

Master 431

Chapter 431

Alivia thought for sure that Brielle would be a bundle of nerves, maybe even shoot Max some subtle, desperate looks. But from

start to finish, Brielle was the picture of composure.

The cooler she remained, the more Alivia felt like a jester, juggling her emotions for naught.

A flash of bitterness crossed Alivia's eyes as she tilted her head up to Max and said, "Since you've brought Ms. Brielle along. I'll

skip going in. You must want her to meet your mum, right? I'd just be a third wheel. I'll swing by this afternoon."

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To any guy, it sounded like the epitome of understanding – faultlessly so. It was at this moment that Brielle realized Alivia could

play the game far better than she had expected.

Such a woman was truly formidable.

Hearing Alivia's words, Max simply nodded. Alivia flashed a smile at Brielle, a cursory greeting of sorts, before making a swift

exit.

The moment she turned away, her face twisted slightly. The thought of Brielle carrying a child and the possibility of Max finding

out any minute now, had her on pins and needles.

She bowed her head and shot a text to Martha. [Aunt Martha, Max has brought that woman to see you. I think I'll stay away to

avoid being a burden. If you need someone to chat with, just holler.]

Just moments ago, she'd been all magnanimity, but in her message to Martha, she played the pity card to the hilt. Since Max

was with another woman, it was best for Alivia to lie low.

Martha trembled with fury upon reading the message. Alivia wasn't concerned about Martha actually getting sick. A meltdown

would play right into her hands, perhaps even lead to Martha dealing with Brielle's "problem" personally.

Max and Brielle stood at the door. Max pushed it open and saw Martha by the window, phone in hand.

Strolling over, Max asked, "Mother, feeling any better today?"

Martha's gaze

was sharp, slicing past him to land squarely on Brielle, but it was fleeting, and her expression quickly softened. "Better, thanks to

Alivia. She found some caretakers to keep me company. They're quite the chatterboxes."

Then, her eyes slid over to Brielle, giving her a thorough once-over. Brielle frowned, sensing a distinct discomfort, as if she'd

been appraised inside and out and judged quite unfavorably.

"Max, who might this be?" Martha asked, delicately sipping tea from a nearby cup.

"She's a director at Dorsey International. Thought I'd bring her by to see you," Max replied.

Martha felt a wave of scorn well up inside her. Was this the seductress who had bewitched Max? Sure, she was attractive

enough up close, but she paled in comparison to Alivia. Martha

was certain that Max had been tricked by her allure. Her heart twisted uncomfortably at the thought of the text she'd received

from Alivia, displaying her fake distress.

Alivia was the daughter-in-law Martha had picked out, and there was no way she should step aside for some nobody.

Knowing her son, Martha realized that the more she resisted, the likelier Max was to ignore her completely. He'd always been

independent, with his own way of thinking and doing things. Any misstep now could make things worse.

So Martha nodded. "If you're by his side, you must be quite capable. Max, the doctor had a word with me this morning about

some new medication. He said to have a word with you when you arrived."

Knowing the importance of the medication, Max got up, instinctively ready to whisk Brielle away with him, when Martha

interjected, "Leave the young lady here, Max. With Alivia absent, I could use the company."

Oblivious to Martha's full grasp of his relationship with Brielle, Max turned to see if Brielle was okay with staying. She nodded

slowly, sensing Martha had something to say to her alone.

Once Max was gone, Martha dropped the facade, her gaze returning to that uncomfortable scrutiny. Despite feeling slighted,

Brielle, as the younger person in the presence of an elder. chose to remain silent.

“Ms. Brielle, which Beaconfield clan do you hail from?”

“None. I was raised in an orphanage,” Brielle replied.

A dangerous glint passed through Martha’s eyes. An orphan upstart had climbed her way into her son’s life? It was laughable.

“Have you been done it with Max?”

The question hung heavy in the air, the silence between them thick and suffocating. Brielle felt the cold of Martha’s indifference

seep into her fingertips.

Martha knew everything.

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Martha had always been a woman of means, and it showed in the steely glint of her eyes as she bore down on Brielle with an

almost predatory gaze. A scornful chuckle escaped Martha. “Seems like something did happen between you two.”

Brielle felt an icy chill spread through her body. Every word from Martha was a sharp sting to her pride.

“And did you think to use protection? My son is a good kid, but I doubt he thought that far ahead during his first time at the rodeo.

But you, Ms. Brielle, ought to know better about these things as a woman. And let’s not forget, Alivia is the one the Dorsey family

has embraced. Since you’ve decided to play in Max’s garden, you should be prepared to do it in the shadows. You’re a college—

educated woman, Ms. Brielle. I shouldn’t need to teach you such basics. But out of respect for the fact that you were born, if not

properly raised, I’m reminding you that the Dorsey family doesn’t allow illegitimate children to tarnish its name. It’s a creed

etched in our bones. If you are pregnant, that child won’t see the light of day.”

Martha’s tone was light, yet her words were weighted with a gravity that crashed into Brielle’s ears, causing an almost physical

pain. The humiliation from the woman whose approval she desperately sought was unbearable. It was all for the sake of the man

she loved.

Martha reached into a drawer and pulled out a strip of pills, her face void of emotion. "Here, Ms. Brielle. Take these."

Brielle recognized the label instantly; they were birth control pills. She couldn't take them; if she did, the life growing inside her

would be in jeopardy.

Brielle internally cursed herself for not having thought through their actions, which was why she was now at such a

disadvantage.

Martha's expression sharpened. "Or are you saying you're already pregnant?" Was that why Max had suddenly brought Brielle

here, to prepare her for this confrontation?

"I'm not, Ms. Martha. Max and I have always been careful."

Martha's laugh was cold as ice. "Is that so? Then prove it. Swallow a few right now, in front of me."

Brielle's fingers tensed; she desperately hoped for Max to return soon.

Martha narrowed her eyes, "I'm laying it out here, Ms. Brielle. If you are indeed pregnant, it's either the child or me. My life

means nothing to me anymore. If I die over this disgrace you carry, do you think Max would still stand by you? How far can a

relationship built on guilt really go? Of course, this is only if you're pregnant. To prove you're not, pop three of these pills right

now."

Brielle wanted nothing more than to walk away from Martha and all this madness, but this was Max's mother. It must have taken

a lot for Max to decide to bring Brielle here, and she had botched everything.

Martha's disdain for her was even deeper than Alivia's, who at least pretended to have some courtesy. Martha's eyes bore into

Brielle like she was the enemy. It hurt because, until this moment, except for Tiffanie, Brielle had not earned the approval of

anyone in Max's family.

Not taking the pills would mean Martha would never let her off the hook and might even suspect she was pregnant, which could

lead to using the Dorsey family's influence to make the problem "go away." Even if Max wanted to help Brielle, would he

challenge his own mother's

life for it?

Taking the pills could harm the baby.

Feeling overwhelmed and exhausted, Brielle's mind flashed back to a college debate where she had firmly believed love should

not be pursued because it involved two families, not just two

hearts.

The pain of being struck by a tile falling from a roof was one thing, but the deliberate sting of a pebble thrown by a loved one or

their family was agony doubled.

Brielle took the bottle and poured out three pills, Martha's words still echoing. "You can't breathe a word of this to Max. He thinks

I'm clueless about you two. Keep it zipped."

So, it was Alivia who had spilled the beans?

Brielle had always been confident, but the recent stress of her pregnancy had left her feeling utterly drained. Sometimes, love

wasn't enough. The obstacles that surrounded a couple could slowly erode their passion. That weariness seeped from her

bones, leaving her defenseless. Without further thought, she brought the pills to her lips, but before she could swallow, the door

swung open, and Max stepped in. Brielle's heart jolted, her eyes instantly welling up.

Max saw the distress in her eyes, then noticed the pill bottle in her hand, and his face darkened. "Spit them out."

Brielle turned away, but he closed the distance swiftly, grasping her chin firmly.

In the next breath, his lips were on hers, prying open her mouth to whisk away the pills she hadn't yet swallowed into his own.

For the first time, Brielle felt the raw intensity of Max's emotions, fierce as if a gun were held to his heart, both brazen and wild.

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She was kissed breathless, gasping for air,

Max swallowed the pill, took the bottle from her hand, and placed it on the table, turning to his mother.

Martha's complexion had already changed the moment she saw him enter. Now, seeing Mar voluntarily take birth control, she

stood up in a rage. "Maz! What in the world are you doing?"

"Mother, what about you? What's the reason for this?" His tone was indifferent as he released Brielle's chin.

Martha trembled, feeling as if she couldn't breathe, on the verge of passing out. "A man, you're a man... how can you take birth

control? You've lost your mind!"

Martha felt a wave of weakness and fell back into her chair. "You would have her take it, but it might as well be me, Mother. You

do understand the nature of Brielle's and my relationship, right?"

Max had rarely opened up to Martha. From a very young age, he had never depended on her. but Martha had always tried to be

kind to him, and he could feel it.

Unfortunately, Martha's troubles came too early, and Max never really experienced maternal love.

Martha remained silent because Alivia had instructed her not to let Max know that she was the one who had leaked the

information. If she admitted it, there would be trouble with Alivia.

Martha sighed. "I just scared her a bit, but now it seems your relationship really isn't simple."

Brielle looked at Martha. Scaring her? No, Martha had a strong hostility towards her from the moment she walked in, which she

couldn't have mistaken. Then Martha had directly asked if they had done the deed, not what their relationship was, and when

she asked, the disgust in her eyes was undisguised. Even birth control was prepared.

How could there possibly be birth control in a sanatorium unless Martha had guessed that Max might bring someone to see her?

Max took a deep breath and grabbed Brielle's hand. "Mother, if you refuse to see her, I won't bring anyone next time."

Martha opened her mouth but, under such strong provocation, found herself at a loss for words. She turned to Brielle, her tone

regaining composure. "Ms. Brielle, just remember what I told you."

If she got pregnant, then between the child and Martha, only one could live. This was meant to drive Brielle into a corner, and

Brielle was quite certain Martha was not joking. The Dorsey family didn't have a single normal person.

Max sensed her stiffness and drew her into his embrace. "Mother, whatever you make Brielle

take, I'll take the same. If there's ever another chance for you two to meet in the future, I hope you'll be more pleasant,"

Martha clenched her teeth in fury but knew she couldn't be hasty now.

Max caught them in that situation, so his heart was undoubtedly leaning towards Brielle. If Martha continued to make a fuss, it

would only make Max care more for that witch.

Martha raised her hand to her chest, breathing heavily for a few moments. "Are you trying to kill me?" Her face turned deathly

pale, and her fingertips curled so tightly they lost color.

Max gently pushed Brielle towards the door. "Wait for me in the car."

His tone was cold, sending a shiver down Brielle's spine. Brielle knew he was angry, but she had no choice. Her eyes fell, and

that feeling of exhaustion spread from the depths of her heart. It felt like the whole world was against her and Max being

together.

Her stomach felt terrible, and as she neared the car, she turned pale and leaned against a nearby tree, feeling queasy. The birth

control pills, though not swallowed, cast a long shadow over her. Every pore screamed discomfort.

Brielle's forehead was covered in sweat, and she noticed a pain starting in her stomach. She sat down on a nearby bench and

saw several doctors rush into Martha's room from the other end of the corridor.

Martha was having an episode.

Martha had her hands pinned by Max and was screaming and flailing, a stark contrast to her usual composure. Max's suit was

wrinkled from her grasp, and the doctor quickly administered a sedative.

"Max, we've discussed not agitating Ms. Martha."

Max saw that Martha's face had calmed down and touched his chin. There was a long scratch from her nails, not the first he'd

received, and something he was used to.

"Sorry, it was an accident." His voice was flat, and the doctor, noting his displeasure, didn't dare provoke him further.

After Martha had settled, Max gave a few instructions and then headed out. A few steps later, he saw Brielle sitting on the stone

bench and frowned. Her face was deathly pale.

Brielle looked up at him, confirming that it wasn't just her imagination Max was truly angry.

"Get in the car." His voice was flat as he took his place behind the wheel.

Brielle reluctantly took the passenger seat.

The drive was silent: the atmosphere was so heavy it was frightening.

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Brielle gazed at the familiar scenery outside Pearl Estate and turned to him. Her words were caught in her throat as he bluntly

said, "Get out."

Her eyelashes fluttered as she opened the door and stepped out. The moment the car door closed behind her, the vehicle was

already speeding away. She watched the taillights vanish into the distance and raised a hand to massage her temples.

To Max, it probably seemed like she could say no to Martha; Brielle was never one to take things lying down. But there she was,

about to swallow those pills when he caught her red-handed.

Brielle was touched that Max had snatched the pills from her lips, but the more touched she was, the more powerless she felt.

What was she to do? Tell Max about the pregnancy, and then what? Have him confront Martha?

Martha had already made her threats clear: it would be either her or no baby. If Martha ever found out about the child, she would

force Brielle to terminate the pregnancy.

Brielle's mind was a whirlwind of chaos. For a fleeting moment, she even considered leaving Beaconsfield and taking the life

growing inside her someplace else. She would have the baby first and figure out the rest later.

But what about Max?

She was greedy, wanting both the child and Max.

After driving a distance, Max pulled over to the side of the road. He had been too harsh with Brielle, especially considering she

had no choice. She was meeting an elder for the first time.

But he was angry at her attitude, at how easily she reached for those pills.

Max knew the risks; without precautions, a pregnancy could happen at any time. Since leaving the clinic, his mind had been

foggy. To him, a child wasn't a big deal. If it were Brielle's, it would probably be adorable, just like her.

But he couldn't bear to think that during all their intimate moments, Brielle might have been taking those pills. She must've known

they were harmful to her health, right?

Knowing the risks and still not asking him to take precautions, that was what infuriated him about Brielle.

Max slammed on the gas. His brows furrowed in frustration, just as Michael called to ask where he was. "Max, get back to the

Dorsey estate; we need to deal with that kid's issue." He was talking about the illegitimate child scandal Ryan had caused.

Max's frown deepened. His mind was already in turmoil; he might as well go to the Dorsey estate and assess the situation.

The Dorsey family had assembled in the living room at the Dorsey estate, save for the two who

11:46

were seldom present. The atmosphere was tense, with no one daring to speak before Michael had his say

Ivan looked miserable, divinely having been disciplined, but it wasn't enough. The child's situation had to be addressed.

Michael was seated at the head of the room and hung his hand on the table, starting everyone but Mas

"Bang!

Michael's gaze lingered on Ryan before shifting to William, whose face was pale. The two were in a bind, especially William,

whose affair with Sue had nearly become town gossip if Michael hadn't firmly suppressed it. Michael had also put pressure on

the police and was trying to convince Sue to settle privately. She could have her settlement, but if she refused to see reason,

she'd have no one to blame but herself for his lack of kindness.

In the midst of the grave atmosphere, a woman knelt in the center of the room, clutching a child, barely a year old, to her chest.

The paternity test confirmed the child was Ryan's.

So, with an icy tone, Michael declared, "You knew what you were getting into when you approached us. The Dorsey family will

not acknowledge this child."

The woman, having ulven birth, clearly had ambitions. Even if she couldn't rise through the ranks, she intended to milk the

Dorseys for all they were worth.

"I will leave with the child, but I want money," she stated bluntly, with no hesitation, aware she had no place in the Dorsey family.

Michael massaged his temples. If the child had not been born, he would have dragged her to a hospital for a forced abortion, but

now, looking at the baby's round eyes, even the hardened man couldn't bring himself to do it.

“Ryan, you’ve just returned to Dorsey International and have already caused a scandal. It’s best you don’t go to the company.

Stay home and clean up this mess. And William, I’m disappointed in you too. If you both learned a thing or two from Max, it

wouldn’t have come to this.”

Max—always Max. The golden boy of the Dorsey family, the one who had been free of any female entanglements for over two

decades.

But Michael had no idea that Max, usually so quiet, was about to cause a sensation of his own.

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Max’s face remained expressionless as he listened to Michael mention his name.

Michael spoke again. “Max, I’m entrusting this to you. Take this woman and her child and get them out of here. Drop them off

somewhere only you know about, so that certain prying eyes Can’t follow.”

After finishing his directive, Michael turned his gaze toward the kneeling woman. “Tell me, how much do you want?”

Without any hesitation, the woman stated, “Fifty million.”

Michael had no intention of saying anything further, so with a dismissive wave of his hand, his consent was given.

Max stood up, ready to escort the woman away, but Spencer, who had been sitting quietly in a corner, also stood up. “Uncle

Max, I’ll come with you.”

Max’s brow furrowed at the interruption, only to hear Spencer add. “After all, he is my half-brother,”

Discussing so-called family ties within the Dorsey clan was almost laughable, but Max didn’t call Spencer out on it.

The woman followed quietly, holding her child close. The child was only six months old, smiling and reaching out to grab his

mother’s face.

The woman had been assertive when demanding money, but now, softened by her child’s presence, she sighed and gently

soothed him, “Be a good little man.” She knew he couldn’t understand, but her voice grew tender all the same.

Max, leading the way, paused at the sound of the child's laughter, unable to resist glancing back. The child was indeed beautiful—

rosy-cheeked and clean.

Seeing Max stop and look at her child, the woman instinctively tightened her embrace. When she was with Ryan, she had indeed

thought about having this child as a ticket into high society. She even believed she wouldn't feel anything for the kid. But at the

sight of the child, all her schemes vanished and were replaced by fear of discovery by the Dorsey family.

The Dorseys had a strict rule against illegitimate offspring, and she was well aware of it. Rather than live in fear, she chose to

confront them directly. If the Dorseys wanted her child gone, she was ready to go too—her own greed had brought this on them

both.

Fortunately, Michael was willing to pay.

Once away from Beaconsfield, it would be just her and her son against the world. But now, facing this utterly impassive man, her

heart raced wildly. She knew of Max and had heard Ryan mention him more than once, describing him as a cold, merciless,

unfeeling creature. So, when he approached, she was so frightened that she immediately dropped to her knees, clutching her

child fiercely.

"Max, I'll leave as soon as I have the money! Really, I won't cause any trouble for the Dorsey family!"

Max regarded her coldly. "The child shouldn't exist. I've arranged the money and a doctor, too."

He had spoken with the woman before.

She shivered, her lips quivering. It was her greed that had led her here. She dreamed only of entering the ranks of the elite.

As the shadow loomed over her, she was about to scramble backward, but then she saw him lean in, gently lifting the child from

her arms.

Max wasn't adept at holding children and lifted him by the collar rather than cradling him. Yet the child didn't cry, even giggled,

thinking it was a game.

As if discovering an amusing toy, Max pinched the child's foot, eliciting another round of giggles from the infant. "You've chosen

to keep him, so he stays. I'll arrange for someone to take you away, but don't reveal his parentage unless you want to be

separated from him forever."

The woman nodded rapidly, gratitude filling her eyes. "Yes, yes, I understand. Thank you, thank you, Max."

Max smiled softly. The sound dazzled the woman and sent a blush across her cheeks. She thought perhaps Max would make a

good father after all.

Outside the grand entrance of Dorsey International, Max's people had arrived, taking the woman and child away.

Max turned to face Spencer, who had been trailing behind. Spencer stood rigid with nerves, "Uncle Max, I'll be off too. That little

brother of mine is quite charming, isn't he?" His words were tripping over each other in his anxiousness.

Max stood tall, an aura of steely resolve about him. "Spencer, have you been bothering Brielle?" This was the first time Max had

addressed the issue of Brielle so directly with him. Spencer's heart skipped a beat, and he quickly shook his head. "I was just-"

"I'm with Brielle now."

To others, Max never wasted words. Unnecessary talk was a waste of his time. So, the more straightforward he was, the better.

"Stay away from her."

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Spencer thought he had misheard. He snapped his head up to look at Max, only to find a serene calm in his eyes as if he was

merely commenting on the pleasant weather.

Spencer's lips trembled before his voice emerged, hoarse and strained. "Uncle Max, do you even realize what you're saying?

Brielle is my fiancée."

“Ex–fiancée.”

“Even if she’s an ex! She was still my fiancée! Uncle Max, as my uncle, how can you–

“She never loved you.”

The painful truth was delivered with such nonchalance, just like Brielle herself would do.

Spencer’s lips pressed into a tight line. His eyes were rimmed with anger. “You’re not afraid I’ll go tell Grandpa? He won’t let

Brielle through the door.”

“That’s why I need you to keep this a secret.”

“What about Ms. Alivia?!”

Max’s brow furrowed. “What’s she got to do with it?”

If Alivia were there, she’d probably feel like she’d been run through with a sword. Max’s expression was so earnest, as if he truly

believed his marriage had nothing to do with Alivia.

“Didn’t you give her your rosary bracelet? Isn’t that a sign of mutual affection if your rosaries disappeared together?”

“I gave the rosary to Brielle, but she doesn’t seem to care for it much.” As Max spoke of Brielle’s indifference, the composure on

his face faded to a look of frustration.

Spencer was livid, feeling as if Max hadn’t heard a word he said, as if his feelings were invisible to him. A flash of hatred crossed

Spencer’s eyes.

Of course, Max had never really had Spencer in his sight, or he wouldn’t dare make a move on the woman Spencer loved.

had to destroy

Spencer’s breathing grew heavy, his teeth clenched, tasting the bitterness of his own anger. He had to act fast and implement his

plan. Even if it meant facing Max’s wrath, h the child growing inside Brielle.

He would not allow that child to live!

Fortunately, he was prepared.

His eyes lowered, and his voice was still hoarse. “I understand.”

Max didn't say anything more and just got into his car. Thinking of his recent fallout with Brielle, he had no desire to head to Pearl

Estate or back to Premier Palace.

Premier Palace had always been comfortable, but it felt like something was missing ever since Brielle's visit. Especially in her

absence, the feeling of loss was profound.

Meanwhile, since being dropped off at home, Brielle had been sitting on the couch in a daze. The pain in her stomach surged,

and she sought antacids but was too weak to find them.

Lying listlessly on the couch, she fell asleep.

She woke up the next day at nine. The pain in her stomach was more intense, and her body was feverish.

Her phone rang; it was Sydney.

Having Sydney in her home had been a good choice—she needed someone to bring the paperwork that required her signature.

She recalled a crucial acquisition meeting scheduled for today.

"Ms. Haywood, you have a meeting at 9:30, but I haven't seen you," Sydney said.

Brielle cleared her throat, her face flushed from the fever. "I'm at home. Can you bring the documents from the left side of my

desk? I need to sign them."

"Sure. Are you feeling unwell? Should I bring you some medication?"

"Just a light breakfast will do."

Brielle was too weak to make soup herself. Thankfully, Sydney was coming over. Hearing this, Sydney's eyes flickered with

surprise, and she quickly texted Spencer. [Brielle's unwell today and asked me to bring documents and breakfast. Anything I

should do?]

Spencer saw the message and sensed a golden opportunity. [I'll drive you there. Indeed, there's something I need you to do.]

Now was his chance to deal with Brielle's child once and for all!

Sydney was clueless about Spencer's plans, but the sight of an extra two million in her account made her lips curl into a smile.

Her heart had been thoroughly corroded by wealth, rusted, and stripped of its original color.

Yet, people seldom realized their own downfall.

Clutching the documents, Sydney waited for Spencer in the underground parking lot of Dorsey International. Soon enough,

Spencer rolled up in his multimillion-dollar sports car.

Sydney had seen luxe rides before, but this was her first time sitting in one. As the sleek vehicle pulled up in front of her, her

heart rate soared, pounding with excitement.

Spencer, however, barely gave her a glance. His voice was chilly as he commanded, "Get in."

e was all

Sydney chafed at the cold treatment. When Spencer had been desperate for her, he urgent and warm.

That's right. Back then, he thought Sydney was Brielle. All that tenderness was for Brielle. But it was Sydney who had slept with

him, not Brielle.

Sydney suppressed her inner resentment. Everyone has a tendency to compare, especially women, and this comparison can

become more intense in certain areas. This wasn't a slight against women; it was just like saying women cared more about

appearances than men—it was stating a fact.

Sydney slid into the car, instantly enveloped by the sensation of being surrounded by riches. It was a comfort, like stepping into

paradise for a moment.

If something were to happen between her and Spencer in this car, would she become the heroine of those romance novels? The

thought made Sydney's heart race even more.

She sneaked a peek at Spencer, but his eyes were dark, showing no hint of such intentions. Sydney felt a wave of shame and

even indignation. Was she truly so unappealing?

Unable to resist, she reached out, her hand boldly suggesting her desire. But Spencer was resolutely indifferent, preoccupied

with how to deal with Brielle's pregnancy. His warning was icy. "Get your hand away from me!"

Sydney felt the sting of humiliation as if her last shred of dignity had been stripped away. Her body flushed with heat. She knew

his mind was on Brielle, so what was she even doing? It was nothing short of self-humiliation.

"Mr. Spencer, I didn't mean to, I apologize."

"Ha, don't think you're special just because I've been with you once. There have been many before you. If you weren't Brielle's

assistant, I wouldn't give you a second look, got that?"

Sydney's nails dug into her palms. Was this the stark difference between men's behavior in bed and out? Damn it, it all came

back to Brielle. Because of Brielle, Sydney was subjected to this shame!

Sydney inhaled deeply, managing a thin smile. "I understand. I overstepped."

Money was more important, and without a doubt, if this man couldn't have Brielle, he would eventually come looking for Sydney.

As Sydney lowered her gaze, she had to admit that the Dorsey family had astonishingly good looks. After being with Spencer

twice, her own plain-Jane boyfriend seemed utterly bland. Their life together was like a still pond, utterly lacking in ripples.

Spencer might've been a brute, but he had introduced her to a world of thrilling indulgence.

When the car passed a popular diner, Sydney hopped out to grab soup and some light side dishes—just as Brielle had requested.

Once back in the car, she watched Spencer take out a small vial containing a liquid. He unscrewed the cap and poured the

substance into the soup. The clear liquid blended seamlessly with the soup, leaving only its appetizing aroma, nothing else

detectable.

Though not a fan of Brielle, Sydney wasn't looking to make a killer move. "Mr. Spencer, you're not trying to poison Brielle, are

you?"

Spencer looked up, and his face twisted in a manic grin. "Of course not. It's just a little something to make her more... compliant. Pretend you know nothing, but make sure she eats it all. Call me when she passes out."

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Sydney swallowed nervously, feeling that Spencer had gone off the deep end this time. But she didn't voice her concerns. After

all, when you took someone's cash, you were in for the dash.

If anything went south, Spencer would be there to take the heat, right?

The car soon pulled up to the grand gates of Pearl Estate.

Brielle had brought Sydney here before, and the security guards at the entrance recognized her. They heard that Brielle was

under the weather and needed some home comforts delivered, so they nodded Sydney through without fuss.

Spencer couldn't go up since no resident had come down to escort him. However, he had swiftly bought a house in the complex

overnight. Once Sydney sent the signal, he could waltz in without a hitch as a homeowner.

Following her memory, Sydney reached Brielle's door and rang the bell.

Still weak and slouched on her couch, Brielle heard the doorbell and mustered the get up and answer it. e strength to

Sydney quickly set down the chicken soup and the side salad she had brought on the table. "Ms. Haywood, I got you some

food," Sydney said, her voice oozing concern. "Eat something first, and then you can worry about work."

Brielle was in so much pain it felt like she might pass out. Barely holding it together, she muttered a feeble "Thank you." She then

sat at the table and began to eat the soup and salad without a second thought.

Sydney watched her, wary of any hesitation, but Brielle was focused on warming her stomach and had no suspicions about

Sydney, who had turned so shady in just a few days.

The corners of Sydney's lips curled in triumph as Brielle ate without a second thought.

After finishing the soup, Brielle felt a touch better but was still in pain. She clutched at her ache. and a fine sheen of sweat broke

on her brow.

“Ms. Haywood,” Sydney offered, with a hint of fake sweetness, “if you’re not feeling up to par. why don’t you take a nap on the

couch? Or I could drive you to the hospital?”

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“No hospital,” Brielle murmured, the exhaustion seeping in and easing her pain. “I’ll just take a nap.”

With that, she shuffled over to the couch and collapsed into slumber far too quickly.

Sydney saw Brielle’s rapid descent into sleep and called out tentatively. “Ms. Haywood?” There was no response; Brielle was out

cold.

Sydney felt like she had struck gold without lifting a finger and promptly texted Spencer.

Spencer smirked as he read Sydney’s message. Without wasting a beat, he called Alivia. “Ms.

Alivia, remember our little agreement? It’s time to take care of the problem in Brielle’s belly. I’ve drugged her into a stupor. She’ll

be delivered to you shortly. You’ve got a doctor who can keep a secret, right?”

A glint of triumph flashed in Alivia’s eyes. She hadn’t expected Spencer to deliver so quickly. “Brielle, oh Brielle, you never saw

this coming, did you?”

Memories of her visit to the sanatorium and hearing the shocking truth from Martha’s lips flashed through Alivia’s mind – how

Max had stooped so low as to help Brielle not take the contraception pills. Brielle wasn’t worthy!

Bitterness laced with exhilaration filled Alivia. To dispose of the child Max didn’t know about was to control Brielle’s destiny.

Brielle deserved to grovel at their feet, a plaything in their

hands..

“Spencer, I’ll send you an address. Bring her there,” Alivia instructed, her voice cold.

With her extensive connections from working in the research institute, Alivia knew exactly whom to call – Tessa. The Rowland

family's medical empire was unparalleled, and after ensuring Tessa's discretion, she headed for the destination.

The clinic was private but staffed with top-tier doctors accustomed to the dirty laundry of Beaconsfield's elite. Whether it was a

pristine debutante needing a quiet procedure or a socialite's indiscretion, they were experts.

And their equipment? State-of-the-art, catering only to those who could afford the utmost privacy and care.

Chapter 439

After hanging up the phone, Spencer flashed his homeowner's ID to the gatekeeper and was naturally granted entry.

When he reached Brielle's location, he felt an unexpected surge of excitement. Sydney welcomed him in, and Spencer strode

past her into the house.

There, Brielle lay on the couch, sleeping quietly but looking terribly under the weather. Spencer's brow furrowed in concern. The

medication should have only put her into a deep sleep without harming her. Yet, she appeared so frail.

He glanced at Sydney, who hurried to explain. "Didn't I tell you? Ms. Haywood wasn't feeling well. When I first came in, I noticed

she looked quite pale."

Spencer snorted dismissively, certain that Sydney wouldn't dare harm Brielle. He bent down, about to scoop Brielle into his arms,

when her phone on the coffee table rang and caught his attention – it was Max calling.

Sydney also noticed and was surprised. She knew Max was the president of Dorsey International, but why had Brielle saved his

contact simply as 'Max?'

Others at Dorsey International would've respectfully listed him as 'Mr. Dorsey.'

A first-name basis suggested either equal standing or a close relationship. Sydney dismissed the former, but could the latter be

possible?

Considering Brielle was Spencer's ex-fiancée, her knowing Max on a personal level wasn't odd. Brielle sure knew how to

elevate her status, going so far as to save just his first name.

Spencer's heart nearly stopped at the sight of the flashing screen. He could not answer the call but worried that ignoring it might

raise suspicion. He took Brielle's phone, using her fingertip to unlock it.

The phone unlocked smoothly, but Spencer couldn't bring himself to press the answer button. Instead, he texted Max. [I need a

few hours of sleep.]

Max sat in the Dorsey International penthouse, his brow furrowing upon reading the message. Even though she wanted to sleep,

there was no need for her to disconnect his call.

He'd worked through the night at Dorsey International, troubled by something the evening before. In the morning, he'd checked

his phone to find no messages or missed calls. Brielle sure could keep her cool.

In the end, he compromised and reached out first, only to have the call disconnected.

Was she angry? Shouldn't he be the one upset?

Amused and helpless, he texted back. [Rest well. Call me when you wake up.]

Spencer breathed a sigh of relief at the response and picked up Brielle, preparing to leave.

She smelled delightful, more intoxicating than ever before. Although he and Brielle had been engaged for years, he had never

held her like this. And she had never been so docile before. Previously, it was indifference, then disgust. Her feelings towards

him had always been clear. He knew he had wronged her with the whole Lillian affair, but her involvement with Max was also

betrayal, wasn't it?

He had no other choices. This child could not live. If Max found out about it, marriage would be inevitable.

Spencer carried Brielle out, and seeing Sydney about to follow, he instructed her. "Go back to Dorsey International, to the

penthouse. Make sure Uncle Max knows Brielle is resting and doesn't want to be disturbed."

Sydney hesitated, fearful of lying to the president. "Mr. Spencer, I-

"Just do as I say. You understand?! I'll give you a million if you pull it off." Spencer's voice was light, as if a million dollars was

merely a frivolous sum.

Sydney gave in, though nervous.

"If he doesn't ask, don't say a word. Keep me posted on his whereabouts. Delay him if he tries to leave, got it?"

She nodded, willing to risk it for the money. In the worst case, she'd quit Dorsey International once she had enough.

Spencer didn't linger. Carrying Brielle, he descended the stairs. To avoid drawing attention at the exit, he covered Brielle with his

suit jacket, making it difficult for the guards to recognize

her.

As he placed Brielle in his car, he watched her peaceful face and wished he could whisk her away from Beaconsfield right then.

But Max would surely search for them, and with Max's influence, Spencer had nowhere to hide.

By driving a wedge between Brielle and Max, Spencer saw a chance for himself.

Chapter 440

Spencer's fingertips grazed her cheek, leaning in to steal a kiss, but the thought of another man's child growing in her belly

stopped the kiss dead in its tracks. He pulled back, buckled Brielle into the seat, and drove to the clinic where he was meeting

Alivia.

Alivia was already there, pacing.

The clinic's floors shone like mirrors, and although the façade was unimpressive, the interior was another story. High-tech

machines dotted the space, with doctors in white gloves poring over medical charts.

Alivia was unusually jittery and even suspected Spencer of deceiving her—how could he have drugged Brielle so easily?

When she saw Spencer's car pull up, a cold smile spread across her face.

Spencer carried Brielle in, handing her over to two doctors. During the transfer, Brielle was

she groggy, blind to her surroundings, and deaf to the conversations around her. She felt as were trapped in a dark, silent box, a

terrifying space where her struggles were futile.

She was so tired, wanting nothing more than to sleep forever.

Alivia, seeing Brielle's face, could hardly wait to see her dead, preferably right there on the operating table. But if Brielle died

now, she'd remain a saint in Max's memory.

The living could never compete with the dead.

She looked at Spencer, hesitant. "Spencer, are you sure about this? If Max finds out later and starts digging..."

"I'm sure. Just have the doctors run a check first." His gaze lingered on Brielle's face for a moment before he left her with the

doctors.

Alivia seemed to want to say more, but Spencer was resolute. "Ms. Alivia, my mind is made up. Whatever the consequences, I'm

ready to face them."

In the corner of his eye, Alivia's lips curled in a slow smirk—good, let him bear the brunt of Max's wrath. Spencer was either too

young or too ignorant of Max's fury, which could be hellish.

The doctors, having taken charge of Brielle, noticed her pallor and ran some tests with their gadgets. They exchanged a look.

"Ms. Alivia, Mr. Dorsey, what procedure do you wish us to perform on this lady?"

"Terminate the pregnancy," Spencer said without hesitation.

The doctors' confusion deepened. "Mr. Dorsey, our blood tests show that she's not pregnant. She's experiencing a hormonal

imbalance."

"What? That's impossible!" Spencer's voice spiked. "The pregnancy test showed two lines!"

11:47

Pregnancy tests are generally reliable, with over 90% accuracy, but that's assuming stable hormonal conditions. If a person's

hormone levels are erratic, the results can be misleading. This woman has been in poor health, likely from a childhood Injury,

which makes natural conception unlikely. If she wishes to conceive, she'll need to address her health first."

So Brielle wasn't pregnant after all?

Spencer didn't know whether to feel relieved or lost. Relieved that she wouldn't suffer an abortion, but lost because if she wasn't

pregnant, what could he use to drive a wedge between him and Max?

Alvia was just as stunned by the revelation. Hearing that Brielle's chances of conceiving were slim, she felt as if the heavens

were alding her. This woman might struggle to carry a child. If she somehow managed to marry into the Dorsey family, Max

would surely reject her.

After all, lineage was paramount in such families.

Now, all Alivia needed to do was capture Max's heart. Brielle was doomed to be discarded.

As much as Alivia wanted Brielle to never leave this room, it wasn't realistic. She had no idea how Spencer had managed to

bring Brielle here without leaving a trace. If there were any slip-ups, Max would easily trace it back. Alivia wasn't about to risk

everything for a moment of satisfaction.

"Mr. Dorsey, this woman is suffering. Her appendix is inflamed, which can be life-threatening. We need to perform an

appendectomy immediately."

Spencer was overwhelmed and at a loss for what to do.

But Alivia's eyes sparkled with malice, her lips curving into a smile. "When she wakes up, just tell her the pregnancy was

terminated.