

Mr. Kane Got Blacklisted Chapter 2051

[Eleven Jewell]

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After the crowd dispersed, Aubrey led Stella upstairs to her office.

Reflecting on her situation, Stella considered, ‘Darcie is sneakier than Jaylene.

Darcie would plant traps in unexpected places but wouldn’t openly make things hard for her target. Like this office, it rivals Keegan’s office in quality. It’s spacious and brightly lit.¹ “Ms. Hall, this is your office. We’ve prepared an office for your assistant and the secretarial team next door. If you need anything, they’re just a call away,”

Aubrey explained.

Surveying the space, Stella inquired, “And where is Darcie’s office?”

“It’s one floor up from here,” Aubrey answered.

Stella dismissed Aubrey with a wave. “Okay, you may leave now. I’ll explore the area myself.’ After Aubrey had left, Stella turned to Xavier and requested, “Xavier, could you get me a boba tea? Choose any flavor, just ask for less sugar.”

Xavier nodded and left the office.

Once alone, Stella swiftly locked the door and retrieved a bug-detecting device from her bag, a gift from Keegan, to search the office for any hidden surveillance.

Keegan had informed her that the detector would buzz upon detecting any eavesdropping tools. She diligently examined the office but initially found nothing, leading her to wonder if they were being overly cautious.

After wandering around without discovering anything, Stella placed the detector on the coffee table, whereupon the detector immediately buzzed. She paused, then traced the buzzing to a plant pot.

Stella found a cling film-wrapped item under the moss in the pot. She smirked, re-covered it, and texted Keegan: [You were right. Found a bug in a plant pot.] Keegan responded promptly: [Leave it.] Stella replied: [I've not touched it. Is Darcie being too cautious? Did she feel threatened by a newcomer like me after decades in this field?] [It may not be her doing.] Keegan suggested.

This made Stella pause, contemplating, 'If not Darcie, could it be Jaylene? After all, Jaylene lives in Royalpark Villa and uses hypnosis to get Keegan's attention.

Even if Keegan says he can't remember anything, wouldn't Jaylene still worry a bit?' With determination, Stella messaged: [Send Jaylene a coffee.] Keegan objected: (Absolutely not.) Stella responded with a playful gif. [Is that a request for a divorce?] Keegan, frustrated, thought, 'Stella knows how to push my buttons. If I ordered the coffee, it might help her now, but she'd surely hold it over me in any future disputes. She was utterly unreasonable!'

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Realizing that her threats had no effect, Stella shifted her strategy, employing charm. She messaged: [Honey, help me out, and I'll do whatever you ask for the rest of this month.] Keegan, eyeing the calendar, responded: [There's only 13 hours left in the month.] Stella quickly bargained. [Then I'll extend it to next month. You can call the shots next month, your word is law.] Having been promised the moon too

many times, Keegan did not buy it. He feigned reluctance, typing: [Nah, I don't have the knack for being in charge. I'd rather not take on that responsibility. I think you're doing a fine job and I'm happy to let you take the reins. The hard work of being Mrs. Kane suits you.] Stella was momentarily speechless, realizing that she had overplayed her hand with promises. To make a compelling offer, Stella decided to play her trump card.

She suggested: [Honey, do you remember that queen's costume from the drama? There were more gorgeous outfits. If you like, I could call Daniel, and we could buy them all. I could wear each one for you in the evening. How does that sound?] Keegan, startled by the proposition, coughed on his water, his ears turning red.

Stella, growing impatient while watching the "typing" indicator flash on her phone, finally received a message from Keegan: [I'm not ordering it for her, but you can use my account.] Elated, Stella sent a sticker saying: [You're the best.] Keegan amused yet stern, reminded Stella: [Don't forget your promises. Or I won't trust you again.]

To forge a mutually beneficial alliance of mischief, Stella swallowed her pride and contacted Daniel.

Daniel, bypassing Stella's lengthy explanation, suggested, "Next time you're in a historical drama, have your guy come pick. It'll save me a fortune if he buys them after you're done filming."

Stella was speechless.

After that, Daniel sold her the costumes, but the total cost was less than the queen's costume alone. Confused, Stella confronted, "Did you overcharge me for that costume last time?"

Daniel shrugged off her concern. "Prices during a trend aren't the same months later."

i'm at a loss because of you, Keegan!' Stella thought to herself.

When Keegan saw the payment screenshot Stella sent, confirming her purchase, he sent her the account verification code.

Stella, using Keegan's account, ordered a bouquet with a personalized note.

Caline was surrounded by office buildings, making the boba tea shop below extremely popular. Xavier had to queue for almost half an hour.

While on the elevator, Xavier encountered Jaylene, who was with a colleague.

She glanced at the boba tea in his hand, then greeted him with a smile. "Xavier, it's been a while since I've seen you, and you haven't been in touch."

Trevor had been busy traveling the world with only one bodyguard, leaving Xavier behind to handle some affairs at the company. It had indeed been almost a month since Jaylene last saw him.

However, Xavier did contact her with a holiday message. He assumed Jaylene likely overlooked it amid the many greetings she received, making his attempt unremarkable.

Xavier smiled and replied, "I've been busy."

Jaylene teased, "So, Trevor turned you into Stella's assistant, and now you're even fetching boba tea? Arent your office duties enough?"

At Caline, there was a well-stocked pantry with high-quality tea, coffee, and fruit tea, so employees rarely needed to leave for drinks. They usually opted for deliveries or relied on pantry staff, following a policy set by Darcie to maintain efficiency and minimize work disruptions.

Xavier kindly responded, "Ms. Hall is still getting acquainted with everything here, so I'm not too swamped at the moment."

He handed a boba tea to Jaylene. "Got one for you too."

Jaylene smiled, thanked him, and casually pulled out a piece of chocolate from her pocket to offer to Xavier. Then, shaking her boba tea, she said, ■' Let's grab a meal together once things settle down. My treat."

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Xavier nodded as he watched Jaylene and her colleague step out of the elevator.

Her colleague, intrigued, remarked, "Jaylene, you seem to know Ms. Hall's assistant quite well?- Jaylene offered a polite smile but chose not to respond.

Despite Xavier's lack of flexibility and adaptability in his work, qualities that Jaylene silently disapproved of, their acquaintance was reignited under unexpected circumstances.

When Xavier came for his job interview, Jaylene happened to be on her way to see Trevor for something and ran into Xavier, who had just finished his interview. Jaylene had forgotten about him until he took the initiative to greet her, reminding her that they were classmates.

For Jaylene, memories from elementary school weren't particularly pleasant, so when Xavier brought it up, she responded with a lukewarm reception.

To her surprise, Xavier proved to be competent. Trevor, known for his exacting standards, had gone through numerous assistants without finding one to his liking, yet he selected Xavier to work for him.

Jaylene was the type who didn't bother maintaining relationships with people she wasn't close to, and Xavier fell into that category. However, Darcie always encouraged her to keep in touch with Xavier, citing their shared history as classmates and suggesting they could support each other.

This advice gained significance when Jaylene learned from Xavier about Stella's paternity test.

Initially, Jaylene couldn't see how Xavier could be of any use to her, especially before Stella arrived at Caline. She viewed him as rather pointless. But now, Darcie's caution didn't seem entirely unfounded.

Handing her boba tea to a colleague, Jaylene said, "Julia, you can have this. N Julia Harper was taken aback. "But he bought it for you, aren't you going to drink it?"

Jaylene replied with a smile, "I've been on a diet recently, and this is too high in calories for me."

'At five feet five tall and only ninety pounds, it was hard to imagine why she thought of losing weight.' Julia internally criticized, but still thanked Jaylene and took the drink.

"By the way, could you let our department colleagues know to return promptly after lunch? I have something to discuss," Jaylene added.

Julia was surprised. 'Jaylene is just a team leader in one of the Perfume Blending Department's teams. It seems odd for a team leader to summon everyone like this.' But Julia didn't dare object, knowing Jaylene was Darcie's daughter and too important to offend. So, she gently suggested, "Jaylene, if it's work-related, maybe Ms. Abbott could handle it. She's been here longer and knows everyone well, so she's better at scheduling."

Jaylene replied, "It's not work-related. Just let them know as soon as you can."

With that, Jaylene made her way back to her office.

Julia was genuinely perplexed. ‘Was it even her responsibility to notify people about personal matters?’ After some consideration, Julia decided to inform Aubrey about the situation.

Aubrey instructed Julia to keep a close watch on Jaylene, as any trouble was likely to involve her.

Meanwhile, Jaylene had just settled into her office when her phone rang. “Is this Miss Jaylene Saun?”

“Yes, speaking,” Jaylene replied.

“Your flowers have arrived. Please come downstairs to collect them,” the caller informed her

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Jaylene frowned upon receiving the call about the flowers. She stated, “I didn’t order any flowers.”

“The flowers were ordered by a gentleman with the last four digits 8286 on his phone. He insisted that you collect them. Could you come down, please?” the caller replied.

‘8286? Isn’t that Keegan’s number?’ Jaylene thought, a hint of surprise in her mind. She quickly stood and said, “Give me a minute. I’ll be right down.”

Downstairs, a delivery guy stood at the reception with a large bouquet of roses.

People coming in and out could not help but glance at it, whispering and speculating among themselves. Flowers delivered to the office were common in dramas but rare in reality, sparking curiosity about the recipient.

When the elevator doors opened, Jaylene approached gracefully. After confirming her identity, the delivery guy had her sign for the flowers before handing them over.

Holding the bouquet and blushing, Jaylene asked, “Excuse me, did the gentleman who ordered these flowers say anything else?”

The delivery guy shook his head, then added, “He asked the florist to include a card, it’s tucked inside the bouquet.’ Jaylene found a beautifully wrapped card inside the flowers.

The receptionist, unable to contain her curiosity, asked, ‘Ms. Saun, are these from your boyfriend?’

Flushing, Jaylene tucked the card back into the bouquet, murmuring, “No, just a friend.”

The receptionist understood and said, “Ah, so it’s from an admirer.”

Jaylene offered a small smile without denying it and went back upstairs with the flowers. She encountered many colleagues along the way. Soon, the news of her receiving flowers from an admirer spread like wildfire among her colleagues.

Jaylene chose not to correct the growing rumors. Although the message on the card was congratulatory on her new job and wished her well, it was from Keegan. Jaylene was eager to stir jealousy in Stella, hoping to provoke a reaction that would turn Keegan against Stella.

Back in her office, Jaylene snapped a photo of the roses and texted Keegan:

[Keegan, thank you for the flowers. I really like them.] Keegan had muted Jaylene’s messages, and it was not until lunch, as he was about to ask Stella if she had eaten well, that he saw Jaylene’s message.

The photo of the flowers baffled Keegan, prompting him to contact Stella urgently: (Did you send her flowers in my name?) Stella, having just loaded her tray in the cafeteria and sat down, responded cheerfully upon seeing Keegan's message: [I only used your phone number to order the flowers. I didn't put your name on the card. How she interprets it is up to her.] Keegan, frustrated, replied: [Is it proper to use your husband as bait?] Stella reassured Keegan: [I'll wear those costumes every night this week.

Whatever you want, I'll do it to make you happy, okay?] Keegan's brief moment of happiness quickly faded, his expression darkening again. He typed: [With the situation as it is, what can I do? Always with the promises!] Stella chuckled softly and typed: [I'm the one who ordered the flowers, why are you so upset?] Keegan asked: [She sent a message thanking me. How am I supposed to respond?] Stella replied: [You managed to bewitch her by pretending to have amnesia before. Why can't you do that now?] Keegan felt cornered and typed: [That's different. Pretending not to remember you was enough to lower her guard. But now, you're enticing her. Have you considered that whatever you do in my name is attributed to me? If she gets clingy when we meet and I don't play along, won't she get suspicious?] Stella replied: [Bingo. Not playing along is the goal. Give her a sense of uncertainty, and she'll be hooked. As long as you keep up your unattainable persona, I'll handle your "other woman".] Keegan was exasperated, swallowing his frustration to calm down and sent:

[Fine, I'll do as you say. You're handling my "other woman", then who will handle yours?] Stella frowned and typed: [What "other man" do I have?]

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Keegan scoffed and typed: [Who sent you that holiday greeting on your phone that you stared at for so long during our stay at Great Grandpa's house?] Stella paused, recalling the night she received a holiday greeting from Marshall before bed. She had spent a long time pondering over it, especially thinking about the rabbit charm, causing her to stare at the phone for a while.

She texted: [Weren't you asleep then?] Keegan sent: [It doesn't matter whether I was asleep or not. I'm asking you, from now on, can I reply to his messages for you?] Stella was indifferent and replied: (Do as you wish. I have nothing to hide.) Satisfied with her response, Keegan did not mind being used by Stella anymore.

He even asked for advice: [So, how should I respond to her?] Stella texted: [No need to reply. From now on, unless I'm with you, don't respond to anything she sends. She'll make her own assumptions.] Keegan was speechless and did not reply.

As Stella was typing, Jaylene sat down across from her with her tray. Stella glanced at her and discreetly closed the chat window.

With a smile, Jaylene said, "Stella, how do you find the cafeteria food? If it doesn't suit your taste, there are some decent restaurants downstairs. I can have someone get you something else."

Stella paused for a moment, then smiled politely. "No, this is fine."

As Jaylene wiped her utensils, she mentioned casually, "Stella, I have some flowers in my office. You should come by later and take a few for your vase. It might cheer you up during work." 'There she goes.' Stella thought. She smiled at Jaylene and asked, "Oh? What kind of flowers?"

Before Jaylene could respond, a colleague from the next table chimed in, ■' Roses, red roses. A big bunch of them."

Stella appeared intrigued and asked, "Roses? Jaylene, do you have an admirer?"

Jaylene smiled and replied, “Just a friend.”

Stella pressed further, “Which friend?”

The colleague quickly answered, “The delivery guy was quite loud. He said a man with the last four digits 8286 on his phone. I remember it clearly.”

As soon as Stella heard that, she pretended to stiffen, her smile gradually fading away.

Pretending not to notice, Jaylene stopped the colleague. “Nonsense, it’s just a normal friend.”

Stella forced a smile and said, “You’ve quite a generous friend.”

After that, Stella seemed to lose her appetite, hastily eating a few bites before leaving.

Seeing Stella in low spirits, Jaylene was very happy and continued her meal.

While Jaylene was eating, her phone beeped.

Jaylene glanced at her phone and saw Stella’s latest social media post—a wedding photo of Stella and Keegan. Stella had even gone as far as changing her profile background to that same picture.

With a sneer, Jaylene hesitated before tapping the like’ button on the photo. She couldn’t help but think, ‘Back when Stella and Keegan were madly in love, they kept their relationship low-key on social media.’ But now, all of a sudden, after those flowers supposedly from Keegan arrived, Stella couldn’t wait to flaunt their photo.’ ‘It just shows she’s trying to compensate for what she’s missing.’

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Stella, fully immersed in her role, had neglected to eat properly. She sat at her desk snacking on treats Keegan had packed for her while going through documents Aubrey had given her on Caline's different departments.

Since rebranding from Enchanted to Caline, the company had been growing steadily. Darcie had orchestrated a big reshuffle among the core team members, and those who remained were probably her closest allies. Stella understood that to infiltrate their circle, she and Trevor had to position their own people within the company.

"Is this new girl we're bringing in gonna be reliable? She's so young, born in 2002," Stella thought to herself.

Her phone buzzed, pulling her out of her thoughts. It was Felicity, asking about Stella's first day at work.

Stella grabbed her phone, snapped a quick picture of her office, and sent it to Felicity, saying, "What do you think? Pretty big, huh?"

Felicity replied in amazement, "Wow, that's massive! Need any help? Hire me!"

Stella chuckled and replied: [Vermont offered you five grand a month to be his assistant, and you refused. You think you'd like my salary?]
Felicity typed: [It's different. Earning his money is like moving it from one pocket to the other. Earning yours is real profit. The amount doesn't matter. It's about sharing the wealth and facing difficulties together.]
Stella was lost for words. She responded: [You picked up bad habits fast. Look at you now, you sounded just like that miser Vermont.] Felicity laughed heartily and asked: [So, first day in, did the motherdaughter duo

give you a hard time?] Stella replied: [I sent Darcie away, and as for Jaylene, she poses no threat.] Felicity inquired: [Where did you send her?] Stella provided a brief explanation. Felicity was astounded and typed: [You're really something, using your dad as a tool. Doesn't his innocence matter?] Stella responded: [Actually, it's good for my dad to go out with her. She definitely won't be at ease with Caline's daily operations in her absence. I don't believe she can remain that composed. We need her to slip up in front of my dad. Once his trust in her wavers, it'll be easier to dismantle her defenses step by step.] Felicity pondered and asked: [Do you think she married your father for his personality or money?] Stella replied: [Hard to say. Definitely for the money, but as for liking him as a person, I'm not sure.] In Stella's opinion, Darcie was really good at hiding how she felt. Stella couldn't figure out if Darcie genuinely cared about Wenham, but it seemed like she did, taking care of every little thing for him, even his blood pressure meds.

The doctor overseeing Wenham's health credited Darcie for maintaining his diet and routine, which, aside from hereditary hypertension, kept him healthier than his peers. This indicated Darcie's dedication.

Stella even believed that if it were not for her unexpected return, Darcie might have genuinely planned to spend her life with Wenham. But Stella's return messed that up.

Stella asked: [Let's not dwell on that. How about you? Didn't you say someone bought your script recently? How's that going?] Felicity replied: [It's okay, I guess. Whether it'll be adapted, I don't know, but I did make some money.] Stella asked: [How much?] Felicity sighed and replied: [Twenty grand before tax. I used to think selling a script for a hundred thousand was the norm. Now I realize only your husband is that generous. He was willing to pay a hundred thousand for the scripts I wrote back then.] □□□

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Stella laughed and replied: [He felt guilty for roping you in, so he offered you a high price.] Felicity replied: (Back then, I thought I was too principled to bow for a good sum.

But now, looking back, being locked up for two hours for a hundred thousand seems worth it. You have no idea how hard it is to earn money these days!

Short dramas have become a big hit recently, and I've been working on those.] She continued: [We don't use famous actors and film within 3-5 days, using scripts from online crowdsourcing. With quick turnaround and low budgets, usually 20,000 to 30,000, we can make huge profits, even more, if a project goes viral. It's a highly profitable model, so many in our industry are doing it. I've been assigned to oversee these projects, but sorting through the overly dramatic scripts every day is overwhelming.] Since her pregnancy, Stella had not been watching many short videos, so she was quite out of the loop about this trend. She asked Felicity what these short dramas were like.

Felicity then sent her a link. After browsing for a while, Stella had an idea and quickly typed: [Can you help me write a script?] Felicity replied: [Huh?] Stella typed: [I'll see you after work. We can talk about it then.] She thought explaining over text was too slow as she could not convey her sudden thoughts properly.

She wanted Felicity to turn the events surrounding the Saun family from years ago into a short drama. She would pay to promote it.

Stella had also considered if Darcie had an accomplice, a story close to the truth blowing up online could force them to slip up.

Felicity responded: [Okay. Then, head straight to Clouditude International after work. We'll meet at the stinky Cucumber's office.] Shortly after Stella put down her phone, there was a knock on her office door.

She said, “Come in.”

Julia heard Stella’s response and gently pushed the door open. “Ms. Hall, do you have a minute?”

To prevent the Perfume Blending Department staff from harboring any disloyal thoughts, as well as to safeguard the formula from leaking and maintain the core team’s competitiveness, Darcie divided the department into units A and B, each further split into three teams. Both units were meant to work together yet also compete against each other.

The core formula of Caline’s products was stored in a computer in a secure room on the top floor, protected by a dual password system.

Besides Darcie, who knew the full password, each of the two managers only knew their part of the password, which was updated monthly.

Stealing the formula would require both managers to cooperate, an unlikely scenario given their competitive relationship. Darcie’s strategy was clever indeed.

Julia, from Unit A of the Perfume Blending Department, had been with the company for three years. After the previous unit leader was transferred, she was the likely candidate for the position until Jaylene was parachuted in.

As Stella pondered, she smiled and asked, “What’s up?”

Julia replied, “Ms. Abbott asked me to take you on a tour of the Perfume Blending Department. Are you available now?” Stella nodded. “Sure, let’s go.”

Following Julia, they headed to the Perfume Blending Department. The department boasted a large office space where, aside from mixing products in the fragrance room, the staff typically worked. When Stella arrived, everyone was busy with their tasks.

Although Julia claimed it was a tour, it seemed more like she was just leading Stella around the workspace without much of an introduction. It

was almost as if she had brought her there on purpose. Stella was wondering about this when a commotion arose at the entrance.

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Jaylene, dressed in a white silk blouse with her hair loosely tied back, exuded a refined elegance with her pearl earrings. She appeared with two people who were carrying bags of what seemed to be high-end cosmetics and perfumes, judging from the packaging.

With a gentle voice, she addressed the gathered employees, “Sorry to interrupt, everyone. We’ve all been busy since returning to work, and it’s rare for US all to be together like this. Today, with Stella joining US, I thought it’d be a good opportunity to give you all some small gifts.’ Stella internally mused, ‘I bet those “small gifts” are likely an attempt to win over their hearts. Now I know that Julia had brought me here just for Jaylene to showcase this.’ The announcement of gifts naturally excited everyone, leading to a round of applause and a lively atmosphere.

Stella glanced at the gifts and thought, ‘Those are indeed cosmetics and perfumes. They are not extravagantly expensive, but not cheap either. They are certainly within the affordable range for the rest.’ Regardless of personal interest, everyone expressed gratitude and admiration for the gifts.

This lipstick shade has been sold out at the counters. I thought I’d never get it.

Thank you!”

I just saw a review of this foundation the other day, and now I have it. You have great taste!”

My mom always uses this perfume. She’ll love it.”

“Jaylene, you really went all out.”

Jaylene graciously accepted the thanks. She said, “It wasn’t much. These are just trinkets to me, picked up while shopping for bags with a friend. I thought you’d all like them, so I bought some.”

The mood slightly shifted as people exchanged looks, their smiles dimming a bit. However, Jaylene seemed oblivious. Her gaze met Stella’s across the room, and she smiled knowingly.

Stella, uninterested in watching the act any longer, turned to leave. Before she could, Julia jokingly said, “Is it a trend now to bring gifts on the first day? If so, I’m looking forward to what Ms. Hall has prepared for US.”

Julia’s comment turned everyone’s attention to Stella.

Gift-giving was not customary. But with both being daughters of the Saun family and vying for control of Caline, they were expected to build their own networks of support. Gifts were a basic tactic to gauge who could be swayed and who could not, depending on how they were received.

Stella had prepared gifts but had not planned to distribute them so soon. She wanted to get to know everyone better before offering anything to avoid seeming too ingratiating. But now she was forced to make a move.

Without commenting, Stella’s smile faded slightly.

Jaylene, still smiling, said to Stella, “Stella, don’t mind them. I just got these on a whim. Pick a couple for yourself to celebrate your first day.”

Stella politely declined. “No, thank you. My skin’s been sensitive lately, and I can’t use makeup. Better leave it for everyone else.”

She paused, then sheepishly said, “Actually, I’ve also prepared something for everyone. Unlike Jaylene, who meticulously found out everyone’s preferences for beauty products, I was a bit careless and didn’t ask as thoroughly. My gifts are more generic, so I am a bit hesitant to give them out.”

This sounded like an excuse to some as if Stella had made up a reason on the spot to avoid giving anything.

At Jaylene’s subtle cue, someone chimed in, “Ms. Hall, it’d be rude of US to be picky about gifts from you. We’re all quite curious about what you’ve prepared

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Looking somewhat embarrassed, Stella explained, “It’s nothing much.

Considering the cold weather, and since it hasn’t warmed up much even after the holiday, I thought about preparing some warm clothing items, something everyone could wear to keep out the cold.”

Hearing the term “warm clothing,” most people thought of hats, scarves, gloves, or knee warmers, causing their interest to wane significantly. Those items were typically distributed by the company at the start of winter, making them hardly something to look forward to.

Considering Stella’s initial comments upon joining, some could not help but see her as a clueless rich heiress, now contending with Jaylene and Darcie for control.

Observing the crowd's reaction, Jaylene smirked as she suggested, "Stella, since you've already prepared them, why not distribute them now? If we wait any longer, they might not be of much use this year."

Julia added, "Whatever Ms. Hall has chosen, even if it's for warmth, it's bound to be extraordinary."

Then, the crowd started to speculate what their gifts from Stella were.

"Ms. Hall's scarf is quite stylish. Could it be that she's prepared something similar for us?"

"If it's Gucci scarves, wow, I'd be ecstatic! Ms. Hall, don't keep US in suspense.

Please show US what you've got. We're all so excited!"

The crowd's comments pushed Stella into the spotlight.

Jaylene was smiling but mocking Stella inwardly at the same time. 'If Stella's gifts fell short of expectations, it would be a significant embarrassment for her.' She had to navigate considerable challenges to secure her position in the Perfume Blending Department, even with Darcie smoothing the way. The employees of Caline were sharp, and it was not easy to win them over without proving oneself.

This was Jaylene's chance to show Stella that status alone would not grant her favor at Caline.

"So, Stella, just bring them out. Don't keep everyone waiting." Jaylene urged.

Stella bit her lip, hesitating before finally saying, "I'll go down and get them.

They're all in my car. I haven't had the chance to bring them up yet."

Jaylene quickly suggested, "Take Xavier and the others with you. It must be a lot to carry. You can't possibly manage it alone."

‘I won’t allow you any chance to call for backup, Stella.’ Jaylene thought.

“Alright, Jaylene. Just ask them to be careful not to damage anything.”
Stella conceded.

Jaylene’s smile faltered, still playing the part. “Don’t worry. They won’t damage anything.”

Upon receiving the call, Xavier agreed and asked for a few people to fetch the gifts from Stella’s car.

Jaylene was momentarily taken aback. ‘Did Stella actually prepare the gifts? I However, she quickly dismissed her surprise. ‘It doesn’t matter. Even if Stella had prepared something, it couldn’t be impressive. Otherwise, why would she hesitate to present it? She must have been unable to compare her gifts to mine, so she’s reluctant to do so.’ During the wait, Stella seemed restless, frequently checking her phone. Her nervousness was evident.

When Xavier and a few others returned, carrying items covered with dust protectors, everyone stood up, curious about the contents.

Once the items were unveiled, twenty to thirty sets of ready-to-wear fashion from top luxury brands, all in stylish designs, were revealed. Each set was exceptionally beautiful. Even at a glance, the quality of the materials was top-notch.

Everyone was astonished by Stella’s choice of “warm clothing.”

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Someone from the crowd could not contain her curiosity and asked, “Ms. Hall, what are these?”

Stella approached, appearing slightly embarrassed. She said, “Didn’t I mention earlier? The weather is cold these days, so I thought of giving some clothing items to keep everyone warm.’ “But didn’t you say you had prepared something more uniform? These don’t look uniform at all. They’re all different.” another from the crowd said.

Stella explained, “They are uniform in a way. I didn’t know everyone’s sizes, and since we’re not all acquainted yet, asking directly felt too presumptuous. So, I opted for a uniform approach and bought everything in size s.

“Seeing that some of you have a similar build to mine today, I initially thought of exchanging a few for size M. But Jaylene insisted I give them out today, and seeing everyone so eager, I had no choice but to bring them over.”

Stella touched the fabric of the clothes and added, “These might not look very thick, but they’re actually quite warm and comfortable. Jaylene often wears these brands herself. Considering we’re about the same age, I figured our tastes would be similar.”

Julia was annoyed by Stella’s words and thought, ‘So, uniform meant the size was uniform? Is she genuinely this oblivious?’ Then Julia turned to Jaylene and saw that her reaction was clearly far from pleased. However, she was unaware of why Jaylene was so infuriated.

Jaylene was angry because every piece on the rack was part of the clothing she had used to mock Stella in the past. All were sizes that Stella could not fit in.

‘In my wildest dreams, I had not anticipated that Stella would use these items as gifts at Caline to win favor. Despite her eloquent justification, how could she be so shameless!’ Jaylene thought angrily.

The crowds were not concerned with whether Stella was genuinely naive or playing dumb. Luxury brand apparel, each piece valued in the five figures, was universally appealing, regardless of its intended message. Yet, they thought accepting such expensive gifts did come with a sense of obligation.

“Ms. Hall, the clothes are beautiful, but they’re too valuable.”

“Yeah. Wearing something this expensive, I’d feel awkward even carrying my usual bag or taking the public transport.”

“And accepting such costly gifts without earning them doesn’t sit right with me.”

“These clothes are so nice; I feel like I don’t deserve them.”

Stella laughed and said. “It’s just a piece of clothing for each of you, don’t overthink it. No matter how fine the clothes are, they’re meant to be worn. In the end, they’re just accessories. There’s no such thing as not deserving them.

Besides, if we all wear them, who’s there to judge? At our age, why burden ourselves with such heavy thoughts?”

Stella’s words effortlessly dissolved the awkwardness surrounding the acceptance of the gifts.

Clothing is meant to adorn the wearer, without notions of deserving or not.

Anyone would feel uplifted after hearing that. It is not just about whether a gift reaches the heart but also about touching the recipient with the right words.

The value of a gift depends on how it is presented. Jaylene’s casual remark about her gifts being “inexpensive trinkets” inadvertently lowered their appeal, making it seem like a mere afterthought, potentially even a handout.

In contrast, Stella's approach not only involved valuable items but also conveyed a sense of worth and consideration, elevating the gesture far beyond the material value of the gifts.

Team One's leader from Unit B was the first to break the ice. "Since Ms. Hall has said so, I won't be holding back then. Can we choose freely?" With a warm smile, Stella responded, "Whoever comes first gets to choose first.

It's time to make your move, or else you'll have to pick from what's left.' Hearing that, those who had been hesitant promptly got up from their seats and lined up to choose their clothes.