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[Vivienne]

I look up from the floor and find a very pregnant woman standing right in front of me.

Seeing her belly, which looks like it's carrying at least seven months of pregnancy, I feel terrible for not being more cautious.

"I'm so, so sorry. I didn't see you there."

"Well, obviously!" She rolls her eyes with exaggerated disdain, placing a hand under her belly and scowling even more. "Look at you, standing there like a clueless idiot. It's pathetic. What exactly are you supposed to be? The new maid who can't even manage to watch where she's going? The kitchen staff who's so useless they might as well not exist? Or maybe you're just another one of those pathetic mistresses they parade around like trophies. Either way, you're failing miserably at whatever it is you're supposed to be doing."

I open my mouth to respond, but the woman cuts me off with a sharp glare.

"Seriously, are you going to just stand there or are you going to do something useful?"

I'm taken aback, but I'm not about to back down. "I'm not here to be anyone's maid or mistress."

What's with jumping to a conclusion like that? Are these hormones? Or is she naturally so offensive?



Not that I need to know right now. The sooner I get out of here, the better.

She snorts, clearly unimpressed. “Yeah, well, whatever. This place is a fucking circus, and you’re about as useful as a wet paper bag. Seriously, what are you doing here? Did they just throw you in because they needed someone to look stupid? Get your act together or get the hell out of my way. I don’t have time for your incompetence.”

“What’s happening here?”

Before I can come up with something that might calm her down, Mrs. Sullivan intervenes. She looks at me sharply. “Why are you still here? You were supposed to follow me, weren’t you?”

“I was, but then —” I start to say, but the pregnant woman cuts me off.

“Mrs. Sullivan,” she cries, twisting her expression from angry to a sad little woman so quickly it almost gives me whiplash. “I almost slipped because of this maid. Please don’t tell Alex about this. He might come down hard on her, and I really don’t want that on my conscience. Can we keep this between us?”

Mrs. Sullivan’s eyes narrow, but instead of saying anything to her, she turns her gaze to me. “You should apologize to Ms. González here.”

“But I didn’t do anything. It was an honest —”

“Does not matter,” she says, her tone brooking no argument. “Just apologize.”

But should I?

I mean, I know I could end this stupid conflict right here and move on,

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but ever since I decided to stop taking Caden's family's bullshit, I've become a bit more sensitive about what I'll put up with. I hate it when people disrespect me, thinking they can get away with it.

But this woman... she's clearly pregnant and probably having mood swings. Maybe it's best to let this go.

I look at her and nod slowly. "I'm sorry. I should have paid more attention to where I was going. I hope you're okay."

The pregnant woman gives a huff of satisfaction and then leans closer, almost whispering in my ear. "Good. Now, you know your damn place."

Then, she waddles her way and disappears from sight in no time.

I shake my head and turn back to face the older woman.

Mrs. Sullivan gives me a look that says this is as much as she's willing to tolerate. "Let's go," she says curtly. "And please stay close. We don't want you getting lost again and again, now do we?"

For the rest of the way, I try to keep my thoughts to myself. I just want to get to that damn room and call my brother.

"Here's your room," she finally announces when we reach a room with tall double doors.

"Make yourself at home or whatever. I'll be right back with some change of clothes."

"Thanks," I mumble, though I'm not feeling particularly grateful.

Mrs. Sullivan huffs and leaves, her heels echoing down the hallway.

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I close the doors and lean against them, letting myself finally take in the mess I've landed in.

"Shit!" I say to myself, looking around the room. "My life couldn't have gotten more twisted than this."

But it's not the time to whine. I need to take control of the situation.

I peel myself off the door and search for my phone in my sling bag.

That's when another realization hits me.

The reason I ducked back into the elevator, leaving Rosita behind, was because I left my phone in my hotel room.

My eyes widen as I realize: "I don't have it. Damn it!"



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