Chapter 24 The small surveillance room was so quiet that the drop of a pin could be heard .

The schools burly security guards , usually a force in he reckoned with seemed downright fragile standing in front of Dominik Dominick stood before the screen , arms crossed , his brow furrowed , exuding : uding an air of a authority th that could make anyone feel small .

Michelle personally called up the footage from the incident and then stepped aside to let Dominic watch it The video , although silent o ered a clear view due to the cameras perfect angle , and with only the three kids in the frame at that moment , everything was easy enough to follow .

At rst.

Grayson was sitting by the small pool and reading alone .

Stella wasnt in the picture at all .

A few seconds later, Serena appeared in the frame.

She bounced to Grayson with a painting in her hand .

Paisleys eyes immediately locked onto the painting .

Though the camera angle was distant , she recognized it right away it was her painting.

The boy in the painting was Grayson .

That explained why Serena had approached Grayson .

She knew Grayson was her brother .

Paisley felt a pang in her chest , her grip on Serena tightening slightly as she processed this revelation .

The video continued to play.

Serena stood about three feet from Grayson , holding up her drawing and showing it to him .

That was when Stella showed up .

She shoved Serena to the ground without hesitation .

The push was hard Serenas body ew about two feet away before crashing onto the ground with a heavy thud .

Paisleys heart tasted painfully as she save the scene .

She quickly ran her hands over Serenas back and hips to make sure nothing was o was out of place .

She then checked on Serenas hands and found her palms were dirty and covered with deep scrapes , Paisleys breath caught in her throat and she felt her heart break .

Dominick noticed Paisleys actions and also saw Serenas injuries .

They were much worse than those on Crayson or Stella .

But in the video , Serena didnt cry Despite being hurt , she got up , dusted herself o , and went back to Grayson , still trying to show him the painting But Stella wasnt done .

She grabbed the painting from Serenas hands , ripped it up , and tossed it in the trash Paisleys eyes lled with tears as she watched the video .

Serena ignored the Ithy trash bin and reached in , trying to get her painting back , but she got nothing .

Just then , Stella said something to her , and Serena nally lost her temper.

She charged at Stella and headbutted her Stella fell and cried .

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Grayson rushed over to check on Stella and got angry at Serena .

He pushed her again and again again .

Serena was nally pushed to her limit .

She scratched Graysons neck in retaliation until she was knocked down The whole sequence of events became crystal clear .

It was true that Serena had approached Grayson rst, but Stella had rst punch .

thrown the

Serena hadnt freaked out for no reason shed simply reacted when two

bigger kids came at her .

Paisley , her heart aching for her daughter , let out a bitter laugh .

Mr.

Vanderbilt, is this what you call good upbringing? At that moment, Paisleys emotions were a whirlwind relieved , angry , and beyond frustrated.

Dominicks expression darkened , and he turned to Grayson Grayson , why ar are you lying ! Grayson was clearly atraid of his fathers anger , and he cowered behind Marissa, refusing to speak.

Marissas face wasnt much better .

Not long ago, she had condently criticized Paisleys daughter and passed all the buck to Serenu.

But now , it dear that Stella had started dungs and had lied about it Anxious that Dominick might be mad at her .

Marissa quickly shot a sharp look at Stella and scolded .

Stella , how could you lie to us ? Im disappointed in you , I told you , lying is not what a good kid should do .

Now , look at you , you even dragged Sonny into the mess and helped you lie to us .

Now , apologize to Serena 1/2 1:30 PM ď ď Chapter 24 Stella had already been ignored ever since they came to the o ce.

Now , being seriously scolded by her aunt , she couldnt hold back any longer.

to Sonny is a y is a bad kid ... You even said shes cuter than n She burst into tears while speaking .

Auntie Marissa , you said anyone e who got close to S dont want Sony to be taken away from me

up ! Apologize now , dont try to argue your way Marissas eyes went

wide with shock , her grip on Stella tightening as she quickly cut her o

Shut up ! Apol out of thi Stella , still upset , reluctantly mustered , Tm sorry, I shouldnt have lied Apologize to Serena ! Marissa snapped, her attitude completely di erent from how she acted a while ago Stella said with sobs , Tm sorry , Serena Grayson apologize , Dominick ordered coldly , his voice like sce However , Grayson hid behind Marissa and refused to speak.

Apologize Dominick said again , his voice low but full of authority , Sorry Grayson screamed with his eyes squeezed shut and then immediately burst into loud, inconsolable tears.

y too .

I shouldnt have bumped Serena had stopped crying .

Hearing Graysons apology, she trembled as she turned to face Grayson

Im sorry Stella

or scratched my bro ... him

She trailed o , as if trying to convince herself that Grayson was not her brother anymore npo After the kids apologized to each other , Michelle and the teachers in the room all let out a collective sigh of relief.

All right , thats senled , Michelle said , still trying to case the tension .

Lets all just be good friends from now Paisley , however , didnt have any of it.

She shot back sharply .

No, thank you.

Im seriously questioning your schools ability to educate .

Im taking my daughter out of here Without another word , she turned around and walked out, cradling Serena in her arms.

She could barely stand to be around these people a moment longer it felt suocating.

and blocked her But just as she was about to open the car door to put Serena inside , she heard footsteps behind her .

Dominick caught up to her a action .

Paisley , tell me , whos the father of this girl ? His voice was urgent and desperate , and the longing in his eyes was painfully clear .

Paisley , fed up with his interference , pushed his hand away from the car door and replied , Not you , anyway your business .

Then who ? Dominick demanded , his tone growing more intense .

He wondered if it was the man she called Honey on the call Glancing at Marissa , who was still holding Graysons hand tightly .

Paisley gave Dominick a cold look and said , None of With that , she slamned the car door shut and got in , not sparing Dominick another glance.

Dominick saw through the window , and his gaze xed on the face of the girl inside .

Her resemblance to Paisley was undeniable .

A chill ran through him as he looked at her , his expression totally icy .

He couldnt believe that Paisley had a child with another man .

Paisley rolled down the window slightly , her voice dripping with sarcasm.

Mr.

Vanderials, your familys waiting for you behind.

So , do me a favor and stop pestering me , okay ? She slammed the window shut , started the car , and drove o , leaving Dominick seething with fury 2/2