

On the other end of the call, Grace's voice came through. "Adam, Mr. Hampton went to Mercy. Did you meet him?"

Adam pressed his thin lips together. "Yes."

"I heard he found his long-lost daughter. Adam, our family has an engagement with the Hampton family. His daughter is your fiancée. Did you meet her?"

Adam stood tall by the floor-to-ceiling window, his figure cast in the dim light.

"Mom, that engagement was arranged by you and Mr. Hampton. I won't acknowledge it."

"Adam, what do you mean by that?"

"Mom, I won't marry Mr. Hampton's daughter."

"What?" Grace's voice instantly shot up a few octaves. "Adam, are you trying to back out of the engagement?"

Adam remained silent.

Grace continued, "Adam, our families have been close for generations. The Alvarez and Hampton families must carry on that bond through marriage. That's how high society maintains stability. As the heir to the Alvarez family, do you not understand that?"

Adam's sharp, chiseled features remained expressionless. He still said nothing.

"Adam, did you get involved with some woman? Listen to me, Adam. You can have fun with those women, but that's all they are-entertainment. Before, Mr.

Hampton's daughter wasn't around, but now that she's back, you need to get rid of all the women around you and make way for the billionaire's heiress."

Grace didn't give him a chance to speak. "Adam, I've turned a blind eye to the women around you, but don't go too far. If you do, I will step in."

With that, she hung up the phone.

Leo stepped forward. "Mr. Alvarez, you know exactly how Mrs. Alvarez operates. If she finds out about Ms. Celine, things will get complicated."

Adam's gaze was dark and unreadable, like a bottomless pit. No one could tell what he was thinking.

"I know. You can go now."

"Yes, Mr. Alvarez." Leo stepped back and left.

At that moment, Tate Manor was brightly lit and decorated with festive banners. They were celebrating Nigel's arrival.

Nigel sat on the couch in the main living room as Sonia personally handed him a cup of tea. "Mr. Hampton, please have some tea."

Carly sat beside Nigel, clinging to his arm. She adored this father of hers. Why had no one ever told her about her

real identity? She was starting to resent Hayden and Lucy.

Why had she spent her life stuck with the Tate family, of all places? She should have been living in the Capitol. She was supposed to be a billionaire's daughter.

Her eyes sparkled as she looked at Nigel. "Dad, why did it take you so long to find me?"

Nigel patted her head. "Carly, I've been looking for you all these years, but I could never find you."

"Dad, what about my mom? Why didn't she ever come looking for me?"

At the mention of her mother, Nigel paused.

Hayden quickly spoke up. "Carly, your mother has passed away. She left this world after giving birth to you."

Carly's biological mother was dead? However, that didn't matter to her. What mattered was that she had the richest man alive as her father.

She wrapped her arms around Nigel. "Dad, since I don't have a mom, you have to love me twice as much."

Nigel nodded. "Of course, Carly. That's why I'm here, to take you back to the Capitol."

Carly's heartbeat sped up.

He continued, "Carly, you're a

daughter of the Hampton family. You've spent all these years wandering outside. Now, it's time to return home. I'll hold a grand homecoming banquet for you and announce your return to all of the Capitol."