and wealth, leaving her with nothing.

After a few seconds of silence, Jason said in a hoarse yet angry tone, "Eric has been arrested and he ratted me out. The police have already put out a warrant for me this afternoon. I'm hiding in an apartment building, scared to come out. Can you get me some cash and give me your mother's address, Ms. Chambers? I plan to smuggle myself into Mysonna to find her. Don't worry, I won't drag you into this."

Winona gripped the phone tightly, her knuckles turning white. She hadn't expected Jason to be exposed so quickly.

Winona was furious as she shouted, "How did this happen, Mr. Wilson? Didn't you say that Eric was reliable and that he would never sell you out? And now, just a few hours later, the police are already looking for you! Did you tell Eric that I was involved in this too?"

Jason quickly reassured her, "No, Ms. Chambers, I didn't tell him anything about you. I just said it was all for the Smith family's revenge. He knows nothing else. Don't worry. I just need some money to get out of Clusia and go find your mother."

Hearing that Jason hadn't exposed her, Winona's attitude softened immediately. Her voice became gentle again. "Mr. Wilson, I'm sorry, I was too agitated. You know, with the baby, I've become very emotional. You know that my mother fled to Mysonna because Zachary and Yvette destroyed the Smith family. They're the ones who've been causing trouble. What's the situation with Zachary now? Is there any chance he can be saved!"

When the car accident happened, Jason had been watching from not far away. Given the circumstances, the chances of Zachary surviving were slim. Therefore, with conviction in his voice, he reassured her, "Don't worry, Ms. Chambers. There's no way he's alive, I saw Eric's truck smash Zachary's car. With the impact, there's no chance the person inside survived. You'll probably hear about his death tomorrow."

A gleam of joy flashed across Winona's face, though she quickly suppressed it. Now her primary concern was to calm Jason down. As for his request for money to find her mother, she didn't intend to say yes. "Where are you now, Mr. Wilson? Send me your location and I'll personally bring you the money tomorrow. 3.3 million dollars should be enough to get you to Mysonna. Once you find my mother, the two of you can live together in peace. No one will bother you again," Winona coaxed softly.

The words Winona spoke filled Jason with an overwhelming sense of joy. He thought, "Is my long-held wish finally coming True? I will soon be able to live forever with Nellic.

Jason thanked Winona repeatedly, told her the address, and made sure she would meet him at the promised time before hanging up the phone.

Standing before the floor-to-ceiling window, Winona stared at the disconnected call with a sneer on her face. She thought, Jason was such a fool. He really thought my mother had been forced into fleeing to Mysonna and that it was all in the name of revenge. Everything had been fine until his bumpkin brother confessed. I told him what to say but still, he got exposed. Now Jason is still hoping to get 3.3 million dollars from me, huh? That's not gonna happen!"

Winona had already noted down the location where Jason was hiding. She thought that people like him, who had outlived their usefulness, should just be discarded like trash.

Winona's pregnancy had been rough lately, and her legs were starting to swell, so she couldn't stand for too long. She was also worried that Victor might wake up and find her gone from the bedroom, so she grabbed her phone and carefully returned to the bedroom. Gently, she lifted the blanket and lay back down.

The doctor had advised her not to lie flat while pregnant, as it could cause the baby to lack oxygen, so she and Victor always slept back to back. That was also why she didn't see the hateful look in Victor's eyes.

Winona hadn't slept well because she had been preoccupied with how to deal with Jason. As a result, her face looked a bit haggard the next morning.

At breakfast, it was only Winona and Yulia in the dining room because Victor and Robert usually wouldn't wake up this early, Yulia couldn't help but frown when she saw Winona's pale face. She never cared for Winona, but she didn't want to see any accidents happen to the upcoming baby.

Although Yulia didn't like Winona, she had no choice but to accept it. And since Winona became pregnant, Yulia had endured a lot, but she kept her frustrations to herself. She just couldn't bring herself to like her. With a grim expression, she said, unhappy, "What did you do yesterday, Winona? You look so exhausted. I'll have the family doctor come over to check on you."

Winona rested a hand on her belly, pausing for a moment. For the first time, she excuse. She responded a bit nervously, The baby was restless last night, so I didn't argue back with her pregnancy as an get much sleep. It's fine, you don't need

to call the doctor. By the way, I've been a bit irritable lately and I might've upset you. I'm sorry."

Yulia looked at Winona with suspicion, finding it hard to believe what she said. After all, Winona had caused her so much trouble since the pregnancy, and even her husband often scolded her for not being attentive enough toward her.

Winona's face was earnest, and Yulia decided to believe her, attributing her ill behavior to the unstable emotions that came with pregnancy. "It's fine. Just don't lose your temper at innocent people next time."

Winona nodded repeatedly, still stroking her belly.

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In disguise, Winona made her way cautiously to a small restaurant near the address Jason had given her yesterday. She covered her nose when she noticed the poor hygiene of the place, but she quickly ordered a few dishes, making sure not to draw any suspicion.

The owner of the restaurant, noticing that Winona was dressed unusually for the hot weather, felt curious, but she didn't ask any questions. It was clear from Winona's clothes that she was someone of wealth, so the owner didn't care to probe further.

Before heading to the restaurant, Winona had already called the police from a payphone, telling them about Jason's hideout. If the timing was right, the police would be there to arrest him in twenty minutes.

Winona didn't want any potential danger to stand in the way of her future. She had to eliminate Jason even though he believed her unconditionally

Ten minutes later, the sound of sirens cut through the air as three police cars sped by.

Winona didn't expect the police to respond so quickly. She thought, 'How did they get here so quickly? Little did she know as soon as her report had reached the police station, they immediately passed the intel directly to Zane, who rushed out of the police station with a group of officers, ensuring they acted fast before Jason could slip away.

Winona watched from her table by the window as the police cars rushed past She quickly paid her bill, left the restaurant, and ducked into a nearby alley. Once she got there, she took out her phone and called Jason.

To avoid leaving any trace, she used an illegitimate card she had bought from overseas.

Jason hid in an unfinished building with all his attention on the phone, trembling with fear all night. Finally, his phone rang. He grabbed it immediately, his hands shaking with excitement when he heard Winona's voice. He was glad that she didn't lie to him or give up on him. "Hello, Ms. Chambers? Where are you? I've been waiting for you."

Winona felt a wave of disgust wash over her the moment she heard Jason's voice. She replied sweetly, "I'm sorry, Mr. Wilson. I may be late. The baby kept troubling me and my mother-in-law insisted on bringing a family doctor over. It has taken more time than I expected. I'm already out of the house, but I need about an hour to get there."

Jason's heart sank, but he understood the difficulties Winona must be going through with the pregnancy. Therefore, he tried to comfort her, "It's okay, Ms. Chambers, no rush. I'll wait for you. An hour is nothing"

However, as soon as Jason finished speaking, he heard the sirens coming from outside the unfinished building. Panic hit him like a wave, his face draining of color. His hand, still holding the phone, began to tremble uncontrollably.

He thought in despair, 'Are the police here? Am I done?' He knew exactly what was coming.

Winona, hearing the sirens blaring on the phone, couldn't help but smirk. She feigned innocence and asked with concern, "What's wrong, Mr. Wilson? Don't worry, I'll be there as soon as I can. You just make sure to hide well, okay?"

Jason was trembling. After a long pause, he let out a heavy sigh of resignation. "You don't need to come, Ms. Chambers. The police are already here. There's no chance for me anymore. Please don't come. I swear I won't drag you into this. If you get to see your mother one day, please tell her that she's the only one I love. Ms. Chambers, I'll protect you and take the blame."

Winona was a bit taken aback. She didn't expect Jason to be so loyal to her mother, but now that it had come to this, she had no choice but to sacrifice him.

Winona feigned surprise and let out a dramatic scream, pretending to choke back tears. "It's all my fault. If only I had come sooner, you wouldn't have been caught, Mr. Wilson, I... I'm so sorry. I'm gonna turn myself in."

Jason was deeply moved by her words. He quickly responded, "None of this is your fault, Ms. Chambers. It's all on me. I have to hang up now and destroy the phone. No one will ever know about our conversation."

Winona had been waiting for Jason to say this. She would never leave any traces behind.

Jason immediately hung up the phone, gritting his teeth as he smashed the phone into pieces. He then pulled out the SIM card and tossed it into a stinking puddle where no one would notice.

After doing this, he collapsed onto the concrete floor of the unfinished building, waiting for the police to arrive.

Winona put away her phone and walked out of the alley, feeling weight lift off her shoulders. She said those words just to get Jason to willingly take the blame for her. Only if he was determined to protect her would he be able to withstand the pressure from the police and shoulder all the blame.

At Jeremiah's villa, Yvette had just finished showering. She walked into the walk-in closet, opening the door to find an entire collection of black-and-white casual outfits, all simple and neat, without any logos. They were all custom-made, exactly her style.

A hint of a smile appeared on her face. She didn't expect Jeremiah to be so thoughtful.

Jeremiah knocked on the door and said in a husky tone that was still slightly groggy from just waking up, "Are you up? Breakfast's ready"

Yvette dressed quickly in a black sports outfit, her expression sharp and cool. I'm ready. She opened the door.

Jeremiah glanced at her, taking her hand and leading her downstairs.

On the dining table downstairs were some sandwiches Jeremiah made. Yvette's sandwich had an extra egg on it, and there was a cup of milk to go with it. Jeremiah had the same, but instead of milk, he had black coffee.

Yvette sat down, took a sip of milk, and a little bit of milk smeared on the corner of her mouth. Jeremiah's eyes darkened as he watched her, but he quickly looked away, pretending not to notice.

Yvette glanced at the black coffee in his hand and protested, "I want that too."

Jeremiah paused for a moment and smiled gently, saying, "Maybe next time. Have the milk this time."

Just then, Andrew pushed open the door and walked in. He regretted coming so quickly. After all, he didn't want to see them act so intimately.

Bonnie, who had been standing behind Andrew, pushed him aside, "Why aren't you moving? You're blocking the way."

Both Jeremiah and Yvette looked up at the door. When they were eating steak yesterday, Yvette had promised to go shopping with Bonnie today. Every time Bonnie was around Yvette, her attention was completely fixed on her: "I missed you so much, Yve."

Jeremiah took a sip of his black coffee with a blank face. He didn't like it when everyone around Yvette flattered her.

Andrew stood with his hands in his pockets, casually leaning against the doorframe. His hair was styled in a deliberately rebellious way, exuding a bit of the tough-guy vibe. "You're being a little too much, Bonnie. We were eating steak together last night, and now you're acting like you haven't seen Yvette for a long time. Come on, are you daring or what?"

Jeremiah, who had been sipping his coffee with his head lowered, found himself surprisingly agreeing with Andrew's words. Bonnie, sitting next to Yvette, made a face at Andrew, sticking out her tongue in defiance. "Mind your own business." Andrew smirked, pointing at Jeremiah. "Why don't you ask Jeremiah if he minds it?"

Bonnie glanced at Jeremiah, who was coolly sipping his coffee, and suddenly felt timid. She quickly shrank back and felt a chill run down her spine, thinking. Just wait, Andrew

Jeremiah glanced at Bonnie with a blank face. Feeling somehow frightened, Bonnie shuffled her chair a little away from

Yvette. She knew that he wasn't happy about her being so close to his woman.

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After breakfast, Yvette decides to go shopping with Bonnie.

Just as they're about to leave, Jeremiah's phone rings.

He answers it and gives Yvette a "wait a sec" look. It's Zane. A brief conversation later, Jeremiah hangs up and turns to Yvette. "Zane called. Jason's been caught. He asked if you want to head over and see for yourself?"

Yvette, dressed head-to-toe in black with a baseball cap pulled low, casually raises her eyebrows and lifts her head slightly. "No, handle it as it will."

Jeremiah nods. "All right, let's go. I'll drop you both at the mall. I've got some things to take care of anyway." He turns to Bonnie. "Which mall are we hitting?" Bonnie shrugs, "No specific one in mind, just want to wander around. Andrew, seeing everyone about to leave, quickly shouts, "Wait up!" and tags along.

They head to Skyline Plaza, the largest shopping mall in downtown Seacriety. The place is loaded with high-end cosmetics, clothes, and luxury items. Everything here screams rich and exclusive. Even the fruit is flown in from abroad, with crazy price tags that once made the news Have you ever seen a \$100 apple? Or a bunch of grapes going for thousands? That is just normal at Skyline Plaza. Jeremiah parks at the entrance, and a valet rushes up to greet them. He is a bit taken aback by the group- the men are dashing, and the women stunning. You don't see a combo like that every day,

The valet bows slightly, waiting by the car.

Inside the car, Bonnie gently tugs on Yvette's sleeve.

As soon as she got in the car, Yvette found the most comfortable position and sealed into the seat. She wasn't asleep; she just closed her eyes to rest, using the blanket that Jeremiah had specially prepared for her.

Yvette, we're here." Bonnie stares at the massive 3D billboard outside Skyline Plaza, speechless.

This is definitely the kind of place where a big shot splashes cash. I bet I am just going to end up buying two overpriced apples, Bonnie thought.

Yvette stretches, glancing out the window. Her bright eyes, hidden under long lashes, don't look the least bit tired. She asked, "Already?"

Jeremiah kills the engine, hands Yvette the blanket he had prepared, and then pulls out a sleek black card. "We're here. Go enjoy yourselves. Use the card- there's no limit. I'll pick you and Andrew up for dinner later. How about some barbecue?"

Yvette raised her perfectly shaped eyebrows slightly. "Okay, got i

She slipped Jeremiah's black card into her pocket, though spending wasn't exactly on her mind.

Jeremiah had long gotten used to her personality. When it comes to food, there is no arguing with her- once she mentions it, there's no stopping her.

Bonnie, meanwhile, stared wide-eyed at the black card in Yvette's hand. Growing up in the hood, she had never seen one up close. 'So that's what a black card looks like? she thought, blinking in disbelief. Dopan't even look that different from my \$20 debit card?'

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She swallowed hard and then asked, half-jokingly, "Wait a minute... is there really no limit on this card? Like, for real? This is the kind of thing those rich, over-the-top CEOs

in romance novels give their girlfriends to swipe endlessly, right? Damn, never thought I'd see one in real life!"

Andrew couldn't help but chuckle at Bonnie's amazement. "What's the big deal?" he thought. Even if Jeremiah did absolutely nothing for the rest of his life, he'd still be set. That black card? It was no big deal.

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He pulled out his own black card and waved it in front of her. "Look at you, all excited. Here, take mine. Swipe it wherever you want no limit. Bonnie blinked at Andrew and then at the card in her hand.

The black card isn't just for billionaire CEOs; even this guy has one.

But the thought of holding it made her nervous. She quickly shoved it back into Andrew's hands. "No, no, no! I am just here to browse. I don't want to buy anything. Please take it back if lose this, I wouldn't be able to pay it off even if I sold myself!"

Andrew chuckled. This girl just doesn't know what's good for her, he offered it to her, and she still rejected it.

He'd given out add-on cards to plenty of girlfriends in the past, and they were all over the moon. But Bonnie? She rejected it like it was nothing. What a fool

Yvette adjusted her cap and stepped out of the car with Bonnie. The greeters at the mall entrance bowed respectfully as they led the two inside.

Bonnie leaned in and whispered, "Yvette, this place is fancy! Even the greeters are so polite."

Yvette slipped her hands into her pockets, her expression relaxed and aloof, her voice cold and calm. "Where do you want to go?" Looking around at all the designer labels some Bonnie recognized, some she didn't she figured they were all crazy expensive.

Determined to stick to window shopping, she decided it would not hurt to just look. I want to check out the women's clothing section," she said. Yvette's face stayed indifferent. It didn't really matter to her where they went. She nodded slightly and said. "Alright, second floor."

Bonnie obediently followed Yvette up the elevator to the women's department on the second floor. Just then, Yvette received a text from a contact named Flying Fish. She asked Bonnie to go ahead while she quickly headed to the restroom.

Bonnie wandered off and browsed for a bit. But every time she found something she liked; she didn't even bother trying it on once she saw the price tag.

"If I worked from the Tudor Dynasty until now, maybe I could afford this," she thought with a sigh.

Noticing Yvette still hadn't returned, Bonnie continued to casually stroll around. Eventually, she came across a gorgeous princess-style tutu dress in the window of a women's clothing store. She was so taken by it, that she couldn't resist going inside.

Meanwhile, on the same floor, Winona and Yulia entered the very same store, just a few steps behind Bonnie.

Winona had just wrapped up some business, watching as the matter with Jason was resolved and he was taken away by the police. With that weight off her shoulders, she decided to treat herself to a shopping trip and dragged along the tired and overworked Yulia. Winona hoped it might improve their relationship, since Yulia was, after all, her mother-in-law keeping things too tense wasn't ideal.

Besides, with someone else footing the bill, she wasn't worried about spending.

Yulia, though, wasn't thrilled. Her complexion was pale, and she was clearly unhappy about shopping right now. Yulia had been overwhelmed with wedding preparations at her family's house and was exhausted. But seeing Winona's belly softened her frustration. This was her grandchild, after all. Yulia decided she'd bite her tongue and save any confrontation until after the baby was born.

Winona, in high spirits, didn't notice Yulia's displeasure. She'd already hit up several stores and liked the vibe of this one.

Back in the store, Bonnie had picked out the tutu dress and carefully went to the fitting room to try it on, making sure not to smudge or dirty it in any way. She stepped out, admiring herself in the mirror, and that's when she locked eyes with Winona.

Winona was accompanied by three salespeople, each loaded down with clothes she had picked out. Bonnie, stunned, recognized her immediately.

Bonnie hadn't heard all the gossip about Winona since Winona left school about Winona being pregnant and marrying Victor. From the looks of it, the rumors were true.

Yulia, relaxing on the VIP sofa with a cup of black tea, glanced up and noticed Bonnie as well. She vaguely remembered her from a past meeting with Yvette. Bonnie seemed

like a sweet girl, and Yulia had always liked her. Winona, however, gave Bonnie a cold look, eyeing her in the princess dress with mild disdain.

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Bonnie knew all too well how Winona style and wanted to avoid any confrontation. She turned around, planning to change. back into her clothes and quietly leave.

But Winona, almost as if she could read Bonnie's mind, smirks. Though her belly isn't showing much yet, she still stands there, holding her waist like she's proud of something. Just as Bonnie is about to walk away, Winona calls out in a haughty voice. "Well, well, it isn't Bonnie! What a coincidence. I did not expect to see you here. That dress looks great on you, but honestly, this store's prices are a bit out of reach for poor students like you, don't you think? Did you even ask about the price before trying it on?"

Winona let out a fake laugh, covering her mouth with her hand. Or are you one of those people who just try things on without any intention of buying?" Winona's eyes gleamed with mockery, glaring at Bonnie. In her mind, Bonnie and Yvette were cut from the same cloth and since she hadn't had the chance to deal with Bonnie since leaving school, this seemed like the perfect opportunity to humiliate her and settle some old scores.

Ever since the library incident, Bonnie had been a thorn in her side because Bonnie had seen Winona's embarrassed looks in the library.

Bonnie's hands trembled, her chest heaving. She hadn't expected Winona to be so harsh.

Taking a deep breath, she stepped forward and said firmly, "Winona, whether I try on clothes or buy them is my business. What does that have to do with you?"

Winona wasn't fazed in the slightest. She deliberately stroked her barely-there baby bump and gave Bonnie a condescending smile. "Oh Bonnie, I didn't mean anything by it. Look how upset you're getting! I just wasn't clear enough. If you can't afford it, I can buy it for you. It's really no trouble for me – just a small gesture. You don't need to struggle over it I'm being kind, but you've misunderstood me."

By now, the esteemed guests in the store had started to notice the situation. Some of them recognized Yulia and Winona and were quietly whispering among themselves.

Yulia stood up and grabbed Winona's hand, trying to keep things from escalating. After all, they were in public, and it was important to maintain appearances. Yulia had a good idea of why Winona was picking on Bonnie- and it wasn't hard to figure out. What else could it be but petty jealousy?" Winona, that's enough. It's just trying on clothes: it's not a big deal. Let it go."

Then, turning to Bonnie, Yulia added gently, “Miss, how about this: I’ll buy the dress for you as a gift.

Winona sneered, clearly unimpressed. What was Yulia trying to do, pretending to be the good guy? But really, how different was she from Winona? Both of them loved using money to belittle others, especially Bonnie. Winona smirked, rubbing her belly as she joined in with Yulia, “That’s right, Bonnie. Yulia’s right. We’ll buy this dress for you. Consider it a gift from the Carter family.”

Bonnie instantly recognized Yulia. No wonder they were family. They truly were cut from the same cloth—humiliating people with their money seemed to be a family trait.

Clenching her fists, Bonnie stood tall, her voice steady. “No thanks. I can buy what I like on my own. Just because I can’t afford it right now doesn’t mean I won’t be able to in the future. You can keep your condescending pity. Winona’s smile grew wider, enjoying Bonnie’s frustration.

She turned to the salesgirl, her voice dripping with superiority. “Did you hear that? This girl can’t afford the dress. Hurry up and make her take it off before she dirties it. How will other customers wear it after that? What kind of riff-raff do let

you into your store, anyway? Next time, be more careful. Some girls have no penny in their pockets. Letting people like that in ‘will ruin your store’s reputation. If I see this again, I won’t be coming back.”

One of the salesgirls, the one with the pointed face, immediately jumped in, eager to please. “Yes, ma’am, we’ll tighten up our management. We won’t let people like that again. Rest assured, Mrs. Carter.

Winona nodded in satisfaction as the salesgirl flattered her. The girl’s eagerness to please only made Winona feel more powerful.

“I’ll take everything I’ve picked out, Winona said condescendingly, and you can add it to your performance for today.”

The pointy-faced salesgirl never expected that a few flattering words would earn her such a big commission. Rich ladies and madams were easy to fool, always craving sweet talk and adoration. Now convinced she had latched onto the right people, the salesgirl redoubled her efforts, throwing compliments around like they cost nothing. She glanced at Bonnie as if she were staring at an enemy.

Winona, seeing Bonnie’s eyes redden with anger, felt even more smug.

Yulia, standing to the side, stayed quiet. In her mind, she had already given Bonnie a way out, but Bonnie had refused it. To her, Winona was right—people like them were born privileged, already ahead of everyone else.

Fuming. Bonnie turned on her heel, ignoring Winona's snide remarks and the salesgirls' condescending glares. She returned to the fitting room, carefully took off the dress, and hung it back up. Bonnie handed it to a shorter salesgirl, who still treated her with some respect, and said politely, "Thank you."

The salesgirl had been quite pleasant when she was serving Bonnie just a moment ago.

Bonnie walked out of the fitting room head held high, chest out, determined not to let them see her falter. As she passed Winona, she stopped for a moment, speaking loud enough for everyone to hear. "I rely on myself. What I can or can't buy is my own business. Don't be so shameless and act like you have the right to judge me. You're just using the Carter family's name to throw your weight around. Without them, you'd be nothing but a sad little nobody."

Winona was momentarily stunned, her face registering anger. She had always thought Bonnie was just a pushover, easy to trample on. Who would have thought she'd talk back like this? Where did this sudden courage come from? Seething. Winona reached out and yanked Bonnie by the arm. Under everyone's shocked gaze, she raised her hand and slapped Bonnie hard across the face,

Bonnie didn't even have time to react. She never imagined that Winona would slap her, especially in public.

Bonnie's cheek burned as it turned red and swollen almost instantly. Bonnie lifted her head, trembling. She clenched her fists but didn't strike back. Winona was pregnant. If she retaliated, the baby might get hurt, and no matter what, the child was innocent.

Even Yulia was taken aback. She quickly stepped between them, shielding Winona's belly with her body, eyes fixed warily on Bonnie.

But Winona wasn't done. Seeing Yulia's concern only made her bolder. She glared at Bonnie, shaking out her stinging hand. "Wow, your skin is really thick. My hand hurts from slapping you." Yulia turned and hissed at her, "Winona, shut up!" But Winona didn't care. The days when Yulia could boss her around were long gone. Robert wasn't as devoted to her as before, and Winona felt no need to obey.

She knew Yulia's Achilles' heel was the baby she was carrying, so she suddenly clutched her belly and pretended to be in pain. "Mom... Mom, my stomach hurts," she groaned, feigning discomfort.

Yulia's face turned pale. "What's happening? Did you overdo it just now and hurt the baby? Hurry, let's get you to the hospital! If anything happens to my precious grandson, I won't let you off." Winona shot a triumphant look at Bonnie as if saying, "See what happens when you mess with me?"

The onlookers exchanged glances, their expressions full of pity for Bonnie. This was the cruel reality of society—the strong prey on the weak, And what could a girl like Bonnie, without money or power, do when faced with such bullying? Nothing but endure.

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Bonnie's eyes were red and teary, and she looked as deflated as a wilted eggplant.

Yvette was busy returning a call from Flying Fish while washing his hands in the bathroom. Two heavily made-up women walked in from outside.

They caught sight of Yvette, who was wearing a duck-billed hat, and didn't bother to hide their disdain as they started chatting about what they had just witnessed. "Do you think that girl would ever light back if she got hit? Winona really knows how to throw her weight around. Without the Chambers family and the Smith family backing her, she's now clinging to the Carter family. I heard she's pregnant with Victor's kid. After she gives birth, she'll be sitting pretty as the lady of the Carter family. I really envy her," one of them said.

The shorter girl pulled out a red lipstick and nodded in agreement. "That girl looks like she has no connections at all. I took a closer look, and all her clothes were cheap, Winona is just picking on an easy target, isn't she? She's only bold because she's got her family to back her up. Victor is notorious for his playboy ways. My little sister was just at each other's throats with him a while back."

"True, your girl seems to have some skills. I can introduce you two if you want," the woman said, putting her lipstick away and eyeing Yvette, who was focused on washing her hands. Yvette's presence was hard to ignore; her aura was just too strong. even if the women couldn't see her face.

One of them nodded generously and replied, "Sure, I'll introduce you when I get the chance. But we should hurry; Mr. Lester is still waiting for us, and we don't want to keep him waiting too long

After they left, Yvette's expression turned colder, She lowered her head and dried her hands.

In the women's clothing store, Winona sat on the sofa, rubbing her stomach nervously, while Yulia asked her if she was feeling okay. A pointy-faced salesgirl hovered nearby, offering tea and water.

Meanwhile, Bonnie stood alone in the distance, stubbornly wiping away her tears. She told herself she had to be stronger and never let anyone insult her like this again. Just as Bonnie decided to leave, Winona wasn't about to let her get away that easily.

She called out, "Mom, don't let Bonnie walk out like this! If anything happens to my baby, I'll make her pay!" Even Yulia thought Winona was going too far. She tensed up but tried to be diplomatic. "Winona, let's cool it for a second."

The pointy-faced salesgirl, eager to please, jumped in. "Mrs. Carter is right! If anything happens to your baby, she'll be responsible. The baby in Mrs. Carter's belly can't be at risk!"

Winona nodded in satisfaction, while the other two saleswomen exchanged glances, signaling the pointy-faced girl to stay out of it. But she didn't care; she thought she had found a way to secure her own future by sticking with Winona

People around were whispering and pointing fingers. Some thought Winona was just being a bully, while others felt Bonnie had no right to try on clothes without money and deserved what she Bonnie watched Winona's hands shake. How could she be so shameless, twisting the truth like this?

The pointy-faced salesgirl approached Bonnie with an arrogant attitude. "Miss, look at the clothes you tried on. They're dirty. You need to pay for them, or else this won't end well. Or you can just kneel and apologize to Mrs. Carter, and you won't have to pay for the dress."

Winona sat on the sofa, eagerly waiting for the show to unfold. The pointy-faced salesgirl was clearly following her lead.

Bonnie looked up, ready to argue "I was careful with your clothes from start to finish! They didn't get dirty because of me!"

Bonnie still underestimated how malicious people could be. The pointy-faced salesgirl snatched the dress from another salesgirl's hand and brushed her own light-colored nail polish against it. The color was so faint you wouldn't notice unless you looked closely. "See Who else could have dirtied it if not you? Don't think just because it's light we can't see it," she sneered.

Winona stroked her stomach, clearly enjoying the drama. "Oh, look at you. Bonnie. Still in denial. I offered to buy you that dress, but now you'll have to pay for it yourself. How much does it cost anyway?" The pointy-faced salesgirl smiled and replied. "It's not expensive for Mrs. Carter-only 150 thousand dollars. But for you? It might be a stretch."

Winona pretended to be kind. "Listen, Bonnie, I'm not trying to be a villain here. If you kneel down and apologize, saying what you said was cheap, I'll cover the cost of the dress for you. Otherwise, you might find yourself in a bit of trouble over this.

Bonnie's face turned red. Just as she opened her mouth to respond, a familiar voice cut through the tension. "Who do you want to kneel to?" Winona, caught off guard, responded without thinking. "Of course, it's Bonnie."

Then she realized who had spoken and turned stillly to the door Yulia recognized the voice too, and they both looked toward the entrance.

The lively crowd in the shop turned to see what was happening is Yvette, dressed in black pants and a duck-billed cap, stepped inside.

As she lifted the cap, her face was revealed, drawing gasps from the onlookers.

Yvette casually strolled in, hands in her pockets, exuding confidence.

Bonnie stood frozen, her eyes wide with excitement as she took in Yvette's presence, feeling a sense of security washed over her.

Yvette walked right up to Bonnie, and the crowd held its breath, curious and amazed by what would happen next. "Alright, dry those tears. Have I ever taught you to back down? People respect you when you stand your ground, and if they cross you. you don't just let it slide," Yvette said firmly.

Bonnie wiped her tears with her sleeve and looked up, like a child who had been wronged but finally found support. "Winona's pregnant; otherwise, I'd definitely go over and scratch her face."

Yvette noticed the palm print on Bonnie's cheek, and her expression turned serious.

She turned around, casually sitting back on the sofa with her legs crossed. She glanced at Winona, who looked nervous, Yulia, whose expression was a mix of emotions, and the pointy-faced salesgirl standing next to Winona.

Yvette's eyes were like a cold pond, making Winona and the others stiffen up in fear. With a slight smirk at the corner of her mouth, she asked in a voice that sent chills down their spines, "Who gave you the nerve to lay a hand on me?" Winona's heart raced as she recalled Yvette's past actions. She remembered when Yvette first joined the Chambers family and had the guts to stab her mother. That moment was etched in her mind, a reminder of her deepest fears. Yvette was a force to be reckoned with, and that banquet had become a nightmare for Winona, one that made her lose everything. She felt empowered to bully Bonnie only because she thought Yvette wasn't around. Little did she know that Yvette would show-up to shop with her.

Yulia opened her mouth to say something but thought better of it. This was Winona's mess to deal with, and she couldn't just pretend it wasn't happening with so many eyes on them. The pointy-faced salesgirl, noticing the tense silence between Winona and Yulia, realized Yvette was not someone to mess with. She felt even smaller in comparison and didn't dare to be c*** as before.