

# SHATTERED ILLUSIONS: LOVE, LIES, AND REDEMPTION



C 681

"Liz, try this, a little sugar might sweeten your mood."

Hogan unwrapped a piece of candy and offered it to Lizetta with a smile.

Lizetta glanced at the candy, guessing it was orange-flavored, a flavor that could bring back a flood of memories.

She managed a smile, "Just set it aside for now, Hogan. I'll have it later. I just want to rest a bit..."

Hogan's hand froze for a moment, but then he placed the candy aside and didn't get up to leave.

He picked up an apple from the fruit bowl and grabbed a paring knife, "Let me peel you an apple..."

"Hogan, I really don't want to eat anything. I just want to rest... Hogan!"

Lizetta softly interrupted Hogan, her emotions unstable, craving solitude.

However, before she could finish, she saw Hogan's paring knife slip from his hand, cutting his finger and staining the apple with blood.

Lizetta gasped, leaning over to take the knife and apple away, her voice laced with concern.

"Be careful, Hogan, don't move. Let me see!"

Lizetta grabbed Hogan's hand, her expression filled with anxious concern.

Hogan was a neurosurgeon, his hands infinitely precious. If he injured himself further while peeling an apple for her, she'd never forgive herself.

"It's nothing, just a small cut from being distracted."

Seeing Lizetta's worried look, Hogan's face broke into a smile.

"Even a small cut can't be ignored. Let me get the first aid kit and take care of it for you."

As Lizetta attempted to get off the bed, Hogan suddenly grasped her wrist tightly.

Lizetta looked up, meeting Hogan's usually gentle eyes, now shadowed and intense behind his glasses.

Feeling a sudden panic, Lizetta tried to pull away, but Hogan's grip was firm. He asked,

"Liz, Zion City is filled with sad

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memories. Wouldn't it be better to start fresh abroad? I'll arrange everything for us overseas! Leave this place behind and start anew. I promise everything will get better!"

Lizetta pulled her hand away, frowning slightly.

Although Hogan made sense, and it seemed like a good option, Lizetta couldn't shake off the feeling that Hogan was pushing her too hard, forcing her into a corner, which she didn't appreciate.

"Hogan, like I told you before, I still feel like Daisyy is here..."

Before Lizetta could finish, Hogan abruptly tightened his grip on her shoulders.

"Liz, that child is gone! She's dead! How can you still be so delusional!"

Lizetta was startled by Hogan's suddenly harsh tone and the cruelty in his words, turning pale.

She stared at him wide-eyed, shocked by his sharpness.

"I'm sorry, I just can't bear to see you drowning in the pain of losing a child. I'm too worried about you."

Hogan looked remorseful, holding Lizetta's hand again, "Liz, you were unconscious from the surgery, and everyone told you the child didn't make it when you woke up. It's natural to cling to false hope since you never saw her for yourself. But illusions can't become reality. You know that, which is why you couldn't bring yourself to see the child, right?"

Lizetta bit her tongue, her heart twisting in pain.

Hogan was right. She had never dared to actually look at her Daisy.

She always felt that by not seeing her, Daisy would still be there, a living, kicking baby.

"Liz, that child was stillborn! Hospitals dispose of stillborns with medical waste, incinerated together. You need to stop fantasizing and move on, okay?!"

Hogan's grip on Lizetta's frail shoulders tightened as he stared into her eyes, his words echoing with finality.

The image of babies and diseased limbs thrown together for incineration flashed through Lizetta's mind, her eyes brimming with tears.



Liz pushed Hogan away forcefully, covering her ears and stepping back.

"Shut up! Please, just stop talking, I'm begging you!"

Seeing her lose control, Hogan's brow furrowed, a shadow passing behind his glasses. He leaned in, gently patting Liz's quivering shoulders to soothe her.

"Alright, I'll stop. But Liz, you have to face reality. I know my words are harsh, but it's all for your own good. My friend, who's studying psychology, might still be at the hospital. I'll call her over for a chat; she can help ease your pain and get you through this, okay?"

Liz, her face slick with sweat and heart in turmoil as if being scorched in a furnace, nodded instinctively at the mention of a psychologist offering relief.

Hogan made a call, and his friend arrived promptly.

She approached the bed with a friendly gesture, extending her hand to Liz with a smile.

"Ms. Gardenia, I'm Daphne. Actually, we've met before. You were unconscious, and I had the chance to review your condition. I even made some suggestions to Mr. Dashiell. Thankfully, he took my advice, which helped you wake up."

Liz hadn't realized a psychologist had been consulted during her unconscious state. Hearing it was Daphne who convinced Remington to let go, she felt a newfound trust.

"Thank you, Dr. Daphne. Please, have a seat," Liz said, taking Daphne's hand.

"Don't mention it. Just call me Daphne. Oh, isn't this the wedding favor I gave Hogan?"

Daphne sat down, idly playing with the wedding favor on the bedside table.

Liz's gaze inadvertently followed Daphne's fingers.

Daphne's casual fiddling seemed almost patterned, sending Liz into a slight daze.

Catching Liz's reaction, Daphne smiled and turned to Hogan. "Lending my wedding favor to Ms. Gardenia, Hogan? How about I have a word with Liz alone?"

Hogan nodded with a smile, glanced at Liz, who seemed unresponsive, and left the room.

As he entered the elevator, his phone rang.

Checking the caller ID, Hogan frowned slightly and answered. After a brief conversation, he spoke sharply.

"Don't come up. I'm on my way down."

Ending the call, Hogan pressed for the underground parking.

Stepping out, he scanned the area and spotted a woman. He walked towards her.

"Dr. White, I-"

The woman brightened up at his approach and hurried forward.

"What brought you here?" Hogan cut her off sternly.

The woman looked up, about to speak, but Hogan grabbed her arm.

"Let's talk in the car. I'll drive you home."

Her cheeks flushed as she glanced

at her arm in his grip, and

following him to the parking lot on the east side.

As Hogan away,

neared the woman walked expression cold and detaie het

i didn't notice a man inget

car observing them,

Remington's gaze was icy as he withdrew his attention, commanding sternly.

"Drive!"

Ray, in the driver's seat, took a couple of photos with his phone aimed in Hogan's direction.

Urged by Remington, Ray put away his phone, turning to him.

"Mr. Dashiell, Hogan was just playing the devoted visitor to your wife, and now he's sneaking around the. parking lot with another woman. Doesn't look good, does it? Could be playing both sides."

Chapter 683



Remington's voice was icy as he snapped, "What's it to you? Just drive."

Ray, taken aback by his harsh tone, didn't linger and pulled the car out of the parking lot. However, he couldn't help feeling indignant and skeptical about Remington's apparent indifference towards Lizetta's situation. He spoke up again, "Mr. Remington Dashiell, I've taken some photos as evidence. Perhaps I could send them to you, and you could forward them to your wife as a heads-up? Don't let her get fooled by that jerk again!"

Remington's eyes opened, his thin lips parting slightly, "Fooled again?"

Ray hadn't expected his own words to betray his thoughts, revealing his belief that Remington was indeed a jerk. He gripped the steering wheel tighter,

hastily changing the subject. "Ah, the woman we saw earlier, with the hat and mask. But her posture, her figure, it was obviously a young woman. And the vibe between her and Dr. White, it was clear she's into him. Remember, wasn't Ms. Shirley Dashiell also chasing after Dr. White? A gentle, polite, and well-mannered elite doctor like him, with his charm, it's no wonder women like him. Aren't you worried your wife might be deceived by him?"Belonging to .

Remington's expression remained impassive as he stared out the window. He had been mercilessly driven away from the hospital by that woman. What could he possibly say to her now that she would listen to? In her eyes, he was the ultimate jerk, the most untrustworthy scoundrel. Even if he sent her the photos, showing Hogan's unclear relationship with another woman, Lizetta would likely just think he was being petty and trying to slander Hogan. Worse, annoyed by his interference, she might even grow closer to Hogan out of spite. No matter what he did now, it would only bring him humiliation.

Remington, with his brows furrowed in self-mockery and irritation, remained silent. However, as they exited the parking lot, and Ray thought Remington truly didn't care about Lizetta anymore, the man in the back seat spoke up.

"Send them to me."

Ray knew it; his boss couldn't just stand by. He immediately sent the photos over and Remington forwarded them to Lizetta. But the next second, a red alert from WhatsApp popped up. Remington's knuckles turned white as he gripped his phone, then he chuckled bitterly and tossed the phone aside without another glance.

Upon leaving the hospital,

venet

Remington went straight back to the family mansion, where Fiona Dashiell had been unwell lately because of issues with the children. As Remington

parked in the mansion's driveway and entered the foyer, he saw Shirley Dashiell and her mother, Mrs. Dashiell, were also there, keeping Fiona company.

Upon seeing Remington, Shirley's demeanor changed instantly, her laughter fading as she stood up awkwardly and greeted him, "Remi."

Remington barely acknowledged her, nodding curtly at Mrs. Dashiell before telling Fiona, "Grandma, I'll be in the study. There's some business I need to attend to."

Fiona watched him, noting how Remington's demeanor had become even colder and more distant since Lizetta's incident.

Mrs. Dashiell suddenly stood up, "Remington, I've been arranging some blind dates for Shirley, and we've narrowed it down to a few gentlemen you're probably familiar with. Could you help me check them out?" As she said this, she approached with several photos in hand. Shirley, startled by her mother's actions, hurriedly tried to pull Mrs. Dashiell back.

Chapter 684



"Mom, Remi's got no patience for this stuff..."

Shirley couldn't believe it when Remington actually stopped in his tracks and turned to look at her.

"You're going on blind dates?"

She was stunned, not expecting him to care about her personal affairs. Ever since she was subjected to a prank involving hot sauce by Remington, their

cousinly bond had grown quite thin, with Remington treating her like she was invisible.

"Who says your Remi doesn't care? I'm right here asking, aren't I? Spit it out," Mrs. Dashiell urged, nudging Shirley, who nodded in a mixture of surprise and gratitude.

"I... well, I'm at the age for dating and marriage, right? They're all from our social circle. Mom says it's better to know their background, so I thought why not go for blind dates."

"What about Hogan? Weren't you all over him before? Suddenly lost interest?" Remington's gaze was piercing.

Shirley nervously licked her lips and shook her head, "I... well, it's just not happening. He's not into me at all. Can't keep throwing myself at him, can I? So, I gave up. Don't like him anymore." Remington stared at her for a moment longer before shifting his gaze to the photographs Mrs. Dashiell was holding.

"Sounds good," he said, then strode upstairs with Ray following behind.

Once in the study, Remington turned to Ray and instructed, "Check out what happened between Shirley and Hogan, will you? And that woman in the parking lot too."

He could tell Shirley was lying.

Shirley was not known for her perseverance, but her infatuation with Hogan had been an exception lasting a good two to three years.

There had been squabbles over get

Hogan before, with Shirley and Lizetta at odds, causing quite a stir. Her sudden surrender and

compliance with the arranged blind dates felt off to Remington.

Ray suppressed a smile, "Sure thing, Mr. Remington Dashiell."

He knew it! Any matter slightly involving the lady of the house, and the boss couldn't stay uninvolved.

Acknowledging the instruction, Ray left the room while Remington sat behind his desk, his brows furrowed.

He hadn't had much interaction with

Hogan, but he could see that Hogan was far from the harmless persona he projected. The year Hogan got into trouble abroad, Helen White approached their family with a marriage proposal, insisting Hogan was unaware and that it was her maternal instinct taking over.

material.

Yet, how did Helen know about Hogan's secret affection for Lizetta? The cunning moves Helen made could very well have been inspired by Hogan. For years, Hogan

been lingering around Lizett silently supporting her without

expecting anything in return, almost

saint-like.

Rubbing his temples, Remington picked up his phone again, forwarding the unsent photo to Cassius.

Cassius responded with a puzzled emoji.

Without hesitation, Remington called Cassius, instructing, "Send the photo to Yolanda. Say you snapped it in the hospital parking lot. Don't mention me."

Before Cassius could respond, the call was ended.

Looking at the photo with a sigh, Cassius did as told and forwarded it to Yolanda.



Yolanda had just made it through the first round of auditions for the lead female role in a period drama, along with two other actresses. The director had arranged a three-day intensive workshop on period- specific body language. Following this, a second round of auditions would determine the final choice for the leading lady.

Yolanda was worried about her friend Lizetta, almost to the point of giving up, especially after Lizetta had been rushed out of the hospital. After a long day of training, Yolanda returned to her hotel room and finally checked her phone, only to be greeted by that photo.

She immediately called Cassius, but the call was abruptly disconnected. Frowning slightly, Yolanda was distracted by the timely ring of the doorbell. Turning to open it, she was met by a towering figure pushing his way in.

In the next moment, Yolanda found herself pinned against the wall, her shoulders held firmly as a large hand easily encircled her slender waist. A voice, both familiar and menacing, whispered from behind her. "Nice dress."

Yolanda was still in her costume from the period drama set, a dress designed to accentuate the era's style, which she hadn't had the chance to change out of. Though not tall, Yolanda's proportions were impeccable. Her body was not the typical thinness seen in many actresses but rather lean and well-muscled, with curves in all the right places. Pinned against the wall like this, her figure was irresistibly enticing.

Cassius tightened his grip on her waist, forcing her to arch her back and press closer to him. As he was about to act on his desire, Yolanda's clear voice cut through.

"Hogan has been into Liz for years, and now that she's finally divorced, how could he possibly..."

The cold reality hit Cassius like a bucket of ice water, deflating his ego.

Snap!

A sharp slap sounded as Cassius's hand came down hard on her buttocks. Before Yolanda could react, he was nipping at the sensitive skin behind her ear, his breath hot and heavy. "Yolanda, thinking of another man while you're with me? Are you looking for trouble?"

Cassius's

words were cut short by a sharp pain in his foot, the result of Yolanda's high heel grinding down mercilessly. Retreating a few steps, Cassius was seething when Yolanda turned and launched herself at him.

He caught her instinctively, her high-slit dress revealing slender, fair legs as she wrapped them around his arm, her gaze bold and teasing.

"So now you're the one beneath me,"

she taunted. Tell me, was that photo from Badass RemingtonP? Can't he stand seeing Liz with

someone else? Kicked to the net

curb

and now slinking around in the shadows, is that it?"

Cassius's eyes were fixed on her lips, his gaze burning with intensity.

"Whether Remi's up to something, I don't care. Right now, it's about you and me!"

With that, he carried her to the couch, tossing her onto it with intent. Yolanda quickly grabbed his wrist.

"Don't rip it! I need to wear this tomorrow."

"Troublesome," Cassius muttered, his patience wearing thin. He moved her hands to the buttons at the neckline. "If you don't want to explain yourself to the director tomorrow, take it off yourself!" The tension between them was palpable as Cassius covered her mouth with his, silencing any protests with a kiss that allowed only muffled sounds to escape. Belonging to .

Hours later, Yolanda lay exhausted

and drenched in sweat beside him. Cassius lit a cigarette, the smoke swirling around him in contented curls. His other hand lazily traced the sweat-slick curve of her back, his voice husky.

"Anything you want to ask me?"

Yolanda lifted her head slightly, "Is that photo real?"

Chapter 686



Cassius froze, a shadow crossing his eyes. "Is that all you care about?"

"What else? Liz just got out of one mess; what if she falls into another? And if those photos belong to that scoundrel Remington, I can't mess up Liz's chance at happiness. I need to figure this out!" Yolanda frowned, clearly worried.

But Cassius's face darkened. He had received a call from his family yesterday, setting him up on a blind date.

The date was set for today, and when he agreed to it, Yolanda had heard everything.

He thought Yolanda would be anxious, would probe and pry.

But from the moment he walked in, all she could talk about was Liz, not mentioning the blind date at all.

Maybe his biggest rival for attention wasn't Liz after all.

Or was it that even if he were to marry someone else tomorrow, she wouldn't bat an eyelid?

Irritated, Cassius pushed Yolanda aside and sat up, his voice cold.

"So you trust Hogan? Even with evidence right in front of you, you still defend him."

"One photo is not evidence. Even if it's real, that woman could just be a patient's family member, a friend, or a relative. Especially if the photo came from Remington, it's suspect!"

Cassius couldn't help but laugh in frustration. "Did Remington dig up your ancestors or something? Hasn't he been good enough to Liz? Without Remington, Liz would've been long gone at the hands of Hans Gardenia. Liz lost her child, and Remington... he lost not just a son but his mother as well..."

"What do you mean he lost his mother?"

Yolanda was confused, and Cassius realized he had said too much.

He frowned, quickly masking his expression. "Nothing. Mrs. Dashiell just went through some mental issues and went for treatment. It'll probably take a few years to get better."

"Ha, that old witch from the Dashiell family finally got what she deserved! Better if she's gone for good, so she can't..."

Cassius stood up, his face cold as he cut off Yolanda.

"Can you show some respect? No matter what, Mrs. Dashiell is an elder. She's already ill, and you're still cursing her." Yolanda's face turned cold too, her lips curling into a sneer.

"I was always petty and spiteful, never a match for the graceful and virtuous ladies Mr. Sterling knows. You said it yourself, you were only after a fling, telling me not to

pretend, not to covet what wasn't mine No matter how much b pretend, you'd never like someone like me, right? So why don't you go find your perfect, well-mannered lady of high society and call it quits?"

Cassius clenched his teeth, staring at Yolanda. "Is that really what you think?"

Yolanda huffed a laugh, climbing out of bed, naked and unashamed as she walked towards the bathroom.

"I've had enough. Get out."

As she passed by, Cassius suddenly grabbed her chin, his voice laced with anger.

"Yolanda, is this how you treat your benefactors? Believe it or not, I could have you kicked out of this production tomorrow!"

But another voice echoed in Yolanda's ears, equally authoritative.

"Ms. Yolanda, the entertainment industry is full of people like you. You're neither particularly beautiful nor outstanding. Your quick rise from behind the scenes to the forefront shows you're smart, taking advantage of my son. But my son is soon to be engaged to Margaret Miller of Glory Media. Some things

don't need to be spelled out too clearly. I think Ms. Yolanda understands why I'm here today.

It doesn't matter if it's Ms. Yolanda or a top actress; against the heiress of Glory Media, being expelled from the industry would just take a word. And that's not even considering the Sterling family's influence.

Chapter 687



Today, the reason it's me sitting across from you, and not Mia, is to leave Ms. Yolanda with a bit of dignity. Ms. Yolanda, I trust you'll appreciate the gesture and won't let me down." It's almost laughable, really. Cassius's mother sent her away without so much as a greeting card.

It wasn't that Mrs. Sterling was stingy; she simply thought Yolanda unworthy. For Mrs. Sterling to take the time to dismiss her in person was, in her view, the highest form of respect. In that moment, Yolanda saw Cassius's face merge with Mrs. Sterling's in her mind's eye.

She blinked, offering Cassius a mocking smile.

"Don't forget, Mr. Sterling, I traded my first time for this leading role audition. My worth is genuine. If you can't handle that, were you hoping to back out?"

Cassius's handsome face darkened instantly, his grip on Yolanda's chin tight enough to crush.

Yolanda bit back her words, and after a moment, Cassius let her go. Belongs to - All rights reserved.

The man zipped up his jeans, picked up his shirt, and before leaving, pulled out a wad of cash from his wallet and threw it at Yolanda's face.

"This body of yours, I'm sick of it. Here's the money for your surgery. Find a decent clinic. Maybe next time, you'll fool someone else into giving you a leading role."

The money hit Yolanda's face, scattering at her feet, with a couple of bills sticking to her chest.

Yolanda looked down, picked up the money, and flashed a bright smile, "Thanks, Movie Star Cassius."

The response was the sound of a slamming door and the silence that followed.

Cassius stormed into the elevator, his phone ringing suddenly.

Was that foolish woman regretting her words now?

He quickly grabbed his phone, but his frown deepened when he saw "Remi" flashing on the screen.

He had forgotten, Remington was waiting for his update.

Now that things had soured with Yolanda, who knew if that foolish woman would still pass on messages for him.

As the ringtone was about to end, Cassius answered the call with a scowl.

"Did you send her the photo? What did she say?" Remington's deep voice came through.

"I did, but Yolanda, being the clever fool she is, suspected the photo was Photoshopped by you, Remi. She's beyond help!"

On the other end, Remington's handsome face also darkened.

Cassius, that fool, hadn't realized they were talking about two different "hers".

After a pause, Remington directly asked.

"Does Liz think the photo was Photoshopped too?"

"Uh, well... Yolanda hasn't sent it to Lizetta yet." Cassius suddenly felt sheepish.

Remington was silent again, then scoffed, making no effort to hide his disdain.

"You're useless!"

Such a simple task, sending a photo to his woman, and he even manage that. Remingtouldn hadn't expected such incompetence.

Cassius, "..."

Feeling both aggrieved and frustrated, he thought about how he had lost his golden opportunity for this mess.

Not only did Remington not offer him any consolation, but he also had the nerve to criticize him?

In a fit of irritated sarcasm, Cassius

shot back, "We're both jilted lovers here. Why the urgency to turn on each other, Remi? If you're so capable, why don't you talk to Lizetta yourself? If anyone's useless right now, it's you!"

After venting, Cassius suddenly realized he might have gone too far.

Why was Remington silent?

Could it be he was already on his way with a gun? Cassius, panic-stricken, leaned on the  
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elevator railing, almost ready to beg  
for mercy.

He was about to plead when he noticed that the phone screen displayed the home screen wallpaper.

Clearly, Remington had hung up long ago.

Chapter 688



Cassius felt like he had narrowly escaped disaster. He tugged at his collar, trying to catch his breath, only to notice the blotchy red marks on his neck.

Yolanda, that woman, was a real piece of work.

Cold-hearted and utterly ruthless!

Remington slammed his phone down on the desk, his brows furrowed deeply.

"Mr. Remington Dashiell, isn't Ms. Yolanda willing to help? This Hogan guy is bad news, getting too close to your wife is extremely dangerous. Maybe it's better if you talk to her yourself," Ray suggested, noticing Remington's angry expression.

Ray had just discovered why Shirley had been avoiding Hogan.

Recently, Shirley's beloved border collie, which she had for over seven years, had mysteriously disappeared.

Shirley had been furious, lashing out at the servants and even offering a hefty reward for the dog's return.

When Shirley visited Hogan, he invited her to his lab. There, she found him using a dog for his experiment.

The dog, having been injected with some substance, was violently crashing its head against the cage's tempered glass, bleeding profusely.

After the dog had collapsed, Hogan proceeded to dissect it in front of Shirley, extracting brain tissue for examination under a microscope.

He then stitched the corpse back together, intending to clean and prepare it for burial.

"Whimpering, she said, 'If I truly loved him, I should understand and respect his work. He prefers women who share his interests. I suppressed my disgust and helped him clean the dog's fur, and that's when I realized it was my Kaka!'Belongs to - All rights reserved.

'Ugh! He butchered my Kaka. Every time I close my eyes, I see him coming at me with that scalpel. I can't love him anymore. Let him go be with Lizetta instead. Yes, I'll leave him to Lizetta!'"

Ray recalled Shirley's terrified, broken state when she talked about Hogan while drunk, realizing Hogan was a master of deception with a dark psyche.

A normal person wouldn't scare off an unwanted suitor in such a gruesome, bloodthirsty manner.

And anyone capable of harming animals in such a way couldn't possibly be mentally stable.

Hogan must be kept away from Lizetta at all costs!

"Keep a close eye on Hogan. Have a few more undercover guards watch over Liz. And find that woman from the parking lot as soon as possible!"

Remington's concern deepened. He

wished to explain everything to Lizetta personally, to take her from the hospital, to keep her safe by his side.

But he had just promised her he wouldn't intrude on her life anymore.

Even if he did go to her, Lizetta would likely see it as another manipulation, only fostering more resentment and resistance.

Remington felt helpless, uncertain of how to protect her without overstepping his bounds.

The only thing he could do was to uncover more about Hogan and guard her from the shadows.

Hogan better not make any more moves.

Otherwise, even at the risk of Lizetta misunderstanding him, he wouldn't let Hogan off.

The next morning, Lizetta received photos and a call from Yolanda.


"Liz, don't you want to ask Dr. White if he's got a girlfriend now?"

Lizetta glanced at the photo but didn't take it to heart.

"Yoli, I get what you're saying, but there's no chance between my mentor and me. I don't have feelings for him, and I've made that clear. Plus, I'm not looking to start a new relationship. If he truly has found someone, I'm happy for him."

As soon as Lizetta finished speaking the door to her room swung open, revealing Hogan in a white-lab coat, smiling warmly. He shook a thermos in his hand and asked, "A girlfriend? Me?"





"Mr. Remington Dashiell, Hogan visited your wife again this morning, brought her breakfast, and stayed in the room for about 43 minutes before leaving. After that, Daphne came in. She spent two hours providing psychological counseling to your wife. It seems like your wife really enjoyed Daphne's company. When Dr. Daphne was leaving, your wife even walked her to the elevator, they chatted for a bit before your wife returned to her room."

This morning's updates about Lizetta were promptly reported to Remington by Ray around noon. Included in the report was a photo of Lizetta and Daphne chatting in the hospital corridor. In the photo, Daphne was holding Lizetta's wrist, seemingly deep in conversation, while Lizetta listened intently, her face relaxed and smiling. At first glance, the scene seemed quite comforting. However, as Remington stared at the photo, his expression grew colder.

Ray added, "We've been keeping an eye on Hogan, and so far, there's been nothing unusual about his behavior towards your wife, other than introducing Dr. Daphne to her. But Dr. Daphne is quite skilled, and it looks like her treatment is really effective. Your wife's mental state has visibly improved. Hogan doesn't like Ms. Shirley Dashiell, he might have scared Ms. Shirley on purpose, but it seems he genuinely cares for your wife..."

Remington put the photo down, his voice icy. "A normal psychologist should earn their patient's trust, sure, but they don't need to be as close as friends. To maintain professionalism, they would usually keep a certain distance from their patients!"

Yet, in this photo, Lizetta and Daphne were too close, almost like friends. Remington knew Lizetta well. She might appear gentle and kind, but she's actually quite reserved. Her past experiences had built walls around her heart, making it difficult for her to open up to someone. That Daphne had only

conducted three sessions with Lizetta and they were already this close made him suspect Daphne might have ulterior motives. Moreover, it was Daphne who had previously suggested to the Dashiell family that Lizetta should be let go. Despite Daphne's good reputation, there were plenty of psychologists in Zion City. The coincidence was too perfect. Content © 2024.

Ray was startled, "Mr. Remington Dashiell, do you suspect Dr. Daphne might be involved in something fishy?"

Until now, Ray had thought Hogan's intentions towards Lizetta were genuine and everything was normal, especially since Lizetta was showing signs of improvement after the therapy sessions. But after hearing Remington's thoughts and looking back at the photo on the desk, a sense of unease crept over him, sending shivers down his spine.

"The wife could be brainwashed by Daphne, right? Like, forcefully implanting beliefs, making her think she's in love with Hogan, so she would only listen to Hogan, only trust Hogan!"

This thought terrified Ray, making

ove

him wish they could rush to the hospital right then to take Lizetta away. But Remington remained seated behind his desk, "You think this is a movie?" If psychologists could easily manipulate memories and change people's beliefs, wouldn't they be monsters? However, it was feasible for a psychologist during counseling sessions to subtly influence Lizetta's thoughts, like strengthening her intention to follow Hogan abroad. Perhaps, that was Hogan's goal all along. He wanted to take Lizetta away as soon as possible. With this thought, Remington's frown deepened.

In the afternoon, Hogan came to process Lizetta's discharge from the hospital. Lizetta didn't have many belongings, just a bag, which Hogan carried. "Liz, we

can go now." As Lizetta nodded, ready to leave with Hogan, the door to her room

opened, and Remington entered with Ray. Seeing Remington, Lizetta immediately frowned.

"What brings Mr. Dashiell here?" Hogan was the first to speak. Remington didn't look at Hogan but focused on the figure behind him. He noticed right away that Lizetta's instinctual reaction upon seeing him was to step slightly behind Dr. White.

## Chapter 690



Although she had once loathed him, she never shied away or retreated when facing him. But now, it was almost as if she instinctively dodged, like seeing a flood or a ferocious beast.

Even knowing that Lizetta might have been influenced by counseling, Remington still felt a pang of heartache from her subtle avoidance. His gaze swept over the big bag Hogan was carrying, then over to the trash can beside the hospital bed. There, discarded completely, were a pair of duck-yellow slippers, white knee-high socks, and a light yellow beanie. All items he had personally picked out for Lizetta, now abandoned.

Remington's eyes turned icy as he lifted his gaze to Hogan, his voice cold. "I was coming to pick Liz up from the hospital myself, no need for Dr. White's help!"

Hogan still had a gentle smile on his face. "Mr. Dashiell, that's a strange thing to say. Did you ask Liz if she wanted you to come?"

Remington didn't answer Hogan. Instead, he took a step forward, looking tenderly at Lizetta, and softly said, "Grandma insisted I come personally to ensure your safe return home."

After saying this, he handed his smartphone to Lizetta, gesturing for her to take the call.

Seeing Remington, Lizetta felt a deep repulsion and annoyance. The man who had promised to leave her be, to not interfere in her life, was now backtracking to this extent; she couldn't help but feel disgusted. But hearing that it was Fiona's arrangement, Lizetta suppressed her irritation. She took the phone with a bit of skepticism and put it to her ear. Indeed, Fiona's familiar voice came through.

"Is that you, Liz?"

Lizetta's expression softened for a moment. "Fiona Dashiell, it's me. How have you been these last few days?"

"I've been well, but you, leaving in such a weakened state, Fiona couldn't stop worrying. Knowing you were being discharged today, I had Remington come to ensure you got home safely. Liz, I know you don't want to see him, just treat him as a regular driver or bodyguard for the day, just to put my mind at ease, can you do that?"

Listening to Fiona's cautious voice, Lizetta felt a tender bitterness. She softly replied, "Fiona, I understand, thank you for your concern."

Lizetta didn't want to disrespect Fiona to her face. But after hanging up the phone, her expression turned cold again. She handed the phone back to Remington, her tone distant and aloof. "I've already troubled my senior to pick me up, no need for Mr. Dashiell's effort."

"You just promised Grandma," Remington said gravely.

Lizetta frowned, and immediately

Hogan let out a light laugh, saying to Lizetta, "Liz, Mr. Dashiell went to the lengths of involving Fiona just to you. It shows his dedication.

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Why not let him join me in taking you? It's just, my apartment is not fér, making such a fuss seems unnecessary..."

Hogan's words clearly implied that everything about Fiona's command was just a ruse by Remington. Indeed, Lizetta scoffed, "Mr. Dashiell's self-directed and self-performed drama, always so inconsistent, do you find it amusing?"

Remington's handsome face turned dark, a momentary urge to throttle Hogan crossing his mind. He stared at Lizetta, teeth clenched. "He's so calculated, stirring up trouble with his sweet talk, can't you see that? Is it whatever he says, you just believe?"

Lizetta looked oddly at Remington, This belongs © .

unable to contain his anger, and then slightly curled her lips. "Didn't Ms. Hawthorne and Ms. West also have Mr. Dashiell believe whatever they said in the past? Their stories were so compelling, I can almost still smell them. How could my senior compare to them?"

Remington was speechless, feeling as if all his internal organs had shifted from frustration, yet he had no retort. Was this karma? To not be believed by the one you love and to see them defend someone with dubious intentions, was this suffocating feeling of frustration really what it felt like?