

Mr. Warner Your Ex-Wife is Brilliant by Paula Chapter 18 -

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Chapter 18

A slick layer of perspiration glistened **on** the assistant's forehead, **the** intense pressure of Drake's piercing gaze resting heavily upon him. Despite the anxiety, his courage didn't waver. He took a steadying breath and ventured, "The head **of** our Cyber Security Department sent me. He needs your help."

An audacious hacker had dared to infiltrate the fortified internal network of Warner Corp, demonstrating a prowess surpassing even the security chief's capabilities. President Warner was their only hope now.

Drake's gaze was frosted with icy determination. As his nimble fingers deftly maneuvered the console, the sterile glow from **the** computer screen cast an austere veil over his face.

Minutes ticked by, tension thick in the air. Drake's self-assured demeanor wavered, his brow knitted with surprise. His adversary was formidable—so much so that even he was struggling to breach their defenses.

Frustration flitted across his chiseled features as his fingers moved even faster on the keyboard, crafting a labyrinth **of** complex codes on the screen.

Finally, his furrowed brow relaxed. The stormy expression on his face lifted, and a smug smile curled at the corner of his mouth.

Meanwhile, in a humble apartment across town.

Zane yanked the power cord from the wall with a swift jerk. Indignation burned in his young eyes **as** he glared at the lifeless computer screen. His small fists clenched with pent-up rage.

Who was that adversary?

Someone more skilled than him—a first since he'd begun exploring computers at the tender age of three! He ha

d narrowly escaped the trap set by the other party, saved only by his quick decision to unplug the power cord. His anonymity could have been compromised. "Brother, play with me and my robot?" Zoe chirped sweetly, holding out a plastic robot model. Her innocent voice coaxed the rage from Zane's heart, his furrowed brows softening. "**Alright**, kiddo." Guiding his little sister to the sofa, Zane started introducing her to the world of robots.

"**Mr. President, any progress?**" Drake's assistant cautiously asked, his nerves on edge under Drake's darkened **expression**.

Drake's hand slammed **down** on the table with a resounding thud, his veins prominent against his clenched fist. **His other** hand instinctively moved to massage **his** temples, a futile **attempt** to relieve his frustration. "**They** slipped **away**, but we have neutralized **the** immediate **threat**."

"**Do you** want our team to trace **the IP?**" **the** assistant asked, seeking guidance.

Drake walked **silently to the** panoramic window, his gaze **lost in** the pulsating heartbeat **of the city**. **Just as the** assistant **began** to abandon **hope of a reply**, Drake's deep **voice sliced**

through the silence.

"No need." His hand slid into his pocket as his dark, inscrutable **eyes** continued to survey the **cityscape**. "**If** they wanted **to** stay hidden, **we** couldn't find them. Let's shelve this matter for now."

"**Understood**." With a nod, the assistant filled Drake on the rest of the department's activities before exiting the office.

Meanwhile, in the grandeur of Drake's villa.

"Teacher Jane, can we skip today's lesson? Will you tell me **a** story instead?" Zachary requested, his youthful face lacking the innocence typically associated with his age. His eyes held a spark that belied his years.

Zachary's mother, Annie, was too engrossed in her obsession with Drake to pay heed to her son, let alone his request for stories. He yearned for the everyday parental presence that his peers enjoyed. As time passed, his tolerance for Annie's neglect waned, and

he distanced himself. However, Jane, his tutor, was different. She mattered in a way no one else did.

At first, leaning towards refusal, Jane felt something stir inside her. She saw in this boy a life too laden with burdens, utterly stripped of the carefree innocence and joy that should be the hallmark of his tender age. Remembering Zane and Zoe who were the same age as him, her gaze softened, and she found herself relenting. “All right, we’ll make an exception today, just this once,” she conceded, her voice barely above a whisper. “But let’s promise to keep our focus on our studies in the future, okay?”

She wouldn’t let her issues with Drake affect her relationship with Zachary. A promise was a promise, and she would not shirk her teaching duties.

“Then, let’s dive into the story of Snow White…”

The tranquility was abruptly shattered as the room door was kicked open.

Annie stormed in, anger simmering in her gaze. “Jane, you stole my limited-edition

necklace, didn’t you? **It’s** one of only five in the world! And here **I** thought you were **a** sweet, innocent tutor, but you’re nothing more than a petty thief!”

Jane, taken aback, started to stand, but Zachary beat her to it. “**Miss** Jane has been tutoring me all day. If you lost something, that’s on you. Don’t blame others for your carelessness.”

“Insolent!” Annie’s **voice** scaled an **octave** higher, her trembling finger jabbing the air accusingly towards Zachary. But almost instantly, **her** posture soon **sagged**, her bravado **wilting like** a punctured balloon. Her eyes swelled with tears, effortlessly slipping into the role of the victim. “Zac, I’m your mother. **This** woman’s merely been tutoring you for only two **days**, and **you’re** already dancing to her **tune**? How could you possibly take **her** side?” -

She sighed dramatically, dabbing **at her moist eyes**, before adding, “And let’s not **forget** – it **was my necklace** that vanished! Your **father** gave it to me. Don’t **I** have **a** right to **seek** what **I’ve** lost within **my** own **home**?” **Feeling the** weight of the **situation**, a maid stepped forward in solidarity with Annie. “**Young Master**,” she pleaded, “Madam has examined **everyone**, including **us servants**. Only **Miss Bentley**

remains **unchecked**. **Why** should she **fear** a simple search **if** she **hasn't** done anything untoward?"

Despite lacking **the** official marriage **seal**, Annie was acknowledged as Madam by the Warner's household staff.

"I said no!" Zachary's icy refusal **ricocheted off** the walls, the tone absolute.

"You **can't** do anything about it! That necklace **belongs** to your mother. How can you take **sides** with a mere **stranger?**" Annie seethed, her face morphing into a **fiery** shade of purple.

"I'm here as Zachary's tutor, hired by Drake. I didn't sign up for baseless accusations," Jane retorted, a fire kindling her eyes. "Besides, your necklace holds no appeal to me." Annie snorted dismissively, her heels clicking authoritatively on the polished marble floor as she closed in on Jane. "Did you genuinely believe a thief would willingly confess? Jane, I'm feeling generous today. If you hand over the necklace without a fuss, we can call it a day. But resist... well, don't plan on calling Willowshire your home anymore!"

Annie was adamant. Jane had to be the culprit. That necklace – its resplendent aura drawing covetous eyes like moths to a flame – was irresistible to any woman and even more so to someone like Jane, whose attire barely matched up to a few hundred dollars in value.

Taking confident strides, Annie closed the distance between them. Her eyes, oozing contempt, were fixed on Jane like a laser.

Jane, in response, flicked her hair back and crossed her arms defensively. She huffed, rolling her eyes in exasperation. "I didn't nab your precious necklace. The security tapes will back me up. For all we know, you could be playing us all, staging this entire melodrama!"

"You're merely wriggling, trying to squirm your way out of this!" Annie's fury bubbled. Her heart spat out silent curses, each one aimed directly at Jane. "Search her!"

The maids behind Annie hesitated, but two eventually stepped forward, advancing towards

Jane.