

Rewritten 38

Chapter 38

Madelyn poured herself a glass of water from the fridge and hurriedly made her way back to her room upstairs.

Jadie glanced back, watching Madelyn's figure disappear on the stairs. "Maybe I should bring her a bowl now. I'm worried she might feel uncomfortable."

Zach reached out and affectionately ran his hand through Jadie's hair. "I'll go," he offered, rising from his seat.

Jadie bit her lip and stayed silent. Deep down, she didn't want Zach to be alone with Madelyn. However, she also dreaded the idea of facing Madelyn herself. Just as Madelyn was about to reach for the door to close it from her bed, the lock clicked, and Zach took the liberty to walk in.

Zach had many admirable qualities, but the fact that he never knocked before entering her room slightly annoyed her.

"Jadie made some gnocchi soup. It's delicious. Care to give it a try?"

"I..."

Before Madelyn could finish her sentence, Zach was already seated by her bedside. His presence emitted a cool, almost intimidating aura that made her heart race. He held a spoon and stirred the gnocchi soup in the bowl. "Would you prefer to eat it yourself or shall I feed you?"

"I-I'll eat it myself," Madelyn stammered. The bowl felt scorching in her hands, and her fingers grew numb from the heat, but she didn't dare utter a word.

Zach's eyes turned icy as he stared at her. "Madelyn... Have you misunderstood something about me recently? Is that why you've been avoiding me?" His voice remained calm, yet it carried an underlying hint of intimidation.

"If there's a misunderstanding, why don't you speak up, Madelyn? I don't want you to misinterpret your own brother."

Madelyn's hand holding the spoon suddenly trembled. "N-No," she replied, her outward demeanor composed while her heart felt stuck in her throat.

At that moment, Zach retrieved his phone from his pocket, unlocked it, and presented a photo to her. He placed the phone in front of Madelyn. "What were you secretly looking at in this picture?"

'This photo...?!' Madelyn's eyes widened, and her body trembled. The bowl slipped from her grasp, spilling soup onto the sheets. Zach's expression turned cold and sinister, as if he was forcing her to admit something! The photo clearly captured her standing by the window, and

the angle suggested it was Jasmine in the car who had taken the picture of Madelyn.

The hot soup seeped into the sheets, scorching her thighs. Hastily, she threw off the blanket and stepped out of bed, avoiding eye contact with him to regain her composure. "Z-Zach... Who took this picture?" She reached for Zach's phone while tossing the soiled blanket aside, pretending to contemplate for a moment. "Brother... there are certain things I'm not sure if I should reveal."

Zach pulled her down to sit beside him. "Go ahead, tell me."

Madelyn spoke up, her voice trembling, "Did Ms. Manning take this picture? When my father came back earlier today, I saw her in his car while I was by the window. Remember? She's the

teacher who visited us before."

She added, her tone filled with concern, "I suspect father might be pressuring her. I have a vague understanding of what he's been involved in, but I'm still too young to intervene..."

Her voice trailed off, then she continued, her eyes pleading, "Brother, if Ms. Manning is truly being coerced by father, can you help her? She's a good person, and I don't want him mistreating her."

Zach noticed her eyes welling up with tears. Tenderly, he cradled her face with his left hand, gently wiping away the tears with his thumb. His gaze softened as he reassured her, "You forget, I attended your parent-teacher conference. I happened to jot down your teacher's contact information. Yes, this picture was indeed sent to me by your homeroom teacher."

He explained further, "But she felt too embarrassed to disclose her current relationship with your father. That's why she asked me to gauge your reaction first. After all, she's your teacher..."