

Out Of The Shadows: Tilda's Brilliant Second Life

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Jude Bell

"Jude, you interested?"

Maurice Rowse had noticed her too—the girl on the dance floor, moving like she owned the place.

Tilda was magnetic, lit up like a queen under the flashing lights.

But what really caught Maurice's attention wasn't Tilda. It was Jude.

Jude was watching her.

86%

Finished

Not a passing glance. Not idle curiosity. He was watching with a kind of focus that was rare for him—cool, distant, and reserved as he usually was.

Jude Bell, the elusive and powerful CEO of DY Group, never gave women a second look. Yet now, his gaze hadn't left Tilda for a single second.

Half his face was lost in shadow, the other brushed with dim light that caught the sharp set of his lips—firm and unyielding. His nose was straight and proud, his features too striking to be dulled by the darkness. Even hidden in the half-light, his eyes seemed to cut through the night like arrows tipped in fire.

Jude didn't answer Maurice's question, but his eyes still flocked to Tilda. His silence spoke volumes.

There was something about Tilda that pulled at him—something familiar.

Jude saw something in Tilda that felt familiar—like he'd finally found someone cut from the same cloth.

His gaze was razor-sharp, and it was nothing like anyone else's. It went deeper. It searched. It stripped away layers, looking for the person beneath.

And Tilda felt it.

Her attention shifted, her eyes following that invisible thread to the fourth-floor glass wall.

The glass was treated so no one below could see in—but she knew. Someone was watching.

When the music ended, she walked back to Una, breathless and glowing from the dance.

“Tilda, that was wonderful!” Una clapped, eyes bright with excitement.

Tilda chuckled and reached over to ruffle Una’s hair. She was about to speak when-

“Hey, gorgeous, feel like joining us for a drink?”

A man swaggered up, dripping in flash and ego. Gold chains. His blonde hair was slicked back as if he had just stepped out of a fashion spread. Early twenties. Cocky grin. Still, he wasn’t bad-looking.

A thick gold tag hung from his neck. It read: Bell.

Tilda didn’t even glance his way. “Not interested.”

Instead of being offended, the man laughed. “Feisty. I like that. Listen, babe, getting noticed by me? That’s

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your lucky day. Name’s Preston Bell.”

He reached out to touch her.

“Don’t touch Tilda!”

Una darted between them, arms spread wide like a tiny lioness protecting her cub.

Her big eyes glared up at him, fierce and adorable.

Preston’s gaze slid to Una, and his eyes lit up. His interest shifted instantly.

Didn’t expect the friend to be this pretty.

Finished

She had that innocent look. Probably never been kissed. A perfect contrast to Tilda's bold, fiery energy.

Jackpot. Tonight really was his lucky night.

"Hey, Wade," Clive muttered, nudging his friend. "Your sister's got some creep on her."

He squinted. "Hmm, looks familiar. Wait—is that Preston? From the Bells?"

"I saw him," Wade said through clenched teeth, though he didn't notice much else.

Preston Bell was the notorious playboy of the family, a relative not from the main branch—rich, reckless, and completely without shame. The kind of guy who showed up at parties with a different girl every night, surrounded by friends who fueled his every whim.

He was the spoiled rich kid everyone loved to hate. He once stole another man's girlfriend right in front of a crowd, but no one dared to call him out.

Because behind Preston stood the Bells—Slosa's untouchable elite.

And above them all was the one man nobody in the city would dare cross—the elusive CEO of DY Group.

Even the powerful Jensions thought twice before challenging the Bells.

"This isn't good," Clive muttered. "Preston's got his sights on Tilda. If she doesn't lose him fast, things could get messy."

He glanced at Wade. "Are you stepping in or what? If you do, I've got your back."

Clive wasn't exactly the kind of guy who'd risk making enemies with the Bells for a stranger. But if Wade moved first, that was another story. It all came down to whether Wade cared enough about his sister to get involved.

Right now, Wade still hadn't made up his mind.

"I'm just trying to make some friends, ladies. No need to get all worked up," Preston drawled, his tone dripping with sleaze.

He didn't notice the way Tilda's expression hardened.

Before he could finish his line, she snapped her leg up and drove her foot straight into his gut.

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Preston went flying like a rag doll, crashing into a stack of tables and chairs.

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The crack of ribs breaking echoed through the bar.

Gasps erupted from nearby patrons. Most scrambled out of the way, while a few stayed, eager to watch the drama unfold.

Clive let out a low whistle. “Holy cow! Wade, your sister’s something else!”

Wade froze. He’d been about to jump in—but now?

Tilda didn’t need saving. She could fight.

This wasn’t the girl he remembered. The timid, insecure Tilda who used to fade into the background was gone. In her place stood someone fierce, confident... dangerous.

Before the dust had even settled, Tilda reached out and gently covered Una’s eyes. She didn’t want her to see something so violent.

“Tilda, what just happened? Are you hurt? Don’t be scared; this place has great security. They won’t let anything happen to us,” Una said, her voice shaking. She had never experienced something like this; rattled, she was still trying to protect Tilda.

Warmth stirred in Tilda’s chest. “I’m fine, Una. I’ll handle it.”

“Mr. Preston!”

A few of Preston’s lapdogs rushed over to pull him to his feet.

Blood streaked his face, and pain twisted his body, but his glare stayed locked on Tilda—wild and furious.

“Bitch! You’re out of your mind! You dare lay a hand on me? Get her! Now!”

“Yes, Mr. Preston!”

“Back off!”

The shout snapped Wade out of his daze. He stepped forward without thinking, his voice hard.

Tilda’s eyes widened. Wade?

What is he doing here? Is he standing up for me?

Preston’s eyes burned red, and he roared, “Who the heck are you? Trying to play hero. Get him too!”

“Yes, Mr. Preston!”

Clive grinned the moment Wade stepped forward. Of course he wasn’t going to just stand by now.

The two of them moved in together, and within seconds Preston’s crew was sprawled on the floor, groaning in pain.

They might’ve looked tough, but against Wade and Clive—both trained from childhood as heirs of powerful families—they didn’t stand a chance. In their world, knowing how to fight wasn’t a hobby. It was

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survival.

Tilda stayed off to the side, arms crossed, watching with a faint smirk.

What is this—Wade playing the hero now?

Please

By then, security had been alerted, and guards finally rushed in.

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Finished

After confirming what had happened, security moved in fast. They grabbed Preston and his crew on the spot.

“I’m warning you!” Preston barked. “Don’t touch me! I’m a Bells!”

The head of security at Nightingale Bar wasn’t the kind of man to be easily intimidated—especially not by someone like Preston. He let out a cold scoff. “My boss is a close friend of Mr. Bell. If he finds out you stirred up trouble here tonight, you’ll be lucky to walk out in one piece.”

Jude’s ruthlessness was legendary across the city.

Anyone who crossed him—family or not—paid the price.

Preston’s face drained of color. He’d clearly chosen the wrong place to throw his weight around. If that devil of a man heard Preston had been using the family’s influence to bully people, he’d be done for.

The bar manager stepped forward as Preston was dragged away. His tone was smooth, almost polite. “Now, let’s discuss compensation.”

He turned to the guests and offered a respectful bow. “We’re deeply sorry for the disturbance. As an apology, all charges for tonight will be waived.”

Then he approached Tilda and Una. “We’ve reviewed the situation thoroughly. On behalf of Nightingale Bar, please accept this Elite Diamond Card. It gives you 70 percent off every visit, plus a 500,000 dollar credit already loaded.”

It was an unbelievably generous offer.

Una’s jaw dropped. “Is this really for us?”

The Elite Diamond Card wasn’t something you could just sign up for. You had to spend at least three million a year here to even qualify.

Tilda had only applied for a regular membership..

“I understand.”

She accepted the card without fuss, calm as ever. She was satisfied with how the bar had handled things.

As for Preston’s disgusting stunt? She’d already moved past it. That one kick would keep him in a hospital bed for a month. And tonight’s bill? He’d be paying it in full.

The people behind Nightingale Bar weren't the type to swallow a loss. They'd make sure Preston paid- literally and financially.

Once everything was settled, the staff moved quickly, restoring the area like nothing had happened. In the grand scheme of the night, the little scene that had played out was barely a ripple.

Everyone went back to drinking and laughing. In a place like this, fights weren't exactly rare. The difference was how the bar handled them.

And Nightingale Bar? They'd wiped a tab worth at least a hundred grand without batting an eye. That was power. And that was why people kept coming back.

Wade stood there, eyes locked on Tilda, his expression tangled with emotions. He'd been torn about stepping in, but the moment he shouted and moved forward, he realized he already had.

Tilda gave him a glance before turning away. She took Una's hand and headed for the door.

She couldn't stay here—not with Wade around.

Even breathing the same air as the Jensons made her skin crawl.