

Master 461

Chapter 461

In the hospital at this ungodly hour, the corridors were packed with people.

Michael's hands gripped his cane, and he sat brooding in a corner. His expression was dark and stormy.

No one dared to utter a word, not even the usually boisterous Tiffanie, who was now curled up in a corner, wishing she could

vanish into thin air.

The Dorsey family would be in chaos with Max's accident. It was the calm before the storm. Everyone was on edge, waiting for

news of Max from the emergency room.

Michael closed his eyes tightly and asked in a cold voice. "Where's that disgrace?"

He was talking about Ryan. No one could have predicted that tonight, Ryan would go off the rails. When Michael had asked Max

to handle the situation with Ryan's child, Ryan hadn't raised any objections, had he? In just a few days, for the sake of his

youngest son, Ryan had rammed into Max with his car right at the gates of the Dorsey estate.

With that single act, he'd thrown away everything he had within the Dorsey family.

William sat off to the side, a hint of glee in his eyes. With Max injured and hospitalized, and Ryan about to be exiled, plus the

third son absent and not returning soon, he was the only one left in the Dorsey family..

Even if Michael were disappointed in William for the moment, all attention would have to be focused on him.

William couldn't let Max leave the hospital unscathed. This was his best opportunity.

"Pop, Ryan's locked up in the Dorsey estate. What do you want to do with him?"

"How should I deal with him?" Michael roared and slammed his cane down hard. "I wish that bastard would drop dead this

instant! What has he done for the Dorsey family over these years. besides loafing around? He's not content with fathering an

illegitimate child and has now injured his own brother over that same kid!"

Michael's chest heaved, and a shadow crossed his face. "Hand him over to the police. For intentional assault, let the law decide

his fate.”

A smile flickered in William’s eyes. Michael was making a statement for Max – choosing justice over family and not even giving

Ryan a chance at exile. It seemed Michael was truly done with Ryan as a pawn.

“Alright, Pop, you just cool down. I’ll have someone take care of it right away.”

Michael sneered, “Don’t think I don’t know what you’re plotting. Even if Max were to become crazy after this, this position is still

his, and no one else in the Dorsey family should even dream of it!”

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Michael had decided when Max was ten that he would be the heir to the Dorsey family. His youngest son had fought his way

through Wall Street at sixteen and had never once disappointed him.

Michael’s high regard for this son was matched only by his disappointment in the others. Max’s journey was supposed to take the

world at large and not just cling to Dorsey International.

It was the first time Michael had openly shown his preference for Max, sending a clear warning to William.

A flicker of hatred passed through William’s eyes, his mouth tasting bitter.

Even if Max went mad, he was still to be the heir. Fine, In that case, William would make sure Max never left the hospital alive.

Then, no one could challenge him for the throne.

“Dad, you’ve got me wrong. I never thought about that. Max is in trouble, and I’m more worried than anyone.”

Too tired to argue, Michael closed his eyes and held his cane tightly.

The emergency room light was still on, and no one knew what condition Max was in.

In the oppressive silence, Faith’s crying broke the stillness. She ran over like a madwoman, dropping to her knees before

Michael.

“Dad, Ryan just lost his head for a moment. Please don’t send him to jail. Dad, I’m begging you. Spencer is also in trouble. I can’t

lose my son and my husband. Dad, please.”

Faith was completely distraught. When she followed the ambulance to the hospital, she had heard about Ryan's actions and felt

like the world was collapsing. Then she got a text from Victoria saying Michael was sending Ryan to the police. She had rushed

over as fast as she could.

"I know Ryan did wrong by Max, and he shouldn't have done it. But Max is in surgery, and so is Spencer, Dad, on account of my

years with the Dorsey family, I've never put a foot wrong. Please spare Ryan this time. We'll leave for another place, and never

to return to Beaconsfield. Please, Dad,"

As she spoke, Faith banged her head on the floor, and blood-streaked her forehead.

Michael felt weary but caught the key information. "What happened to Spencer?"

Tears fell from Faith's eyes as she sobbed. "Brielle, she's gone mad. She tried to kill Spencer. He's lost so much blood, oh..."

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With Max's ordeal behind them and having dealt with Ryan's mess, it seemed only natural that Brielle would be the next thorn to

remove from the Dorsey family's side. This woman had caused nothing but pain for them.

A sly grin flickered across William's eyes, thinking about how Michael was shielding Max. He just had to wait until Max woke up

and found out what happened to Brielle. It would surely lead to a confrontation with Michael, and the bond between father and

son would suffer.

At that point, Michael would come to realize that his most prized son had long since fallen for Brielle.

Michael's gaze was sharp as he turned to one of the attendants. "How is Spencer holding up?"

"The doctors are still working on him. He took a nasty hit to the head, but his life isn't in danger."

Michael let out a sigh of relief and waved dismissively. "Mobilize all of the Dorsey family's resources. Ensure that Brielle spends

the rest of her life behind bars, with no visitors allowed. Strip her of her position at Dorsey International. Once Spencer is up, he

can take over. I don't want that woman anywhere near him again."

William couldn't resist fanning the flames a bit more. "Dad, it seems Spencer hasn't quite given up on Brielle. If he makes

another misstep after this, he might not be so lucky. You saw how ruthless she was this time."

Such a woman had no place in the Dorsey family.

Michael's brows furrowed in disgust. "Make sure the police keep a tight lid on her. There should be no chances for appeal. That

will be all for now. Let's disperse. We can all use some rest."

His tone left no room for argument; his disdain for Brielle was palpable.

It was past three in the morning. At his age, Michael could hardly afford to lose sleep. Resolving these three issues had taken its

toll, and he planned to visit Max again the next day.

But before he had the chance to leave, a commotion in the corridor caught everyone's attention. It was Alivia, pale as a ghost,

and lips quivering with fear.

Michael, where is Max? How is he doing?"

She must have received the news late at night, hastily throwing on a coat that hung loosely from her shoulders. Her slippers

were missing, and her bare feet had rushed through the winter chill, a testament to her desperation.

Michael's heart softened at the sight. "He's still unconscious, but I expect he'll be awake by tomorrow. Alivia, why on earth did

you come out without shoes?"

A wave of relief washed over Alivia as she realized she was indeed shoeless and quickly sat down to recollect herself. "I'm sorry,

I was just so worried... I'm glad he's okay." Her eyes were

red-rimmed, and her feet were frozen stiff.

Victoria, who had a soft spot for Alivia, sprang into action. "I've got a spare pair of shoes in my car. I'll get them."

Michael nodded in approval, admiring Alivia's dedication. "You came all this way in the middle of the night. That's very

considerate of you."

Alivia bit her lip, her cheeks flushing with a mix of worry and relief. "Michael, it's the least I could do. Max means everything to me."

Michael was pleased, Max needed a woman like her by his side. "Alivia, once you've settled things with your research institute

and things aren't so hectic, we should sit down and finalize your engagement."

Her eyes brightened at the suggestion, but she was cautious, worried that pushing too hard might drive Max away. "Let's wait

until Max wakes up. His opinion is what matters most." Her words were calculated, designed to endear her to the Dorsey family.

Michael smiled for the first time that evening and massaged his temple with a weary hand. "I'm getting too old for this. Now that I

know Max is safe, I can rest easy. You should head back, too."

"I'll stay here until he wakes up."

Michael sighed, resigned. "You're a good girl, Alivia."

As Michael was escorted away and Victoria returned with shoes for Alivia, the corridor finally emptied. Only then did a sly grin

creep onto Alivia's face. She had purposely left her shoes behind as a ruse to show the Dorseys Just how much she cared for

Max.

While genuinely concerned for Max's well-being, the news of Brielle's downfall had put her at ease. That phone call she made to

Spencer had been the right move. Under such stress, he had sought out Brielle.

Already shattered by the loss of a child, the public scandal, and now being harassed by her despicable ex-fiancé, Brielle was

bound to crack.

Alivia had always said that her torment of Brielle was just beginning. She hardly needed to lift a finger; her rival would self-

destruct without hesitation.

Alivia's love for Max was like a wildfire, reckless and all-consuming. If Max were to die tonight, she would follow him without

hesitation. Therefore, Max had no choice but to love her and her alone.

Now was the perfect opportunity. Michael, out of loyalty to Spencer, was gunning for Brielle, and with Max incapacitated for the

moment, Allvla had ample time to foster a bond between the two. Everything was unfolding just as she had hoped, smoothly and

without hindrance,

Downstairs at the hospital, members of the Dorsey clan were leaving in a procession of sleek cars.

Victoria climbed into her vehicle, casting a disgusted look at Tiffanie, who lingered outside. "What are you even doing here?

Don't fool yourself into thinking you're one of the Harkins. You haven't managed to earn Everett's affection yet. You're a waste of

space, barely worth the air you breathe. You might as well be dead."

The more Victoria thought about it, the angrier she became. Her disdain deepened at the glimpse of a tattoo peeking from

Tiffanie's neck. "I can't fathom what sort of lowlife your real. father was, but you're certainly his spitting image. Stay away from

the Dorsey's affairs in the future, would you?"

"Mom, I got it. Just go." Tiffanie replied with rare tranquility, her smile unwavering as she watched Victoria.

Victoria's stomach churned at that smile. She had always loathed her daughter and tried many ways to torment her, yet Tiffanie

remained resilient, often popping up when least expected. Instead of breaking. Tiffanie had developed a carefree personality.

Victoria just couldn't understand it.

Too fed up to look at Tiffanie any longer, Victoria drove away.

Both Brielle and Maxie

The moment she left. Tiffanie's smile vanished. Trouble was brewing. were in dire straits, and with her grandfather's orders,

Tiffanie couldn't reach either of them. What should she do?

Tiffanie was beside herself with worry. As for Victoria's recent insults, they barely registered to her. Her primary concern was

Brielle. The Dorseys planned to pressure the police; who knew what Brielle might endure in custody?

Maxie was still unconscious and would be unreachable even if he woke, since his phone had been confiscated.

Frantically pacing. Tiffanie wondered whom she could turn to.

Andrew? Unlikely. He had never been fond of Brielle and probably wouldn't mind seeing her stuck in jail forever.

Kenzo?

Overwhelmed and with dawn approaching. Tiffanie couldn't think clearly.

Aubree was similarly anxious. She had followed the police to the station, where they had initially agreed to let her see Brielle. But

then, a phone call changed everything, and she was abruptly turned away. Someone had given the station orders.

Aubree was raised in the thick of these circles and was no stranger to such scenarios. But with Max incapacitated, she had no

allies to turn to. She was about to lose her cool when she tentatively dialed Andrew's number.

Andrew and Kenzo were holed up in the hospital lounge, having overheard the Dorsey family's conversations. If they showed

themselves, they'd be obliged to engage in pleasantries, something they were both keen to avoid.

The Dorsey family seemed to be on the precipice of a significant shift.

Andrew's lips curled into a half-smile as he casually flipped a doctor's pen over in his hand. "Kenzo, what's your take?"

Sitting with a straight back and an amused twinkle in his eye, Kenzo simply said, "Quite intriguing."

Andrew scoffed softly. "Sometimes I really don't get you. I was worried sick, and you're acting like it's no big deal. Weren't you

even a bit concerned for Max? With Ryan pulling a stunt like that, even I might not have dodged the bullet."

Kenzo's eyes slowly closed, his voice still gentle. "Michael chose him as the heir at age ten, so a little vigilance is natural for

Max."

Andrew's family, the Clements, lacked numerous heirs, so he couldn't quite understand the constant vigilance that came from

being targeted by one's own kin from a young age. Max's journey had likely made him more composed and more ruthless than

most. There was little to worry about. "Even if Max willingly walked into the jaws of death." Kenzo mused, "the reaper himself might think twice before taking him."

Andrew lowered his gaze, his brow furrowed. "And what about Brielle? You heard what they said. Are you okay with letting her rot in jail?"

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Kenzo chuckled softly, his eyes were still warm, but his expression was somewhat laden with hidden meaning. "Andrew, this is a

Dorsey family matter, and it's Max's own business. When he wakes up, he'll handle everything. Let's not rush in and add to the

chaos." One of Kenzo's life principles was to go with the flow.

With his legs encased in combat boots, Andrew kicked the chair impatiently. "Fine, you're the wise one. I'm outta here. No point

hanging around when I can't see anyone."

He strode out, inevitably bumping into Alivia. Wrapped in her coat. Alivia froze when she saw him. What was he doing coming

out of that room?

Andrew nodded at her, said nothing, and walked away.

Alivia was relieved she hadn't called anyone and revealed her true self. Looking back into room, she caught sight of Kenzo.

"Kenzo?"

the

Kenzo came out, ruffling her hair with a smile. "Grandpa's given you a free pass. Stick with Max for a while."

Not that she needed telling. Alivia would have stayed by Max's side anyway.

Once they were both gone, Alivia finally breathed a sigh of relief.

Outside the hospital, Andrew's phone buzzed with a call from Aubree. He could guess what she wanted to say and quickly hit

'end call.'

Aubree stood in front of the police station, and dialed ten times to no avail. Eventually, the line went dead. Even she knew

Andrew wasn't going to help her.

A bitter smile crossed Aubree's lips.

By dawn, the security around the police station seemed impenetrable. It looked like the Dorsey family intended to leave Brielle to

her fate. She was isolated in her own little world.

Aubree was helpless against the Dorseys, the first family of Beaconsfield. Only when Max woke up could anything change.

Noon came, and Max still hadn't stirred.

The atmosphere on the hospital floor was tense. Every medical staffer delivering medication moved with utmost care, each

subjected to multiple screenings.

All non-essential personnel were barred from Max's vicinity – except for Alivia, whom Michael had allowed to stay.

Sitting by the bed, Alivia gazed at Max's face. His eyes were closed, his expression unapproachable. This was the man she'd

been smitten with since childhood.

She took a deep breath, reaching to take his hand, to hold it in hers, but as she neared, his fingers twitched.

Alivia drew back, and when she looked up, she saw his eyes slowly opening.

"Max, how do you feel? She quickly pressed the call button, summoning the doctors.

The doctors swarmed Max, checking his chest wound, then his head. "Max, can you hear us?"

A sharp pain shot through Max's skull as if a hammer was pounding into his brain.

"There's still some bruising at the back of your head. If it hurts, try not to think too much and rest for now."

Max didn't respond; he just closed his eyes again.

The doctor straightened up, addressing Alivia. "Ms. Alivia, Max is okay. Waking up is a good sign. He's still under the effects of

the anesthesia, but give it an hour, and he should be fully lucid. His physical condition is stronger than most – he'll recover quickly."

Alivia exhaled in relief. "Thank you."

But no sooner had the doctors left than Max's eyes flickered open again. Alivia hurried to pour him some water. "Max, want a drink?"

He glanced at her, his eyes devoid of emotion, then shut them once more.

Alivia's heart melted.

An hour later, Max was truly awake, surveying the room with furrowed brows. His voice was hoarse and unsteady. "Where's

Ryan?"

"Michael had him moved out overnight. Max, is there anything that feels off?"

Max tried to sit up but winced at the pull in his chest. Alivia reached out to help, but he brushed her off. "I've got it."

Disappointment flickered in her eyes as she withdrew her hands.

Max sat up slowly, cushioning his waist with a pillow. His head was throbbing too much to think, his face pale.

This was the worst injury he'd had in his life, a parting gift from a desperate Ryan. Ryan had been like a madman last night. It

wasn't like him to be so unhinged unless someone was using him.

The mere thought sharpened the pain in Max's head, forcing him to lie back down, his voice The indifferent. "Get Patrick to bring

me the company files this afternoon."

Even in this state, he was concerned about work.

Alivia found it amusing and puzzling. Since waking up, he hadn't mentioned Brielle once. What was going on?

A tremor of fear ran through her at the thought that crossed her mind.

After making sure Max was sound asleep, Alivia could no longer contain her excitement and promptly left the hospital room.

She sought out the doctor to inquire about Max's condition. "Doctor, I need to know if the blood clot in Max's brain might cause

any complications. Like, could it make him forget certain things?"

"Ms. Alivia, theoretically, it's possible. However, Max was quite fortunate last night. The clot isn't located in a critical area, so the

likelihood is slim but not entirely out of the question. You might want to check with Max himself for specifics."

How could Alivia possibly bring herself to ask Max such a thing? If he truly had forgotten, she wouldn't allow anyone else the

opportunity to bring up Brielle in his presence.

But judging from his current behavior, there was a ninety percent chance he'd forgotten. Otherwise, he wouldn't have neglected

to ask for his phone or about Brielle and would have jumped straight back into work like his old workaholic self.

From now on, Max would belong solely to her. And that bitch Brielle would rot forever in her lonely little prison.

A smirk crossed Alivia's face. "Alright, I'll ask him later."

Her eyes flickered with excitement as she stepped out of the room and walked to the balcony at the end of the hallway. She

dialed a number on her phone.

A lazy voice answered, "Alivia, it's been ages since you called me after going back home. I thought you'd forgotten about me

with all the chasing after Max."

"Jaired, I need a favor."

Jaired chuckled softly, his voice turning tender. "What kind of favor? Here I am, still in the military, and you're already thinking of

using me?"

"Are you going to help me or not?" Alivia was more relaxed with him than with others, and she didn't put on airs as she did with

the rest.

“How could I possibly refuse your request? Go ahead, tell me.”

“Isn’t the police force in Beaconsfield under the control of the Riddle family? I remember your uncle just got promoted, right? I

need you to go to the police station and find someone for me.”

Jaired’s eyes narrowed. Though he wasn’t in Beaconsfield, he occasionally heard some rumors from there. “Who are you looking for?”

“Brielle. I know you have your ways. I want her to go mad in that place. That’s not too difficult for you, right?”

With his languid demeanor and a hint of wild ferocity, Jaired was like a noble jaguar, his muscles taut and ready. “The woman Max is keeping now? Is she worth your effort? Since when did you become so insecure,

Alivia? Instead of staying by his side, which seems exhausting, why not come to me? You know I’ll always welcome you back.”

“Jaired, you’re Max’s friend. I don’t want to hear such talk again. I’m destined to marry him. Help me with this, and when you’re

back, I’ll treat you to dinner, Deal?”

Jaired sighed, rubbing his temples. “Alright.”

After hanging up, Alivia’s smile widened.

Max, Kenzo, Andrew, and Jaired had the closest ties within their circle, but Jaired had always been in the military and rarely got

involved in Beaconsfield’s affairs.

The Riddle family’s political influence was not to be underestimated, and Jaired, being the only son of his generation, had always

carried the family’s hopes. He had stayed in military training and now was winning awards internationally. He’d probably return

home soon.

It would be a good opportunity for Max, Kenzo, Andrew, and Jaired to get together.

It was almost like going back to the old days when the four of them would sit together, and she would secretly watch Max from

the shadows, only to be caught and teased by Jaired for her little crush. But now, this was no longer just a crush.

As long as Brielle was out of the picture, she could be with Max immediately. Alivia was so confident that she didn't notice a

shadow pass by the glass door behind her.

She tucked her phone into her pocket and returned to Max's room. There, she saw Max standing by the window, which was ajar,

letting in the chilly breeze. "Max, you shouldn't be exposed to the cold right now. Let's keep the window closed."

Max was idly playing with something in his fingers, his gaze calm and steady as he looked out..

Alivia moved to drape a coat over his shoulders, but he said, "No need." He always had this way of rejecting her.

His complexion was still a bit pale, but he watched the snow falling outside. "Is it almost Christmas? Winter's been lingering for a

while now."

Joy flashed in Alivia's eyes. At that moment, she was utterly convinced that Max had forgotten that despicable Brielle! It was as if

the heavens were conspiring in her favor!

"Yes, Christmas is just a couple of weeks away. Jared should be coming home soon. You haven't seen each other in quite some

time, have you?"

Max lightly tapped his fingers on the window frame, chuckling. "It has been a long time."

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He delivered the words with a languid and enticing breath, stirring the soul. The winter sun chose that moment to bathe him in its

light. All Alivia could feel was an irrepressible flutter of the heart. "Michael was livid last night. The doctors must have told him

you're awake by now, He'll be here soon, I'm sure."

Max stared out at the world draped in its wintry white, probably feeling the ache in his head. He raised a hand to rub his temples,

"Hmm."

"Max, why don't you rest some more?"

Max settled back into bed, not lying down completely but rather leaning against the headboard with his eyes slightly closed,

seeming somewhat aloof.

His fingers subconsciously caressed the wrist where a rosary should have been, finding nothing. He withdrew his hand, and his

lips pressed together coldly, like a tree encased in frost.

Alivia's lips curled into a tender smile, her heart melting completely. This man was finally, utterly hers.

Half an hour later, Michael arrived.

Leaning on a cane, he looked worse for wear, obviously having had little sleep. With both a grandson and a son fighting for their

lives, he couldn't find rest.

Now, seeing Max awake, he let out a heavy sigh of relief. "It's good to see you're alright. I've made sure that Ryan and Faith are

no longer in Beaconsfield, and they won't be coming back."

Max's expression was muted, unreadable.

"You all just can't seem to give me a break, not even Spencer. They didn't get him out of surgery until the wee hours of the

morning, and he's still not awake."

Michael had wanted to talk about Brielle, but seeing Max raise a hand to press at his temples.

he bit back his words.

"Father, I'm quite tired."

Michael had no choice but to stand. "You rest up. I won't let anyone disturb you for a while. Alivia insisted on staying by your

side. You're not getting any younger. Once you've recovered, we should finalize the wedding arrangements. It's not fair to her to

keep worrying about you like this, is it?"

Alivia, though thrilled on the inside, feigned hesitation outwardly. "Michael, there's no rush. We'll do things according to Max's

wishes."

Michael grew more fond of Alivia by the minute. Both wanted to give Max space, so they left the room together.

Just then, a doctor came to notify Michael that Spencer had awakened. Michael, intent on checking on his other grandson

upstairs, set off with Alivia close behind. Spencer was her comrade, after all. She had crucial information to share.

Once inside the elevator, Alivia spoke up gently. "Michael, perhaps it's best not to mention Spencer's situation in front of Max.

The doctors say he needs as little stress as possible right now, and since this involves Brielle... Well, Max does value Brielle's

professional skills, and it would only upset him."

Her words served dual purposes: to keep Michael from bringing up Brielle in front of Max and to highlight that Brielle's

relationship with Max was purely professional, valued only for her skills.

Michael had had his suspicions about Max and Brielle, but hearing Alivia's reassurances, he felt his doubts were perhaps

misplaced. Max was a workaholic, and it was true that he held those who excelled professionally in high esteem. Brielle might've

come from humble origins, but her talents were undeniable.

"Alivia, Max is blessed to have you."

A glint of triumph flashed in Alivia's eyes, but she kept silent, smiling to herself.

They reached Spencer's room to find his head wrapped in several layers of bandages, now sitting up. His gaze was empty as he

stared out the window.

"You fool!" Michael couldn't contain his anger upon seeing his grandson in such a state. "You let a woman do this to you. You've

really outdone yourself!"

Spencer's face grew even paler, and his eyes rimmed with red. Brielle had truly meant to kill him, a fact that pained him deeply.

He admitted he was scum, having wronged her emotionally in the past, but he never wished her dead. Even as he lay close to

losing consciousness under her assault, he thought perhaps it was better if they both died. If Brielle couldn't be his, she shouldn't

belong to anyone else.

The hatred and panic in Brielle's eyes were like thousands of needles, piercing straight into his

heart.

Before this catastrophe, he thought he was just resentful, but as he lay vaguely conscious in the emergency room, all he could

think of was her.

He shouldn't have treated her like this. How could he be such a bastard?

Where was Brielle now?

"Grandfather, what's become of Brielle?" His first conscious thought was of her.

Upon hearing him inquire about Brielle, Michael's expression darkened further. "Anyone who harms the Dorsey family will not get

off easy. She'll be spending the rest of her life behind bars. That much is certain."

Spencer became frantic. "That won't do. I still have to marry her."

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The moment the words left his lips, Michael's cane came crashing down on Spencer's back, sending a shiver through his body.

Michael's scalp tingled with fury. "Stubborn as a mule! You don't give a hoot about your own folks, but you're all worried about a

stranger. Your dad hit Max with the car last night, and I had to whisk him and Faith out of Beaconsfield in the dead of night.

Spencer, your mom chose to leave you behind; don't you go disappointing her."

Spencer's pupils shrank sharply, deflated like a punctured balloon. He stopped his ruckus about what he would do with Brielle,

simply lowering his gaze and clutching the blanket in front of him with a death grip.

Growing up in a powerful family, he knew what being sent away meant. To outsiders, Michael had washed his hands of them,

and keeping Spencer was just a nod to the last thread of kinship.

"You take the time to get well. Once you're out of the hospital, I'll find you a suitable marriage to keep you from mooning over a

would-be murderer all day long."

Spencer fell silent, and once the old man had left, he realized Alivia was still standing in the hospital room. Her face carried the

same gentle smile as she poured him a glass of water from the dispenser. "Spencer, Michael and I just came from Max's room.

He's forgotten all about Brielle. Congrats, she's all yours now."

Her words treated Brielle like some cheap trinket.

Spencer was about to reach for the glass, but his hand froze mid-air at her words. "Are you certain?"

"Mmhm, the blood clot in his head must've squeezed some nerves. Ever since he woke up. he's been out of it, not a peep

about Brielle."

A flicker of wild joy crossed Spencer's eyes, and his lips curled into a cold smirk.

Alivia patted his shoulder. "Brielle is yours to shape or shatter as you please. Max won't interfere anymore. Once he's healed up,

he'll be marrying me."

"Congratulations to you, Ms. Alivia, for getting your heart's desire.

Alivia chuckled lightly. As long as Jaired hurried things along, getting Brielle into trouble behind bars, everything would be

perfect.

Alivia didn't let Jaired snuff out Brielle's life, not out of kindness; she wanted to drive Brielle mad and then have the crazed

woman attend her wedding to Max.

Murder was mundane, but to crush a spirit was the real thrill.

In prison, Brielle curled up on the narrow cot, feeling the chill seeping through her bones. She wanted to sleep, but the pain from

her wound kept her too alert.

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The prison medic had come once to dress her wounds, admonishing her to stay still before leaving.

Sweat poured down Brielle's face. The sound of the iron door being knocked echoed, and then it swung open. Her blurred vision

couldn't make out the faces of those who dragged her swiftly to an abyssal cell.

Solitary confinement was a common punishment for unruly Inmates. Inside, time lost all meaning, and sanity hung by a thread.

After being unceremoniously dumped onto the cold floor, Brielle was engulfed in darkness so absolute she couldn't even see her

own fingertips. She didn't cry out or scream; it was as if the darkness was born within her heart, becoming one with her very

being.

The guards in the surveillance room watched Brielle maintain her position on the floor, puzzled. "It's been three hours. She hasn't

begged for mercy or even opened her eyes. What's she up to?" If Brielle was scared, her calm face certainly didn't show it.

"Let's just keep her there for now. Of all the people to cross, she had to anger the Riddle and Dorsey families. Both gave us the

same order: take special care of her. A grown man would lose his mind after three days in the hole; she won't last long."

"A shame, she's quite the looker."

The guards, more brutish in nature, couldn't afford to be gentle; it wouldn't do in a place like this.

"Well, you won't get a taste of that."

"That remains to be seen. The Riddle family wants us to drive her mad. What do you reckon is the fastest way to drive a woman

insane?"

The two guards exchanged knowing looks and fell silent.

Unaware of the brewing storm, Brielle didn't know how long she'd be trapped in this darkness. Every time hunger clawed at her,

someone would come to feed her. She didn't even know what she was eating; she couldn't see anything, not even a sliver of

light. Her body sank into deep fatigue as if she would sleep forever. So tired, so drowsy, every part of her felt rusty and slow.

sapping her of the strength to even rise. She was certain that something extra was being added to her meals every day.

After an indeterminate length of time, she glimpsed a hazy light. She tried to move her fingers, only to find her hands restrained

on either side. She looked up to see two men leering down at her, their eyes trailing over her body.

“Ms. Brielle, you’ve got quite the will. It seems we’ll need to get creative to drive you mad.”

Chapter 468

Brielle felt drained, bone-weary to her core. Even when she heard their taunts, she could only muster a faint glance in their direction.

The two men felt slighted by her dismissive gaze and grabbed her hair roughly in a fit of anger.

“Word on the street is you just lost a kid,” one sneered. “Why dwell on it when you can have a bit of fun? How about you make a couple of kids with us, eh? We’ll give you a ride you won’t forget.”

“Oh, and by the way, Ms. Brielle, you might not have heard the latest gossip—your lover got into an accident, banged up his head

pretty badly, and now he’s got amnesia. Can’t remember a thing about you. He’s about to tie the knot with somebody else, Ms.

Alivia.”

Brielle’s emotionless facade trembled as her lashes fluttered in disbelief. She looked up, voice barely a whisper, “Liar.”

her

Seeing her finally react, the men let out a sigh of relief. They threw her into a dingy little room that seemed to frighten her none,

leaving them at a loss. Earlier that day, they’d received a call from a woman who instructed them with grave seriousness on how

to break Brielle’s spirit.

“Us, lie? Isn’t your beau the big-shot CEO of Dorsey International? Do you really think he’s into someone like you? He’s all set to

marry Ms. Alivia, and both families are over the moon. While you’re rotting here alone, we figured you might be a bit lonely. So,

how about you give in to us?”

Their hands started to creep toward Brielle’s collar but were met with a cold, mocking laugh. The fear vanished from her face,

replaced by an icy detachment. Her rational mind was returning. “So even with me locked up here, some people are still nervous,

huh?"

The color drained from the men's faces, but she pressed on, her gaze piercing. "Because if I ever got out, whatever she's got

now would be as fleeting as a mirage.

Faith, being who she was, would have made sure the whole Dorsey family knew about her son being knocked out, including

Michael. And Tiffanie had always said Michael was fiercely protective—so the decision to throw Brielle in jail might have been his

idea.

But a man of his stature, with years in the business world, wouldn't resort to sending two thugs to defile a woman. Michael

probably didn't care how she fared in jail; he just wanted her gone for good.

Someone was terrified of her getting out, scared of her showing her face again. That was why they were so concerned about her

well-being in this cell.

Brielle had felt devoid of spirit, almost too numb to resist what seemed like fate. Maybe she really was cursed, abandoned by

fortune itself. But she couldn't let anything happen to Max. As long as she wasn't dead, as long as she had a breath left in her,

she had to get out and see what was really going on.

— burst of fun they grabbed her throat. "You think you're

tough, huh? Well, make sure you scream loud, cuz we want to enjoy ourselves!"

Brielle's face turned crimson from the lack of air, but she didn't forget to throw a threat back at them.

"Choosing not to kill me outright suggests that someone behind you wants me alive. If you mess with me like this, aren't you

afraid of what I might do to you once I'm out? I've crossed the Dorsey family, even laid one of their heirs. Who knows what I

might do to you if I lose it?"

Her laugh was harmless, yet it sent chills down their spines.

Suddenly, the door burst open, and a uniformed officer appeared at the threshold. "What the hell are you two doing? Who gave

you permission to take justice into your own hands?"

The men jumped, releasing Brielle immediately, muttering, "But we were told-

The officer waved them off, his impatience clear. "Told what? You don't even know which side will win, and here you are, eager to

prove your loyalty. Do you want to end up like she said, targeted for revenge when she's out? Let her go. Treat her well. Even a

woman in chains sees further than you. Your lot's destined to be jailers for life."

The men dared not defy him, casting a resentful glance at Brielle as she arched an eyebrow, the corner of her mouth curling into

a sly grin.

"Still laughing? Are you trying to provoke us? Is that it?!" Their fists clenched, ready to strike, but recalling the officer's words,

they held back.

Brielle closed her eyes, ignoring their vulgar tirades, and made her demands. "I want a shower, I want a decent meal, and no

funny business with my food. I need a softer bed; the current one's giving me aches."

"Say that again?!" the men spat, enraged and ready to lash out.

Chapter 469

Brielle closed her eyes with a detached expression, a clear sign she had no intention of struggling. "Go on, hit me. But once I'm

out of here, you'll be regretting you ever wanted that arm. Isn't the President of Dorsey International my secret lover? If he really

forgets about me. well, I snagged him once, and I can do it again. Once I've got him wrapped around my finger. you guys are

toast."

Her brazenness bordered on shamelessness. Fighting with someone shameless only left you powerless. The two men were left

speechless by her words, their faces turning red with frustration, feeling utterly humiliated.

The man at the door in uniform cast a long look at her, then chuckled, "Ms. Brielle, you do have

guts.”

Feeling that the anticipated punch hadn't come, Brielle looked up and met the gaze of the uniformed man at the door. She was

too calm, too rational, her gaze indifferent.

The man in uniform raised an eyebrow and instructed the other two. “Do as she says.”

Hearing this, Brielle lowered her eyes. “Should have done that in the first place.”

The two men by her side were seething with anger. “Don't get too cocky. It's not certain you can get out of here. If you push us

too far, you won't even know what hit you.”

Brielle looked up, a cold smile flickering across her face. “That's why someone's in charge and you're not. With your wits, you're

better off staying guards forever.”

“You!” They glared at Brielle as if she were a monster. They were brothers who had been in this place for years and had never

encountered someone as tough as her.

Grinding their teeth in silent rage, they held back, knowing all too well what it meant to deal with the President of Dorsey

International – the heir to the Dorsey fortune. If this bitch managed to charm her way out, they wouldn't just lose their jobs. They

feared her vengeance would be tenfold.

They knew better than to treat her like any other. The orders were clear: drive her mad. But with her wits about her, even if they

tried to break her a hundred times, she would remain unshaken. The brothers weren't fools. They exchanged a look and decided

to drop it.

*Meanwhile, Brielle closed her eyes, deep in thought.

In the hospital.

Max's fingers lightly tapped on the keyboard, but after only a few emails, his head began to throb. He massaged his temples and

turned to the doctor beside him. “When will this headache go away?”

“Well, Max, it's hard to say. Maybe a month, maybe half a year. It depends on the case.”

1/2

11:54

Max's fingers paused, his expression growing colder.

He was in good shape, his chest wound was healing well, and Michael was surprised to see him dive back into work so quickly. It

was both reassuring and remarkable. "If the other Dorsey family members had half your sense, we wouldn't be in this mess,"

Michael said as he got up, feeling completely at ease. "Max, you should rest more. You've lost weight. No matter how busy work

is, you need to take care of your health."

"Father, how's Spencer?"

As an elder, it was only right to show concern for the younger ones.

"That boy sulked for an afternoon when he found out his parents were sent away. Then, suddenly, he couldn't sit still and kept

begging to be discharged. He's probably just restless."

Max nodded as if asking out of routine before smoothly changing the subject. "Spencer is too impulsive; he can't keep this up.

It's time for him to settle down and get married."

Michael agreed but hadn't considered any potential brides. "Max, which family's daughter do you think would be suitable?"

"The Rowland family, Sophia."

Michael frowned. Sophia?

Tessa was the well-known daughter of the Rowland family, but the other girls were less prominent. Spencer might not have been

the most capable, but he was still a legitimate heir of the Dorsey family.

"Father, the Dorsey family doesn't need a political marriage to secure its status, but the public sees Spencer as vulnerable

without the support of his parents. Marrying a favored daughter from another family could lead to resentment. We can't have

another Everett incident. Sophia knows how to keep her thoughts to herself; she's secured her own place while staying loyal to

Tessa and strong-willed. That's exactly the kind of wife Spencer needs."

Michael was persuaded, or rather, he trusted his son's judgment implicitly.

"Alright, I'll send a proposal to the Rowland family as soon as I return. Once Spencer is out of the hospital, we'll arrange their wedding."

Chapter 470

"Sure." Max's response was as nonchalant as ever, and he fell silent again.

Michael heeded Alivia's advice and refrained from bringing up Brielle in Max's presence, wanting to avoid any chance of Max

showing her leniency due to her talents. With work to attend to, Michael didn't plan on lingering.

Max was healing at a rate that would put any ordinary man to shame. An injury like his would've been a death sentence for most.

Not only had he dodged a potentially fatal collision, but here he was, ready to check out of the hospital after just three days.

"Where's my phone?" He directed the question at Michael, who had taken charge of the device. not wishing to disturb his

recovery. But now that Max was up and about, there was no need to withhold it.

"It's in the lounge at the end of the hall." As Michael's words settled, Alivia pushed through the door from outside.

"Alivia, go fetch Max's phone for him, will you?" Michael said.

Alivia had initially stored the phone away, so it made sense for her to retrieve it now.

A flicker of something crossed Alivia's face as she nodded slowly and stepped out of the room. She glanced back inside the

hospital room, where Max sat on the bed, his demeanor as icy as ever, unchanged from before the incident with Brielle.

Content with what she saw, she pulled the phone from her bag. The phone had never made it to the lounge – it had been with

her all along. Aubree had called nearly a hundred times, and Alivia hadn't answered any, even blacklisting her number.

She had also deleted Brielle's WhatsApp and combed through all the photo albums. Max was never one for pictures, so the

albums were empty, which reassured her that Brielle hadn't broken all of his rules.

After blocking Brielle's number and completing her tasks, Alivia returned to the hospital room with the phone in hand. "Max, I've

been charging your phone for you the past few days. It should still be good to go."

Max took the phone, but he didn't rush to check anything.

"You sure you want to be discharged?" Michael pressed.

"Dad, I know what I'm doing. There's an important meeting this afternoon."

Michael sighed, feeling both pride and frustration toward his youngest son. He wished others would step up like Max, yet also

hoped Max would learn to take a break.

Once Max made up his mind, there was no changing it. Michael arranged the discharge, and an hour later, Max was down at the

Dorsey Tower, with Alivia in tow.

Alivia was heading to Dorsey International, and Max had no reason to stop her.

But waiting inside the Dorsey International lobby was a woman. With dark circles under her eyes, Aubree was nearly asleep on

the couch. At the sight of Max, she sprung up reflexively.

Aubree had been beside herself with worry these past days. She finally heard that Max was awake, but he hadn't answered her

calls or even blocked her.

Now, seeing him walk into Dorsey International with Alivia, Aubree wondered if Max was truly about to ditch Brielle. "Max! You

jerk! You're the worst! How could you even think about abandoning Brielle? Do you have any idea what Bri-

Brielle had lost a child.

The thought brought tears to Aubree's eyes, and as she looked past Max to the poised Alivia, she clenched her teeth. "Jerk! You

are gonna end up in hell, just like that scumbag Andrew!"

Max's brow furrowed for a split second. He glanced her way but kept walking to the private elevator.

Aubree, chilled by that glance, stood frozen.

Alivia lingered, offering Aubree a tender smile. "Miss Aubree, Andrew was right not to fancy you. A crude woman like you could never catch his eye."

Aubree squinted, sizing up Alivia from head to toe. Dressed in Chanel, with a Patek Philippe on her wrist, Alivia looked both

professional and gracious, a stark contrast to Aubree's sleep-deprived appearance.

Aubree scoffed, "No matter how pretty you package yourself, Ms. Alivia, Max still hasn't chosen you. You're still following him,

and he hasn't even glanced back, has he? You think you're so high and mighty, yet you haven't even touched his hand. Bri,

though? She's had him, inside and out, more times than you can count."

"You!" The warmth vanished from Alivia's face, replaced by a cold, thin smile. "Being used and tossed aside like trash is nothing

to boast about. If you were any good, you'd be with your friend instead of lurking around Dorsey International."

She stepped closer, her voice dropping to a whisper meant only for them. "And by the way. I made sure your friend got special

attention in jail. She lost a child, didn't she? Since she's so keen on having one, maybe carrying the child of some inmate

wouldn't be so bad, right?"