

Chapter 12

Thomas was so angered by this that he lost his appetite. The tension in the air was so thick that nobody dared move.

"He's such a fool! He and that woman will ruin Holt Jewelry!"

They didn't have family dinners like this often, but now the atmosphere was ruined.

Sasha took the opportunity to fan the flames. She wouldn't let any chance to humiliate Jessamine go. "I don't think Thaddeus will be home tonight. It's only the second day of Amy's return, and I bet they have plenty of catching up to do.

"You guys don't know about this, but Thaddeus threw a welcome-back party for her last night. They've been separated for three years, yet they're still so in love. God, it's so touching."

The thought of pissing Jessamine off made her lose control. She exaggerated everything that had happened. Heather couldn't even stop her.

Thomas flung his cutlery on the table, his chest heaving with rage. He pointed at Sasha and snapped, "You're not allowed to spend time with that woman either. In fact, you're not allowed to leave home until you learn how to talk properly."

This made Sasha shut up. The meal ended on this unpleasant note.

Jessamine wanted to take advantage of Thaddeus' absence to sneak away. Her suitcase was still in Shane's car, after all. But before she could put her plan into action, Heather sat her down for a chat.

Chapter 12

Heather was the gentle, demure type. She was also quite soft-spoken. Jessamine couldn't understand how someone like her could've given birth to someone as cold and distant as Thaddeus, as well as someone as obnoxious as Sasha.

Jessamine and Heather didn't usually talk with each other much. It wasn't because of any conflict between them. It was just that Heather rarely went over to Jardin Estate to visit Jessamine and Thaddeus.

Heather's sudden warmth surprised Jessamine. "Why don't you spend the night here, Jessie? I bought you and Sasha a pair of pajamas each the last time I went shopping. I'll get it for you later so you can try it on."

"Thanks, Mom." At the mention of a gift, Jessamine was reminded of the ruby necklace Thaddeus had given her. She knew red was Heather's favorite color, so she took the necklace out of her bag and gave it to Heather.

"This is a piece that's gonna be launched in the upcoming collection, Mom. I think it fits you much better than it does me."

Heather's eyes lit up, and she looked pleasantly surprised. She immediately took a liking to the necklace. "This design is quite different from the previous ones that the designers at Holt Jewelry came up with. In fact, it's really eye-catching."

Jessamine smiled helplessly. "It was designed by a new designer Ted hired from abroad."

Heather didn't know the truth. She kept singing the designer's praises while admiring the necklace.

Chapter 12

That night, after returning to her room, Jessamine stared dazedly at the app she used to record her period. Her period was more than two weeks late, yet she hadn't noticed at all.

She placed a hand on her stomach, feeling apprehensive. Then, the glimmer of hope she felt was extinguished when she recalled the pregnancy test result Amy had sent to her.

So what if she was pregnant? Thaddeus wouldn't want it. He would only look forward to Amy's child.

Thaddeus would most likely be spending the night outside. Feeling irritated, Jessamine walked over to the balcony in hopes that the night breeze would clear her mind.

It was the middle of May, but the temperatures still dropped at night. Jessamine pulled her shirt tighter around her.

There was a crescent moon hanging in the dark sky. She could also see a few stars here and there.

The silence of her surroundings made her think of her dead mother. She still had no clue as to what had caused the accident.

The police had concluded that the brakes had failed, but Jessamine firmly believed things weren't so simple.

The car that Jessamine's mother had been driving at the time of the accident was relatively new, so it wasn't likely that something like brake failure would happen ... unless someone had tampered with them.

Jessamine was lost in thought. She was pulled out of her reverie when she heard the sound of the door being locked behind her. She

Chapter 12

turned to see Sasha making a face at her while swinging around the key to the balcony's door. ¹

The realization dawned on Jessamine. She pushed the balcony door to find that it wouldn't budge.



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