

Master 421

Chapter 421

The young girl, fearing disbelief, quickly widened her eyes and said, "It's true. The whole company is buzzing about it. They say

that it was Sue who reported it under her own name, claiming Mr. William is tied to her daughter's death."

Brielle was rooted to the spot, stunned. It took her a full minute to regain her composure before she chuckled and shook her

head. She refused to believe that William could have anything to do with Sue. After all, William wasn't Ryan; he wouldn't leave

such a scandalous trail.

Brielle set down her cup, trying to fathom Sue's motives. If Sue was just spreading rumors, and the police cleared William's

name, he certainly wouldn't let Sue off the hook with his temperament. He might even silence her permanently. And at the very

least, Sue would face arrest and charges for defamation. Why would she take such a reckless step?

"Ms. Haywood, you must find it hard to believe, too. We were all discussing it. We thought Mr. Dorsey was such a gentleman, but

who knew he could be such a person in private? Poor Sue has already suffered so much, only to face this too."

The young girl's words were a real eye-opener for Brielle. During Brielle's last trip to the hospital, she had made an anonymous

livestream featuring Sue and her husband. In the video, Sue was entirely presented as a victim – a meek, pitiable figure, devoid

of any defiance. She bore the brunt of humiliation and physical abuse without uttering a word in retaliation. It was a glaring

testament to her chronically timid nature.

If such a woman was daring to bite at the high ranks of Dorsey International, then her words must've held a measure of truth.

And the public always prided itself on moral high ground, with a penchant for filling in the blanks. They would naturally rationalize

Sue's actions. A weakling who dares to fight back is to be encouraged and praised. The public would not hesitate to side

with Sue.

Brielle smiled, a gleam of amusement in her eyes. She had always said, those who underestimate the power of public opinion

will eventually be defeated by it. In using Sue's family, William could never have anticipated her daring to strike back.

After a brief pause, Brielle sorted out Sue's strategy. Sue didn't expect William to truly be punished, nor did she hold any hope for

the police investigation. Since William held such a high position, he undoubtedly had myriad ways to clear his name. Sue wanted

to ruin William's reputation, to make the public associate the name William with the word 'rapist.' This would not only hinder

William's career but also send his public image plummeting.

People tended to focus on the beginning of a story, rarely caring for the outcome. Many high-profile cases stirred up a storm

online, only to be resolved much later when public interest had waned, and few were watching. So, in most people's minds, it

was the start of the story that stuck, not the conclusion.

Once William's case hit the internet, the public would condemn him swiftly. As for the ultimate

verdict, only a few would see it. For the majority, William would remain a rapist.

Sue must have been desperate to take such a gamble, but it was a grip on William's Achilles' heel.

Brielle found herself reassessing the woman once again.

During lunch break, she headed to the company cafeteria and found William's scandal had spread like wildfire. In the age of the

internet, secrets were hard to keep. She ate her meal slowly, overhearing a group of girls at a nearby table.

"I can't believe Mr. William could be like that. I thought he was really easy-going."

"People can be so deceptive. Our supervisor has already ordered us not to leak anything to the media."

"Even if they silence us, they can't silence Sue. She's still at the police station. No one's stopping her from speaking out."

Brielle was engrossed in the conversation when they abruptly changed the subject.

“Forget about Mr. William, he’s old news. Aren’t you more curious about our CEO? I just found out he’s got a bite mark on his

collarbone.”

The girl’s eyes sparkled as she spoke, “Guess who left it?”

The others leaned in, intrigued. In Dorsey International, no one was more magnetic than Max.

“It has to be Ms. Alivia. I’ve already imagined her and the CEO in a loving embrace. She’s so lucky to have such a top-notch

husband.”

“The CEO is known for his meticulousness and unapproachability, yet he indulges her, leaving a mark there. It’s clear he’s

absolutely smitten with her.”

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Brielle’s smile faltered slightly. Even though she knew it wasn’t the truth, being so misunderstood left a subtle unease in her heart. The bite mark was her own doing, and it was deep.

The girls were still chattering about Max and Alivia, but Brielle had already stood up and left.

Back in her office, she sat in her chair, zoning out, when her phone buzzed with a text from Spencer. [You spent another night at

the Premier Palace. Can’t stay away from men for even a second, can you?]

Creep!

Brielle promptly blocked the number, certain now that Spencer, that lunatic, had been stalking her recently. Her brows furrowed

in concern. A hospital visit was out of the question; she’d have to take extra care of herself for the time being. As long as she

didn’t show, no one would discover her pregnancy.

“Knock, knock.”

Someone tapped politely at her office door. It was a colleague coming to collect documents, the same girl who enjoyed sharing

the latest gossip with her.

“Ms. Haywood, have you signed off on these files? I’ll take them down to the business department.”

The girl’s gaze drifted to the thermos at the edge of the desk, admiration flickering across her face.

“How do you still find time to

cook up a stew at home?”

The stew was something Brielle had to avoid, so she pushed it away. “If you fancy it, go ahead. I haven’t touched it, and the flask

is brand new.”

A spark of surprise lit up the girl’s eyes, almost in disbelief. “Can I really have it?”

Brielle nodded with a half-smile. “Yeah.”

“Thank you, Ms. Haywood. I’ll work extra hard tonight! I’ll treat it as a midnight snack to nourish myself!”

Brielle found it amusing but said nothing more.

Once the girl left, Brielle continued with her work, not stopping until eight in the evening. She then took the private elevator down.

Just as she reached the ground floor, every light in the Dorsey Tower went out.

She froze, witnessing a power outage at the company for the first time. Quickly, she sent out a message to the group chat.

[There’s a power issue in the district; all the buildings around have lost electricity. Those still working, stay safe. The company

will switch on the emergency power, and we should be back

up in fifteen minutes max.]

She reassured her staff, fulfilling her duty, before getting into her car and driving away. But unbeknownst to her, the girl who had

taken her thermos earlier had just finished the stew and had even come by her office to drop off some documents for the

morning.

Now in darkness, the girl reached for her phone for light but felt an abnormal heat coursing through her body. The heat was so

intense it made her legs buckle.

Her eyes glazed over with weakness as she slumped at the desk, gasping for air.

The office door seemed to open, followed by a man's hands. The dim light made it impossible to see who it was. Only a wave of

panic set in.

No. Please, get away from me!

But she couldn't utter a word, completely sapped of strength.

"Do you like this, Brielle?" Spencer's voice was taunting as he gripped her waist, forgoing all pretense and taking what he

wanted.

At that moment, he felt a twisted sense of pride. He hadn't expected Brielle to ever be under him, and all his resentment

vanished, replaced by a sinister smile as he whispered temptations. "This drug won't give you a chance to resist. Didn't you say

you liked it? How about it, am I not better than the others?"

In the shadows, he clutched her chin, kissing her without space for breath. Taking advantage of the blackout to force this upon

her was a thrill like no other. He even wanted to take a photo of her in this state, to send to Max later, to show him just how

Brielle looked beneath another

man.

She was nothing but a tramp who couldn't stay away from men.

Spencer felt both satisfied and furious, wondering why so many men had her and why she had to be with Max.

"Stay with me from now on. I won't hold your past against you, okay?"

As he finished speaking, the lights flickered back on. The smile on Spencer's face froze as he looked down at the stranger

beneath him, crying silently with clenched teeth.

He frowned, surveying the office. There was no sign of Brielle.

He'd spiked the thermos at lunch while Brielle was out, intending only a petty revenge. Coming down that evening, he heard the

faint breathing from the office and rushed in, driven by the urge to claim her.

But it wasn't Brielle at all.

His face darkened as he hastily zipped up and threw money at the problem. "Five million. Keep quiet about this. Don't tell a soul, got it?"

The girl nodded, trembling with shock.

Spencer felt cursed, grabbing his hastily discarded tie and storming out of the office.

The girl clenched her teeth, seething with anger and resentment.

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But Brielle was none the wiser, having told Max she wouldn't be at the Premier Palace and had instead gone back to Pearl

Estate for some rest.

The next day, when she arrived at Dorsey International, she couldn't shake the feeling that there was a strange odor in her office.

The scent was enough to make her feel a bit queasy.

A stack of documents needing her signature was on her desk, and after attending to that, she decided to head to the top floor.

Passing by the workstation of the girl who had been the center of yesterday's gossip, she noticed that her complexion was

ghostly pale, devoid of any color.

Brielle frowned. The girl, Sydney, was usually such a cheerful soul. "If you're not feeling well, just write me a sick note, and I'll

approve your leave."

Sydney jumped at the sound of Brielle's voice, shrinking back. As whispers of Mr. William's assault allegations reached her ears,

the last bit of color drained from her face. She stood up abruptly, knocking her chair to the ground.

It seemed she only then noticed Brielle, her eyes suddenly brimming with tears.

It must have been something about last night's soup, and if it hadn't been for Brielle's soup, she wouldn't have had that

encounter with Spencer. Now, seeing Brielle's innocent expression, Sydney's heart filled with resentment.

After what she'd been through because of Brielle—crying for the better part of the night, still puffy-eyed—there was Brielle looking

like the picture of innocence, and Sydney couldn't help but feel bitter.

Moreover, Spencer had been looking for Brielle last night. It was just Sydney's bad luck.

Sydney clenched her teeth. When she realized she was overreacting, she quickly cast her gaze downward. "I'm fine. There's no

need to take a leave."

Brielle thought Sydney had been performing well lately, and her upbeat personality was a bonus, making her a good candidate

for her assistant. She offered a reassuring smile, "Don't push yourself too hard."

"Ms. Haywood, really, I'm fine. I just got a bit too invested in a TV series last night, and I couldn't help crying."

Such a young girl, so naïve.

"Why don't you join me for the meeting upstairs?"

Sydney was taken aback. Going upstairs meant possibly facing Spencer. She felt a flush of nerves but followed Brielle's lead.

Brielle, preoccupied with work matters, didn't notice Sydney's discomfort.

Brielle stepped out of the private elevator and saw Spencer looking dapper in a crisp white suit. Despite his disagreeable nature,

he bore the handsome Dorsey family genes well.

Brielle didn't linger on the sight but headed straight for the conference room.

Spencer smirked at her, "You sure you want to go in there? Alivia's been inside for over an hour and came in with Mr. Dorsey this

morning." His gaze shifted past her, landing on Sydney, who instinctively hid behind Brielle.

Spencer found it amusing. Brielle was grooming her new sidekick, his conquest from last night. The thought gave him a perverse

satisfaction, much like the thrill he used to get from his clandestine affairs behind Brielle's back.

He never denied it—he was a scoundrel. Five million for just one night? Hardly enough.

Brielle, oblivious to the tension, pushed the door open. The room was devoid of Alivia. Spencer had been bluffing.

Turning to Sydney, she instructed, "Wait here for me. You can sit in on the executive meeting for me."

“Ms. Haywood!” Sydney’s voice pitched high in alarm, but noticing Brielle’s puzzled look and Spencer’s threatening glare, she

shrank back, “Sure. I’ll take good notes.”

Brielle nodded, having to run back for some documents. These kinds of meetings, where only a few executives droned on, were

perfect for an assistant to summarize.

She closed the door behind her and called out, “Max.”

Max, already aware of her presence, put down his pen.

Brielle handed him the documents. Her visit wasn’t just about the paperwork; she also wanted to gauge the state of the Dorsey

family after William’s incident, stirring up a storm inside Dorsey International. Did Michael know?

Max seemed to anticipate her questions and pushed a cup of coffee toward her. “Patrick’s special roast. Want to try?”

But pregnant women should avoid strong coffee.

Office workers like Brielle usually loved their coffee, but now she had to abstain. “My stomach’s a bit off. I’ll pass. How’s the situation with William?”

Max glanced at her midsection. “Feeling that bad?”

“No, let’s focus on William.”

Seeing she wasn’t in severe discomfort, Max leaned back, and a trace of fatigue crossed his face.

Brielle rose to stand beside him, intending to ease his tension with a temple rub, but as her gaze dropped, she spotted a faint

lipstick mark on the inside of his suit collar.

The subtle stain was like a thunderclap in her heart, hidden away yet revealing.

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Her fingers tensed momentarily, but she couldn’t pretend she hadn’t seen it.

Max’s hair was slightly coarse, and from her vantage point, she could see the perfect arch of his proud nose. Brielle’s mind was

awash with thoughts, yet she ultimately refrained from asking directly.

Max sensed her standing behind him, lost in thought, and reached back to catch the tip of her pinky with his hand.

From a man like him, such small gestures could sweep you off your feet. Brielle's cheeks flushed, but the mysterious kiss mark

also left a sour taste in her heart.

Thinking she was feeling unwell, Max suggested, "Brielle, I'll take you to the hospital for a check-up."

Hospital. Check-up. That would mean her secret would be out.

The words Max shared with Michael the night before haunted her, and she didn't have the heart to reveal the truth at this

moment. Any hesitation on Max's part could shatter her defenses.

Max took his jacket, ready to head to the hospital, but Brielle stood tall. "I'm really okay. You focus on your afternoon tasks. I

remember you have an important meeting later, but I probably won't be able to attend. I need to go home and grab some

documents."

Max was still worried, but Brielle changed the subject. "Didn't you return to Premier Palace last night?"

He nodded, the fatigue visible in his brow. "There was a bit of trouble with Mother."

It had been only two days since their return to the city, and Martha seemed to be struggling to adapt. Something here seemed to

trigger her innermost fears. Doctors abroad had already said they needed to find the root cause of her condition.

When Martha had an episode, she could get violent. She already had an outburst since arriving. Max had rushed over last night,

staying with Alivia to soothe his mother until daylight. It's more exhausting than a night's work.

"Alivia was there too?"

"Yes, my mother relies heavily on her. Often, she only listens to her."

This was the worst-case scenario, Brielle bit her lip, piecing together how that kiss mark came to be. She had deliberately

angered Alivia, and Alivia was paying her back in kind.

It was a taunt – don't think you're special to Max. He may sleep with you, but he's not done with me either. You, Brielle, are not

the only one.

Brielle felt weary. She could let this slide once, but what about the 'next time or the time after? Alivia's presence was like a ticking bomb, ready to explode at any moment.

Such petty tactics were meant to whittle down her affection for Max. If Brielle were to lose faith in Max, it would play right into Alivia's hands.

Taking a deep breath, Brielle stepped forward and buried her head in his chest. Around Max, she always retracted her outward thorns, so he patted her back. "What's wrong?"

"Can you promise me something? Just like you asked me to stay away from Dustin, can you stay away from Alivia?"

They both had their demands, and both had to abide by them until she grew stronger. Even though it was very hard to swallow.

Max's hand paused, his brow furrowing. He hadn't allowed Alivia anywhere near him. No touch, not even a fingertip, but frequent

meetings were inevitable with his mother coming from abroad.

"Brielle, I'm not that kind of man."

Brielle closed her eyes, feeling weary.

Outside the door, Spencer watched Sydney with a detached gaze.

Sydney bit her lip in fear.

Spencer chuckled lightly, "Did you tell Brielle?"

"No, I didn't."

"Good, because it's not your first time, and it probably isn't worth five million, right?" His tone was biting, his look disdainful

Sydney felt both shame and anger but knew Spencer was a man of the Dorsey family, someone not to be defied. Not everyone

could be like Brielle, bold enough to splash coffee on his head.

"I want you to befriend Brielle and keep an eye on her for me. Report everything back to me. Understand? Use any means

necessary to get close to her, ideally to gain her complete trust."

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"Mr. Spencer, I really can't do it," she whispered, her voice laced with a fear she couldn't disguise.

Having been around the block at the company, she knew that Brielle had some serious moxie. Brielle was brazen enough to

stand up to Spencer and even gave Mr. Ryan a piece of her mind in front of everyone. No one was spared her boldness.

Sydney was just a regular Joe in the company, a nobody. Crossing someone like Spencer was akin to signing your own death

warrant without even knowing it. Although because of last night's incident, her resentment towards Brielle simmered beneath the

surface.

Spencer's eyebrow arched, his whole demeanor screaming devil-may-care. He had always sailed through life on easy street,

except for the occasional setbacks with Brielle. "You have a boyfriend, don't you?" he prodded with a wry grin.

Sydney's face turned as pale as a ghost. Of course, she had a boyfriend, and they were on the verge of discussing their wedding

bells. But she couldn't bring herself to reveal the previous night's events to him; after all, they were both regular folks.

Spencer leaned in closer, his voice dropping to a seductive whisper, "The paycheck from Dorsey International isn't too shabby,

but if you're looking to buy a house on your own, it's like climbing Everest. Help me out, though, and things change. Look, one

romp with me, and I've already thrown ten mil your way. Keep me happy, and who knows how much more you'll pocket."

Sydney's gaze dropped, tasting the bitterness in her mouth. Harsh as Spencer's words were, they were steeped in truth.

Beaconsfield was prime real estate, and with both her and her boyfriend's salaries, they'd be scrimping and saving for ages just

to make a down payment. But Spencer could cover that with a mere flick of his wrist.

She had to admit that her moral compass was spinning out of control, which was why she hadn't thrown his despised check back

in his face last night.

Spencer's lips curled into a satisfied smirk. "Just keep tabs on Brielle for me. I want to know every little thing. Got it?"

Sydney caved in, nodding slowly.

Pleased, Spencer waited outside for Brielle while Sydney took her place in the conference room. Only upon arrival did she learn

the dreaded meeting was scrapped, forcing her to trudge back to the president's office.

Brielle was just stepping out when she spotted Spencer still lurking. Her brow crinkled in annoyance.

Without missing a beat, Spencer shadowed Brielle. "Alivia called me. She's getting hitched to

Uncle Max. She asked if he had a soft spot for anyone, but Max kept mum. Brielle, are you really going to keep pining for him?"

Brielle halted, unsure of what game Spencer was playing now. If he loathed her so much, why not keep his distance? Yet, here

he was, again, spewing his venom.

Sydney, trailing not far behind, felt a surge of indignation. Just last night, Spencer had been with her, but it seemed like he had

already forgotten her taste and was fixated only on Brielle.

Biting back her anger, Sydney clenched her teeth and stayed silent.

Spencer followed Brielle right to the private elevator. "Brielle, I'm talking to you."

Without hesitation, Brielle yanked Sydney inside and hit the close button.

Spencer didn't pursue Brielle; if Max were destined to be with Alivia, there would be other opportunities for him to pursue her.

Somehow, being consistently rebuffed by Brielle seemed to satisfy some twisted part of him. Still, he'd be over the moon if Brielle

ever gave in to spending a night with him.

Inside the elevator, Brielle massaged her temples and noticed Sydney's unusual silence, prompting her to speak up. "Did he give

you a hard time?"

Startled, Sydney shook like a leaf, but quickly shook her head.

"Spencer's been a bit off the rails lately. Ignore him. I'll talk to HR and make you my assistant."

A shadow passed through Sydney's eyes, but when she looked up again, her façade of innocence was restored. "Ms. Haywood,

are you heading home now?"

"Yeah, I need to grab some files."

"Mind if I tag along?"

Brielle considered. If Sydney were to be her assistant, she might as well know where she lived for urgent document retrieval.

"Sure."

Sydney exhaled a sigh of relief, surprised at how easy it was to get close to Brielle.

Soon, they arrived at the lavish Pearl Estate. Sydney's eyes widened in shock at the sight of such a well-secured and luxurious

home. All this time, she thought Brielle was strapped for cash, yet here she was, living in high cotton!

At that moment, a thick wave of envy washed over Sydney.

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She had to admit that Brielle had some chops, but everything she had now must've been thanks to Spencer, right?

The fastest way to make money in this world, it seemed, was to sell your body.

Brielle didn't notice the edge in Sydney's tone, simply assuming she felt under the weather. After saying a quick word to the

security guard at the entrance—who was quite familiar with her—Sydney was let in without issue.

Reaching her front door, Brielle fished out her keys and unlocked it.

Sydney's face subtly changed upon seeing the exquisite interior. The house itself was already worth a pretty penny, yet the decor

seemed even more expensive, as if every breath was laced with the scent of money.

Even though she worked at Dorsey International, Sydney had always played by the rules. Apart from a likable personality, there

was nothing extraordinary about her. Most of her colleagues were graduates from reputable universities, but those who actually

belonged to the affluent circles were few and far between. Having a place of your own in Beaconsfield was considered

quite the achievement.

And here was Brielle, living alone in such a beautiful home. How many years would she and her boyfriend have to work without

indulging in any pleasures to afford a place like this?

Sydney couldn't help but glance at the shoe rack, where a few pairs of men's shoes were stored. Those were for Max since he

occasionally stopped by.

Casting a few surreptitious glances, Sydney feigned nonchalance and asked, "Ms. Haywood, do you live in this big place all by

yourself?"

Brielle didn't pick up on the insinuation and wasn't one to spread details about her private life.

"Yeah."

A hint of scorn flashed through Sydney's eyes. So, Brielle was living alone. The men's shoes in the foyer—if not Spencer's, then

whose?

A fuck buddy, perhaps?

With that thought, the disdain in Sydney's gaze deepened. She had pegged Brielle for a straight-laced type, not expecting her

private life to be so messy. She was remembering how Spencer and Noah had been doggedly pursuing Brielle, and a wave of

jealousy washed over Sydney.

The money for the house must have come from those two true trust-fund kids, right? If that was the case, why did Brielle play so

hard to get?

Sydney masked her expression as she watched Brielle walk over to the coffee table on the sofa and start reviewing documents

with great concentration.

Brielle thought too highly of Sydney to suspect that last night's events could have so dramatically altered her perception. As

Brielle mulled over whether to make changes to one of the forms on the table, Sydney probed further.
“Ms. Haywood, may I use
your restroom?”

Without much thought, Brielle gestured towards the bathroom.

Sydney made her way there, her peripheral vision not missing a chance to take in the house’s decor. The
more she saw, the
more her heart ached.

Every detail was perfect. Although she wasn’t friends with any designers, her past daydreams of buying
a house with her

boyfriend had led her to peruse many designer portfolios. Yet none had struck her quite like this.

There’s a saying in this world: beggars don’t envy millionaires because that life is too far out of reach.
But they did envy other

beggars who made a bit more than they did. Have you ever seen. the rich resent wealth? In the end, it
was the lack of money

that bred resentment.

Everyone in Sydney’s usual circles was more or less on the same level. If someone had a bit of extra
cash, it certainly wasn’t

enough to afford a house like this one. And since Brielle had never mentioned a mortgage, it seemed
she had paid in full.

Sydney looked at her reflection in the mirror, taking a deep breath to compose herself before facing
Brielle again. If she could

cash in on this information, why wouldn’t she? No one ever complained about having too much money.

She splashed her face with cold water from the tap, accidentally knocking her black hairpin to the floor.
Bending down to retrieve

it, her hand stumbled upon something else—a pregnancy test.

Sydney wasn’t naive; she knew exactly what it was and had used one herself before.

There were two lines on it. This was Brielle’s room; it couldn’t belong to anyone else.

A surge of triumph flashed in Sydney’s eyes, her lips curling up in delight. Brielle was pregnant, and
Sydney was probably the

first to know.

Sydney wrapped the pregnancy test in a tissue and stashed it in her purse. After washing her hands once
more, she headed

back out to face Brielle.

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Brielle had just finished amending the spreadsheets. When she noticed that Sydney's face was alight with barely concealed joy.

Curious, she couldn't help but ask. "Feeling better all of a sudden?"

Sydney flashed a toothy grin. "Yeah, you know, last night's TV show wasn't as heart-wrenching as I thought. I heard it's got a

happy ending, so I'm not fussing over it anymore."

Brielle found it amusing, having never seen someone so devastated over a drama before. "Let's hit the road and get back to the

office."

At that moment, Sydney was itching to get out of there, especially with that item in her purse, making her feel guilty. She feared

that Brielle might discover it by chance.

However, when Brielle was cleaning up earlier, she didn't even notice the pregnancy test had fallen to the floor, so the thought

never crossed her mind.

Once back at the office, Brielle headed straight for her desk. Taking advantage of the moment she was handing over documents,

Sydney slipped up to the rooftop.

Spencer was feeling rather bored that day, and when he saw her come up, he pulled her aside to the stairwell. For some reason,

the thrill was doubled when it involved someone connected to Brielle.

Sydney couldn't resist and found herself in an awkward position. Spencer was pressed against her back. The risk of being

caught at any moment only added to the excitement.

"Mr. Spencer, I've stumbled upon a massive secret, but it's gonna cost you another five million you

want in on it."

if

A secret worth five million? Spencer's eyes narrowed, but he didn't stop. Sydney was almost at

her limit.

The door to the stairwell was kept closed since people could come by at any moment. This only ramped up the thrill.

“What secret’s worth five million?”

“It’s about Brielle.”

His excitement peaked at the mention of Brielle’s name during such a moment. “Fine, five million it is. Spill.”

Making ten million in two days was beyond Sydney’s wildest dreams. She pulled out the pregnancy test from her pocket. “I found

this at Brielle’s place. She’s pregnant.”

Suddenly, the world seemed to fall silent. The excitement, the pleasure, vanished in an instant. Spencer’s interest evaporated,

and he stared at the pregnancy test. His face paled with shock. He composed himself, his eyes bloodshot with fury. “You’re

saying Brielle is pregnant?”

Sydney, not minding the pause, slowly nodded. “Found it in her bathroom. It’s positive. Worth the five mil, don’t you think?”

Before she could react, Spencer’s fist slammed into the wall next to them, his knuckles bloody. Sydney nearly screamed in fright,

her face turning ghostly white as she stepped back.

Spencer let out a cold laugh and, without a word, pulled out a check and threw it at her. “Get lost.”

Sydney felt humiliation like never before. He fucked her twice, and each time he discarded her coldly. She felt like nothing more

than a throwaway tool.

As much as Spencer desired Brielle, she had ended up carrying some other man’s child – the irony was too rich! Sydney wanted

to shout this news from the rooftops, to expose Brielle’s true colors to the world.

The repeated humiliations combined with the shock of the money shifted Sydney’s perspective completely. She had glimpsed the

true nature of wealth and felt transformed.

As she reached for the door, Spencer's voice froze her in her tracks. "I'm warning you, if you let this slip to anyone, I'll make sure

you can't show your face in Beaconsfield again. Think about it – do you want a steady flow of cash or a life looking over your

shoulder? Choose wisely." His eyes were a frightening shade of dark, and Sydney felt as if her heart was in a vice grip. She

could hardly breathe and quickly dismissed the thought of revenge. "I... I understand."

With that, she left, her legs shaky. Never had she known Spencer to possess such a commanding presence.

After she was gone, Spencer closed his eyes tightly. His heart was seemingly gnawed at by a million worms. He lit a cigarette,

his eyes red as he began to smoke.

Damn it, how could Brielle be pregnant? How could she bear a child for someone else?

At that moment, Spencer felt an overwhelming urge to cry.

All thoughts of revenge, of striking back, were forgotten. He wanted nothing more than to confront Brielle with the pregnancy test,

but he knew the response he'd receive would be nothing short of scorn.

As the cigarette burned down to his fingers, Spencer hissed in pain and flicked it away; the butt hit the ground with a quiet thud.

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He lit another cigarette, his lips trembling uncontrollably.

If Brielle were pregnant, then she'd surely tie the knot with Max, and if she married Max, then Spencer would lose his shot

forever. They'd be a happy family of three, and his resentment, those deep-seated, soured affections, would just fester in some

dingy corner, fermenting and rotting away.

Even when he and Brielle were engaged, she never talked about having kids. But with Max, she barely hit the sheets and–

boom–bun in the oven.

Damn, Brielle. Damn it all!

Spencer punched the wall again, shaking with fury. He couldn't quite place this feeling. He had not felt like this even when he

was with Lillian.

It was as if his soul was about to leave his body.

After chain-smoking ten cigarettes, his clothes reeked of smoke, and the floor was littered with butts. Spencer rubbed his

stinging eyes and finally opened the emergency exit.

Several people were already standing outside. They looked surprised to see him with his red-rimmed eyes. Spencer ignored

everyone and trudged back to his desk, a lost soul amidst the cubicles.

As he entered Max's office, he nearly tripped at the door. Max's brow furrowed at the sight of Spencer.

"If you don't want to work,

just go back home."

Spencer lifted his gaze blankly to Max. He had always looked up to Max, a towering mountain before all the Dorseys, visible to

all but unscalable.

Even Grandpa had said, "A guy like Max comes once in a century." So, as a junior, Spencer had long given up on comparing

himself to such a man.

However, his heart's desire was entwined with this man, and perhaps this stark contrast made Brielle leave without a backward

glance.

Right then, upon hearing of Brielle's pregnancy, Spencer realized what the pain in his heart was. He liked Brielle, really liked her,

enough to endure her hostility and sneers. His clenched fist trembled at his side, lips quivering before he asked. "Uncle Max, do

you want kids?" His voice was so hoarse it sounded like he was on the brink of tears.

Max couldn't even begin to associate Brielle with the idea, so he simply looked away. nonchalantly, "Never thought about it."

His feelings towards Spencer were complex; on one hand, he was his junior, but on the other, he was Brielle's ex-boyfriend.

Having petty squabbles with a junior lacked dignity, but from a man's standpoint, Max couldn't let go. Besides, Spencer seemed

unable to move on from Brielle, though clueless enough not to realize it himself.

The only thought swirling in Spencer's mind was "never thought about it." This meant that Brielle hadn't told Max about the

pregnancy yet.

The only ones privy to the news were probably just Brielle herself, him, and Sydney. Sydney would keep tight-lipped and not

spread the word, which left only him in the know.

A dark resolve flickered in Spencer's eyes. That child must never be born. It had to perish in Brielle's womb. But he couldn't do it

alone. Instantly, he thought of Alivia.

Alivia had connections; she might just have the means.

Shaking with urgency, Spencer failed to mask his emotions. Max, sitting across from him, narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

"What's on your mind?"

Spencer turned pale, feeling the weight of a mountain on his shoulders. It had been ages since he'd felt such oppression; his

insides felt crushed, painfully so. "Uncle Max, sorry, I was just... distracted."

Max's aura receded. "We're in the office, call me Mr. Dorsey."

Head bowed, Spencer took the files and left. The moment the door closed behind him, a sly grin spread across his face. He

slipped into the emergency exit where he'd been before and dialed

Alivia.

Alivia hadn't expected Spencer to reach out so soon. She was prepared for small talk, but his bombshell left her reeling. "Ms.

Alivia, did you hear that Brielle's pregnant? With Uncle Max's child."

She thought she was hallucinating, or maybe she just woke up on the wrong side of the bed.

Did Max get someone pregnant? Impossible. But this was Brielle, the one who broke Max's pattern.

Her eyes were bloodshot with jealousy. She lost all reason. "Are you certain?"

The murderous intent was audible in her voice. The child couldn't live, and neither could Brielle.

Chapter 429

Spencer's lip curled into a smirk. "I've got someone watching Brielle, and they found a used pregnancy test in the trash—double

lines."

Alivia's mind buzzed, her grip on her phone nearly slipping. Brielle was pregnant—the very thing Alivia had dreaded most was

happening!

"But Uncle Max is still in the dark, Ms. Alivia. I don't want that kid to be born. I'm hoping you can help me out here."

Alivia had connections, the kind that could take care of messes perfectly. Spencer didn't care whether he faced backlash from

Brielle or the rest of the Dorseys later. He just couldn't stand the thought of Brielle having another man's child! The very idea of

that child's existence was torture to him!

Hearing this, Alivia felt a laugh bubbling up. Brielle was such a fool. She had the perfect opportunity to tell Max about the

pregnancy. Knowing him, he would have shouted it from the rooftops, announcing their wedding to the world. But Brielle chose to

hide it, an utterly foolish move! She was practically handing over the chance to drive a wedge between her and Max!

After a brief moment of panic, Alivia's eyes regained their cool composure, not forgetting to maintain her carefully curated

persona. "Spencer, are you sure about this? After all, that's

Max's first child. If he finds out..."

"I'll take full responsibility for the consequences. He's not going to kill me." Michael would never want to see such a thing happen

anyway.

That was exactly what Alivia needed to hear. Orchestrating such a scheme was simple for her, but she worried about being

exposed, revealing her true face to Max himself. She had to hide her intentions well, to drive Brielle out of Beaconsfield.

“Ms. Alivia, it sounds like you’ve got a plan.”

The corners of Alivia’s mouth turned up slightly. She now understood Brielle’s hesitations. It was because Brielle was of low

status, and since Max’s feelings weren’t deep enough yet, Brielle couldn’t be sure he would accept the child. If other members of

the Dorsey family found

out, what would become of the child?

The Dorseys wouldn’t tolerate any illegitimate offspring. Only someone with Alivia’s background would be fit to bear Max’s

children.

“I do have an idea, but I’m hesitant. Spencer, are we doing the right thing?”

In Spencer’s eyes, Alivia was a paragon of virtue, a blank slate when it came to love. Plotting something like this must’ve been

difficult for her. “Ms. Alivia, you’ve waited for Uncle Max for years. Can you really stand by and watch him marry another woman?

If you work with me, it’s a win–win. You get Uncle Max, I get rid of Brielle, and everyone’s happy.”

A hint of sarcasm flickered in Alivia’s eyes. She couldn’t fathom what potion Brielle had given

Spencer. Even with Brielle pregnant, he couldn’t let go. “If that’s the case, then alright. I do have a plan in mind, but I’ll need your

cooperation.”

Spencer’s eyes were full of glee as he ended the call and rubbed his eyes. He had to do this. If blame was due, it was Brielle’s

for getting pregnant.

After finishing her day’s work, Brielle received a text from Max, saying he wanted to take her somewhere. Her mind raced

through all the places couples might go—a funfair, a park, maybe even a countryside inn. But it wasn’t until she was in the car,

pulling up at a top–tier sanatorium, that her heart started to race.

Max leaned back in his seat, his long fingers resting on the steering wheel. “Brielle, I’ve thought about it and decided to bring you

here to meet my mother. She doesn't know about us yet, but I want you to understand me better."

It was a well-considered move by Max. Aside from Alivia, who had always been close with Martha, Max had never brought

anyone else to meet his mother, not even Michael.

Brielle's nerves kicked in—she hadn't expected Max to bring her to meet Martha so soon.

Sensing her anxiety, Max reached for her hand, warming it in his own. "The last time I spoke with Alivia, you overheard. My

mother's lucid moments are frequent now, but she could relapse at any time. I shouldn't be introducing you to her so soon, but I

can't shake this feeling of unease. Maybe you'll feel more secure if you meet more of my family."

Max's words were heartfelt, making Brielle wish she could tell him right then that she was pregnant.

Chapter 430

Brielle's nerves were jittery as the car slid smoothly through the suburban streets, en route to see Martha. She wished she had

taken a moment to pick up a little something. "Should I have bought a gift or something?"

"It's alright. The care home provides everything," Max reassured her, his voice laced with a tinge of regret. "Brielle, I'm really

sorry, but I can't introduce you as my girlfriend. In my mother's eyes, Alivia is the ideal daughter-in-law. For the sake of her

health, I can't reveal the truth just yet. Her new medication is only in the trial phase, and I don't want to risk upsetting her. Am I

being too unfair?"

Max was torn for the first time, wondering if it was a mistake to bring her along.

Brielle felt a pang of sadness, but this was the grim reality between her and Max—one they would have to face sooner or later.

If Alivia could win Martha's affection, maybe with some effort, she could, too. A surge of confidence washed over her. "It's not

unfair, not at all. I only care about my place in your heart," she said, cheeks flushing with a mix of bravado and embarrassment.

Their relationship had always been easy, unfolding naturally without any need for over-the-top declarations of love. Never had

she thought she'd be the first to utter such a cheesy line. Her impulsive bravery quickly dissipated, leaving her with nothing but a

warm blush.

Max chuckled—a sound that seemed to clear the skies and warm the earth. “In my heart, you’re the one and only,” he said,

dishing out a phrase cheesier than what she said.

The embarrassment vanished and was replaced by a sweet feeling so intense she could melt right there in the car. How perfect it

would be if time could freeze in that moment.

Max reached out and gently pinched her earlobe, easing her tension. Taking a deep breath, Brielle stepped out of the car first.

If she wasn't visiting Martha as Max's girlfriend, she'd do so as a colleague. Approaching Martha's room, Brielle stepped back,

positioning herself behind Max where a subordinate ought to stand.

Amused, Max leaned over as if to kiss her, but a surprised voice from behind halted him, “Max?” Brielle's heart skipped a beat.

She turned to face Alivia for the first time.

Alivia was dressed in a pastel ensemble, her hands resting calmly in front of her, and her eyes sparkling with a gentle grace like

moonlit marble. Compared to Brielle's cool demeanor, Alivia's harmless appearance could easily win over anyone, making them

want to confide in her. But any secret shared would become a weapon in her hands.

Alivia's emotions were a whirlwind, though her face showed none of it. She had seen Max, moments from kissing Brielle.

Damn it!

Seeing Max so forthcoming was more painful than discovering a love bite on his collarbone. Before, Alivia had assumed Max's

tolerance of Brielle was due to novelty, but now she realized their private rapport was much more intimate. The armor he wore

for others seemingly melted

away.

Brielle could touch Max's real warmth, but to everyone else, he remained an icy peak.

Alivia approached, her gaze fixating on Brielle, who met it without flinching, quickly spotting the disdain in Alivia's eyes. It didn't

sting Brielle; she wasn't burdened by the judgments of others.

Max, unfazed by the tension, made the introductions. "This is Alivia, Kenzo Barnes' sister."

"Alivia, this is Brielle, the woman I care for."

That simple declaration outshone all else. Alivia's mouth tasted of blood, yet she forced a smile. "So, this is the one who made

you break your rules, Max. You two do look good together, and Ms. Brielle, you're very beautiful. For the first time, I see that

you're superficial, just like everyone else, Max."

It was a playful jab between friends, a compliment to Brielle. Max was thrilled with the compliment and softened visibly, his usual

aloofness melting away. But this shift also gave Alivia an opening, and as she and Max chatted about other things, Brielle felt

somewhat sidelined.