

Savvy Son-in-law by VK Boy Chapter 111

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Benjamin heard the voice recording, and his heart swelled from happiness. Surely, Rebecca hadn't given up on him just yet. Though she had told him they should meet in person, he couldn't control himself. He went to a private room and ended up calling her straight away. As the phone rang, his heart raced. As every second passed, he heard his heart and pulse more and more clearly. The call was answered, and there was silence. Nobody spoke. "R-Rebecca?" His voice contained all the care in the world. "Why did you call?" a quivering and unclear voice came from the other side. "I told you we should meet directly and discuss." "Yes, but... were you sleeping? I mean, your voice is shaky." "Yeah," Rebecca rubbed her face. "I was tired, so I ended up falling asleep." A few seconds of silence followed. Both felt like talking, but they didn't know what to speak about. After moving away, she thought his priorities would change just as she was trying to change her priorities and get him out of his head, though it didn't work out. Her family kept telling her Benjamin wouldn't fit in the equation of Sterlings, but her heart still couldn't move away from him.

Even though she had her family around her, she felt isolated all these days.

"I don't trust my mom, Benjamin," she opened up her heart a bit. "I don't trust anyone in my family. They all want to marry me to a guy of their choosing, regardless of my feelings. I worked hard and started earning enough so that my words will have some weight in this family, and that's how I was able to marry you." She paused, a hint of regret leaving her breath. "And I'm not sure where this will lead us... but trust me, I will not let their ramblings influence me. So..."

"So?" Benjamin's heart was skipping fast.

"Let's be... friends, until we sort all these issues, or misunderstandings or whatever they are," she said. "Is that okay with you?"

He didn't reply.

"Benjamin? Are you there?"

"I-It's totally okay," he replied and laughed a little. "I mean, they say couples are also best friends, so..."

"About the divorce..." she hesitantly said and paused, but his heart shook from the suspense, "let's decide that after we come to a decision."

Benjamin breathed a big sigh of relief. "Sure. So, when are we meeting? How about we go to a concert or a movie tonight... as friends?"

Rebecca took her time to reply. "Sorry, I'm tired." "Okay. How about tomorrow?" "...we'll see. Can I get back to sleep now?" "Yeah, yeah, sure. Oh, wait, one more thing," he hurriedly asked. "Did you check the video I sent you?"

"What video?"

Benjamin wasn't surprised. "It's been a few days, so check your messages and mail, too. It's important, so don't forget." "Okay. Bye." "Yeah. Good night. Sweet dreams, and..." he hesitantly sent a kiss. "A friendly kiss."

The call ended, but Rebecca was shaking her head. "He comes across as really cheesy sometimes." The friendly kiss through the phone didn't feel awkward or unpleasant, but it definitely felt slightly embarrassing. Then again, it was nothing new. Whenever Benjamin got romantic, he would get way too romantic with his words, saying things like she was his moon and what not. He definitely used phrases that no other man used when complimenting her.

More than these phrases, what she had always liked about him was how badly he wanted to make the marriage work, despite her hurting him innumerable times in just eight or so months. Could someone like him have slept with many other women at the same time? She found it hard to believe, but having seen a monstrous man like her father, she could never be 100 percent sure of any man.

"Nobody is perfect," she thought, "but that's no excuse, either. Maybe he's telling the truth, or maybe he's not. However, he's been very patient with me, so I'll try to do the same and see if it'll work out."

He told her to watch some video, but she was too tired, and her head felt heavy, so she put the mobile aside and went back to sleep.

Meanwhile, Benjamin was dancing in the private room. He was so bad at dancing even dogs would have laughed at his dance. However, nobody was watching, so he went wild for a good couple of minutes.

That surely took a lot of stress out of his body.

"Pfft," a restrained laughter reached Benjamin's ears.

"What the "he looked around. There were two eyes watching him through the vent-holes.

“Pardon my offense, Lord,” Shadow said, covering his mouth with his hand for another couple of seconds. “Ahem,” he cleared his throat, “you meant to show me a new type of dance, I’m sure.”

Benjamin’s face turned red from embarrassment. “Shadow, you sneaky little rat!” he lunged forth and punched the vent-hole. It broke and smashed Shadow’s face, sending him flying into the artificial decorating bushes right next to the street.

He bled from the nose, but he was still laughing. “Hahaha. I don’t think I can keep this new

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invention a secret for long. Should we call it Benjamin’s Dance? How about Benjamin dancing min? Pfft...” just thinking back on it made him laugh some more, and tears sprang to his eyes. “I see what you did there,” Benjamin was boiling mad. He would have crawled out through the vent-hole if only he was small enough to fit. “Just stay right there, you bastard. I’m coming!” he rushed out through the door. Shadow, of course, didn’t stay there but vanished in a heartbeat. Meanwhile, at Sterling villa.

Selena and Elizabeth were having dinner early just so they could talk with each other. The daughter-in-law was personally putting food and curry on her mother-in-law’s plate. There were no maids around them, either. Selena loved how she was being treated, even though she knew that this was all so that she would push the agenda of George marrying one of her daughters. “George doesn’t know how to behave with women,” Selena said. “He isn’t good looking, either. While his wild and wayward approach may fool some women, Rebecca won’t fall for such tricks. If we leave things to him, he’ll get nowhere.” “T-Then, what should we do?” Elizabeth would love it if her useless brother were to be married into the Sterling family and also marry Rebecca who earned in millions. And if she were to be cause for that marriage to happen, she could forever make her younger brother owe him. She couldn’t miss this chance. “My husband doesn’t even put my brother in his eyes. I can’t make him speak for George. As for myself, Rebecca and I aren’t really close.”

“Lives of adults are most influenced by two things,” Selena stared at the meat ball at the tip of the fork. “Money and sex. We can’t do anything about the money sitting in her bank right now, but we can definitely do something about the other thing she’s lacking.”

Elizabeth’s eyes widened. “You don’t mean...”

Selena smiled amusedly. “We just have to drug her with some aphrodisiacs and then make your brother visit her often in shorts or something that reveals enough skin or shape.”

Elizabeth’s heart almost exploded. “You think that’ll work?”

“Don’t underestimate the power of drugs. Just do what I said, and she’ll take the bite one day!”

Just then, Elizabeth received a call. It was from her brother. When she went to the side and answered the call, he began screaming and crying on the phone as he told her about getting shot in the hand.

“Is everything alright?” Selena asked. “Y-Yes, mother-in-law,” Elizabeth forced out a smile. There was no way she would let Selena know her brother got wounded as that could only complicate things. She climbed up the stairs and began scolding her brother for never doing anything properly. “How bad is your wound?”

“I don’t know. It hurts like hell. I’m heading to the hospital.” He didn’t want to talk about Benjamin giving him first-aid, either. “You don’t know?” she gritted her teeth. “What the fuck are you going to do if one of your hands get compromised? Forget about marrying Rebecca, you won’t be able to work as a

mechanic!”

“That can’t happen. Please do something, sister.” “Do what?” she enlarged her eyes. “I’d kill you if you were right next to me. That’s how angry I am with you right now!” George’s blood stirred madly. “I called you because I got shot, and you’re yelling at me? You know what? You’ve never been a proper sister to me,” he howled at her. “Fuck you, bitch. Go and keep sucking Shawn’s dick for every little thing you need.” He ended the call abruptly. Elizabeth went speechless for a long while.

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The next morning

Shawn had just come out of Rebecca’s room with the divorce papers, and he didn’t look happy. Asking his sister so many times hurt his pride, but he had no other choice right now.

Meanwhile, inside her room, Rebecca was putting minimum makeup on her face. Jane was on the call.

“You are going to see him on a date?” Jane couldn’t believe what she was hearing. “For an entire day? Are you serious?”,

“You and my family may think I’m crazy, but I’m not ignoring my intuition,” replied Rebecca. “Your intuition?”

“Yeah.”

“Didn’t I tell he just hit Donovan yesterday?” Jane raised her voice. “That guy is a thug. He has no respect for others. It’s because he was your husband, Donovan is controlling himself from going after him. You get that, don’t you? He’s a seasoned fighter. He can eat Benjamin for snacks if he wants.”

“You’re not telling me the reason he hit your boyfriend,” Rebecca said, “but I’m sure he had a reason, didn’t he?”

“Tsk, do whatever you want. Why should I care?” Jane ended the call.

“It seems having sex with a seasoned piece of trash has taken its toll on your brain, Jane,” Rebecca muttered under her breath. “I’m guessing Benjamin hit Donovan again? What do you want me to do? Wipe away the non-existent tears on your boyfriend’s eyebrows?”

She took her time to prepare herself, but just when she was about to leave the room, Kathy came rushing to her and said, “Madam Selena has suffered a heart attack!”

Rebecca’s expression froze. Her arm handbag fell to the floor. Within the next hour, all the adults of the Sterling family reached the hospital. While Selena was being moved from the emergency room after getting her symptoms relieved, Selena’s eyes were clouded by tears after seeing her mother on a stretcher. Veronica’s mouth was also turned down. However, Selena was still unconscious, so nobody from the family was allowed to come near her yet.

Jacob had her put in one of the ICUs.

Louis and Bella were consoling each other.

George, who just got there, briefly looked at his sister. He couldn’t go and talk to her after scolding her on the mobile, so he went up to his mother and asked her. She pointed her finger at Nolan, his father.

Nolan took George to the side and told him everything.

“What?” George was shocked.

A whole ton of nude pictures and videos of many actresses were leaked online by an anonymous person, and Selena was also among the victims. She suffered a stroke after hearing the news, even though her pictures and videos were of when she was young and rash and ignorant.

“Being an actress is a double-edged sword,” Nolan said in a rather sad tone. “The attention you get can really be harmful sometimes.” He then looked at George’s hand that was wrapped up in thick bandage. “What’s up with your hand? Did you jerk off too much last night?”

“Stop it, dad. I don’t do that shit anymore. As for this injury, I got hit by a damn bullet.”

“A bullet?” Nolan waved his hand, thinking George was joking. “Tell me a more believable lie.” “I’m not lying!” George pinched his dad, making him angry. “Do you believe it now?”

“No. I don’t!” Nolan pinched him back harder, causing George to cry out.

Meanwhile, Shawn was talking with a hacker on his mobile. “Can you find out who leaked those images?” he sounded furious.

“I’m trying, but I can’t guarantee anything.” Shawn ground his teeth. “At least remove those things from the internet. As fast as possible!” “Yeah. It’ll take time, but I’ll make it so that accessing those files is nigh impossible.” Shawn heard a strange noise on the call. “Wait, are you wanking?” “O-Of course not.”

“You little shit. You think you can fool me?”

The call was cut.

All the veins on Shawn’s face bulged from fury. He wanted to kill this hacker, but that wasn’t the priority right now. He suppressed his rage with great effort and then dialed to the school and requested the receptionist to send the children home. When she asked for a reason, he told her their uncle George died, a thought that was at the top of his mind.

However, what Shawn didn’t expect was that the damage was already done. Lisa and Roshan’s friends were already shown the nude pictures of their grandmother by their friends and were humiliated and mocked during the recess. Lisa and Roshan left the school before even the receptionist came to them. As for Vlad and Mercie, they were just happy they would get to go home and didn’t look the least bit sad after hearing the news of George’s supposed death.

At the Chief Justice’s house.

Terry Praise and Langdon Campbell were sharing drinks in the afternoon. “Jacob would have been here if not for the recent mishap,” Langdon said. “I wonder how he’s doing. I thought of calling him, but then I also thought, talking about his wife’s nude pictures wasn’t a good idea.” “Selena Sterling...” Terry raised his brows. “She still looks like she’s forty. I’m sure many men will be busy for a few days.”

Langdon ended up laughing a little, even though he didn't want to. However, he had no idea that it was Terry who had leaked the images. He had to leak the pictures of many actresses so

that it wouldn't look personal, but his focus was always on Selena. "We all have our dark secrets that we don't want to be revealed to the world," Langdon said. "Indeed." Terry didn't look like he achieved something big because he was just getting started. Though he expected Selena would have a lot of dirty secrets, she was actually clean, so all he could find about her was some nude images and videos of having sex with her ex boyfriends. However, he had something much bigger in store for Jacob and his entire family, especially their one and only son-in-law. "By the way, you said something about your son putting a bounty on someone and then withdrawing it all of a sudden last night. What's that all about?" "Ah," Langdon was a sixty-year-old man who looked handsome in all white from hair to suit and boots. "The former underboss of Black Feathers, Rodnie, approached me last night and told me to withdraw a bounty on a certain person, and I did. I asked him why, and he said it's better that I don't know about it. My son is furious, but as long as he's alive, I don't care if his little ass is angry or upset." "Rodnie?" Terry narrowed the windows of his view. "I remember putting him in jail for seven years. So, he's still involved in the underground businesses, huh."

"Well, once you go underground, you can't come out of it even if you want to," Langdon said, slurping on the wine. "Mmch, uhhh, that's how it is."

At the Sterling villa.

"She forgot to take her mobile." Kathy was staring at Rebecca's mobile. There were 53 missed calls, all from Benjamin. "But this guy doesn't give up, does he?" her eyes were full of envy. "If only he showed interest in me instead of blindly following his wife's tail, I would have shown him heaven!" As she cursed him, the phone rang again. As expected, it was Benjamin. She kept staring at the screen as Benjamin's image showed now. "How can I make this guy mine?"

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A few days later.

Lisa and Roshan stopped going to school for the time being. Many famous figures from around the world visited Selena while she was still in the hospital. Artur Bonsbell also met her and made a good impression. He also met Rebecca because she stayed with her mother all these days and took care of her.

Today, as Selena was going to be discharged, everyone from the Sterling family came to the hospital. While Selena was entering the car in the parking garage, Benjamin approached her with a bouquet.

Rebecca's eyes gained life after seeing him so many days later. His beard looked a little bit bigger, but he looked healthy. However, the same couldn't be said for the others.

"I-I'm so sorry for what happened," Benjamin tried to talk to Selena, but her eyes gained redness from rage. "Whoever released those photos and videos should be put in jail!" Jacob looked embarrassed when the topic he had tried to forget was again brought up by his son-in-law. Lisa and Roshan looked much more shamefaced. Elizabeth, however, hiddenly smiled. Vlad and Mercie, on the other hand, didn't know what Benjamin was talking about.

"Benjamin!" Veronica was the first to lash out at him. "How dare you come here after everything you did? You shameless son of a bitch!" "He's really shameless," Dorothy also voiced her mind. "To think he'd come with a bouquet in his hand. What's he expecting, huh? That Selena would take the flowers and forgive him?" Selena just glared at Benjamin briefly before glancing at her sons. Both Shawn and Louis stepped forth. "You should go," Louis warned, "or you'll get hurt." His voice didn't contain much hatred.

"I told you I'd kill you if I see you again," Shawn folded his sleeves. "You shouldn't have come here."

Rebecca stood in the path of her brothers, surprising them. "Move," Shawn ordered.

Rebecca turned around to face Benjamin. She took the bouquet from him and said, "On behalf of my mom, thank you." Her little smile was a mixture of emotions. She couldn't make it to the date she had said she would, and she didn't even call him to explain what had happened. Yet, he came here to give flowers to her mother whom he definitely didn't like. She felt sort of bad for putting him in this situation. She wanted to give a hug, not just because she thought he deserve but also because she felt like she needed it, too. However, she couldn't do that in front of her family. She couldn't wear her heart on her sleeve.

Selena, meanwhile, couldn't digest seeing her daughter talk to Benjamin. Why did she even take the bouquet from him? Weren't their relationship on rocks? "Rebecca..." she called for

her in a soft voice while pressing her hand against chest as though she was in pain.

"Mom!" Rebecca rushed over to her. "Are you okay?"

Selena looked into her eyes. "Don't talk to him. Promise me, you'll never talk to him."

"Mom..." she put the bouquet on the car's hood before helping Selena get into the car. "This isn't the time for you to worry about such things."

Elizabeth took the bouquet and threw it at her feet and stomped on the flowers, both the roses and the lilies. She was grinning as she did it.

"What are you doing?" Rebecca was annoyed from seeing what Elizabeth was doing. She pulled her to the side.

"Kya!" Elizabeth cried out.

"How can you step on flowers? They didn't do anything to you, did they?" Rebecca picked up the bouquet and glared at her sister-in-law before looking at her brother. "Tell your wife to stay in her limits."

While Shawn wasn't surprised by Rebecca's actions, George surely did. Was she the same Rebecca who used to be all shy and timid in the past? How was she fighting back against his monster of a sister?

Elizabeth went to Shawn with a crying face as if her arm got hurt. She leaned into him and sniffled. "Why should we stay in this family when nobody respects me? Let's live in a separate house. You, me, our children, and my parents."

Shawn didn't say anything, so Jacob had to open his mouth, "How much longer are you going to make me stand here? Get in."

His words made almost everyone get into their respective cars, and Elizabeth hated how even her husband still listened to his father.

As the cars left, Vernoyed showed Benjamin her middle finger, but Rebecca also briefly looked at him and smiled. It wasn't a big smile, but it showed that she was happy to see him. And that was all he wanted. He couldn't smile back in time, but he still waved his hand. Veronica could only frown in annoyance from seeing him wave at her even after she gave him the middle finger.

"Shameless! So shameless!"

After the cars faded out of his sight, Benjamin took a deep breath. "I can't wait to have a heart-to-heart with you, Rebecca. Then, all these invisible chains binding me might just break away, and I think I can be a better husband."

He then looked to his right, toward a pillar. "How long are you going to stand there, officer?"

“Ah, so you knew,” Steve walked out with a rather sharp smile on his face. It was your typical, forced smile. One of his hands was on the gun, while the other held a mobile.

“Is this about the bounty poster?”

“You are always a step ahead, and I’m starting to see why,” Steve took his gun out. “You are no ordinary guy, are you? Not just anybody gets put a million dollar bounty on their head and

then gets the bounty taken down within 24 hours. What is your real identity, Benjamin? Are you the son of a don or something?” Benjamin smiled, but it only annoyed Steve. “Do you think this is funny?” Steve shot the gun, and the bullet flew past Benjamin’s face and hit a fire extinguisher. However, Benjamin didn’t even flinch, which kind of left Steve in disbelief for a second. “Who the fuck are you?” “If you had got any evidence that proves me breaking the law, you wouldn’t be asking that but would have already tried to arrest me,” Benjamin sat on his bike. “As for my identity, you

already know it. I’m just a live-in son-in-law of the Sterling family who hopes to get accepted into the family so I can hold my wife’s hands in public and without asking anybody’s permission for it. And I hope the same for you, that you get to hold Jane’s hand because the one she’s currently with is cheating on her.” The last sentence shocked Steve. “A-Are you talking about Donovan?” “Unless Jane changed boyfriends, who else can it be?” Benjamin started the engine and twisted the throttle. “I wish you good luck in your endeavors, officer.” He steadily released the clutch, and the bike whooshed past Steve who just watched. After Benjamin left his sight, Steve was still occupied in his thoughts. “He didn’t spout some bullshit just to get away, did he?”

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Langdon Campbell had invited all of Jacob’s family for the special party tonight. The party was being held for many reasons, but the primary reason was because Langdon bought many paintings in auctions, some of which were originals of Picasso. In truth, Artur wanted to buy one of Picasso’s paintings, but David Bonsbell advised him to not give competition to Langdon.

Langdon was the wealthiest governor of the country with a net worth of over five billion dollars, which was low compared to David’s wealth, but Langdon had the priceless political power behind him. If he refused to sign the bills, a lot of David’s businesses would take big blows, after all. Even though Artur didn’t like it, he had to swallow his pride and visit the party. The same could be said for Rebecca. Because Selena was still recovering, Jacob asked Rebecca that she should accompany him in her mother’s place and as the eldest daughter of the family.

Shawn also attended along with Elizabeth and the rest of her family, all dressed up with luxurious outfits from top to bottom. George also wore a suit after a long time, and he looked quite happy. Louis and Bella, who rarely attended these events, also decided to come to this party and brought their children along.

The party was held on the 300-acre lawn of Campbell's mansion, with tens of paintings being publicly displayed while protected in tough glass coverings. There were lights everywhere, even on the leaves of the many trees in the garden. No matter where one looked, it was a dazzling sight. Alcohol and meat dishes were served without restraint. Moreover, the maids were wearing clothes that revealed a bit of their cleavage, and Roshan was found gawking at their breasts again and received a smack on the back of his head from his mother.

George, who saw that, could only chuckle. (I can't blame him. He's at that age where he feels like burying his face in boobs for whatever reason. I was there, too.) Lisa saw the price tags attached to glass coverings on the paintings. Every painting was worth millions. Some were worth tens of millions. She looked at her father, wrapped her arm around his arm and asked, "Why don't you buy these kinds of paintings, dad? Our villa only has no noteworthy paintings, right?"

"Regarding that, you should go and ask your grandfather, not me."

Lisa spoke no more as she could guess what her grandfather's response would be. However, Veronica still asked Jacob. "Isn't the governor your friend, dad? Can't you ask him to give one of these paintings to you? I mean, for the same price he bought it with, of course." "I can, but I won't." Jacob's reply was as indifferent as it could get.

Meanwhile, Rebecca was busy talking to some adult women who kept asking her about her mother. Elizabeth looked so envious because only one or two people talked to her whereas Rebecca was always surrounded with at least ten people.

At that moment, Arlo entered the scene, and the women surrounding Rebecca received his signal and left her alone so he could talk with her.

Rebecca's complexion changed quickly as Arlo stood next to her with two champagne glasses and tried to share a glass with her. Elizabeth noticed that and wondered what her relationship with Arlo was.

"It's really unfortunate what happened with your mother," Arlo said, putting forth the white sparkling wine, suggesting to her to take it.

Rebecca, however, didn't even raise her hand.

Arlo stepped closer and lowered his voice as he spoke, "You know, after the photos and videos got leaked, the rank of your mother's name spiked in the search engines, as expected I must say, but what surprised me is that your name has also grown in popularity just as much if not more. It seems people are searching for your name because you're Selena's daughter. You are younger and look more beautiful than her. You are also in the peak stage of your life, so I can totally understand why everyone's looking for you on the internet. Your sister's name also got popular by the way." He slipped some wine and licked his lips. "There's something special in the women of the Sterling family. Something really hot runs in their blood. In your blood, right?"

Rebecca's blood got all stirred up, but she could only reply with a smile on her face, "You're the worst man I've ever met, Arlo. You're the type who wants to stick your dick in every hole you see but can never fall in love with a woman because you have no clue what love means. Growing up as the only son of a rich family, you enjoyed all sorts of luxuries from a young age and lived a life that didn't develop your personality all that much. That's probably why you have grown into such a pervert who can't even think of anything good."

Arlo flashed his teeth in return. He spat saliva in one of the glasses, creeping her out. He then started walking toward Veronica.

"What is he..." Rebecca's eyes widened. Was he going to give that glass to her sister? She was about to move, but then her sister moved first.

Veronica didn't approach Arlo but went in another direction and met Benjamin who was wearing a simple white shirt and black jeans.

"B-Benjamin?" Rebecca was pleasantly surprised. She stood at a distance and observed him without blinking and with her heart beating faster than usual. "Why's he here?"

"How did you get in?" Veronica asked Benjamin. "I'm sure you are required to show the invitation card before entering."

"And I did," Benjamin replied. In his hands, there was a bouquet and a folded paper.

"You did? How?" Veronica didn't believe it. "Wait, what's that in your hand?"

"A painting," Benjamin said. "I brought it as a gift. I drew it with my own hand, you know. Want to take a look at it?"

Veronica shook her head, but he still opened it anyway. "Don't be like that, sister-in-law. I poured my heart into it."

Veronica saw the painting, and her face contorted for a second after seeing the portrait. “Ew, what an ugly face. Not even his own mother could love such a face.” Arlo entered the scene and looked at the painting and said, “It’s indeed ugly, whoever that face belongs to.” Benjamin turned his head to look at Arlo. “I know I’m not as good as Picasso, but how can you not recognize your own face, Mr. Arlo?”

Arlo, who was sipping on the wine, ended up spilling it.

Pfft,” Veronica controlled herself from bursting into laughter. “I get it,” Benjamin continued. “You probably don’t look at yourself in the mirror all that much anymore.” Veronica couldn’t control herself anymore and ended up laughing out loud. “Puhahaha!” Arlo’s face turned ashen. He glared at Benjamin. “Who the fuck are you?” “Oh my, don’t you recognize the person you put a million dollar price upon?” Benjamin asked. “Do you only remember the faces of women, or what?”

Arlo’s expression suddenly changed. Right, now that he looked again, this was the same guy on the bounty poster!

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Anger flickered in Arlo’s eyes, but he coolly asked, “Can you show me your invitation card?”

His father Langdon made customized invitation cards for all the families and friends he had invited over to this party, so Arlo was sure Benjamin didn’t have an invitation card, unless he stole others. Either way, once it’s made public, Arlo could kick him out of the party by himself. That was what he was after.

Benjamin, however, smiled and looked at Veronica, puzzling her. “Why didn’t you ask my sister-in-law the same question?” asked Benjamin. “Because she’s Jacob Sterling’s daughter. His whole family was invited, so she’s also invited.” “And I’m Jacob Sterling’s son-in-law,” Benjamin raised his brows, “am I not?” Arlo frowned. Benjamin and Rebecca hadn’t separated yet, so even though they were living away from each other, they were still very much a couple. “I’ll deal with you later,” Arlo started walking away. “You don’t want the painting?” asked Benjamin, but Arlo didn’t stop. Veronica chuckled a little, but when Benjamin shifted his gaze toward her, she quickly collected herself and harrumphed before walking away. She appeared more like a child than an adult in the way she behaved.

“Benjamin...” Rebecca came over to him.

“Rebecca!” Benjamin put the painting away and gave the bouquet to her. “This is for me?” It was a small but beautiful jasmine bouquet, and its wonderful fragrance stimulated her senses and soothed her soul. This type of bouquet wasn’t sold at a florist’s as far as she knew, so he must have made it by himself. Regardless, it was easily the best gift she had received in a while. She wished those flowers wouldn’t fade so she could keep the bouquet with her forever. “Thanks. This is precious.”

Benjamin grinned like a Cheshire cat.

“But why did you come here?” she looked worried. She was afraid of his family members causing a scene. Shawn was already giving a death glare at Benjamin. “I didn’t shed weight in over two days,” Benjamin said, “so I was looking for the best place to unload all of it. And this place is perfect for pooping, don’t you think?”

Rebecca’s lips stretched sideways and exposed her teeth. “That’s disgusting.” “But it made you smile, though.” “No, I didn’t smile.”

“Yeah, you did.”

“No, I didn’t.” She slapped his arm.

“Okay, okay. You can’t see your smile, but you win.”

As silence crept into their space, they surrendered themselves to it and kept looking into each other’s eyes that had become laborers of love. Just then a tall man walked past them and kept checking Rebecca out and began biting his lips. He was aged over fifty and was a rich businessman, but his actions angered Benjamin.

“Don’t,” she whispered. “He’s just drunk.”

Benjamin listened to her.

“Why do you get so angry so fast?” she asked, still staring into his intense eyes. “Is it because of your temper? Or do you really love me so much?”

“Wouldn’t you get upset if some other woman began checking my ass out?”

“I would, but...” she pressed her lips together. “Should we go and look at the paintings?”

“Why would I care about those paintings when I’m already looking at the prettiest painting there is,” her words strengthened her heartbeat. “Why bother about the wine,” his hand slowly raised up to her lips, “when the sweetest honey resides in these lips.” As she stared at him, almost spellbound by his words, he touched her slender waist. It was a gentle touch, but there was a hint of firmness in it, and her whole body felt a rush of goosebumps. She didn’t expect him to touch his waist like that. She pushed his hand down.

Benjamin who was about to touch her lips with the risen hand stopped and pulled that hand back. She wasn't ready yet, to display her love in public. He got that and didn't want to force her into displaying her affection for him. "Did I go too far? I'm sorry."

Rebecca didn't say anything, but she kept looking around.

Elizabeth, who had been watching all this, felt so frustrated, her intestines turning greener with every second. She looked at her brother and rebuked him, "Look at him and learn! He just walks up and owns Rebecca even after all the shit that has happened, but what about you? You're fucking busy eating chicken roast!"

"S-Sorry, sis," George's mouth was covered with sauce. "Doctor told me I shouldn't eat oily food, but I couldn't resist."

"That's not what I'm talking about," her voice crackled with fury, "you idiot!" She would have twisted his ear 360 degrees if only she wasn't at a party. "I know, but I was just clarifying things, that's all."

Elizabeth's brows twitched in annoyance. She clutched her head before walking away from George who then went back to his eating,

Meanwhile, Artur was talking with Shawn. "Didn't you kick him out of the house? Why's he still here?"

"We didn't bring him with us," Shawn explained himself. "That sneaky bastard came here without telling us."

"Still, this wouldn't have happened if only you had made your sister sign the divorce papers!" Artur was so mad, saliva flew out of his mouth, even though he was keeping his voice low.

After that I would have made that little fucker sign the documents myself."

"I'm trying," Shawn lowered his head,

"Tsk," Artur looked at Rebecca, and she was still next to Benjamin, holding the flowers he had given her. "He just gave her what? A bunch of tiny flowers? If it was me, I would have made her a whole bed of flowers! I would have filled the entire mansion with flowers to receive her, yet she chooses to be with that pathetic bastard. Why? What does she see in him? I don't get

it."

Just then, Arlo interrupted their conversation by stepping into their space. "I'm very glad that you took time to show up, Mr. Artur," Arlo put his hand forward.

“How can I miss a grand party like this?” Artur shook Arlo’s hand

“It’s grand, but we’re missing the yacht vibes where we can dance and drink and throw currency notes on the beauties as much as we want, don’t you think?”

“Well, yes.”

“Then can you make some time for my friend’s birthday party tomorrow night?” Arlo asked. “It’s gonna be a blast on one of my yachts, I promise.”

“I can’t guarantee, but I’ll try;” replied Artur, not making eye contact. “Great,” Arlo then left as a happy man. “What do you think of this Arlo Campbell?” Artur asked Shawn.

“Someone who gives high-interest loans for anyone that asks of him and then sucks their whole wealth dry using all means available... he’s a devil in disguise.”

“Mm, I give high-interest loans to my friends, too,” Artur said. “Does that also make me a devil, senior?”

Shawn faintly smiled and said, “We both don’t hesitate to put our morals aside for making more money, so that makes us devils, too, I guess, but we’re smaller devils compared to the

likes of Arlo Campbell.”

“Huh,” Artur snorted a little, “you really have a way with words.” “Fooling people into taking all kinds of insurance is my job, after all.”

Their wine glasses clinked. “Mm?” just then Artur noticed something coming over, flying in the dark sky. “What the.”

It was a flying drone, carrying a heavy object. Artur’s eyes widened. “A bomb!” he yelled.

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Chapter 116

CHAPTER 116

“Can I have your number, please?” Aman approached Veronica and asked for her phone number, but she turned away from him. “Excuse me, miss.” he asked again.

“You are excused,” she replied.

“Geez,” he shook his head and walked away.

“Hmph, every Tom, Dick, and Harry wants my number these days,” she murmured to herself and then walked up to a waiter. His handsome features struck her ego at once. Tall and charming, especially with the long ponytail he had. His thick eyebrows were an added attraction. If only he wasn’t a mere waiter, she wouldn’t mind asking him out on a date, she thought. “What’s with that ponytail?” she still ended up starting a conversation with him.

“It’s a wig, ma’am.”

“Eh?” she was shocked. “I should have known. What do you do by the way, other than serving drinks, I mean.” “I follow people from the shadows,” he replied with a blank expression.

“You mean...” she observed his expression. “Stalking?”

“Something like that,” he said, maintaining the poker face.

Veronica paused for a second and then ended up chuckling a little. “Haha, that was a good joke. What’s your name? I’m Veronica, by the way. Veronica Sterling.”

“It’s a pleasure to meet you, Ms. Veronica. You can call me Shadow,” he said as he offered her a glass of Electric Blue.

She squinted her eyes while taking the glass. “That can’t be your real name.”

He faintly smiled in return. “Actually...”

“A bomb!” a loud voice startled everyone. When heads turned toward the source of the sound, they realized that the voice belonged to none other than Artur Bonsbell. And then they couldn’t help but notice the flying drone carrying a big-ass box, hovering over people’s heads. “Kyaa!” everyone freaked out and began to flee in whichever direction they could. Chaos birthed almost instantly.

The box landed in a loud thud, but nothing happened. Many people stopped running, and those who never ran still had their ears covered.

All their eyes were on this package wrapped up in pristine, brown leather. The word ‘W’ could be seen on top. The drone had already left.

While nobody dared to approach the package, both Jacob and Elizabeth stepped forward. They had seen this happen before. Not just those two but Rebecca also did during Donovan’s birthday.

Though some warned them not to go closer and that a bomb disposal squad would take care of it, Jacob got there and took a closer look. It had the same belts and shape and quality. His

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eyes were filled with anticipation as he began to unbuckle the belts that sealed the bag.

“What’s he doing?” Langdon put his hand on his head and looked extremely tense. “Doesn’t he fear death?” The government officials next to him also felt the same way.

Once Jacob removed the belts, the leather walls neatly fell to the four sides, revealing a top quality wooden box inside. A four-foot-tall and four-foot-wide box.

Jacob grinned and looked around. “This isn’t a bomb, people. This is a box full of gold!”

“What?” Everyone was shocked. Was it a gift prepared beforehand by Jacob? That’s how most people perceived it at the moment, except for the Sterling family members.

Jacob looked at Langdon and waved his hand. “Come over here. You should open the box.”

“Y-Yeah,” Langdon acted all cool. Given how Jacob was standing right next to the box, there was no way a bomb could be inside, he thought. “You really are a special friend.” He patted Jacob’s shoulder, making him wonder.

Everyone gathered around the box, wanting to witness the gold. “Open it. Hurry up!” Langdon looked at the wooden box. “Mm? How do we open this thing?” “You push the top at an angle, and it will slide over, uncle,” Elizabeth said.

“Is that so?” Langdon did exactly what she said, and the top of the box moved. He pushed it with force, so it slid over and fell to the other side.

“The gold!” Elizabeth cried out, but both her and Jacob’s expressions froze almost immediately. All the expectations of people were warped really fast as a horrible smell intruded their nasal cavities and jolted their brains and took seize of their lungs. People covered their noses and turned to flee for their lives.

Many people vomited, including Langdon.

“What’s inside?” Rebecca, who was standing in the distance, wondered. She was about to go closer, but Benjamin grabbed her hand.

“Don’t go,” he said and sniffed a couple of times before saying, “what’s inside isn’t gold but dung.” “Dung?” Rebecca’s face contorted. Standing isolated from the crowd,

Shadow was laughing amusedly. "You sent elephant dung this time, huh, Alfred. From the smell, I can tell it's rather fresh. Perhaps, you kept it moist on purpose."

In a matter of seconds, all the guests began to leave without even talking to Langdon. They all lost their appetite after smelling something horrendous. Most of them were millionaires and officials of the government and carried quite a bit of pride. How could they stay in the vicinity of elephant crap? They wouldn't even want to be within 1 mile from it. Nobody gave two-shits about the paintings anymore.

Langdon's blood boiled, seeing how everyone was leaving like they were ignoring a loser." What sort of joke is this, Jacob? I thought we were friends."

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"What?" Jacob looked bewildered. "What are you talking about?" A second later, he realized what had happened. "Wait, you think this gift was sent by me? No!" "Then who sent it? Your grandfather?" Langdon yelled at him, which Jacob didn't like at all. "Mind your tongue, Langdon. I'm telling you this gift isn't sent by me," Jacob replied in a sharp tone.

Elizabeth stepped forward. "Yes, Uncle Langdon. This same type of gift was sent at a birthday party our family visited, and it was full of fold. That's why I knew how to open it. Trust me. Why would my father-in-law send this gift to you when you two were so close?" Langdon gritted his teeth. "I will find out who's behind this by myself." He walked past Jacob. "Thanks for coming to the party, but you can leave now." He began vomiting again.

The onlookers that were still there really pitied Langdon's situation. Langdon was someone who only ate five-star quality food. Such a person was made to smell fresh elephant's crap in the middle of a prestigious party while everyone was looking, even the lifeless paintings that carried a part of their owners' souls. This was bound to leave a scar on him for sure.

Jacob didn't want to stay there for another second, so he hurriedly walked out. Shawn and others followed him. George felt bad that a lot of food was being wasted. He grabbed another roasted chicken leg before catching up with the rest. Rebecca was also leaving, but Benjamin still caught her hand. She pulled her hand, but he didn't let her go.

"Don't go," he said, his voice soft and carrying a sense of longing for her, "please." His words made her lose some of her strength to resist. She looked at him in a complex gaze.

Her ethereal beauty once again struck his heart. Her face was white as what calves drank from their mothers, and her sparkling blue dress paled in comparison to her tender, spotless skin. Her hairs shined so wonderfully, the moon hid itself behind the

clouds like it was just another mere raindrop. Even the jasmines in her hands felt so jealous of her that Benjamin's eyes were not on them but on his wife. She looked so pretty tonight, if there were bees around, they might have ignored the jasmines and surrounded Rebecca instead, for the sweet scent wafting near her was so exceedingly rapturous. She stepped closer, looking with those irresistible eyes that had long caged his heart, "I'm not going anywhere, Benjamin." Her voice was a whisper as much as it was a life-giving breath to his sick, starving soul, but then her lovable lips pecked his cheek tenderly, causing his whole body to loosen up. As she turned and walked away, she briefly glanced over shoulder, gazing at him diagonally, and the sweet smile playing on her lips took his breath away. It took him a few seconds to realize that this resplendent woman had just tricked him, but a dreamy smile bloomed on his lips anyway, and his hand touched his chest and kept softly rubbing it.

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Chapter 117

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At noon, Selena was still resting in bed, with Delle massaging her feet. Kathy was feeding her spoonfuls of fish soup.

"You are observing every move Rebecca is making, aren't you?" she glanced at Kathy. "Yes, ma'am, and I think your son-in-law, I mean, Benjamin didn't give up yet," she said." He called her mobile over 100 times. I wanted to delete the call history, but I didn't know the password. Now, I'm sure Rebecca ma'am would have seen that. I wonder how she felt after checking her mobile." "You should have destroyed the phone!" Selena yelled. "I'm sorry, ma'am, but please don't feel stressed. It's not good for your health." "Tsk," Selena could hear her own heartbeat after yelling just once. She had become a lot more fragile after the heart attack. It was like she felt the weight of her heart, and it made her feel quite uneasy. She clutched the bedsheet in frustration. "I'm the one who raised my daughter. She's my property. I can't let some random guy own her. I wanted to force George into her life, but with his hand like that... gunshot recoveries can take a lifetime. I don't want to give my daughter a physically handicapped man. Maybe I should just side with Shawn and see how

it works out. Why don't you give a call to Artur Bonsbell?" "What?" Kathy was startled. Why did she want to talk with Artur directly and not with Shawn? What was she thinking? Kathy could only wonder, but Delle had a guess. If Selena were to talk to Shawn about this, it'd look like she was depending on her son. Delle knew Selena enough to tell that she hated being dependent on others. At a grand, romantic outdoor restaurant.

Rebecca was waiting at a four-seater table until Jane came and gave company. "Why did you call for me to meet here? And you didn't want Donovan to come?" asked Jane. Rebecca snapped her finger and then ordered chicken tenders, which were Jane's favorite. She asked for a spicy lemon juice for herself. "You're not gonna eat anything?" Jane asked. "I will when Benjamin's here," replied Rebecca. "What?" Jane's expression stiffened a little. "Why did you call me when you were going to meet with him?" "Because I didn't want to talk with him alone, Rebecca said. "He tries to get touchy whenever an opportunity arises, and I become weak when he touches me." "Yeah, you were always over sensitive about your body," Jane replied, "to the point my ex boyfriends used to say you think with your vagina because you never let them have a go at it, thinking yours is supremely superior or something. Haha, those were funny times. Anyway, if me being here will help you, I don't mind helping." "Thanks," Rebecca smiled. "I want to talk with him and fix things up, but I can't trust my

family members. They don't agree with me and give their own selfish opinions, so that's why I wanted you to be here."

"Don't worry," Jane assured. "I'll kick his ass if he tries to force himself on you." "Haha, he's never forced himself on me, so I doubt he's that type."

"Oh, you know nothing about men. At the end of the day, they're all the same," she touched her neck as she said. "I'm not saying there aren't any honest men, but if he seems too good to be true, then he likely is. Didn't you say one of your maids confessed to having sex with him multiple times?"

"I did, but we can't trust her words blindly. What if my mom made her do it?" Rebecca said. "I've been trying to reach Ashley since yesterday, but her address and everything about her is fake. It's all confusing. But I've long stopped trusting anyone blindly, including Benjamin." Rebecca said and noticed that Jane was wearing a turtleneck. "Wait, are you hiding the hickies with that thing again?"

"You know me better than most," Jane smiled a little bit sadly, and Rebecca also noticed that.

"Is everything okay?" she could tell that Jane's voice didn't have the base it normally would. Clearly, something wasn't right. "Yeah, it is..." Jane took a bit of a deep breath. "Just that, two nights back, Donovan got over aggressive, and I passed out." Rebecca's jaw dropped. "What?" Passing out while having sex? Was that even possible? Just what was Donovan doing? "Are you fine? Just what did he do? This isn't something that can be ignored, right?"

Jane didn't say anything. She remembered that time when she kept telling Donovan to stop, but he didn't. He kept choking her like a beast that had let go of all of its reservations. She passed out in the middle of it and didn't have sex with him again in these two days, which was a first after their relationship started.

“Jane, I know you’re having the thoughts of marrying Donovan, but you should reconsider,” Rebecca urged. “I don’t know anything about Donovan, but if he’s so abusive even before marriage, then what will he be like after marriage?”

Rebecca’s words rang true in Jane’s heart, but should she break up with Donovan for one mistake? He did apologize to her afterward and said he would never do it again.

“If you don’t like what I’m saying, at least see how much accountability he takes for things he’s done,” Rebecca said, but Jane looked conflicted. “Look. He’s rich and good in bed. I get it. But the allure of easy money or good sex also pulls countless people into situations they later regret. You remember Natalie, don’t you? Just make sure you’re not making the same mistake.”

Natalie was a good friend in college. She loved a douchebag who would piss in her private parts during sex and would treat her more like a tool. Despite his lack of self-control and respect toward her, she ended up marrying him and later committed suicide one day. Jane and Rebecca didn’t even know the exact reason for her death because Natalie grew depressed after marriage and stopped talking with them.

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“Donovan isn’t like Natalie’s husband,” Jane said, somewhat confidently. “You know him better than I do, so I’m not going to say more.” “So when is your dear husband coming?” Jane wanted to divert the topic. “In fifteen minutes.” Jane thought for a second as the ground level sounds of the vehicles coming and going distracted her a bit. “Have I told you that Benjamin began working at Rye’s Pizzas again?” Rebecca was a little surprised. “No, you didn’t.” “You don’t look like you are bothered with it.” “Why would I be bothered?” “C’mon, if your relationship with him is getting serious, then he should find a more serious job, don’t you think? How long do you want him to work as a freaking pizza deliverer? Do you want him to knock on strangers’ doors and have clothless women pick up his deliveries?” Rebecca’s heart skipped a beat. “You really think there are women who receive deliveries naked? Doesn’t that stuff only happen in movies?” “Huh, I didn’t tell you this,” Jane whispered, “but I once did it myself a couple of years back right after breaking up with a bastard.” “What?” Rebecca was left in disbelief. “You’ve gotta be kidding me.” “I was frustrated, you see.”

“So? You will have sex with a stranger? What if he does something that will affect your body permanently? There are all kinds of men out there. Be more careful.” “I’m being more careful, of course, so relax.” Just then, a Harley Davidson bike entered Rebecca’s view. A bearded man in a black jacket and a helmet was riding it. There was something cool in the way he drove the bike and carried himself. Before she knew it, she found herself watching him. But when the bike stopped at the restaurant, she looked back at Jane. “So, uh, what were you saying?” Jane blinked twice while chewing on the chicken tenders. “Nothing, girl. Drink your damn lemonade. You haven’t even touched it.” “Yeah.”

“Am I late?” a familiar voice reached Rebecca’s ears, shifting her gaze toward her right. The man in the black jacket sat next to her seat, pleasantly surprising her, but what made her go

silent was the fact that this man was her Benjamin.

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“Hey,” Benjamin waved his hand before Rebecca. Only then she started blinking. “Are you

fine?»

“Y-Yeah, I’m fine,” Rebecca picked up the glass and sipped on the spicy lemonade. Her eyes,

glances at him. He looked ten times more manly and cooler in this jacket and jeans. The helmet was resting on his thigh. He was spinning the keys around his forefinger and looked completely comfortable and lively. The only thing she didn’t like was his beard. It was eating away most of his looks. Jane, on the other hand, couldn’t look at Benjamin. The last time they met, she had slapped him, after all.

After Benjamin sat at their table, the atmosphere slowly but surely changed. Benjamin didn’t say a word, but the male energy made the two women go silent for a little while. He didn’t do anything other than sit in between them, but he seemed dominant for some reason. “You got your job back at Rye’s Pizzas?” asked Rebecca, sporting an awkward smile. He nodded. “How’s your mother doing?”

“She’s resting. That’s all she can do for a week or two.” A few seconds of silence passed. “And why did you call so many times? What was so urgent?”

“There were many reasons but mainly two,” he patiently explained. “You didn’t come to the date. I wanted to know why and also hear your voice.”

Rebecca’s cheeks gained some pink.

“Hear her voice?” Jane snorted. “I agree that Rebecca is a natural beauty who is so amazing to look at, but her voice is, meh, at best. Stop over-praising her just so you can get into her panties.”

Rebecca felt the urge to pinch Jane, but she was sitting on the other side, so she pressed her foot on top of her foot. Jane still smiled back as though nothing happened. “Jane... Do you want me to talk about the time when you sold your panties off for 200 dollars?”

Jane’s expression greatly changed. She slightly shook her head. “Then, speak properly,” Rebecca warned.

“Ahem,” Benjamin cleared his throat. “I like Rebecca’s voice because she’s my wife. I can’t say I don’t like her voice now, can I?”

Jane chuckled a little.

Rebecca flushed again but for a different reason, and she ended up pinching Benjamin.

“Aw, I was joking,” Benjamin rubbed his forearm. It really hurt for a couple of seconds. “But to be honest,” he stared at Rebecca like he was longing for her, “I think God sprinkled a little extra of everything when he made this young lady. She’s a beauty who doesn’t realize how beautiful she is, so how can I not love her?”

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“S-Stop it, Benjamin,” Rebecca couldn’t even look into his or Jane’s eyes. “You’re making me feel embarrassed.”

Jane, on the other hand, couldn’t help but feel envious. Nobody ever praised her like how Benjamin just praised his wife, and his words felt so good on the ears. She felt the need to play with Benjamin all of a sudden. “You didn’t praise her for no reason, right? Nothing’s for free in this world. You love her because she’s beautiful. If she had an ugly face, would you have even bothered to chat with her in the bar when you met her for the first time? You praised her because you want to get laid with her. That’s the fact.”

Her words somewhat spoiled the pleasant ambience permeating between Benjamin and Rebecca.

“Why do you relate everything with sex?” Rebecca snapped at her girlfriend a little. “You know he didn’t sleep with me even once after marrying. He didn’t force me to, either. That’s what I like about him.”

“Yeah, if I get married into a multi-millionaire’s family, I can also...” Jane was saying, but then paused for a second, “well, I don’t think I can live without sex, but I can sacrifice a lot of other things, a lot more than Benjamin ever did. That much I can assure.”

“Huh, baseless bravado.” Just then, Rebecca saw Nate go past the restaurant on a motorcycle. “That little bastard...” she clenched her fists.

“What happened?” Benjamin was alerted.

“Nothing,” Rebecca looked slightly frustrated. “Actually, my dad forced Lisa and Roshan to go to school, saying they should face these tough situations and grow strong. But everyday, they are coming home with sad faces. I heard they were getting bullied badly in school. Lisa’s ex boyfriend is particularly harassing her. She complained about it to her father, but my brother is too busy with other things at the moment. I feel really bad for the kids. I want to do something for them, but... what can I do about the kids at school? How can I shut their mouths?”

“Leave it to me,” Benjamin said, startling her. “I will deal with it so that no one bullies Lisa or Roshan from tomorrow.”

“H-How?” She looked surprised. “What will you do? This is a sensitive issue.” “Yeah, you can’t go and beat the children,” Jane voiced her mind, “unless you want to end up behind the bars.”

“I have my way, so don’t worry about it,” Benjamin assured.

“Benjamin...” she put her hand on his hand, surprising him. “I want to know more about you. You said you would explain everything.” “Yes, I did, but...” he glanced at Jane, “can’t we both talk alone?” “You know she’s my best friend. She knows everything about me.” “That’s...” Benjamin still didn’t feel comfortable. “I don’t know where to start from.” “Start from the day you were born,” Jane said, sitting straight, and explain everything in detail. We have all the time in the world, after all.”

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Benjamin leaked out an angry smile at Jane, but she just wiggled her eyebrows and teased him. “Why don’t you start with telling us your real name?” asked Rebecca. Jane blinked twice. “Wait, what do you mean by his ‘real name? Isn’t his name Benjamin?” Rebecca looked at Benjamin, expecting him to answer Jane’s question. “My name is not Benjamin Wilde,” he said. The half-chewed chicken tenders in Jane’s mouth dropped. “What?” “My real name is...”

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“My real name is...” “Madame,” the waiter intruded into their space, “any more orders?”

Rebecca and Jane glared at him. “O-Okay. I’ll come back later,” he walked away without making any sound.

Jane turned her head fast and looked at Benjamin. "So, you were saying..." He looked into Rebecca's eyes. "It's Benjamin Wolfe. That's my real name." A second of silence passed, not counting the noise of the breeze and the sounds of the street. "So much suspense for nothing," Jane blurted out. "Aren't both the names almost the same?"

Rebecca stayed silent, but she was feeling a lot better now. After all, she was so glad to hear that his real first name was Benjamin, a name which had a special place in her heart, one which she had grown attached to.

"Yeah, but..." Benjamin was trying to explain himself.

"You don't need to say more," Rebecca stopped him. "You must have had your reasons for hiding your family name, so you don't have to talk about it if you don't feel like it."

Benjamin didn't want to tell about his past in front of Jane, so he nodded in return. "Thanks, I'll tell you about my whole past soon, at a more appropriate time." "Then, what about the whole thing with Ashley?" Rebecca stressed the last word.

"That's a lie. She's a liar," Benjamin was quick to respond. "I can prove it to you."

"You can?"

"Just wait," he then showed her the voice recording he did when had spoken with Ashley outside a lodge. From the conversation, it became clear that Ashley was lying when she said she had sex with Benjamin multiple times.

Rebecca felt so happy but also quite guilty at the same time. Tears welled up in her eyes as she remembered how her father and brother had beaten him on that day. "I'm so sorry..." her voice struggled to break out of her mouth. She was genuinely sad.

Seeing her so vulnerable, like a little bird that needed caring, Jane's mouth turned down, she was about to give her a tissue paper, but Benjamin got out of the seat and hugged her.

"It's okay," he wrapped his arms around her head and comforted her. "I forgot what happened that day, but if you cry, I won't be able to ever forgive them."

"I'm really sorry," Rebecca still kept crying.

Seeing the two of them like that, Jane felt like she was totally left out of the conversation. (They are such love birds.)

By the time they calmed down and Benjamin sat back in his seat, Jane finished eating.
"My

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work here is over, so I'll get going." Neither of them stopped her, and she secretly hated that. "What do you want to eat?" Rebecca asked him. "You choose," he said.

She picked up the menu and ordered Smoked Bison Ribs for him while she ordered Black Beans Burger for herself. However, when the orders arrived, Benjamin made her share both the burger and the ribs.

Rebecca felt much better after eating.

"Before you go home, shall we go for a ride?" asked Benjamin.

"On your bike?" Rebecca was pleasantly surprised, but she also quickly nodded. "Sure." She had never sat on a bike before, so she felt both anxious and excited at the same time. When the waiter came with the bill, Benjamin gave him his platinum card. "No, I'll pay the bill," she said. "It's okay," Benjamin replied. "I don't mean to insult you, but it's going to be costly," Rebecca persuaded, "the reservation here costs 1000 dollars per hour. And I booked this table for the whole day, from 9 to 8, so it'll be 11,000 dollars just for sitting at the table." "It's okay," Benjamin just replied with an added smile and patted her hand.

The total bill was 13,600 dollars, out of which 250 dollars was paid for parking Rebecca's car. It wasn't an amount Benjamin couldn't pay, but it was still equal to two to three months of his salary, so she felt bad for making him spend now. To add to that, Benjamin paid 400 dollars in tips. The waiter thanked them both as he only received at an average of 10 dollars per table. As they were leaving, she asked, "You bought the bike, didn't you? Did you take out a loan for

it?»

"No, I paid." "You paid? How?" She knew that her mother took a lot of money from him whenever she could, so he couldn't have saved much. Benjamin tapped his cheek with his finger.

"What?" she seemed a little puzzled by his reply.

"I'll tell you if you give me a kiss." "Huh," her smile challenged him, "I will kiss you twice if your driving impresses me." "Really?" Benjamin's face lit up like that of a child.

"I don't take my words back," she said a little proudly. Benjamin locked the helmet at the back of the vehicle before getting on and starting the engine using the kick-start. The nearby men were quite surprised to see the kick-start facility in the Harley Davidson bike. "Why does his bike have a kick-start? Is it a customized model?"

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Shadow, who was eating at another table in the outdoor restaurant, was smiling. "That's the bike my lord stole from his father. It's a priceless bike in my opinion."

Rebecca got on to the bike and hesitantly put her hands on Benjamin's shoulders. Maybe because he was wearing the jacket, he didn't show any reaction. "Shall I start?" he asked.

"Mm," she nodded. The bike took off at a steady pace. There was traffic in that street, so he went slow. Rebecca felt tense for the first couple of minutes as her focus was on not falling from the bike. After she got used to it, she began to feel more comfortable. Still and all, she never thought her first bike ride would be with her husband. It made her heart flutter as though she had achieved something. One thing she could see clearly from there was the shape of his head, and his hairs were dense, so he was definitely not going to get a bald head, she thought.

Her gaze shifted to his ears, and she remembered Jane once telling her how she tricked the guy she had a crush on by asking him for a bike ride and talking right into his ear and bringing him into the mood. Rebecca had told her it wasn't the right thing to do, but then Jane replied that men also turned women on with their skillful bike rides.

(He won't do anything like that now, would he?) she wondered. (I mean, I'm not his girlfriend. I'm his wife. His demeanor has mostly always been gentle, so maybe I'm just overthinking.)

They could see two paths ahead. One was a wide street, and the other was relatively narrow. "Which way?" he asked. "Why are you asking?" she asked back. "The wider one has many turns and speed bumps because of the schools." "It's okay. You can enter the wider street," she said, having no clue she would regret her decision big time.

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"The wider street has many turns and speed bumps because of the schools," Benjamin stated.

"It's okay. You can enter the wider one," she said, having no clue she would regret her decision big time.

Benjamin happily drove through the wider street, and the many speed bumps made sure her chest kept bumping into his back very many times. Her face flushed into an

orange tomato pretty fast. She wanted to cover her chest with her hands, but she was too afraid to let go of him. In the end, she had to bear through everything.

After reaching the end of that street, Benjamin squeezed the brake and asked, "Do you want to go through the narrow way?" Rebecca squinted her eyes. If she were to say yes, he would turn the bike and make it go over all the speed bumps again. "No!" she quickly responded in a grudging manner. Forget about getting turned on, she felt so embarrassed right now. "Are you sure?" he asked innocently.

"I'm sure. Super sure. Never been more sure about something in my entire life." "Haha," Benjamin chuckled a little and twisted the throttle, "your wish is my command, my love."

"That's cringe-worthy. Perhaps, I should call you Cringamin from now on?" "You can call me whatever the heck you want, my love!" Benjamin said and then entered a highway and steadily went into the exclusive seventh gear and clocked 100 miles per hour, causing tears to fly out of Rebecca's eyes. "Kyaaa!" her heart was in her mouth. "STOOPPP!"

By the time the bike stopped, her hair had become a pig pen. For someone who always took pride in neatness and perfection, this was a first. She got down from the bike quickly and was ready to yell at her husband for scaring the living daylights out of her, but when he got down from the bike and looked at her with smiling eyes, she couldn't scream at him. His hands rose, and his fingers combed through her gently. He was done sorting her hair quickly, but she wished it lasted a lot longer. And that simple gesture greatly elevated his position on her friend list. She wanted to give him a kiss, but she didn't want to look impatient, and she held herself back.

"So, shall we continue the ride?" he asked. "I promise I won't cross 50 mph."

"No," her blunt reply disappointed him. "How about you teach me how to drive?"

Benjamin's disappointment was quickly washed away with her smooth-flowing words. "Sure, but..." he looked down at her foot. "Is your ankle fully healed?"

"Your bike has a self-start, doesn't it?"

"It does, but you still need to be able to balance the weight of the bike when it's not moving," he said. "How about we do it some other time?"

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Since he gave a valid reason, she could only nod. And then the ride resumed, with Benjamin driving like a dad with his family waiting back home. They went to many places in the city and took photos together and had fun, especially when talking to each other. Sparks flew at times between them when he first held her hand as they toured a museum, but they never blew up into flames. Nevertheless, Benjamin did end up kissing

on her cheeks whenever an opportunity arose and made her blush deep at times. Though she didn't resist him, she didn't brew any romance from her side, either.

They spent over an hour at the public park called Purity Park, sucking honey from the flower stalks, splashing water in the pool with their feet and playing with the ducklings, blowing bubbles out of hand-made bubble blowers, enjoying the tranquility of nature together. She tried to catch a rabbit and failed, but he caught the rabbit and brought it to her. She kissed it and almost suffered from the allergic reaction a little bit before letting the rabbit go. To make things worse, a couple of cute little puppies came to them for food. She shoed them away, but they didn't go until Benjamin tricked them into chasing after the stones he threw into the distance.

She tried to grab the mangoes from a tree, but they were too high for her to reach with a jump. Benjamin went down on all fours and helped her stand on his back, and so she was able to pluck two mangoes, which they consumed right then and there after a quick, little wash. Benjamin spared half of the mango, which the puppies ate after they left that spot.

After walking on the grass for a bit, holding each other's hand, they settled down in the shade. Though there wasn't any mat, she didn't mind dirtying her dress at the moment. Benjamin sat in her lap and kept talking about all the funny and strange incidents that had happened during delivering pizzas. Some of his little stories broke her belly from laughing so hard. Here was a guy who could make her dreams come true sitting in her lap and spending time with her, playing sweet music with his words. Even silence sang when she was around him. She wanted these real moments sweeter than her sweetest dream to continue for a long time.

They roamed until night fell before returning to the same outdoor restaurant. He put his jacket around her as it had gotten cold outside and asked her to dinner. She couldn't refuse even though she had eaten enough in the last few hours. Just like how he broke her happiness barriers multiple times that day, she wanted to do the same for him.

The table she had booked for the whole day was empty, so both of them at there and talked more than they ate. However, this time, she made sure to pay the bill. When he asked for the two kisses at the end, she reminded him of all the kisses he put on her cheeks without her permission. Benjamin's shoulders slumped as he apologized to her in his heart. (My little heart is just desperate for you. My lips hunger and thirst for your lips. I can't help it. I'm sorry. If I don't at least kiss your cheeks, I'm afraid I'll end up kissing on your lips, which I don't want to do one-sidedly.)

"Benjamin..." her loving voice reached his ears, making him raise his head and look at her. "It's a handsome name for my handsome husband. I hope your name never grows old in my heart." She stepped closer and embraced him warmly. "Thank you, Benjamin, for today and for everything. Thanks for being with this broken vessel."

Like a rushing river, blood flooded into Benjamin's heart. His eyes teared up. The cold night felt warm from her embrace.

At the same time, Artur reached the Sterling villa and entered a room, as led by Kathy, with Luther following closely behind.