

The Divorce Prescription Chapter 101

“I sold everything I had to send her to school, gave up everything to send her to the big city. And now? She refuses to acknowledge me! Says I embarrass her and wants me to go back to the countryside...” Larry cried, his performance so convincing that even he almost believed it. His acting deserved a perfect score.

The reporters snapped photos frantically. An adoptive daughter abandoning her rural adoptive father was headline-worthy material. They were all eager to get an exclusive scoop.

The journalists felt deeply sympathetic toward Larry and didn’t hold back their criticism of Celine. “How could Celine be so heartless?”

“I never believed anyone could be inherently evil until Celine proved me wrong!”

Benjamin handed Larry a tissue, his voice filled with righteous anger. “Today’s press conference is to expose Celine for who she truly is. Too many people still don’t know what kind of person she is. She can’t just abandon her adoptive father. She must take responsibility!”

Larry wiped his face with the tissue, a sly smile flashing briefly across his lips. No matter how much protection Adam offered, Celine wouldn’t escape him.

Lucy exchanged a quick glance with Carly. Both of them were pleased with how things were unfolding.

Hayden hadn’t bothered to show up. To him, this press conference was enough to deal with Celine. He had a business dinner with a few clients at a luxury hotel and

was simply waiting for good news from Lucy.

Lucy, meanwhile, wore a pained expression and spoke apologetically, “Ladies and gentlemen, I owe you all an apology. Celine is my daughter. It’s my failure as a mother that I didn’t raise her properly, leading to such a negative effect. I’m not a good mother.”

Carly immediately took her hand. “Mom, it’s not your fault.”

The reporters chimed in. “Mrs. Tate, you’re a wonderful mother! Just look at how well you raised Carly.”

“Mrs. Tate, Celine is just rotten to the core. Some people can’t be taught no matter how hard you try.”

Lucy's lips curved slightly. Using Celine as a stepping stone, she had successfully established herself as a good mother.

It was then that Benjamin spoke again. "The press conference has started, but Celine hasn't shown up. I bet she's too afraid to face us. Guilty conscience, anyone?"

His words had barely settled when a clear, confident voice rang out. "Benjamin, are you talking about me?"

Everyone turned to see a slender, graceful figure standing at the door. Celine had arrived, and she came alone. She walked forward with steady steps, the crowd of reporters instinctively parting to make way. She stopped in front of Benjamin.

"You've got some nerve showing up here!" Benjamin snapped.

Celine raised an eyebrow, her expression playful but sharp. "Benjamin, make up your mind. Do you want me here or not? Pick one, will you?"

"How dare you!" Benjamin's face flushed with anger. The so-called little tyrant of Mercy City had lost to Celine yet again.

Lucy smirked discreetly. It was even better that Celine had shown up. She immediately signaled Larry with a look.

Larry reached out to grab Celine's hand. "Celine..."

Celine's eyes turned icy as she glared at Larry. "Don't touch me with your filthy hands. You make me sick."

Larry froze.

Lucy didn't miss a beat, quickly stirring up the crowd. "Celine, how can you still treat your adoptive father like this? Haven't you done enough?"

Carly chimed in, "Celine, apologize to your adoptive father right now and take him home with you."

Benjamin added, "Celine, you're absolutely despicable!"

The reporters swarmed closer. "This is all happening right in front of us. Celine, your true personality is hideous. We'll make sure the world knows who you truly

are!"

As Adam and Nathan entered the venue, this chaotic scene was the first thing they saw. Celine was standing alone, surrounded, and under siege.

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The press conference spiraled into chaos, with accusations flying at Celine from every direction.

Adam's gaze was ice-cold, a flicker of exasperation crossing his otherwise impassive face. Did Celine not realize this was like walking into the lion's den? How reckless could she be to come here alone?

"What the hell?" Nathan muttered under his breath. He stepped forward, ready to shield Celine from the growing mob. However, someone had already beat him to it. Adam moved swiftly, his long strides cutting through the crowd.

Nathan was speechless. What kind of wingman was he? What a way to read the room.

However, the chaotic room fell eerily silent. Celine, surrounded by hostile faces, lifted her head. Her clear, unwavering gaze swept over the crowd. Though she didn't raise her voice, the quiet authority in her gaze commanded attention. The sheer strength in her demeanor made everyone hold their breath.

Adam froze mid-step. He had never seen this side of her before.

The reporters now stood dumbstruck. Something about Celine's presence was intimidating.

After letting her gaze linger on each face, Celine's eyes locked onto Larry. "Did you really think I came here alone?"

Larry flinched. "What are you talking about?"

Suddenly, Robin's voice rang out. "There he is! That's Larry!"

All heads turned to see a team of uniformed police officers entering the room. The tension in the air became palpable as they marched directly toward Larry, presenting an arrest warrant.

"Larry Slick, you're under arrest for extortion, kidnapping, and attempted rape," the officer declared. The click of handcuffs echoed like a thunderclap.

The press conference exploded into chaos. Everything escalated so quickly, and nobody had any idea what was going on. The once-pitied man was now revealed as a dangerous criminal.

Benjamin was dumbfounded. “Officers, there has to be some mistake. He’s a simple villager, an honest man. Extortion? Kidnapping? Attempted rape? Who did he even try to assault?”

“He tried to rape me!”

Those words struck like a hammer, reverberating in everyone’s ears.

Gasps rippled through the crowd as they turned their stunned faces toward Celine. However, no one was more shaken than Larry, Lucy, and Carly.

At that moment, Robin ran to Celine’s side. As her best friend, she refused to let Celine face this alone.

Celine raised a photograph for everyone to see. It was the very image Larry had used to blackmail her. Facing the cameras and reporters, her voice carried unwavering strength.

“Yes, Larry is my adoptive father, but he’s also a pedophile. Ten years ago, he was convicted of abusing and molesting children and sentenced to ten years in prison.

The room went still. Every pair of eyes locked onto the photograph in her hand.

Celine’s voice didn’t falter as she continued. “He was released recently and came straight for me. First, he tried to blackmail me for 100 million using this photo. Then, he knocked me unconscious in a club, kidnapped me, and dragged me to a mountain cave where he attempted to rape me.”

She pulled out a small recording device. Her sharp gaze pinned Larry in place. “I’ve been wearing this hidden camera. It has recorded **every** single crime you committed.”

Larry’s face went pale in disbelief. He didn’t expect Celine to carry a recording device all along. How could she?

Celine stepped forward, closing the distance between them. She leaned in slightly to talk to Larry, but her eyes were locked on Lucy.

“I was the first to know you were released. You thought you had me trapped, didn’t you? But the truth is, I’ve been waiting for you. Ten years behind bars wasn’t enough for what you’ve done. This time, I’ll make sure you never see the light of day again.”

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Larry’s eyes widened as the realization dawned on him. From the moment he was released from prison, Celine had been aware. She had been waiting for him.

Everyone thought she would never dare reveal the dark shadows of her childhood. A woman always put the utmost importance on her reputation, after all.

She hadn't told Mary, nor had she told Adam. When he demanded money, she gave it to him. When he knocked her unconscious and kidnapped her, she seemed helpless, like a prey ensnared by its predator.

However, that was all an illusion. She had been pretending and was in control the whole time. The small recording device she wore told the true story. Whether it was his demand for 100 million or his attempt to rape her in the cave, every step of his crimes had played into her hands.

She had used her apparent obedience to feed his greed and used her endurance to lead him deeper into the pit of his own making. She had baited him with herself. Now, ten years later, she had sent him back into the abyss.

With the multitude of charges against him, his fate was sealed. It was either a death sentence or life imprisonment. Everything had gone according to her plan.

What Larry had figured out, Lucy also realized. She remembered the moment when Hansel brought Larry into the Tate family. Celine had stood outside, silently watching.

Lucy stared at Celine in shock. This wasn't the same little girl who had chased her mom's car, sobbing as she was abandoned. This wasn't the helpless child who had called her mom for help after being violated. This wasn't the girl wandering aimlessly through the woods without a home.

Years had passed, and Celine had grown. She stood tall now, confident and resolute. Her clear eyes radiated unwavering determination.

Celine turned to face the cameras again. Her voice was steady, resonant, and full of strength. "I've never felt ashamed of my life. I don't believe in punishing myself for the crimes of others.

"If you've experienced what I have, if you've been hurt the same way, remember, don't cower, and don't be afraid. I know it's hard, but you must stand up for yourself. No one else can save you. You have to save yourself!"

She had saved herself.

Robin, standing nearby, was overcome with emotion. Tears welled in her eyes as she clapped her hands.

The reporters looked down with guilt. They began murmuring apologies. Ms. Celine, we're sorry. We misunderstood you earlier and raised our voices at you."

“Celine, I have two daughters. I can’t imagine the courage it took for you to do this. You’re amazing.”

Thumbs went up all around.

Adam watched silently from a distance, his gaze fixed on Celine. He had doubted her ability to handle everything on her own. However, she used herself as bait, and he finally saw her trap unfold. Her calculated reversal of the entire situation made him realize how wrong he had been.

She had said she would handle it herself, and she had. He had always dismissed her and underestimated her, yet time and again, she defied his expectations.

He wasn’t sure what kind of women he preferred before. However, beauty paired with intelligence and an unyielding spirit was mesmerizing. Celine, standing here in this moment, was radiant.

Nathan stood nearby, stunned by everything he had just witnessed. “Adam, you knew, didn’t you?”

Adam didn’t answer. His silence was all the confirmation Nathan needed.

Nathan remained silent. He could have had his moment as the knight in shining armor. He couldn’t help but feel their brotherhood had changed.

Meanwhile, Lucy and Carly stood frozen, their faces ashen. They had never imagined things would take such a drastic turn. They were the ones who had been utterly defeated in this press conference.

Lucy quickly said, “Celine, I’m sorry. I misunderstood you earlier. Please, let me explain. I didn’t know anything about this...”

Celine’s gaze was stone cold. “Did you really not know anything?”

Before Lucy could respond, the police officers stepped forward. “Lucy Garcia, during Larry’s escape, you harbored and sheltered a fugitive. We have reasonable suspicion that you colluded with him. Please come with us for further investigation.”

The officers didn’t wait for a response and grabbed Lucy by the arms.

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Lucy’s mind buzzed, her thoughts freezing for a moment. She suddenly recalled that when Larry escaped, she had indeed taken him in. Shocked, she turned to Celine. “Was it you?”

It was Celine who orchestrated Larry's release through Leo. She had anticipated that Larry would run straight to the Tate family.

Celine met Lucy's gaze with an innocent expression and a faint smile curling her lips. "I don't understand what you're accusing me of, Mom. You don't owe me an explanation. Save it for the authorities."

"How dare you!" Lucy's voice cracked.

From the distance, Larry, how restrained by the police, let out a desperate cry. "I don't want to go to jail! Mrs. Tate, save me! Please, save me!"

The crowd's eyes shifted sharply to Lucy. The whispers started, spreading like wildfire. Her reputation as a good mother was completely ruined.

Lucy's expression changed as she panicked. "Shut up! Make him stop!"

The reporters started discussing among themselves. "Didn't that man go to prison ten years ago for molesting a child? Are we supposed to believe she didn't know?"

"And she still associate herself with someone who harmed her own daughter? What kind of mother does that?"

"Didn't you hear? Mrs. Tate's the ultimate pick-me. First for Hayden, now for Carly."

The phrase "ultimate pick-me" hit Lucy like a slap to the face. She didn't like that nickname and was flushed with anger.

"No, it's not like that! That's not true!" She wanted to defend herself, but the two officers standing on either side of her gripped her arms firmly and escorted her away.

Carly stayed frozen in place. She panicked, and her face went blank.

How could it have come to this? What was she supposed to do now? This press conference had gone horribly wrong. They had fallen into a trap.

"Mom!" Carly opened her mouth again to call out, but the judgmental eyes and murmurs around her made her snap it shut.

No one was more confused than Benjamin, whose mind was spinning, trying to piece together what had just unfolded. That was when he noticed a pair of clear, beautiful eyes looking straight at him.

It was Celine.

A pang of guilt struck Benjamin. He hadn't known what she had been through, the horrors she had faced.

Celine walked toward him. "Benjamin, are you thirsty?"

What? Benjamin was baffled by the abrupt question.

Celine smiled sweetly. "If you're thirsty, have some nut milk. It's good for your brain."

With that, she turned and walked away.

Robin couldn't hold back a laugh as she hurried to follow Celine.

Benjamin stood there in silence. Did she just ask him to have some nut milk for his brain? Was she implying that he was stupid?

Whatever guilt he had felt moments ago vanished in an instant. His face darkened as he shouted, "Celine! Come back and explain yourself!"

It was then that Carly approached Benjamin, her eyes glistening with unshed tears. She couldn't afford to lose him. "Benjamin, I don't know how things turned out like this. I had no idea Larry was such a monster."

Benjamin's expression turned sour at the mention of Larry. "Don't bring up that bastard. He's done for. He'll rot in prison! And Carly, don't blame yourself. You're kind and beautiful. You were deceived like the rest of us."

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Benjamin stood by her side, which eased Carly's nerves a little.

After the press conference ended, Adam returned to his luxury Rolls-Royce. In his deep, magnetic voice, he instructed Leo in the front seat, "Inform the media that I don't want any news about Celine leaking out,"

Les replied with a hushed tone, "Don't worry, Mr. Alvarez. Several female reporters at the scene already took the initiative to delete all photos and videos of Mrs.

Alvarez. They won't be reporting anything about her,"

Adam's lips curled into a faint smirk. "She does have a way of winning people over,"

Leo, with genuine admiration, added, "Mrs. Alvarez is truly courageous,"

Adam raised an eyebrow. She was indeed very brave. He pulled out his phone and dialed a number. "Hello, James,"

His uncle, James Lambert, was the renowned president of Vorhine University and a medical professor respected wherever he went. "Adam, this is rare. What's on your mind?"

"**James**, I need a favor,"

Adam said.

"Interesting. If it's enough to make you call personally, I'm all ears," James replied,

"I want to enroll a young woman at your university," Adam said.

"A young woman? Who?" James was curious,

"Her name is Celine. Please arrange for her to join the medical program," Adam said calmly.

"Celine? Isn't she your stand-in bride? Alright, have her report to Vorhine University tomorrow. I'd like to meet this so-called stand-in bride myself," James said.

Adam ended the call, and Leo couldn't hide his surprise, "Mr. Alvarez, you're sending Mrs. Alvarez to Yorhine University?"

Looking out the window, Adam replied, "Celine is clever, but she'd never had a proper chance to study. She stopped going to school when she was 16. I know now that it wasn't entirely her fault. With an adoptive father like hers, education probably wasn't an option.

"By sending her to Vorhine University, I hope she can build a better future for herself, since she seems to have some interest in medicine, that's where she'll go."

Leo's eyes lit up. "Mr. Alvarez, that's brilliant foresight."

"I don't expect her to shine on some grand stage like Carly, basking in the spotlight. I just want her to improve herself a little. Finding a stable career is far better

than"

Better than sitting still, thinking about which man to later onto next.

Leo dimed in cheerfully, "Mrs. Alvarez will undoubtedly work hard, she won't disappoint you,"

Adam's gaze remained on the passing scenery. He hoped so. He just hoped she wouldn't cause any trouble.

In a lavish private room of a five-star hotel, Hayden was enjoying dinner with David, Robert, and Harry. Ever since the debacle at Sonia's Both birthday banquet, he had been working hard to rebuild his reputation and secure this dinner with the three influential businessmen.

Raising his glass, Hayden said with a grin, "Mr. Weston, Mr. Lanning, Mr. Levine, I look forward to your guidance in future business endeavors."

The three businessmen clinked their glasses with him.

"You're too modest, Mr. Tate Everyone knows your beloved daughter is romantically involved with Mr. Alvarez. It's only a matter of time before you become his father-in-law"

These men were only here because of Hayden's connection to Adam. Over the years, Adam had elevated the Tate family to great heights.

Upon hearing this, Hayden laughed heartily. He knew the press conference was ongoing, and he could soon become Adam's father-in-law. All that was left now was a call from Lucy

"Soon, soon Filtreat you all to a drink when the time comes," he said.

The men downed their drinks.

Just then, the TV in the private room caught their attention A news anchor appeared on screen, holding a microphone.

"Today, authorities had apprehended a man charged with child molestation and attempted rape. Alongside him, a suspected accomplice was also arrested."

The screen cut to footage of Larry, his head covered with a black hood, being escorted into a police vehicle. Moments later, Lucy appeared, handcuffed and flanked by officers.

The three businessmen froze. While they didn't recognize tatty, Lucy's face was unmistakable. "Mr. Tate, isn't that Mrs. Tate?"

Puzzled, Hayden's hand, which was pouring his drink hallway, stopped abruptly. He turned toward the TV.

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He saw Lucy on the TV, and the smile vanished from Hayden's face while he froze.

With a microphone in hand, the reporter said, “Who says being a pick-me isn’t an economy? Hats off to this suspect, as she’s the ultimate pick-me. She’s doing it with such flair, such passion...”

Hayden remained silent.

The three businessmen didn’t bother hiding their distaste. They pushed back their chairs and got up.

Hayden hurriedly tried to salvage the situation. “Gentlemen, please wait...”

The trio glanced at him, their lips curled into a sardonic smile. “Mr. Tate, you’re really something. We could never hope to match your charm.” With that parting shot, they walked out.

Today, the ultimate pick-me, Lucy, had her moment of infamy. Her antics dragged Hayden into the spotlight as a subject of ridicule among the businessmen.

Hayden’s face darkened as he threw the glass on the floor with all his might.

Just then, his phone rang. It was Carly. “Dad, something terrible happened! The press conference was a disaster. Mom’s been arrested! You need to get a lawyer and get her out now!” Carly cried out.

Outside the police station, the night dragged on as Hayden, accompanied by a lawyer, finally managed to get Lucy released.

Lucy’s face was pale. This was the first time in her life she had set foot inside a jail. “Honey, I can explain...”

The sharp sound of Hayden’s slap echoed in the room. His hand left a vivid red imprint across Lucy’s face, her head snapping to the side from the force of the blow.

Hayden’s face darkened. “You’ve made me a laughingstock! How the hell am I supposed to face anyone in the business world now? Lucy, you’ve ruined me!”

Lucy clutched her stinging cheek, but she dared not speak. Her humiliation turned to seething anger toward Celine. This was all her fault!

Carly stood silently to the side, her expression indifferent as she watched Lucy get slapped. She made no move to intervene. In her eyes, Lucy was just a stepmother, not her real mother. “Dad, what do we do now?”

Hayden turned to Carly and said, “Carly, I’ve noticed Mr. Alvarez’s attitude toward Celine has changed. He’s the key to everything. You need to make sure he stays firmly in your corner.”

Carly let out a cold laugh. Lifting her chin proudly, she declared, “Dad, do you think Celine actually believes Adam likes her? She’s delusional. I’ll show her her place soon enough.”

Even now, Carly didn’t see Celine as a threat. Sure, Celine had won a few rounds lately. However, when it came to Adam, Celine would never win. She could try if she didn’t believe it!

Celine had just returned to Alvarez Residence when her phone buzzed. It was a call from Carly.

“Celine, are you free? Let’s grab some coffee,” Carly said.

Star T

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She‘

Immediately Carly raised an eye and smirked. “What’s wrong, Celine? Are you afraid? You’ve been riding high on your recent wins and Sexting in the art you? be you rared of me?”

Catina curved bay log in 1e eile “Alright, I’ll see you soon.” After hanging up, Celine got ready to leave

Hey phone *buzzed* with a trepp notification from **James**, who had sent her a complex surgical proposal. “Doctor, this was a tricky surgery I encountered last

If you have few, please guide me through it.”

fers was the prose otheeversity and also one of her students. Coincidentally, Tracy had graduated from Yorhine University and was one of James‘ mave promising students

10 fart, Tray’s sole are obstant had been heavily supported by James‘ recommendation. In a way, they were all part of the same mentor–student lineage.

Coline english, “bare”

Man try, Celine arrived at the caté, she spotted Carly immediately. Unlike someone casually waiting, Carly stood by the staircase as if deliberately weichgating bay ifival

Celine mcended the stairs, her voice calm and direct. “

Carly, I don’t think our relationship has ever been close enough for casual coffee. Say what did you want to say?”

Carly, in her crystal heels and a bold red slip dress, looked radiant and dazzling “Celine, congratulations. You really pulled off a win at the press conference.”

“Thank,” Celine replied flatly.

“But so what? Even if you win, can you truly ever have Adam?”

Celine met her gaze without saying much, “So?”

“SA” At that moment, Carly’s peripheral vision caught sight of the double doors swinging open. A tall, handsome figure walked in, exuding an air of power and

authority

She walked to the edge of the staircase, lowering her voice as she grinned. “Celine, I’m just worried that you’re flying too close to the sun. It’s time I bring you coming back to reality

Before Celine could react, Carly grabbed her sleeve and suddenly screamed in panic. “No! No!”

With that, she tumbled dramatically down the staircase, rolling all the way to the bottom.

Celine’s instincts fluttered slightly as she looked on. She wasn’t entirely sure what game Carly was playing this time, but it was clear the woman wasn’t holding back

A voice, barely audible, called out, “Carly!”

Celine turned her head and saw him. He was here. In that instant, Celine understood what Carly was trying to do.

He arrived just in time to see Carly falling down the stairs. He immediately rushed forward. “Carly! Carly!”

Celine descended the stairs and said *with* a neutral tone, “Adam, she’s pulling the same stunt **again**. Don’t tell me you can’t see that she threw herself down on

Carly lay on the ground, her face pale and drenched in cold sweat. “Adam my leg. It hurts so much...”

Adam felt something warm and sticky on his hand. He looked down and realized it was blood. Carly’s leg was injured, and blood was streaming from the wound.

Without sparing Celine a glance, he scooped Carly up in his arms and headed straight to the hospital.

Celine called after *tam*, “Mam, don’t be fooled by her!

Kampened mad-step and turned his head slightly. His by gaze swept over her “Celine, how can you be so heartless? Carly is a dancer—her legs are her livelihood. And now she’s heart!”

With that, as carried Carly out, leaving Celine standing frozen in place.

He had called brianless

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It wasn’t as if she had pushed Carly down the stairs. Carly had done it to herself. Still, Adam’s reaction had been visceral seeing her injured leg, especially knowing she was the lead ballerina. He was heartbroken, deeply so.

Celine let out a bitter, self-deprecating chuckle.

Inside the VIP suite of the hospital, Carly’s leg had already been treated by the doctors.

Adam’s expression tightened as he asked the doctor, “Is her leg injured badly? Will this affect her ability to dance in the future?”

The doctor reassured him. “Mr. Alvarez, no need to worry. We conducted a thorough scan. Fortunately, it’s only a light wound. There was no damage to the muscles or bones. As long as she rests properly, she’ll be able to return to dancing without issue.”

With that, the doctor left.

Adam felt something touching his palm. Carly had reached out her slender hand, slipping it into Adam’s palm. Her delicate fingers curled around his.

Adam lowered his gaze to her pale face, which was tilted up toward him. “I’m fine, Adam. Don’t worry about me.”

He had been so visibly worried about her. It was exactly as she had hoped, but her heart was still warm and satisfied.

“Why did you throw yourself down the stairs?” Adam suddenly asked.

Carly froze, but she quickly recovered. She knew she couldn’t lie to him. She wasn’t planning on fooling him, either. “Adam, I’ve felt like you’ve been distant from me lately. I can’t feel your love anymore. I don’t feel safe.”

He didn't deny it. Ever since the incident where she tried to use Mary as leverage, something between them had shifted. He had kept his distance, finding her less and less like the girl he had once met in the mountain cave.

Furthermore, he was spending his time with Celine. He couldn't explain it, but Celine had a way of pulling him in.

The memory of that stormy night at the B&B flashed in his mind. He had allowed himself to give in to a fleeting moment of passion with her. Looking at the frail and teary-eyed Carly now, guilt crept into his chest.

He sat down on the edge of the bed, his tone softening. "But throwing yourself down the stairs? What if you had seriously hurt yourself? What about your dancing career?"

Carly leaned into his embrace, her fragile frame trembling as she buried herself against him. "Adam, I was just afraid you didn't want me anymore. You said back in the cave that you'd always want me. If you don't... then I don't even care about these legs. I don't even care about my life."

The mention of that day in the cave made something inside him ache. How could he stay mad at her? Adam wrapped his arms around Carly tightly. "Don't say such things. I won't leave you."

This was his promise. He would never leave Carly. A promise made by a man like him was as solid as a lifetime vow.

Carly's lips curved into a triumphant smile. She had known this would work. His heart was still hers, and he would continue to pamper her like before. Today, the fall had been worth it, completely worth it.

Carly pouted slightly, tilting her face up toward him. "I understand that because of Mrs. Alvarez Senior's health, you can't divorce Celine for now. But starting today, I don't want you two sharing a room anymore.

"Don't think I don't know you've been staying in the same room with her! I don't want that, understand?"

It was true. Adam and Celine had shared a room. A bed, even. He had found himself unable to resist her beauty and the quiet allure she exuded. However, that

wasn't right.

Carly was the one he had chosen, the one he wanted to be with. He had to put an end to this and stop giving Celine the chance to seduce him.

Adam held Carly closer, his voice soothing. “I’ve already arranged for Celine to attend Yorhine University. She’ll be staying on campus. From now on, there will be no more shared rooms.”

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What? Adam was sending Celine to study? At Yorhine University?

He had to be out of his mind. Yorhine University was a top-tier institution. What qualifications did Celine have to get in?

Carly’s face twisted with disbelief. “Adam, Celine dropped out of school when she was 16. She’s just some girl from the countryside! What does she know other than how to seduce men? What gives someone like her the right to attend Yorhine University?”

Adam stared at Carly without saying a word. His gaze was firm and unyielding. It was obvious that his decision to send Celine to Yorhine University was final. There was no room for debate.

Carly was smart enough to realize that they had just started to mend their relationship. Picking a fight with Adam now would be unwise.

Besides, someone like Celine would only make a fool of herself at Yorhine University. When that happened, Adam would naturally grow even more disgusted with

her.

Carly wouldn’t have to lift a finger. She could simply sit back and enjoy the show.

She curved her lips into a smile. “Fine, Adam. I’ll listen to you.”

Adam reached out and playfully pinched her nose. “Good.”

Carly snuggled into his embrace, her heart brimming with sweetness.

Celine returned to Alvarez Residence and waited in her bedroom for Adam to come back.

It was late into the night when two beams of light swept across the lawn. Adam had finally returned, driving his Rolls-Royce Phantom. He had probably been at the hospital with Carly all this time, which explained why he was back so late.

Soon, the bedroom door swung open. Adam stepped inside, bringing with him a wave of crisp, cool night air.

Celine looked up at him. “How’s Carly?”

Adam, tall and imposing, strode in with his long legs. His well-defined fingers reached up to unbutton his suit jacket. "It's just a light wound. Nothing serious."

Celine didn't look surprised. "Of course, she would never let herself suffer anything worse."

Adam's eyes fell on her. Her clear, dark eyes were quietly fixed on him, calm but observant. "I know you didn't push her. She fell down the stairs on her own."

Celine remained silent, waiting for him to continue. Under the soft light, Adam's handsome face flickered between light and shadow. "But I can't let her fall down the stairs again."

Celine almost laughed. Carly really was clever, at least when it came to manipulating Adam. This time, she hadn't even tried to frame her. She just needed to roll down the stairs in front of him to achieve her goal.

There it was. The power of being loved without limits.

Celine looked at him. "You have something you want to tell me, don't you?"

Adam studied her slender silhouette bathed in the warm light. Compared to Carly's entitled arrogance, Celine was so quiet, so composed. Almost obedient. She was smart too. She already knew what he was about to say.

His Adam's apple bobbed as he swallowed. "Carly doesn't want me to share a room with you anymore."

Carly didn't want him to share a room with Celine anymore.

Celine froze for a second. It felt like a bee had stung her heart. It was sharp and sudden, followed by a lingering ache that clouded her senses.

Carly's smug voice echoed in her ears. "Celine, I'm just worried that you're flying too close to the sun. It's time I bring you crashing back down to reality!"

Carly did it. She had succeeded in putting her back in her place.

Celine's delicate face remained expressionless, but it had turned a shade paler. Her lashes lowered as she whispered, "I'll move out tonight. I'll let Grandma know. I won't be coming back here anymore."

With that, she turned and started walking toward the door.

Before she could leave, Adamn grabbed her wrist. "It's late. You can leave tomorrow."

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Adam added, "I'll sleep in the study tonight."

Celine's lips curled into a bitter smile. So this was all it took. A single word from Carly, and he had turned into a model of chastity.

She looked up at him. "No need. I'll leave tonight."

She tried to pull her wrist free from his grip, but his slender, commanding fingers held her firmly, his strength unwavering. His deep voice carried no room for negotiation. "Tomorrow, you'll report to Yorhine University."

Celine froze. "What?"

"I've arranged for you to attend Yorhine University to study medicine. Everything has been settled," Adam said.

Her mind went blank for a moment. He was sending her to Yorhine University to study medicine? Did he ever stop to hear the ridiculousness of his own words?

"I'm not going!" Celine rejected him outright.

Adam frowned. "Celine, Yorhine University is one of the top institutions. Not just anyone can get in. This is a rare opportunity.

"I know you stopped studying at 16, but I'm giving you a chance now. Didn't you once say you were interested in medicine? If you work hard, you could shine on your own stage just like Carly."

Celine remained silent. Of course, he looked down on her. Guess she had to thank him now.

She swallowed her frustration and agreed. "Fine. I'll go."

Without waiting for his response, she yanked her wrist out of his grip and walked away.

Celine headed to Mary's room. When she entered, she found Mary sitting at the bedside, threading a needle with her reading glasses on.

"Grandma, why are you still up so late?" she asked as she approached.

"Celine, just in time! I've finished a little vest for you. Try it on and see if it fits." Mary tied up the last thread, held up a yellow knitted vest, and helped Celine slip

it over her shoulders.

“Oh, it’s perfect! Just the right fit,” Alfred said with a chuckle.

From outside the room, Adam arrived just in time to hear the laughter. He stopped at the doorway, his eyes drawn to the scene inside.

Celine was wearing the vest. It was a soft, delicate piece in a cheerful shade of yellow that complemented her petite frame. Her long, silky black hair cascaded down her back, accentuating her delicate beauty. The knitted vest hugged her slender figure, and her fair complexion glowed under the warm light.

Mary had always had an eye for color. She had chosen the yellow perfectly.

“Grandma, I have plenty of clothes. You shouldn’t strain your eyes making this for me,” Celine said.

“I figured autumn’s around the corner, and the weather will cool down soon. I don’t want you catching a chill. I want you to stay warm,” Mary replied.

Celine’s nose tingled, and her chest tightened with emotion.

Alfred chimed in with a laugh. “Mrs. Alvarez, you’re quite lucky. Mrs. Alvarez Senior hasn’t touched knitting needles in years. Even Mr. Alvarez doesn’t have a single piece of clothing she’s made herself.”

Mary huffed playfully. “Adam has so many people fussing over him. He’ll never go cold. But Celine is different. She’s always been alone.”

Celine had been taking care of herself all along. Those words pierced Celine’s heart, touching the most tender and fragile part of her soul. She leaned forward and wrapped her arms around Mary.

Tears welled in her eyes as her cheek pressed against Mary’s warm shoulder. “Thank you, Grandma.” Thank you for your warmth and acceptance. Thank you for bringing me into Alvarez Residence.

The Alvarez Residence had been the warmest place she had ever known. It was her haven, her shelter.

However, no matter how much she cherished it, it didn’t belong to her. She couldn’t hold onto it. She had to leave.