

The Revenge of the Mute Wife [Completed]

Chapter 41-50

Chapter 41

What?! You can't-Roger protested, jumping to his feet.

Yes, I can. In fact, I disagree with Mrs. Peterson's request. You will be required to pay her \$25,000 a month for her expenses and prenatal care. "\$25,000 is too much and-"

Shut up, Roger. Roger turned around in shock to see his father standing beside him. "Don't worry, Your Honor. This useless man will pay that amount promptly."

You took the words right out of my mouth, Mr. George Peterson, the judge said, smiling. "But to teach your son some humility, he will accompany your wife in a cell for 24 hours. Guards, take him away." "What?! No! You can't..." Roger tried to resist, but two policemen escorted him out.

With that, the trial ended, and people began to leave. George and Elliot took the opportunity to approach Deborah.

Well... now you're my ex-sister-in-law, the teenager said sadly, running over to hug her.

[You'll always be my little brother to me.] Deborah smiled as she separated from the hug. [And no matter the situation, we'll always be family because you're my baby's uncle.]

True.

And speaking of that, I expect monthly updates on my grandchild's health, George said, joining the conversation. "My dear, forgive this old man for not protecting you. I didn't know that scoundrel took the card I gave you. [It's not your fault.]

It is. I let my wife spoil that boy, he said, his voice tinged with sadness. "But don't worry, they'll get their justice."

[Thank you, but it's not necessary.]

Even so, my dear, I'll make sure those two face the consequences of their actions. Forgive me, because it's partly my fault for not discussing Roger's upbringing enough with my wife.

[Don't say that. You're a great father. Elliot is a wonderful young man.]

Thank you, Deborah. And if you need anything, don't hesitate to reach out to this old man. I'm back in town to train Elliot to be the new president of the company.

["It's good to know you're back."] Deborah smiled as she could hear the excitement in George's voice. Her ex-father-in-law had always been kind to her since she was a child.

Hey Debbie, now that things have calmed down, give me your address so I can visit and bring gifts for my niece or nephew.

#...

Sure, I'll give it to you later, she replied, her expression turning serious.

Elliot was about to ask why later, but he noticed the change in her demeanor. Looking to his left, he saw Deborah's family approaching, wearing their usual arrogant smiles-something he despised. "Oh Deborah, it's good to see you're okay and-"Vanessa began, moving in to hug her, but Deborah stepped back, giving her a hateful look.

[What do you want, Vanessa?] Deborah looked straight into Vanessa's eye.

Don't be rude to your mother, Fredrick reprimanded while trying to stay calm.

[She is your mistress, not my mother.]

Fredrick's eye twitched. He hated being challenged.

Sis, don't be mean or rude to our mother.

Why don't you bite your tongue, Cassandra? Caroline asked angrily.

And who are you? Cassandra asked, looking Caroline up and down, judging her outfit.

For someone who claims to be family, it's strange you don't know your sister's best friend, Jayden intervened, standing beside Deborah and placing a supportive hand on her shoulder.

And who are you? Cassandra complained, glaring at Jayden. "You should learn not to interfere in family matters-"

Cass, shut up, her twin brother quickly ordered, recognizing Jayden and knowing that having him as an enemy would be a death sentence for the whole family.

Wow, every time we meet, you manage to surpass yourselves in making a bad impression, George remarked, glaring at the family,

Don't say such nonsense, Mr. Peterson, Fredrick replied.

And speaking of nonsense, when will you return all the money you borrowed from Roger?

Yes, Fredrick. You see, Roger is no longer the CEO of the company, and while teaching my son his new duties, we discovered several promissory notes with large sums that your family borrowed with the promise of prompt repayment. "Well, it's just that..."

And that's why I want you to return ALL that money by the end of this week, or I'll be forced to cash those promissory notes with the included interest.

What?! the whole family screamed in panic.

"G-George, you can't... you can't do this to us. You know, we're family and-

We are no longer related, and I want my money back. """"

That's right. I expect the prompt repayment of the money you owe ME, Elliot declared.

What a funny little boy, Vanessa remarked.

Don't mock me, ma'am. As the junior CEO of the company, it's natural for me to protect my future interests. In two years, the company will legally be mine, and I want to inherit it debt-free.

Everyone accompanying the teenager smiled proudly at his declaration.

[Don't worry, George. I'm sure they will repay everything because they are a responsible, respectable family who will keep their word.]

Fredrick wanted to slap her and break her hands to stop her from speaking such nonsense, but Jayden was protecting her.

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The Andersons were itching to punch Deborah for the idiocy she had just spouted. They had none of that money left... In three days? They would never be able to gather the nearly \$800,000 they had borrowed over the three years of marriage. The twins' plan was in shambles; they had intended to force the mute girl back home to steal her money, believing they deserved it as the beloved children of their parents.

Caroline watched their faces intently, smirking as she discerned their obvious thoughts.

So... why did you come over? I doubt it's to talk to Deborah, Caroline commented.

Well, believe it or not, we do want to talk to her, Cassandra insisted.

That's right, we're very worried about my big sister, Ernest added.

Actually, we wanted to tell you that if you want, you can come back home, Debbie, Vanessa said, trying to sound kind and understanding.

[Oh really? And why would you want me back home?]

Deborah, come on, stop joking. We're your family, and we're worried about you, Fredrick said.

Worried? I never saw you visit Deborah at the apartment. And now I find you very diligently asking for money with that same excuse, Jayden chimed in.

Most likely, they're using the family card to make Deborah go home and then steal her alimony, Caroline observed, noticing their scowls.

[Typical, it's all they know how to do: take advantage of everyone around them. It's no wonder they change friends every season.] Deborah signed, letting out a silent sigh.

I can confirm that. The rumors about them among my friends are less than flattering. Everyone avoids them because they just ask for money to pretend they're rich and live in debt, George added. Fredrick clenched his fists tightly, trembling with rage and shame.

You don't have to insult us like that, Vanessa said furiously.

Ma'am, no one is insulting you, George replied. "I'm just repeating what everyone says about you, and of course, how the Anderson family lost its prestige when the

legitimate heir died and her husband married you, a barmaid from a seedy joint, correct?"

Vanessa ground her teeth in fury.

Let's drop this and go have a celebratory meal, Jayden said, taking Deborah's hand.

Can we join? Elliot asked.

Of course.

Let's go, then George agreed.

Uh... hey, George, are you really going to leave your wife and son in jail? Vanessa asked, stunned as the Petersons walked away.

Yes... they deserve it for underestimating and discriminating against my now ex-daughter-in-law. Although, I think some others should be in prison too, he said, glaring at the Anderson couple. "Deborah, let's go home. We even prepared your old room," Vanessa said.

Huh? Really? Cassandra blurted, only to be silenced by a stomp from her brother.

[No thanks, I don't want to jump out of the frying pan and into the fire.] Deborah frowned. [You made my life miserable since my mother died. I don't want to go back to that supposed broom closet that was my room.] "Deborah, why are you saying that? You're making us out to be monsters," Vanessa said nervously when she noticed more people were paying attention to their conversation.

Why do you think? Christian asked sarcastically, crossing his arms.

[By the way, since you're here, Fredrick, I want you to know that I'm going to recover all my mother's belongings and reopen the case of her death.]

What are you insinuating with that stupidity? Fredrick was so angry he no longer cared about his language.

[I want to know the truth about the day I lost my mother.]

Hah... don't be ridiculous. Your mother died in that stupid car accident because she was drunk.

[You're lying. She never drank while driving, especially if I was in the car. It was too convenient that she died the same day she asked you for a divorce after catching you

with Vanessa.] Deborah frowned. [I might have been a child but I was fully aware of what was happening around me. You were about to lose everything for adultery, so I have my suspicions about that supposed accident.] "Watch your words, you insolent girl," he declared, raising his hand.

[Go ahead, hit your unwanted daughter. But remember, you kept me alive because, without me, you can't access my grandparents' money. They never trusted an opportunist like you to inherit the family's fortune.]

Now I understand why the Andersons fell from grace when the legitimate heir died. Opportunists took over, Jayden said.

You don't know what you're talking about, idiot, Cassandra snapped.

Cassandra, shut up.

No, let your sister speak. It only shows how fake she is, Jayden said, smirking. And now everyone knows it," he added, pointing behind them.

The family turned to see reporters and photographers still in the room, keenly listening to their words.

They were utterly terrified. The reporters started to swarm them, asking about the conversation and the possible conspiracy surrounding Alexandra Anderson's mysterious death.

With the reporters occupying the Andersons, the rest managed to slip away to their cars.

That was brilliant, Elliot said. "Two birds with one stone."

That was Deborah's idea, Caroline noted.

Yes, I suggested doing something drastic to spark interest and make it easier to reopen the case. Normally, accident death cases aren't reopened because the evidence is considered irrefutable, Christian explained. "But since there's doubt whether it was an accident, we can reopen the case."

[Exactly, because I still have my doubts. Now that I don't have to worry about Roger, I want to know the truth.]

And I'll help you with anything you need, Jayden said.

Count on us too, Debbie, Elliot said, with George nodding in agreement.

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After escaping from the reporters, Deborah and her supporters ended up at a nearby restaurant to eat and celebrate her victory. Out of solidarity, everyone ordered juice or soda to accompany their meal, though Deborah insisted it wasn't necessary. "Here," said Caroline, passing Deborah a glass of orange juice.

Well, let's toast to freedom and a new beginning, Jayden said, raising his glass of soda, and everyone followed suit.

Deborah, tell me, what will you do now? asked George.

[What do you mean?]

Well, I remember you haven't worked, and you're expecting my grandchild, so...

[Oh, that. Don't worry, I have a way to survive. Thanks to a friend, I got a job behind. Roger's back.]

That's great, Deborah. I commend your initiative. Can I ask what the job is?

[I'm an accountant. I help with a government support program.]

That is excellent, Deborah! Congratulations, George said, noticing how his words made Deborah blush a little. "And how do you do the work? Do you go to an office or

[Everything is online. I help several small business owners manage their accounting. The system assigns clients to me, and I get a fixed payment for each one I handle.]

Oh... you have a modern job, Debbie, Elliot said, smiling at her.

A friend of mine was the one who started that initiative and it has helped a lot of people, especially since not everyone is familiar with bureaucratic procedures or has the time to organize their documentation, Jayden explained. "And a friend from my office told me about that new job so I didn't hesitate to mention it to Caroline so she could encourage Deborah to apply for it," Christian said.

"It's good to

see v

have great friends, George commented, looking at Deborah." "Um... about the alimony, I'll be sending it to you.""

[Actually, I don't-]

I know why you didn't ask for it, but we must comply with the judge's orders. So, I'll send you a new card for the deposit, and this time it'll have those new biometric keys so only you can use it. "Deborah, it's OK to accept it. Just consider it as savings for your baby," Jayden said encouragingly to Deborah. "Or as emergency money for any eventuality."

Jayden is right. In the end, it's the compensation you deserve for the harm that jerk did to you. Um.... no offense, Caroline said, looking apologetically at George.

No offense taken, George replied, sipping his drink.

[Well, if you put it that way, I accept.]

Yay, we won! Elliot declared happily, making everyone laugh. "Hey, Debbie, now that I think about it, at your next appointment, they'll tell you, right?"

[That's right.]

Can I go with you?

I'm going with her, Jayden quickly said, noticing the boy's affection for Deborah,

And why can't I join you? Elliot asked, glaring at Jayden.

Son... George gently chided him.

It's just...

[Elliot, I don't think you can come with me because the appointment is very early.]

Ugh, that's not fair.

[But how about I text you right after I leave the clinic to tell you?]

That sounds like a good deal, Elliot said happily.

After that, they chatted about other trivial matters, having a pleasant time. Deborah was happy because, at that moment, they were interacting as if they were a real family. After the meal, Deborah gave her phone number and address to George and Elliot, hearing their promise to visit her in the future for a chat or to bring gifts for the baby. "See you, Debbie, we're heading home now, Elliot said.

[See you, Elliot, and rest well.]

Goodbye, Deborah, George said as they got into the car; it had been a long day.

The others waved the father and son goodbye.

Well, we're leaving too, Caroline announced as she got into the car with Christian to go home and rest.

[See you, and thank you.]

I'll call you tomorrow afternoon to start looking into your mom's case, Christian mentioned before saying farewell, getting into the car, and driving away.

Well... we're alone now, Jayden said, using a flirty tone.

[That seems to be the case.] Deborah blushed a little.

"But let's go

home because I imagine it's been a very tiring day for you."

She thanked him, and they returned home in his car.

[Thanks for being by my side today, Jayden.]

"You're welcome, beautiful. Besides, today was an important day for you.

[Yes, by the way, do you have some time?]

Well, it depends," he said playfully. "Are you going to invite me to dinner?"

[Something like that. Do you want to join me for some desserts?]

Heh, craving something sweet?

I accept, as I'm in the mood for something sweet too.

They both went into her house, where Jayden helped her warm something up. Jayden found it a little curious for a dessert, but then he saw her bring out bread and fruit accompanied by a bowl of... "Oh, how delicious, chocolate fondue," he said, helping her place it on the table.

[The lady at the store told me it's the most popular product right now, and since she noticed it was for my craving, she gave me a special chocolate that's not too sweet.]

Wow, that's good salesmanship. She gave you good advice, he said, tasting the chocolate and noticing it wasn't as sweet as it seemed.

[It's from the café across the park, and I got a discount because the owner's granddaughter is one of my students.]

That's great. By the way, you didn't tell me how your schedule worked out?

[Classes are on Wednesdays and Fridays at 6 p.m.] Deborah smiled with joy. [And guess what?]

What?"

[I have 25 students per class.]

Wow, that's amazing, Congratulations, Debbie.

[And next Tuesday I'm going to start tutoring a neighbor.]

Tutor sessions?

[She found out I'm an accountant and asked for help with her math homework.]

Wow, that's great. Now you can live doing what you love.

Hey, um... sorry about earlier.

I kind of invited myself to your medical appointment.

[Don't worry. In fact, you beat me to it because I was planning to ask you.]

Oh, heh, I see, he said, blushing. "In that case, I accept."

Deborah laughed, seeing the happiness in Jayden's eyes. They talked a bit more- Jayden started telling her about the new project he was about to start with his father. "By the way, beautiful, would you like to accompany me to a special party in a few days?"

[Party?] Deborah asked, confused and amazed.

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Jayden explained the details of the party. For a moment, Deborah felt unsure because she had never attended such events. However, recalling her new mindset of leaving the old Deborah behind, she accepted the invitation, deciding to go and have fun with him. Thus, the day ended, feeling long for some and short for others. The only thing that mattered was that it was a day that marked the lives of many, causing a drastic shift in their way of life.

The next day began with a new drama for those who had spent the most

uncomfortable night of their lives. Isabelle and Roger were being released but not without fury and threats to the officers accompanying them.

Just you wait. I won't let this go, Roger spat angrily.

How dare they let a lady like me sleep on the floor without a sheet or pillow, Isabelle complained.

Don't worry, Mom, they'll get what they deserve. Do you hear me?!

It seems a night in prison didn't teach you anything, said a cold voice. They turned to see George standing outside, waiting for them with his arms crossed.

Darling... Isabelle approached, trying to hug him, but he stepped back. "G- George?"

Here, he said coldly, handing her a folder.

What...? Isabelle was confused, never having seen this attitude in her husband. Opening the folder, she began to tremble. "D-Divorce?" she whispered, looking up to meet his eyes. "George, what does this mean? You can't..."

I told you not to lie at the stand, he said, frowning. "I'm also tired of your favoritism and discrimination towards our children. You're no longer needed at home. My son and I will stay. I don't want Elliot to suffer because his mother doesn't love or support him like she does his brother."

Isabelle grimaced. She knew she hurt her second son, simply hating him because she never wanted him. In fact, she had wanted to abort him upon learning he was a boy, as she had wished for a daughter. But seeing her husband's excitement for another child, she kept him.

Dad, you can't be cruel to Mom, Roger interjected.

You stay out of this and worry about your own problems.

George, divorce is extreme and-

Don't worry, you'll get a substantial alimony to live comfortably, he declared, ignoring her words. "Just give me the address of your new place, or I'll send your things to Roger's apartment because you're not coming back home." "George, no..."

Now I'll fulfill your wish: live with your favorite son without worrying about the other. Do whatever you want... I won't criticize or argue about your actions anymore.

Isabelle was in shock. She saw the determination in her husband's eyes and knew he wasn't joking about this. The divorce was serious. She never imagined that at 55, she would be facing a divorce.

Mom... Roger called out, scared, as he saw her fall to her knees, tears streaming down her face.

And you, George turned to Roger, "Forget about other people's problems and focus on your own. So tell me, how are you going to pay Deborah's child support?"

What are you talking about? I'm not giving her anything.

Well, if you don't pay, I think you'll be facing more than just 24 hours in jail.

Ugh...maybe I'll give her some of the pittance I earn at the office.

Some? You will pay the full support! George reprimanded Roger. "Since you're man enough to have two women, now you'll face the consequences of supporting both with your job."

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But 25 thousand is a lot and-

So what? You were giving 19 thousand to your mistress, so it shouldn't be difficult to come up with that money for yourself.

I could pay that amount if you give me back my job.

No, Roger. That's your punishment: you'll find a job like everyone else to support your mistress and pay child support to Deborah, without my financial help. "Wait... what do you mean by finding a job?" Roger asked, alarmed.

You need to find employment because you're fired from the company. "What?!" Both Isabelle and Roger were shocked.

George, isn't that a little excessive? Roger is your son and-

He's an employee who skipped work without any justification.

Without justification? He was in prison!

But that happened because he annoyed the judge, didn't he?

George, you need to be fair.

Well, I wasn't the one who fired him, it was his direct supervisor. And I shall respect Edgar's decision.

"George, you can't do this to our son and

I am being fair-I'm teaching him a life lesson so he can grow up to be a man and face the consequences of his actions without your support."""

Me? Isabelle said, confused as she placed her right hand on her chest.

When I went abroad, I told you to support Elliot and not betray my trust because I'll be watching. All you needed to do was to focus on Elliot and care for him so he didn't feel alone. "You were watching me?"

Yeah, so you should know that lying to me won't work, George said with a sigh." And by the way, instead of arguing with me, you'd better hurry up before that woman gets kicked out of the apartment."

You haven't paid rent yet, which is 10 thousand a month.

What?! That's impossible, it can't cost that much, Roger protested, frightened." Deborah managed with the thousand I gave her for rent and other expenses."

Oh, you didn't know.

Know what? Isabelle asked.

Deborah paid 200 a month for rent because the landlord lowered it for her.

So she slept with the landlord, Roger said with disgust.

"God, what a slut, and she dared to call my son

Isabelle, people's kindness isn't always tied to sexual favors as you're insinuating, George scolded her. ""And for your information, that building belongs to a woman close to Mrs. Cooper, someone you've surely seen before,"" he added, looking at his"

son.

I haven't seen anyone from that family, just that idiot Jayden.

Oddly enough, don't you remember the old lady who lives two apartments down from yours?

Roger tried to remember and frowned upon recalling her. "But that old woman isn't the great Mrs. Cooper."

No, but she's Jayden's nanny, a woman highly regarded by his family. She was the one who requested special treatment for the young woman. The nanny wanted to support the young woman who communicated through sign language and was mistreated by her husband. So Jayden's mother lowered her rent, saying that would be the price until she left the apartment.

Roger was speechless because he didn't know about this.

It's funny how you always said Deborah would ruin our family name, yet she was the one who brought honor to the Petersons by showing what kind of human being she is, unlike that other woman. "Dad..."

This is goodbye, Roger. I hope things go well for you in life, and Isabelle, I hope you find happiness but I don't want to see you again, George said before turning around

to get into his car and driving away from the

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For a moment, Roger remained in a state of shock, because he had truly lost everything. It sounded so surreal. He was the eldest son of the Peterson family, the second-richest family in the country. And now, he had become a nobody with no money or family support. All because of that stupid mute.

The moment he thought about Deborah, he clenched his fists tightly, swearing to himself that this wouldn't be the end; he would reclaim everything that was

rightfully his no matter how long it took. "Son..."

His mother's voice interrupted his thoughts. She was very distressed about everything that was happening, especially now that she was homeless.

Take it easy, Mom, he said, approaching to hug her. "This... this is just a rough patch. Everything will be sorted out in a few days." He tried to sound confident but even he had his doubts considering how set his father seemed to be in revoking their privileges. "Come, let's go to my apartment so you can rest a bit."

Yes... you're right, son, she said, trying to calm her anxiety.

Isabelle and Roger got into the latter's car and headed to the apartment. They arrived just in time because Isabelle's belongings were just arriving too.

Roger immediately opened the door for the movers to bring everything inside, leaving several boxes with the woman's clothes, shoes, and accessories piled up in the living room.

This is humiliating... Isabelle whispered, seeing all her things stacked up in the

Alright, just sign here please, one of the movers said.

Thank you, and this is for you guys, Roger tipped the men and bid them farewell. After he closed the door, Roger let out a sigh and saw that his mother looked like she was about to cry. "Come on, Mom, let me help you get settled in. Do you want the room she used or the guest room?"

The guest room, I don't want to be in the place where that stupid girl was, the woman declared angrily.

Roger helped her arrange his mother's things in the guest room. When they were finished, they ordered something from a restaurant to eat.

While waiting for the food, they began to discuss what they would do next because they refused to accept this reality. They were determined to reclaim their lives by

any means necessary.

I'm going to fight-I'm not going to accept this nonsense of a divorce. Isabelle was angry. "A divorcee at my age? Never! I refuse."

And I'll support you, Mom. Besides, I'm sure Dad did this because of what happened yesterday. He'll come around in a few days and things will return to normal because you're his beloved wife. "That's right, Roger, you're absolutely right."

Just then, they heard a knock on the door.

That was quick, Isabelle remarked. "I'll set the table."

Roger smiled and went to open the door to receive the food, but it wasn't the delivery person he was met with. It was a certain troublemaker.

Hi, darling, Sophia said, throwing herself into his arms. "Look, I brought a cake to celebrate and-

Celebrate? he interrupted her as he grabbed her arms to push her away.

Yeah, because now you're officially divorced from that mute and-

"Shut up! There's nothing to celebrate.

What do you mean?" Sophia was confused, thinking the divorce would solve everything."

"Son, why are you yelling at the delivery guy? What happened? Oh... it's you...' Isabelle said, giving a dirty look to Sophia who was entering the apartment.

Mom, how are you? Oh, let me guess, you're here visiting your son to congratulate him on the divorce, right?"

Unfortunately, I'm not here for a visit. I now live here because of the stupid trial, she replied angrily.

What...? What do you mean you live here? Sophia made a face as she spoke-her life plans did not include living under the same roof with that annoying old woman. What happened to your house? "My house is fine. What happened is that my husband has kicked me out for

supporting you instead of the mute." Isabelle was furious. "So all of this is your fault!

Mom, don't yell at me, Sophia said, trying to sound sad with some tears in her eyes. "Please remember that I shouldn't stress myself for the sake of your first grandchild."

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Isabelle pointed at Sophia's belly. "You're mistaken, dear. That will be grandchild," she said.

What do you mean? Sophia was puzzled.

my second

Deborah is pregnant and a month ahead of you, Roger chimed in, arms crossed.

Sophia's eyes widened. "Wait, seriously?"

Yes, Roger confirmed. "So using the baby to win my father's favor won't work, Sophia. He's publicly declared that he'll only recognize one grandchild, and that's Deborah's."

But perhaps Sophia and her little bastard can help us, Isabelle mused. "If Sophia's child is a boy, we might still have a chance to reclaim everything."

Sophia interjected, "Wait, why do you call my son a bastard?"

Because Peterson Group has always been passed down to the firstborn, Roger explained. "If Sophia's child is a boy, logically and traditionally, we can fight to regain everything for him." Roger's excitement grew. "But what if Deborah's child is also a boy?"

Sophia felt a knot of worry. There was a detail she hadn't shared with Roger about the baby, and now things were getting complicated.

Well, Isabelle said reluctantly, "I suppose we'll have to take care of Sophia now."

Sophia asked, "What do you mean?"

Things are changing, Isabelle continued. "Starting with how I manage the money I give you."

Sophia hesitated. "Speaking of money, I recently tried to use the card you gave me, but it didn't work. So, I used the emergency card from your paycheck."

Roger's panic set in. He hadn't checked his account amidst the drama. Grabbing his phone, he checked his account balance and gasped at the amount spent on Sophia's emergency. "What did you spend so much on?" Roger demanded to know.

Sophia explained that she had been buying things for the baby. "You know, baby stuff."

But so much? Roger fumed. "Sophia, give me those cards!"

Sophia resisted, but Roger wrestled her bag away and pulled out her wallet. "What's wrong with you?" she protested.

This money is mine, Roger declared. "I've been supporting you all this time."

But Roger-

Listen to me, and listen very carefully: I'm not rich anymore!

Sophia stammered, "T-That's i-impossible."

I'm poor because of you! Roger snapped. "Well, now that I'm free from Deborah, I'll make you my wife, just as you wanted."

Sophia's eyes widened. "That means we'll live in that house you told me about?"

You'll live here, Roger said. "And you'll take care of the house, handle the groceries, pay bills, and have my dinner ready when I come home."

Sophia couldn't believe it. "I'm not a maid!"

You're the woman I chose after my divorce, Roger declared. "Now you'll work to pay back all the money and things I've given you over the years." He gripped her arm, forcing her onto the sofa. "So I hope you're skilled in the kitchen because I don't eat just anything," Isabelle sneered arrogantly.

This is outrageous! You can't... Roger, you can't treat me like this! Sophia cried.

Now you'll be the center of my life as you wished, so you must keep me happy and satisfied, like a good wife, Roger said indifferently.

I think you've got it all wrong! I want to be your wife, not your maid! Sophia protested.

Too bad, my love, because, if you claim to love me, you'll stand by me through thick and thin, Roger snapped.

Well said, son. This all started because of her, so it's time she repaid us for all the kindness we've shown, Isabelle said haughtily.

Chapter 48

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After a few days, Deborah met Christian again in his office to discuss reopening her mother's case-she doubted it was an accident. Christian and his friends gathered all existing material on Alexandra Anderson as they took a seat at the table. The three of them were poring over the files, yet they found nothing useful to reopen

the case.

Ah...nothing, Christian's assistant complained.

"Nothing here either... Hey Deborah, do you remember anything strange or

suspicious from that day? Christian asked, slightly annoyed at how flawlessly the investigation report labeled it a car accident"

[It's a bit fuzzy, but I know I was with her.

Hey! Wait, I found something, Alan exclaimed excitedly after reading a report on his laptop.

[What did you find, Alan?]

It says here that Miss Alexandra Anderson had this accident because she was drunk, but there's no evidence to support that claim. Alan showed them the report. "And here, it shows she had a life insurance policy that was cashed out." [Could that be a clue?]

Yes, Christian said, moving closer to his assistant to look at the report. "Because any life insurance is invalidated if you die in an accident caused by yourself,

especially under the influence of alcohol."

And what an amount... Alan commented, astonished.

Hey Alan, that insurance was for \$500,000, right?

"Yes, that's the amount, and here it says the insurer paid it to the legal

representative two weeks after Miss Anderson's death once all the paperwork was completed."

Wait... legal representative? Christian asked, reading the copy of the insurance contract. "Oh... God, how despicable."

[What's going on, Christian?]

Deborah, did you know you were the sole beneficiary of that insurance?

[What...? No, in fact, Frederick bragged to me that he received the it on his family's month-long Caribbean vacation, leaving me alone at home without money and spent food.]

Oh God... you know, with your ex... Well, let's just say now I understand why you fell into his clutches. Your supposed father is just as bad or worse than that Peterson idiot, Alan remarked, frowning.

But with this, we can start poking around, Alan added excitedly.

[How?] Deborah asked.

Because the police said your mom died driving under the influence, but the insurance report stated that she died in a car accident, Christian explained. "There are even two death certificates for your mom, which is technically illegal. Deborah looked at the documents she was shown, feeling her anger growing inside. In the end, it was all about the damned money. Fredrick never cared about his daughter and wife. All he wanted was the money to enjoy with his other family. "Excellent, we've got a reason to reopen the investigation. And with current technology, we can uncover clues that were never considered before," Christian said excitedly.

There came a knock on the door and they turned around to see Caroline walk it. How's it going?" she asked before approaching her husband and kissing him on the lips.

We've found a reason to reopen the case, Alan declared excitedly.

Really? That's great, she said, noticing Deborah seemed happy about the discovery too. "Well, it's time to leave it for now."

[And why's that?]

Deborah, look at the time, Caroline chided playfully.

Deborah glanced at the clock, startled by the hour.

You forgot, didn't you? Come on, let's go, you still have time for me to help you get ready, since it's your first party after the divorce.

[It wasn't on purpose.] Deborah apologized.

"Well, Carrie's right. You should get ready. We've done enough for today, so let's take the rest of the day off, Christian suggested."

Sounds good to me too. Now I have time to get home for my video game's special event, Alan said, packing up the files and shutting down his computer. "Good luck at your party, Deborah. Bye, guys." Alan grabbed his things and left the office. They bid Alan farewell and headed to Deborah's house after locking the office.

Chapter 49

Chapter 49

During the journey home, Deborah ordered food for everyone. Their arrival at her place coincided with the delivery driver.

[Perfect timing.] Deborah chuckled as she opened the door and paid for the food.

Caroline told her friend to take a shower as they entered the house. "I will serve the food."

[Yes, Mom.] Deborah replied playfully.

Hey Deborah, can I have your wifi password? Christian asked.

[I have it written down on the little pink note on my laptop.] She signed before heading to her room to shower.

Oh, thanks, Christian replied, settling into the living room to check a few things on his computer.

Oh, honey, leave work and come help me, Caroline complained upon seeing her husband engrossed in work again.

I'm coming, sweetheart. I just want to check the stock market a bit.

Are you still playing with stocks?

Yep, since someone told me they want a little house in this area. He gave his partner a flirtatious glance.

Christian, you-

I'm a man of my word, babe, he said, winking at her.

Caroline leaned in happily to kiss him on the lips before continuing to serve the food. Christian smiled at her excitement. After checking his stocks, he closed his laptop and went to help set the table. Just as they finished setting the table, Deborah emerged from her room.

When they were done with their meal, the women went to Deborah's room while Christian settled in the living room to watch TV.

Ready? Caroline asked as she laid out the makeup and accessories she would use.

[But remember, I don't want heavy makeup!] Deborah reminded Caroline.

Aw... don't be a party pooper. Besides, I know that isn't your style. Deborah smiled and closed her eyes, leaving herself in her friend's hands.

Caroline gave Deborah smoky eye makeup in shades of green and painted the latter's lips a pale pink. For Deborah's hair, Caroline pinned it up with a jeweled clip.

After the makeup was done, she helped Deborah into an off-shoulder, long bottle-green dress. Then, Caroline handed Deborah silver heels, a pair of long earrings, and a bracelet to complete the look. "Ta-da!" Caroline announced upon exiting the room, catching her husband's attention as he turned to look at them.

Wow... Deborah, you look gorgeous, he complimented, seeing Deborah blush with embarrassed happiness. [Caroline works magic.]

That's why I'm already saving up to open my own styling business, Caroline said, snapping some photos of her friend.

Christian smiled at his wife's excitement, knowing it was Caroline's dream to have her own salon where she could style others-a dream he would help make a reality.

Deborah let herself be pampered because she saw her friend's excitement. After that, the couple said their goodbyes before heading home.

Tell me all about it tomorrow, Caroline said as she got into her car.

Bye Deborah, and good luck, Christian added, starting the vehicle.

[Yeah.] Deborah waved, watching the car drive away.

Wow... you know, now I feel like imitating Roger and locking you up at home, Deborah heard someone say behind her. She turned around and saw Jayden looking at her with a flirtatious smile. [Well, I won't let you.]

You look stunning and I wouldn't want anyone trying to flirt with you.

[Stunning? I feel a bit chubby.] Deborah admitted.

"That's a lie. It's not noticeable at all. Whoever sold you that dress is a genius

because it highlights your beauty and hides your pregnancy, Jayden complimented,"

approaching to take her hand.

[Well, if you put it that way, you look handsome too. It's the first time I've seen you in a suit.]

I'm not a fan of dressing like a penguin, but today I'm glad to be dressed like this to match such a woman, he said, making Deborah blush at his words. "Ready?"

[Yes, I just need to grab my purse. By the way, where's the party, or what's it for? You didn't tell me any details.]

It's a surprise.

Chapter 50

Chapter 50

It was a beautiful night for a grand celebration that brought together many important and powerful figures of society to commemorate the founding of the city. Anyone who was anyone or had a generous amount of money was invited.

But more than the commemoration, all eyes and ears were on the rumors circulating about the Peterson family. Several had heard the trial's conclusion led to George and Isabelle announcing their divorce-many were there to verify if it was true or just gossip. For the same reason, Roger received a separate invitation with an extra pass to bring a guest if he wished. Because of that, Sophia was excitedly doing her makeup for the grand event.

You know, Roger, this party will feel different because I don't have new jewels to wear, Sophia pouted because Roger had always gifted her a new set of jewelry for every event they attended together.

Stop complaining, Isabelle spoke, already fed up with Sophia, thinking it would be better if the girl were mute so that she could stop hearing her irritating voice all day,

Are you ready yet? Roger emerged from the room, adjusting the cufflinks of his suit.

Yes, my love, Sophia said, approaching to kiss him. "Oops... Roger, your tie."

Roger frowned as he noticed the knot was off and remembered how Deborah always helped him fix it. Grimacing at the memory, Roger tied it properly and left the apartment to fetch his car for the event. It was his mother's chance to talk to his father and make him reconsider this whole divorce ordeal.

The venue for the party was the most popular hotel at the moment, boasting a grand ballroom large enough to fit about 500 people. Gradually, guests and the invited press filled the hall.

When Roger and his company arrived, they coincided with the arrival of George and Elliot.

Oh, Elliot, you're accompanying your dad. Sophia greeted them.

Save it, witch. There's no point in feigning kindness with me, Elliot replied sharply.

Sophia blinked as her eye twitched slightly at his response.

Elliot, don't speak to her like that, show some respect, Roger intervened.

Don't try to give me lessons in manners. You're the least qualified for that, Elliot retorted. "Elliot, we're in public, control yourself," George instructed, heading towards the hotel

entrance. "Honey, wait, we should enter together." Isabelle tried to take his hand but failed to even touch it.

Why? George arched an eyebrow.

Well... if we don't, the gossip will start and... Isabelle hesitated.

You know, it pains me to know that in all our years of marriage, you never noticed that I don't care about what others say or think of me. George didn't bother hiding his annoyance as he looked her in the eyes. "Come, Elliot," George called for his son that they could enter the hall together.

So

Isabelle grimaced and clenched her fists, trying hard to hold back tears-her pride prevented her from showing weakness.

Roger took his mother's hand and led the two women inside.

The sight of the divided family sparked whispers among the guests immediately, though what drew the most attention was seeing Roger with his lover. Everyone was surprised even though they were used to seeing him bring her to such events.

After a few minutes, the gossip subsided when the Cooper couple entered. They were the city's most powerful pair, although rumors began circulating when they noticed they had arrived without their son-a strange occurrence, as Jayden always accompanied them to such events.

Samantha, Eric, George approached to greet them.

Back already, old man? Eric replied.

Well, the three of us just got back too, Samantha confessed.

And when was that? George asked.

We just returned a couple of days ago from our trip to Androsia, Eric explained.

Business or pleasure?

Both, the Coopers answered simultaneously.

Hey, now that I think about it, where's Isabelle? Samantha asked, noticing George was without a companion.

Many things have changed. In short, I'm getting a divorce, George replied bluntly.

What?! But

Samanta was astonished, but then saw Isabelle approaching with

Roger and his mistress.

Mr. and Mrs. Cooper, good evening, greeted Roger.

"Young man, how's life as CEO

Well..."

how's life as CEO treating you?" Eric asked.

My brother is no longer the head of the company, Elliot declared, smiling arrogantly.

What...? The Coopers felt they had missed a major event, but before they could satisfy their curiosity, murmurs began to spread. Looking to their right, they found the reason for the commotion: their son had arrived at the party with a beautiful brunette. Deborah and Jayden's arrival caused quite a stir because it was the first time the heir to the Cooper family arrived with a companion. But of course, the biggest reason for the growing murmurs, especially among those who knew her, was Deborah.

She... Sophia sized Deborah up, trying to find flaws in the latter's attire. But there were none. Sophia felt offended because this couldn't possibly be the mute. And perhaps what made her feel worse was the fact that Deborah could look like that despite being pregnant. "Mom, Dad," Jayden greeted as he approached them.

Son, who is this beautiful lady? Eric asked, smiling at Deborah.

Oh... Son, could it be true? Have you finally found a girlfriend? Samantha asked excitedly.

Deborah blushed slightly at their comments and discreetly greeted Elliot, who returned the greeting with a wave.

I'm working on it, Mom, Jayden replied amusedly.

Well, introduce us to this lovely lady, Eric requested.

Her name is Deborah."

[Pleased to meet you, Sir, Madam.]

The Coopers were surprised by her method of communication.

Sophia and Isabel smiled arrogantly, thinking the Coopers would reject Deborah for being flawed.

Pleased to meet you, beautiful, Eric said aloud while signing, astonishing Deborah.

Now I see why someone studied sign language, Samantha remarked. "And let me apologize in advance if this one ever did something wrong to you. He's quite the mischief-maker." "Hey," Jayden protested, blushing a bit.

[Quite the opposite. Jayden is a wonderful man and has treated me with love, care, and respect.] Deborah smiled at the beautiful interaction between Jayden and his

parents.

Well, I hope your relationship blossoms into something lasting because we're eager to become grandparents, Samantha said happily.

Mom, really... Samantha's words made Jayden feel embarrassed but eventually smiled seeing how happy Deborah was from hearing the very same words that made him blush.

Well, Samantha, you may not have to wait long for that. Though I don't know if adopting that woman's child fits into your plans, Isabelle said, giving Deborah a cold look.
