

No Remarriage: You Don't Deserve Me (Lenora and Zachary) Stay Away

Stay Away 361

Chapter 361 Read The Room

Chapter 361 Read The Room

At fifteen minutes past eight in the evening in Sunset Br.

The agreed time was eight o'clock, but Sophia and Lenora intentionally arrived a bit late,

Sophia hoped the other party would wait for a while and leave because she hadn't shown up.

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Inside the bar, there was a cacophony of voices. The entire place was bathed in the glow of red lights and the shimmer of countless bottles.

The two of them found a booth inside and sat down, ordering a couple of drinks.

Sophia took out her phone, sending a message through WhatsApp: I'm here. Where are you?

The other party responded: I'm not there yet. Please wait for a bit.

Sophia replied: All right. Then, she vented to Lenora, "D*mn! He's even more late than me!"

In a booth not far away, a tall figure sat with a languid grace. He was sipping his drink in utter boredom, occasionally glancing toward the entrance as if he were waiting for someone.

He had a refined appearance, adorned with a pair of gold-rimmed glasses, emanating a scholarly and dignified aura. His clean and refreshing demeanor was like a breath of spring air, naturally drawing people to want to get closer. Just in the short time he had been sitting there, quite a few people had approached him, both men and women. However, he had turned them all down.

When he saw a certain figure enter and take a seat, his eyes lit up. He casually finished his glass of red wine and was about to get up and approach when suddenly, someone called out to stop him.

"Zephyr?" Summer approached with a warm smile. "I didn't expect to run into you in Jacaster. What a pleasant surprise."

Zephyr nodded. "It's quite a coincidence, indeed."

Summer introduced Howard, who was standing behind her. "Howard, this is my cousin's friend, Zephyr. And this is Howard, an old friend of Ezekiel."

Upon noticing the subtle hint of appeasement in Summer's interaction with Zephyr, Howard studied him for a moment. Extending his hand, he greeted, "Hello." Zephyr glanced at him and extended his hand. "Hello."

As soon as he finished speaking, he withdrew his hand and said nonchalantly, "I have some matters to attend to, so I won't be able to entertain you any longer"

With a smile, Summer said, "Zephyr, please go ahead."

Zephyr rose and departed.

Summer and Howard settled themselves directly by the table.

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Howard turned to glance at Zephyr's figure. Dissatisfied with his indifferent demeanor, he asked, "Who is he

Summer said, "All I know is that he's a friend of Ezekiel's while abroad. It seems like he's of mixed heritage. It was only last year, when he returned to the country and paid a visit to the Hoffman family with Ezekiel, that I got to know him."

In reality, Zephyr's physical appearance wasn't bad at all. From their first meeting, Summer was somewhat taken aback..

Afterward, she casually inquired about Zephyr from Ezekiel. She found out that Zephyr had left his venture capital firm abroad with plans to return and establish himself in his home country. The implication was that Zephyr came from a humble background and had made hi Howard scoffed dismissively, his gaze fixed on Zephyr's figure. He watched as Zephyr confidently took a seat at the table of two beautiful women.

Howard shifted his gaze back, his curiosity piqued as he asked, "Is it true that mixed-race guys have a better chance with the ladies?"

After waiting for a few seconds without getting a response from Summer, Howard looked up, only to find her staring intently in the direction of Zephyr - or, more accurately, at the two beautiful women across from Zephyr.

Howard took a closer look. Wasn't one of the two beauties across from Zephyr none other than Lenora? Sophia had just put down her phone when a familiar figure approached her.

The figure was all too familiar to her. She didn't need to look to know who it was.

Sophia averted her gaze and muttered under her breath to Lenora, "Here comes the trash."

Lenora was momentarily taken aback. Just as she regained her composure, Zephyr had already taken a seat across from them.

He chuckled, revealing a set of pearly white teeth. "Sophia, Ms. Wilkin, what a coincidence."

Sophia rolled her eyes. "Can'

you read the room?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"If I'm not welcoming you, you should just walk past me, pretending you haven't seen me."

The last time they met at a mall, this was

actly what Sophia had done.

With a gentle smile, Zephyr lowered his gaze, his demeanor refined and insightful. "I apologize," he said, "I would never do something so impolite."

His words subtly suggested that Sophia was impolite.

Sophia gave a light huff. "Now that we've exchanged greetings, can you leave?"

"In such a vast city, our meeting must be fate. Shall we share a couple of drinks together?"

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Sophia looked at him with disdain, remaining perfectly still.

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Leñora rolled her eyes in silence, thinking to herself that Zephyr's thick skin was on par with Zachary's.

Seeing the two remaining silent, Zephyr raised an eyebrow. "What's the matter? Are you in such a hurry to get rid of me? Did you arrange a blind date and are afraid I might see?" "I'm afraid you might disgust him," Sophia responded.

"As it happens, I've also arranged to meet someone. But I'm not worried about her being put off by you, so let's wait together. We can introduce each other when the time comes."

Sophia and Lenora were rendered speechless.

Lenora's worldview seemed to be falling apart.

He wants them to introduce their exes to their blind dates?

Is this what Zephyr had learned after spending several years abroad?

Sophia knew all too well that Zephyr was simply trying to make her uncomfortable.

Her chest heaved with suppressed emotion, on the verge of a fiery outburst. Suddenly, Zephyr said, "By the way, the matchmaker mentioned that my blind date's last name is Tortell. It couldn't possibly be you, could it?" The words Sophia was about to say suddenly got stuck in her throat, almost choking her.

She took a breath, denying, "No."

""Why not?"

"The WhatsApp username is different."

"Oh, I have an alternate account. It's called ZY."

Sophia's facial muscles twitched twice.

A hint of a smile tugged at Lenora's lips. If her memory served her right, she had just caught a glimpse of the chat interface on Sophia's phone screen. Displayed at the top was "ZY" "Zephyr Yankovich, are you messing with me?" Sophia gritted her teeth in anger.

From a not too distant spot, Summer let out a cold chuckle. Search the (f)indNOVEL.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Although she couldn't hear their conversation, with a bit of thought, she knew that if a man tried to flirt, as long as the woman rejected him, he would certainly take the hint and leave. Zephyr was strikingly handsome and came from an exceptional background. He was not the type to relentlessly pursue someone.

He had been sitting across from Lenora for so long without leaving. It was clear that Lenora and her friend had not turned him away, deliberately keeping Zephyr around.

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She pursed her lips, turning to Howard and said, "You see? Any random guy, as long as he appears wealthy. Lenora can easily laugh and chat with. How does a person like that deserve Ezekiel?" Howard had a strong dislike for Zephyr, which consequently led to an even greater distaste for Lenora. He suggested, "Should I teach her a lesson right now?"

"What are you planning to do?"

Howard explained softly, "Given the criminal record, even if Ezekiel agrees, Mr. Hoffman would never

consent,"

"Isn't this a bad idea? What if Ezekiel finds out..." Summer voiced her hesitation.

"Don't worry. I won't let Ezekiel find out."

Summer pursed her lips. "If Ezekiel finds out, don't tell him I knew."

"Don't worry. I won't rat you out."

After he finished speaking, Howard made a phone call.

A few minutes later, a young man who looked like a punk approached Howard.

Howard whispered a few words into the thug's ear, who nodded in response. He then reached into his pocket to retrieve a package that resembled white flour and slowly started walking toward Lenora's table.

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Chapter 362 Prospective Match

Chapter 362 Prospective Match

Suddenly, an alarm rang out at the door.

Someone shouted, "The cops are here!" 89%

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Shortly after, the entire bar erupted into chaos. Some patrons stood frozen in place, looking utterly lost, while others, guilt-stricken, scurried around trying to escape.

A couple of police officers charged in through the main entrance to maintain order. The leading officer sternly commanded, "Everyone, please remain calm. We've received a report of illegal substance use within the bar. We ask for your cooperation with our investigation. It will take much of your time. Failure to comply may result in arrest for causing a disturbance."

Many of the guests calmed down and cooperated with the police during their questioning.

Sophia was utterly taken aback. "Someone's doing drugs here? It's such a mess! Yankovich, what kind of place have you brought me to?"

Zephyr flashed an innocent front. "How would I know-

Shut up!"

Zephyr pursed his lips, remaining silent.

Sophia asked in a hushed tone, "Since they received the complaint, didn't the informant describe what the suspect looks like?"

Resting her elbow on the table, Lenora raised her hand to rub her temples, choosing not to respond.

Zephyr responded in a low voice, "Usually, they would provide that, but they can't rule out the possibility of a crowd gathering, so they'll need to investigate." Drug use, crowd gathering, AIDS...

The words gathered and hit Sophia all at once. She shivered as if struck by a sudden chill, shooting him a disdainful glance. "Who asked you?" she retorted. Zephyr responded, "Can't you ignore me, then?"

Sophia pursed her lips, turning her attention to Lenora and expressing her concern. "Nora, why does your face look like that? Are you feeling unwell?"

"I'm feeling a bit dizzy." Lenora clutched her chest. "My heart's beating a bit fast, probably because I've been too busy and haven't been getting enough rest lately."

"Ah..." Sophia sighed. "I originally planned to leave as soon as I met the person. Now, it seems like I might be delayed a bit."

After she finished speaking, she shot Zephyr a glare.

If it weren't for him, why would she have come to such a place?

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Chapter 362 Prospective Match

This time, Zephyr didn't retort her. He glanced at Lenore, his brows furrowing in that and weed kis suspicion. "Could it be that you..."

Before he could finish speaking, a police officer was already heading, wrath for their both. We street ar the edge of the table and looked down at Lenora from superior portion sizing her op. He then took on a small notebook and asked, "Ma'am, your name? "Me?" Lenora pointed to her own nose, still feeling a bit dazed.

"Correct. You," the police officer said with a stern expression.

"Officer, we..." It was simply impossible for them to use drugs.

Just as Sophia was about to explain, Zephyr subtly kicked her under the table.

He was almost certain now that Lenora had been messed with by someone,

Someone had slipped something into the drink she had consumed. Subsequently, that individual immediately reported the incident to the police.

This wasn't unusual in the bar.

Sophia's explanations were of no use. In such circumstances, they were definitely going to be taken back for inspection.

It was unclear whether that person was targeting Lenora alone or all three of them.

What was their purpose?

Zephyr glanced at Sophia across from him. He reckoned this naive girl probably still hadn't grasped the situation.

After the police had inquired about Lenora's personal information, they asked further, "Why did you come here tonight? Have you been here before? How many times? And what were your reasons?"

The caseworker was stern, which only made Lenora feel increasingly dizzy and suffocated. Irritation bubbled up in her heart, but she held her patience and responded, "This is my first time here tonight. I came with a friend..."

"Came with a friend?" The police officer noticed something off about Lenora and gave her a few more glances. He was almost certain she was the person they were looking for.

"Blind date." Sophia took over the conversation, shooting Zephyr, who was sitting across from her, a glare. The police officer glanced at Sophia. "Are you her friend?" "Indeed."

"What's your name?"

Sophia proceeded to share her personal information.

The police asked a few questions, then turned to Zephyr, inquiring, "Are you her blind date?"

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"Indeed." Zephyr nodded.

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"Who introduced you? When did you start communicating? Is this your first meeting tonight?" the police officer asked.

In the past, informants came up with all sorts of cover stories to arrange their meetings. The excuse of a blind date wasn't unusual. The police interrogated them thoroughly.

Once Zephyr finished answering, the police officer closed his notebook and tucked his pen into his front pocket. "Come along. The three of you need to come with us for a urine test." "Huh? A urine test?" Sophia looked up in surprise. "Are you suspecting us of..."

Lenora was also somewhat taken aback, feeling a faint unease in her heart. "Let's discuss any issues after we get the test results."

Sophia wanted to say something more, but Zephyr abruptly pulled her back.

Sophia calmed herself down, knowing that anything she said at this point would be futile. However, she just couldn't help but feel angry.

"It's all your fault! Not only did you set me up on purpose, but look at this dump you've chosen!" Sophia, in her frustration, shot Zephyr another glare.

"All right. All right. It's all my fault. All my fault.""

The police officer suddenly turned around. "Aren't you two on a blind date, having just met?"

Sophia was rendered speechless.

Under the watchful eyes of the crowd, the three individuals were escorted into the police car.

Lenora was alone in a vehicle, accompanied by two police officers.

She didn't understand what was happening to her. Her heart was racing with excitement, yearning for an outlet, yet she was clueless about what to do.

She found herself inexplicably taken to the police station, feeling so irritable that she wanted to hit

someone.

Sophia shared a car ride with Zephyr, accompanied by a police officer sitting next to them.

Zephyr shifted slightly under the police officer's intense gaze. He pulled out his phone from his pocket. "Officer, you wouldn't mind if I made a call, would you?" "Who are you calling?"

A friend."

"Go ahead."

Zephyr then proceeded to make the call.

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The call connected, and he said, "Ezekiel, it's me."

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Zephyr relayed the situation at hand to Ezekiel, with a particular emphasis on Lenora's symptoms. "I'm afraid someone might be targeting her. Keep your eyes peeled."

After Ezekiel agreed, Zephyr ended the call.

Sophia realized belatedly. "What you're saying is, Nora, she..."

She wore an expression of disbelief, yet reflecting on Lenora's symptoms, it did indeed seem somewhat similar...

"It's a speculation. We'll know once the test results are out."

Sophia wore a worried expression as she nodded. Suddenly, a thought struck her, and she asked with a tinge of melancholy, "Who were you on the phone with just now? Ezekiel? Ezekiel? Do you know Ezekiel?" So, are you saying that his appearance in Newcove was not a coincidence at all?

No wonder Fiona mentioned seeing other people in Ezekiel's car who hadn't gotten out yet!

It must have been this scoundrel!

Zephyr was baffled.

Due to the time required for metabolic processes in the human body, nothing significant could be detected in a urine test conducted within a short period.

Wait was necessary.

Several hours later, the urine could finally be tested.

Lenora grew increasingly restless.

Sophia wasn't all that great either.

Only Zephyr remained calm.

The trio stayed at the police station until the wee hours of the morning when the urine test results were finally out.

Lenora and Sophia were both tested positive.

Only Zephyr was of tested negative.

Upon seeing the test results, Lenora found it hard to believe.

Had she taken some drugs?

When did this happen?

Could it be that her discomfort earlier was a reaction to the absorption?

She reckoned that was probably the case.

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So, someone had slipped something into her drink at the bar?

She had only ever seen such things in TV dramas.

Sophia could hardly believe it too.

Was she drugged as well?

However, why didn't she feel anything?

The two were separately escorted into the interrogation room and questioned about the origins of the drugs, whether they were addicted, and so on.

The police asked Zephyr a few more questions, then gestured dismissively. "You can leave now."

Zephyr emerged from the office, coming face to face with several people.

At the forefront was a middle-aged police officer. Judging by the insignia on his shoulder, it was clear that he held a high-ranking position, placing him amongst the top brass of Jacaster's police force. Beside the police officer walked a middle-aged man dressed in a suit. The two of them conversed as they strolled, and judging by the officer's expression, he held the man in high regard.

Upon seeing Zephyr, the middle-aged man quickly approached him. "Zephyr, why didn't you let me know when you ran into such a situation?"

Zephyr chuckled. "Just as I was about to call you, you showed up."

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Chapter 363 What Else Is There To Worry

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"Chief Lourd has told me about the situation." Uncle Zephyr asked, "Those two girls... Are they your friends?"

"Yes. From what I know, they would never touch prohibited items. I suspect something was tampered with their drinks at the bar," Zephyr said.

Zephyr's uncle casually shoved his hands into his pockets, stealing a glance at Vincent Lourd standing next to him.

Vincent said, "In that case, Mr. Yankovich, Mr. Xenos, there's no need for you to worry. I'll instruct my subordinates to investigate as quickly as possible and release Mr. Yankovich's two friends." "Thank you, Chief Lourd." Zephyr acknowledged with a nod.

Inside the interrogation room, a dedicated staff member had come by. After inspection and communication, it was confirmed that Lenora was experiencing this for the first time and had not yet developed an addiction. Lenora, nursing a headache, strained to recall the details from the bar.

However, she hadn't paid much attention back then, and some details were a bit hazy in her memory.

"Think carefully again. Did the wine glass ever leave your sight?" asked the police officer in charge of the interrogation.

Lenora's brows were furrowed tightly, her head throbbing as if it was about to explode. She was restless, her voice laced with bitterness as she said, "I really can't remember. Can you guys check the surveillance footage?"

The police officer was about to say something more when another officer entered the room. After whispering something into the interrogating officer's ear, they both left together.

A few minutes later, the interrogating officer reentered the room. He waved at Lenora, saying, "You can step out for now."

"Huh?" Lenora paused, instantly feeling a lot lighter. "No more investigation?"

"Do you want it to last a bit longer?"

Without uttering another word, Lenora hurriedly rose and left.

"Nora! Are you all right?"

Sophia had already stepped outside, waiting by the door for Lenora. Upon seeing Lenora emerge, she quickly approached her.

"I'm fine, just having a headache. How about you?"

Sophia raised an eyebrow. "I don't feel anything unusual. If it weren't for the test results, I wouldn't have known there was something off about the drink I had. I have no idea who did it! This bar is now on my blacklist. I swear I'll never go back."

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Chapter 363 What Else Is There To Worry

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"All's well then." Lenora leaned against the wall, catching her breath. "Go and sit over there for a bit. By the way, where's Zephyr?"

"Who knows? He might have run off a long time ago, Sophia said dismissively.

Following that, Zephyr was spotted conversing with a middle-aged man while descending from the second floor.

The middle-aged man carried a resolute expression, exuding an aura of authority without displaying anger. His entire being radiated a sense of time-honed wisdom. His piercing gaze seemed as if it could see through a person with just a single glance.

A police officer and a man in a suit carrying a briefcase were accompanying the middle-aged individual, appearing to play the role of a secretary.

Lenora tilted her head back, momentarily stunned, a brief flicker of bewilderment crossing her face.

Had she seen it wrong?

That middle-aged man... seemed like the mayor of Jacaster. He was often seen in political news

Besides that, his secretary seemed familiar.

Lenora took another glance.

She was sure she wasn't mistaken.

She remembered when she had just married Zachary, and their relationship was still harmonious. Once, Zachary got drunk at a social event. Lenora happened to be nearby and went to pick him up. She had briefly met this mayor in a private room. If she remembered correctly in Jacaster, given Zachary's status, the only people who could get him to indulge in social drinking to the point of intoxication were those from the government. That was why Lenora had such a vivid memory of that moment.

However, why did the mayor come to the police station?

How did Zephyr end up talking to him again?

Should she greet him or should she pretend not to know each other?

Lenora wore an expression of utter confusion.

As he descended the stairs, Matthew Xenos inadvertently caught sight of Lenora standing nearby. Seeing her face all scrunched up, he inexplicably felt a sense of familiarity. He halted his steps and chuckled. "You're already out. What's there left to worry about?" Lenora hadn't expected the mayor to speak with her. She was pleasantly surprised. "I... I'm not worried."

Zephyr was also taken aback for a moment.

"What's with that expression, then?"

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Chapter 363 What Else Is There To Worry

"I... I was contemplating whether or not to greet you."

Matthew shook his head with a smile. "What's there to be conflicted about?"

"Do you recognize me?" Lenora asked cautiously, lifting her gaze.

"At first, I didn't remember, but now I do. Your name is Lenora Wilkin, and your husband is Zachary Fuller if my memory serves me right?"

"You have quite the memory." Lenora subtly flattered him without making any deliberate attempt to correct him about the matter of her divorce with Zachary

It wasn't really brown-nosing. She was just telling the truth.

After all, it was just that one encounter, yet the fact that the mayor actually remembered her truly astonished Lenora.

Matthew just smiled, didn't say anything further, and walked out.

Zephyr paused for a moment and glanced at Sophia. "Wait for me in the lounge first."

Before Sophia could react, he had already stepped forward to catch up.

Matthew glanced at Zephyr, who was a step behind, and teased with a smile, "That young lady earlier. Are you interested in her?"

Zephyr didn't deny it. He simply smiled lightly and replied, "Uncle Matthew, I'd appreciate it if you could keep this a secret for now. Let's not inform my parents just yet." "You're not getting any younger," Matthew advised earnestly. "If you're serious

about this, you should settle down soon. Bring her home to meet your parents." "I understand."

At the main entrance, Zephyr took the initiative and opened the car door, saying, "Uncle Matthew, safe travels."

Matthew settled into the passenger seat. "You should head home. Take some time to understand this matter thoroughly. Come over for a meal another day." "Definitely."

After seeing off Matthew, Zephyr returned to the lounge.

Lenora was in the midst of a conversation with Sophia.

Sophia found Matthew's face vaguely familiar, but it was only after Lenora's explanation that she understood his identity. She sighed. "I never would have guessed that he's such an approachable mayor. But, how did Zephyr come to know him?" "You'll have to ask him that."

No sooner had Lenora finished speaking than Zephyr appeared at the lounge door.

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Sophia glanced at him. "Hey, how did you get to know the mayor?"

Leaning against the door, Zephyr crossed his arms over his chest and chuckled leisurely. "Did me?"

Sophia's lips twitched slightly, gritting her teeth. "Zephyr!"

"What's the matter?"

"How did you come to know the mayor?" 89%1

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"Perhaps it's because I'm exceptionally capable. The mayor appreciates me," Zephyr said, pushing up his glasses in a serious manner.

"You're just boasting!" Sophia scoffed, averting her gaze, her heart filled with skepticism and uncertainty.

During high school, Zephyr had won numerous awards and was particularly favored by the teachers.

Zephyr came from a poor family. His mother passed away when he was in his sophomore year, and his father's health wasn't in the best condition either. The cost of his living was entirely borne by himself through tutoring jobs. Many of these tutoring part-time jobs were arranged for him by his school teachers.

She heard he'd been doing pretty well for himself overseas.

In the city, there must have been policies to attract talent. People like Zephyr probably met the criteria. It was only natural for him to know some people in the government.

Would the top official of Jacaster really bother with a minor returnee from overseas?

Zephyr chuckled.

At that moment, a police officer approached and knocked on the door. "Mr. Yankovich, Ms. Wilkin, Ms. Tortell, we've retrieved the surveillance footage. Please come with us. We have a few more questions for you." "All right."

Lenora and the other two followed the police officer to the front of the office display screen.

The police captured a certain frame from the surveillance footage. They enlarged the image, moving the cursor over the individual's face before asking, "Do any of you recognize this person?"

Sophia shook her head, turning her gaze toward Lenora.

Zephyr felt a sense of familiarity, narrowing his eyes.

Taken aback, Lenora blurted out, "Howard!"

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Chapter 364 Your Wingman

Chapter 364 Your Wingman

Lenora could never have imagined that Howard would actually resort to spiking her drink with illegal drugs.

When he was in Jeahron, he had always spoken against her, but Lenora knew that she couldn't possibly gain everyone's approval.

But had she somehow offended Howard?

No.

He did this to her simply because he didn't like her. It was utterly outrageous.

It wasn't that bad since this was the first time he had targeted her this way. However, if Howard took advantage of her unpreparedness again, would she become an addict?

At this thought, a chill ran through Lenora's entire body.

"Who's this person? They appear to be together." The officer pointed to the woman next to Howard.

Lenora furrowed her brows. "Summer!"

Could it be that Howard's inexplicable hostility toward her was because of Summer?

The police officer turned his gaze toward 'Sophia. She waved her hand dismissively. "I don't know him." The police officer turned his gaze back to Lenora. "Have you had any issues with them before?" Lenora pointed at Howard. "I have nothing to do with him, but I do have "Tell me in detail."

Zephyr, with his arms crossed over his chest, peered thoughtfully at Lenora through his glasses.

Summer had a thing for Ezekiel. Though he had only spent a single night at the Hoffman residence, he could tell right away.

Furthermore, Ezekiel took a liking to Lenora.

Most likely, it was due to this reason that Summer targeted Lenora.

However, to their surprise, the words that came out of Lenora's mouth next left both him and Sophia utterly shocked.

Surprisingly, Ezekiel's stepmother turned out to be Lenora's biological mother. This meant that Lenora and Summer were cousins, but they had been at odds since childhood. Not too long ago, Summer even stole Lenora's photography work.

The police officer asked a few more questions and then turned to Lenora and Sophia. "All right," he said. "once you've paid the fine, you're free to go. Be extra careful in the future. If there's any follow-up needed, I'll contact you."

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Chapter 364 Your Wingman

After leaving the police station, Sophia was chattering away relentlessly, pulling Lenora along with her. Zephyr trailed behind them, strolling at his own pace,

"Nora, so you're saying Ezekiel is somewhat like a brother to you? I never imagined you two had such a connection. Why didn't you tell me sooner?"

"I only found out recently myself. After more than twenty years apart, they might not even want to acknowledge me. So, there's not much to talk about," Lenora said. Her eyes flicked over to Zephyr standing behind her, and she asked, "What's the matter? If I had told you so you have done?" "Of course, I would ask you to be my wingman. Why let outsiders have all the benefits?" Sophia blunted

out.

After she finished speaking, a chill ran down Sophia's spine.

Zephyr's poignant voice echoed from behind. "Set you up? Why let outsiders have all the benefits?"

Sophia swallowed, turning back to glance at him, her expression serious. "Is there a problem?" she asked. Zephyr gave a fake smile. "You can try to get his attention now. I'll even play wingman for you." "There's no need for that..."

"I'll call him right now and tell him you're interested in him." Zephyr took out his phone, looking as if he was about to dial a number.

"No need!" Sophia hurriedly stepped forward to stop him.

Out of nowhere, Zephyr extended his leather shoe toward her.

Sophia stumbled and found herself falling straight into Zephyr's arms.

She looked up, their eyes locked in an intense stare-off

Changing the subject, Lenora said, "Mr. Yankovich, I'll be taking a taxi home with Soph. Please feel free to do as you wish."

Once Sophia came to her senses, she immediately pulled away from Zephyr's embrace and waved her hand, saying, "Bye-bye."

Zephyr was rendered speechless.

"Why aren't you leaving yet?"

"Aren't you girls leaving too?"

"We're waiting for the car."

I'm also waiting for my ride."

Sophia was baffled.

She turned her face away, refusing to speak with Zephyr.

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Chapter 364 Your Wingman

Unsure if it was due to the late hour or some other reason, they spent several minutes hailing, a ride through the app, but no one accepted their request.

Lenora was just about to suggest Sophia give it a try on her phone when suddenly a car drove up, coming to a halt right in front of them.

The passenger-side window rolled down, revealing Ezekiel's handsome face. [SEARCH THE find novel.NET website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

He tilted his head, signaling them, "Get in. I'll drive you guys home."

Lenora didn't decline. "Thanks, Ezekiel."

She took the initiative to open the backseat car door and slide in, with Sophia following closely behind her. Just as she was about to close the door, it was abruptly held open from the outside by Zephyr. "What are you doing?"

"What are you doing?"

Their eyes met, and simultaneously, they both spoke.

Zephyr swung the car door open. "Of course, I'm going to ride in the car. Scoot over a bit."

Sophia belatedly realized that he knew Ezekiel and that it was he who had informed him. Surely, Ezekiel would have offered him a ride.

She pouted, reluctantly shifting herself inward with a sense of discontent in her heart.

Zephyr entered and shut the door behind him.

A familiar, delicate scent wafted up to Sophia's nose.

Lenora asked, "Ezekiel, what brings you here?"

"Zephyr informed me," Ezekiel responded, "You're okay, aren't you? Were you frightened tonight?"

"I'm fine."

"Did you figure out what happened?"

"I... I've figured it out."

Ezekiel turned to look at her. "Who was it?"

Lenora hesitated for a moment.

Zephyr spoke up. "It's Summer and a guy named Howard."

Ezekiel paused, turning his gaze toward Zephyr.

The latter gently nodded in confirmation.

A sudden fierce glint flashed in Ezekiel's eyes, reminiscent of a demon from hell, but it was fleeting. His gaze shifted to Lenora, and with an apologetic smile, he said, "I'm sorry, Nora. I failed to control my

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Chapter 364 Your Wingman

family and friends. I assure you. I will hold the Winfrey family accountable for this."

Lenora chuckled. "Ezekiel, it has nothing to do with you."

Ezekiel was Ezekiel, and Summer was Summer.

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Ezekiel turned his head back, focusing on the road ahead. He narrowed his eyes, their depths filled with solemnity.

It seemed he had overly indulged Summer to the point where she truly believed she could do anything she liked.

Zephyr leaned against the chair back, his long legs casually relaxed. He rubbed his eyes and asked, "This matter hasn't escalated, has it?"

"It's already been taken care of."

After overhearing a few words between them, Lenora finally understood. Their departure had been filmed and casually uploaded onto the internet, which had given rise to countless rumors.

Summer had just been berated online for allegedly stealing photographic work, to the point where she didn't even want to open her social media accounts anymore. Now that she had this opportunity, would she let Lenora off the hook? No way.

However, unexpectedly, as soon as the video and related content were posted online, the topic was deleted. There wasn't a trace of it to be found on the internet.

With gratitude, Lenora cast a glance at Ezekiel.

If things were to escalate online, Lenora could only imagine the amount of backlash she would receive.

She didn't want to go through such an experience again.

The car pulled up to Lenora and Sophia's residential area, where both bid farewell to Ezekiel before exiting the vehicle one after the other.

Once the two of them had entered the residential area, the car started moving again.

Zephyr had shifted slightly from the spot where Sophia was just sitting, settling into a more comfortable position. His legs crossed, and he took his time to study Ezekiel's profile and attire.

With some reluctance, Zephyr admitted that Ezekiel was indeed quite a good catch.

Did Sophia favor such a style now?

"Why are you looking at me?" Ezekiel glanced back at him.

Snapping back to reality, Zephyr asked, "Ezekiel, what are you planning to do with your cousin? And about your stepmother..."

"Do whatever you want with her. Do I need to consider her feelings?" A hint of coldness flashed in Ezekiel's eyes, his tone indifferent as if Jasmine and Summer were insignificant as ants.

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Chapter 364 Your Wingman

Zephyr smiled. He could somewhat understand Ezekiel

On the surface, Ezekiel appeared to respect Jasmine. However, in his heart, he didn't really consider her significant at all.

She and Donovan posed no threat to him.

Indeed, it was for this reason that Ezekiel was able to tolerate Jasmine's entrance into the Hoffman family in the past. He not only adhered to his father's wishes but also dealt a severe blow to Tamara.

An enemy of one's enemy was one's friend. It was a principle that Ezekiel adhered to. As long as it made life difficult for Tamara, he was more than happy to extend a measure of respect to Jasmine. Zephyr thought back to Lenora's background.

When he first received the news, he thought about giving Ezekiel a heads up, just in case Jasmine used Lenora as a stepping stone.

The thought of Sophia, of all people, having once harbored feelings for Ezekiel made Zephyr lose his will to speak.

Though there was a hint of innocence in Ezekiel.

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"Why are you smiling?" Ezekiel glanced at him through the rearview mirror, a slight frown creasing his brows. "You look so sly when you smile."

"Did I smile?" Zephyr spread his hands out.

Stay Away 365

Chapter 365 Do Not Agree

Howard was arrested and brought to justice in the early morning.

Upon learning of the situation, Felipe Winfrey and Tatiana rushed to Jacaster overnight. It didn't take them long to realize that their son had been used by Summer

They looked down on Jasmine, a woman who worked as a bargirl, and they had an even lower regard for Summer.

Despite their son being utterly captivated by Summer, no amount of persuasion could convince Howard to betray her. He stubbornly insisted that he simply wanted to teach Lenora a lesson.

The Winfrey family was also a prominent clan in Jeahron. Normally, any trouble caused by their offspring could be easily suppressed.

However, this time, the trouble Howard stirred up was far from simple.

The incident took place in Jacaster, where they should not tread on someone else's toes. The reach of the Winfrey family wasn't that extensive.

In addition, there was intervention from the mayor. The Jacaster police refused to back down, and Zachary also remained unyieldingly firm.

At that time, the matter was still being kept under wraps. If it were to leak out and stir up even more public opinion, Howard would have no good outcome.

Felipe and Tatiana were deeply frustrated and disappointed in their son for not living up to his potential. This caused them a great deal of stress and exhaustion. Zachary only found out about this the next day.

He immediately rushed to Lenora's house, where Lenora was resting.

After the effects of the medicine wore off, Lenora was as pale as a sheet. She was exhausted, lacking the strength to do anything, and had no interest in anything.

She knew that this was merely a side effect. Once she weathered this period, everything would be fine again.

Zachary watched her with a heart full of ache, his large hand slowly tightening.

Lenora was feeling listless, much like a delicate flower under the scorching sun, wilted and drained of vitality. Zachary took a seat by the bed, his gaze briefly flicking over the fruit platter on the table.

Within a couple of minutes, Lenora heard a rustling sound.

She opened one eye and saw Zachary peeling an apple.

The strip of apple peel lay on the table, unbroken and long.

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Chapter 365 Do Not Agrec

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Lenora's gaze fell upon his fingers. They were fair and long, holding a peeler with a graceful bend. His knuckles were clearly defined, and his nails were neatly trimmed and rounded, exhibiting a faint pink hue. Upon envisioning certain scenes, Lenora buried her face into the blanket.

After peeling the apple, Zachary proceeded to cut it into pieces, arranging them neatly on a fruit plate and sticking toothpicks into each piece.

"Eat?" He speared a piece and held it out in front of Lenora.

Lenora poked her head out from under the blanket, took a glance at him, and then gobbled it up in one bite.

Zachary chuckled, then picked up another piece and passed it over.

A few moments later, glancing at the apple slices in front of him, Lenora turned her head away and rubbed her tummy. "I'm not eating anymore." Zachary put the apple on the table.

Lenora heard a sound again. She turned her head to see Zachary peeling an orange.

She shifted her gaze, her eyes landing on Zachary's profile.

His eyebrows were full and prominent, his nose bridge stood tall and straight, his lips tightly pursed, and his jaw was clenched. The angle of his jawline was clearly defined. Every feature was nothing short of perfection.

No matter how much one looked at his face, it exuded a stunningly timeless beauty.

At that moment, the owner of that face was peeling an orange for her.

He didn't use a knife. Instead, he used his hand. His fingers were stained with the yellow juice squeezed from the orange peel, yet his expression remained unchanged. It was as if he was no longer the Zachary who used to be obsessed with cleanliness. Lenora had never experienced such treatment before.

Even during times when their marital relationship was harmonious, Zachary seldom did much for her.

Perhaps it could be said that the so-called harmony was nothing more than a one-sided effort. She devotedly cared for him, maintaining their marriage with wholehearted enthusiasm. On the other hand, he merely accepted her efforts, treating her courteously. "Open your mouth."

Zachary carefully picked up a slice of orange, meticulously removing all the white pith until it was perfectly clean. He then brought it to Lenora's lips.

Seeing her lost in thought, unsure of what she was mulling over, Zachary directly pressed the orange against her lips.

Returning to her senses, Lenora opened her mouth and ate the orange.

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Chapter 365 Do Not Agree

The juicy orange burst in her mouth, and she closed her eyes in satisfaction. "I want more

Another slice of orange was brought up to the lips.

Lenora opened her mouth and bit down.

Her expression was akin to that of Cotton, who had just finished its cat treats, adorable and petulant. It was irresistibly inviting, making one yearn to pick her up and shower her with affectionate caresses.

Just like Cotton, she, too, unknowingly, had grown accustomed to him taking care of her.

During the period just after their divorce, all she did was push him away. Who would have thought that she would reveal her softer side to him today?

Their relationship had already surpassed that of ordinary friends. All he was lacking was an official title

Zachary's lips curled up slightly as he handed over another orange slice. He said, "I predict Howard's parents will seek you out. They'll likely offer you a deal in hopes that you'll forgive Howard, aiming for a lighter sentence."

When it came to the matter of drugs, the police department had already filed it as a criminal case. It wasn't something that could be settled privately. The Winfrey family would undoubtedly seek probation while figuring out their next move. Lenora hesitated for a moment. "If I refuse, will they give me a hard time?"

"Perhaps they will, but I'll be here," he reassured.

Upon hearing Zachary's words, Lenora glanced at him. "You don't need to help me. I'll figure things out on my own."

If it comes to it, I can always take a step back.

Having made up her mind to leave, she didn't want Zachary to stand up for her.

Whether it was her reluctance to accept his feelings or her desire to prevent him from confronting the Winfrey family, everything was in the past.

Zachary's eyes darkened as he cast a solemn glance at Lenora, falling silent as his gaze lowered.

He had noticed early on that Lenora was unwilling to accept his help, keeping him at a distance.

Of course, she would still express her gratitude as usual for those that he had already helped.

Therefore, he shouldn't have explicitly stated his assistance. She would have no choice but to accept after he had helped her.

Zachary glanced up, his gaze sweeping across the room. Spotting something, he quickly got up and walked over, swiftly stowing the item in his pocket. Casually, he picked up a banana. "Want to eat?" Lenora patted her tummy. "I'll eat half of it."

Zachary settled down by the bed, leisurely peeling the skin off a banana.

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As Zachary had predicted, the Winfrey family indeed sought out Lenora and Sophia, bringing along with them generous gifts. During the negotiation, they also put forth conditions that were quite enticing.

However, Lenora and Sophia remained unmoved.

These prominent families were known for their fickle natures. They were always fond of offering courtesy before resorting to force. With a cold chuckle, Felipe abruptly turned hostile. "Since both of you are so out of touch with reality. I won't hold back any longer!"

As he spoke, he pulled out his mobile phone from his pocket. He turned the screen toward Lenora and Sophia, playing a video for them.

The expressions of Lenora and Sophia simultaneously changed.

Lenora glared resentfully at Felipe, grinding her teeth. "You people are truly despicable!"

In the video, Fiona was shown in a distressing state, bound to a pillar. A rag was stuffed in her mouth, her hair was disheveled, and fear was evident on her face. She was trembling uncontrollably.

Felipe let out a chuckle, his expression filled with profound significance and a confident smile. "All is fair in war. I'll give you a few more minutes to think it over. If you still refuse, well, who knows what might happen to your friend?" Jeahron was teeming with influential elites, and to have a foothold there was no small feat. Felipe was not to be underestimated in his tactics. Naturally, the two young ladies couldn't possibly be a match for such an old fox. When Felipe arrived in Jacaster, he had thoroughly researched the backgrounds of Lenora and Sophia. He decided to approach the situation through their mutual friend, Fiona.

Lenora's fist clenched tightly. Her brows furrowed deep in a mix of resentment and helplessness. Her heart felt heavy, as if she was holding her breath, a large lump of it lodged in her chest with nowhere to vent. She knew they had to make amends today, whether they wanted to or not. She felt a sense of helplessness deep within.

Sophia's face turned beet red with anger. She retorted, "Just as I thought, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. There's not a single decent person in your entire family!"

Stay Away 366

Chapter 366 Settlement Agreement

Chapter 366 Settlement Agreement

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Tatiana's expression remained unchanged as she played the good cop. "Ladies, our intention in coming here was solely to help Howard, not to hurt your friend. Put yourself in our shoes. No one wants to see their child locked up. Resorting to such measures was truly out of desperation. It's better to resolve conflicts than to create them. I hope you'll consider this carefully."

"You're all talk!" Sophia rolled her eyes. "When all is said and done, aren't you just trying to get us to forgive your precious son?"

"Ms. Tortell, if you want to vent your anger, feel free to do so," Tatiana said calmly. "Once you've let it all out, I hope you can calm down and seriously consider what's more important - your pride or your friendship?"

Seeing Tatiana's calm and composed demeanor, Sophia felt her anger deflate, much like a balloon, immediately losing its vigor.

She exchanged a glance with Lenora. Although Tatiana had spoken those words, they were left with only one choice.

With a smirk, Lenora mocked, "So, you're all pretty confident that we'll just give in, aren't you? What's there left to ponder?"

Tatiana chuckled, pulling out paper and a pen from her bag. "This is the only solution in a no-way-

out situation. You two ladies are loyal and sensible. If I were in your shoes, I'd also want to be friends with you. Go on, write the settlement agreement. Once it's done, your friend will naturally be released." Lenora glanced at the notebook in front of her, then looked up and asked, "Does the deal we discussed earlier still stand?"

Since the decision to compromise had already been made, it was better to gain some advantages from it. There was no point in ending up with nothing and being left with a belly full of anger. Felipe gave a sarcastic laugh. "Of course, Ms. Wilkin, you can rest assured."

Lenora lowered her gaze, opened the notebook, and casually flipped to a page. Picking up a pen, she wrote the words "Settlement Agreement" on the paper.

Just then, a sudden noise came from outside the door.

The four of them simultaneously turned their heads to look at the door.

The front door creaked open, revealing a thin sliver of the outside world

Bewildered, Lenora and Sophia exchanged a glance.

Who was it? How did they get a key to their house?

Under the watchful eyes of the crowd, Zachary's tall and upright figure emerged from behind the door.

He was dressed in a deep navy suit, perfectly tailored to his tall and graceful figure. His expression was serene, revealing almost no hint of emotion.

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Chapter 366 Settlement Agreement

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Zachary's gaze briefly swept over Lenora's face before he strode in, his eyes landing on Felipe and Tatiana. A polite smile graced his features as he greeted, "Mr. Winfrey, Mrs. Winfrey."

Felipe managed to hide his surprise, standing up and extending his right hand. "So, it's Mr. Fuller," he said. "I've heard so much about you. Now that we've finally met, it's clear you are indeed a promising young man."

Zachary shook his hand, giving him a faint smile. "You flatter me."

He cast his gaze down at the notebook spread out on the table, where the words "Settlement Agreement" had already been written in bold.

Had he arrived just a bit later, the settlement agreement would likely have been finished.

Zachary leaned in slightly, his slender fingers picking up the notebook from the table. He glanced at Lenora, his voice carrying a hint of accusation. "Is this what you meant when you said you didn't need my help?" A blush heated Lenora's face, her hands anxiously twisting together. Lowering her head, she pouted slightly,

She never imagined that the Winfrey family could be so shameless, directly seizing Fiona to threaten them. After Felipe saw this, his eyes dimmed, and his tone became serious. "Mr. Fuller, what do you mean by this?"

Zachary glanced at Felipe and Tatiana, his expression unreadable. Without a word, he calmly tore off the page, crumpled it carelessly with his large hand, and tossed the ball of scrap paper into the trash bin. The expressions of Felipe and Tatiana changed abruptly as they looked at him in surprise.

Lenora quickly rose to her feet, seizing her hand and lowering her voice. "What are you doing? Fiona is still in their hands."

At that moment, Lenora could no longer afford to hide her relationship with Zachary from Sophia.

Zachary took her hand, looking up at Felipe and Tatiana. "This is what I mean. I don't agree with the settlement. Howard is an adult, and he should understand what he's done. Since you failed to educate him properly, let society do it." Felipe let out a cold chuckle. "Mr. Fuller, your opinion isn't what matters. What's important is Ms. Wilkin's thoughts, isn't that right, Ms. Wilkin?"

Lenora could sense the threat in Felipe's words. She glanced at Zachary, shaking his hand slightly,

and was about to speak when Zachary interjected, "There's no need to intimidate Lenora; she's timid. Oh, and you might not have been informed by your subordinates yet, but Ms. Rouge is safe now."

Anticipating that Felipe would resort to illicit methods for Howard's sake, Zachary, with the help of Elijah's people, had been keeping a close watch on the Winfrey family's actions from the moment they arrived in Jacaster. When Felipe and Tatiana arrived, Elijah had already led a rescue team to save Fiona.

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Chapter 366 Settlement Agreement

Lenora and Sophia were delighted.

Sophia cast a glance at Zachary,

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She swore she had never found Zachary so pleasing to the eye before.

The expressions on Felipe's and Tatiana faces, however changed abruptly.

Felipe remained composed, his gaze steady on Zachary "Are you trying to trick me?"

"Whether I'm tricking you or not, you'll know once you make a call to your subordinates," Zachary said, his demeanor calm and composed.

Felipe felt a sinking feeling in his heart.

The cell phone in the pocket conveniently started to ring."

Tatiana grew increasingly anxious, hastily retrieving a phone from Felipe's pocket to answer the call.

Something was said on the other end of the line, leaving Tatiana in a state of shock and disarray, Her grip loosened, and the phone clattered to the ground with a sharp snap.

Upon seeing his wife's reaction, Felipe knew that what Zachary had said was indeed true.

Fiona had been rescued.

Felipe let out a sigh, his demeanor softening. "Mr. Fuller, I hope you understand my feelings as a father. If I have offended you in any way, please forgive me. As for the

matter of the settlement agreement, as long as you agree, feel free to state your conditions." With newfound confidence, Sophia asked, "And what if we refuse?"

Felipe chuckled, casting a glance at Zachary. "Ms. Tortell tends to act on impulse. The business world is like a battlefield. Whether one is a friend or foe, it all comes down to a split-second decision."

End of the day, the two ladies were unharmed. It might be best for them to forgive and end things on a good note.

Otherwise, the Winfrey family would surely have clashed with the Fuller family.

Even though the Winfrey family's influence was primarily concentrated in Jeahron, their connections were extensive and far-reaching, not to be underestimated.

Being friends with them was better than being enemies

Zachary calmly said, "I've already made reservations at a restaurant. I'd like to invite Mr. Winfrey and Mrs. Winfrey to sample Jacaster's local cuisine. Perhaps we could continue our discussion over dinner?" "All right." Felipe nodded in agreement.

"Please..." Zachary shifted to the side, raising his right arm.

Felipe and Tatiana then left, one after the other.

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Chapter 366 Settlement Agreement

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Watching as their figures disappeared out the door, Lenora pointed toward Sophia and asked, "Should we go?"

"No need," Zachary reassured her, gently patting her hand. "I'll handle them." He prepared to leave, comforting her further. "I'll be back soon. Wait for my good news."

"If you must forgive, then demand a hefty price for it, Lenora reminded without forgetting.

"Okay."

After Zachary left, Lenora breathed a sigh of relief. As she turned around, she met Sophia's teasing gaze.

Lenora's heartbeat skipped a beat. She guiltily averted her gaze, afraid that Sophia might interrogate her about something

However, Sophia didn't ask anything. She just sighed and laid, "Nora, for the first time, I feel that Tyrant Fuller is somewhat useful."

That was the truth

Even though it was agreed that he wouldn't help, in the end, he still stepped in.

Lenora let out a sigh.

She found herself owing him yet again.

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Stay Away 367

Chapter 367 Would Not Allow It

Chapter 367 Would Not Allow It

In the afternoon, Zachary visited Lenora's home.

With anticipation, Lenora hurriedly welcomed him through the door, asking, "How did it go?"

Zachary found Lenora's expression somewhat amusing

She had never welcomed him so warmly before.

"It's done." Zachary settled down on the couch.

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"How did the conversation go?" Lenora sat across from him, listening attentively like a diligent student.

"He made me understand the depth of his love for his son, and I made him understand that my love for my wife is as important as life itself." Zachary revealed a hint of a smile at the corner of his lips. Lenora twitched the corner of her lips. "Zachary, I've come to realize that you really have no shame."

"Have you only just noticed?"

Lenora was rendered speechless.

She changed the subject. "And then? He couldn't have given up on the settlement agreement just because of this, could he?"

"Of course not, so, I pointed him in the right direction.

"What do you mean?"

"I had them look for the Hoffman family," Zachary said, giving her a serious glance. "Do you know what Howard's testimony at the police station was?"

Lenora shook her head. "I don't know."

"He stated that his actions were driven by his desire to prevent Ezekiel from being deceived by you, to stop you from marrying into the Hoffman family," Zachary said, gazing into Lenora's eyes. His expression was calm, betraying no hint of displeasure, and his voice maintained its usual clear tone,

Lenora blurted out without thinking, "Is he out of his mind? When have I ever planned to marry into the Hoffman family?"

Locking eyes with Zachary, Lenora pursed her lips slightly. "What? Do you believe what he said?"

"Of course, I don't believe him, but why would he have such a misunderstanding?"

"Because of Summer."

"Exactly," Zachary said, "Therefore, whether it's for Ezekiel or because of Summer, Howard's actions are inevitably linked to the Hoffman family. They should primarily be seeking out the Hoffman family, especially Summer. Do you understand?" After a moment of consideration, Lenora replied, "Understood."

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Chapter 367 Would Not Allow It

Zachary gazed at her serious demeanor, unable to resist leaning down to plant a gentle kiss on her face. A hint of shadow flickered in the depths of his eyes.

Why did Howard have such a misunderstanding?

Beyond Summer's provocations, there was undoubtedly also Ezekiel's attitude toward Lenora,

In other words, Ezekiel truly had feelings for Lenora.

Zachary lowered his gaze, a layer of frost creeping into his eyes as his fists slowly clenched.

Despite being fully aware of the existing relationship between them and knowing that Lenora was his ex-wife, Ezekiel still found himself developing such thoughts about Lenora. Did he really think Zachary was a pushover?

Uncharacteristically, Lenora didn't glare at him. Instead, she let out a sigh.

"What's wrong?" Zachary asked.

Lenora glanced at him. "You've helped me again. Thank you."

It seemed all she could say was thank you.

In other matters, she couldn't offer him much assistance.

"Why are you being formal with me?"

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"I feel quite useless, needing your help with everything."

"Nora, don't belittle yourself," Zachary said. "It's not that you're useless, but that's just how the world works. Without power or money, it becomes incredibly difficult to make progress." Another issue was the matter of their mindset.

Lenora had spent many years with the Fuller family, yet due to her distance from their inner circle, her mindset remained that of an ordinary, simple, and harmonious person.

The mindset of Jehronists was cold and brutal, often disregarding the law.

Like this instance, she never imagined Felipe would directly seize Fiona to threaten them.

"If you're willing, I can teach you," Zachary said again.

Lenora curiously looked at him. "How are you going to teach me?"

"Aren't you planning to establish a foundation?"

Those investors, each one more cunning than the last, used so-

called charitable foundations as tools to amass wealth. They merely cloaked their actions under the guise of charity, secretly pocketing vast amounts of donations. Only a minuscule portion of the funds was actually put to use, yet they boasted about it extensively

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Chapter 367 Would Not Allow It

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The substantial funds that Lenora had invested in establishing the foundation sparked discussions among users on various platforms. Seeing the potential for profit, numerous investors were eager to get involved.

If Lenora was willing, she could easily loosen her purse strings, leveraging the foundation's ability to generate money from money. Simultaneously, she could build her network, using the money she earned for investments. With both power and wealth at her disposal, she could. Once their interests aligned, these resources finally became the "friends" that were truly beneficial to her.

Lenora understood what he meant, pursing her lips and shaking her head. "Let's forget it."

From the beginning, her intention was merely to donate money. However, due to the large sum, she established a foundation. She never intended to use the foundation as a means to amass wealth.

Zachary knew deep down that she still considered herself an ordinary person who would turn to the police when in trouble.

Even so, Zachary often found himself worrying for her. However, he was willing to protect Lenora.

"Forget about it. I've got your back. You don't have to feel like you owe me anything unless you're still thinking of leaving."

Zachary looked at her with a meaningful gaze. "I didn't hit the mark, did I?"

Lenora was baffled.

Initially, she was quite moved. However, upon hearing the latter part, Lenora rolled her eyes and replied seriously, "No, you're just being overly suspicious."

Deep in thought, she was silently mulling over her father's death. Should she put her faith in Zachary just this once? Was it necessary for her to leave?

"After all, you're quite the little trickster. I still remember how you fooled me back in Jahron," Zachary said with a smirk.

Lenora was at a loss for words.

A wave of thoughts washed over Lenora once more. She shot Zachary a glance, swiftly changing the subject. "By the way, how did you get a key to my house?" Zachary hesitated for a moment, then pulled out a key from his pocket and placed it on the table.

Lenora immediately picked it up and examined it, "Isn't this my key?"

"Mm-hmm."

"When did you take it?"

"It was this very morning."

"How come I didn't know?"

"You were busy eating a banana at that time."

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they wood no chanceagains Ezekiel Therefore she never opposed him, dways weking ways to get on his good sife and encogging Donova to get closer to Ezekiel

She had made acquaintances with the distinguished lakes of Jeahtron despite knowing that they looked down upon her behind her back. She wasence that Eekiel's future wife would most likely be chosen

However, Turkel had already reached an age where must men would have married yet he shower no intention of taking a wife. His indifference toward the high-born ladies of similar age, who were long- time Sandby agrances, we guzzing, Moreover, there were an signs of him showing interest in any women, which left fomite completely batled

Bindeed, Fackel had once accompanied Lenora on aqultural excursion out of town, it at least indicated that he treated Lenore &fferently from other women

In order to jurify her actions with Howard, Summer couldn't help but tarnish Lenora's reputation.

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Chapter 368 The Pursuit

Stay Away 368

Chapter 368 The Pursuit

Chapter 368 The Pursuit

Upon noticing Jasmine's silence, Summer pleaded anxiously, "Aunt Jasmine, you must help me."

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Jasmine snapped back to reality and said gently, "Didn't you say it was Howard's doing? The police didn't arrest you, so it has nothing to do with you. Relax."

Summer's heart pounded with fear. "But what if he tries to lessen his guilt and pins the blame on me at the police station? And what about the Winfrey family? What if they decide that I'm involved in this? Would Uncle Bertram sacrifice me to preserve the relationship betwe Summer wasn't worried about Howard at all.

He was utterly smitten with her, so much so that at her slightest gesture, a mere curl of her finger, he would obediently follow. If she beckoned him east, he wouldn't dare venture west.

What she feared most were the members of the Winfrey family.

It was clear that they were from a prestigious family, each one of them cunning. They would easily figure out that she had instigated Howard and, thus, confront the Hoffman family and seek an explanation. Just as Jasmine was about to speak, a commotion erupted from downstairs.

Summer rushed to the window and took a quick peek. She saw a black sedan parked at the entrance of the Hoffman residence. A man stepped out from the back seat of the car. It was indeed Howard's uncle.

Howard's uncle casually glanced toward the second floor. Summer, her face as pale as a ghost, quickly withdrew her head. She clung to Jasmine's arm, sobbing. "Aunt Jasmine, the Winfrey family is here! You must save me! My parents died early. You're the only family I ha Summer's parents tragically passed away in a car accident.

Back then, they had just arrived in Jeahron and were traveling in the car Jasmine frequently used.

Originally, Jasmine was supposed to join them in the car. However, due to an unforeseen circumstance, Jasmine suggested that Summer's parents go ahead without her.

Who would have thought that the car would have met with an accident? The vehicle was wrecked beyond recognition, and tragically, the driver, too, lost his life.

When Summer came to Jeahron, her parents had instructed her to make sure she pleased her aunt. Therefore, Summer insisted on staying with Jasmine, successfully avoiding a potential predicament.

Afterward, Jasmine kept Summer by her side. They had spent many years together; their bond was deep and profound. Their relationship was no less than that of a biological mother and daughter. How could she just stand by and watch Summer fall into the hands of the Winfrey family?

Bertram was relatively kind to her, but his attitude toward Summer was distant. Jasmine believed that if the Winfrey family truly made a request, Bertram would indeed hand over Summer.

She pondered before saying, "Take it easy, Summer. There's no need to rush."

As she spoke, she moved to the side, opening a cabinet and pulling out a stack of cash. She pushed the

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money into Summer's hands. "Take this. Go and clear your head in a different city. I'll be here, waiting for you. Once this blows over, you can come back. Leave now through the back door" "Thank you, Aunt Jasmine. You're truly the best."

Holding the money, Summer was touched as she looked at Jasmine.

"Go now."

"Okay."

With a reluctant glance at Jasmine, Summer took the money and exited the room. She quietly slipped out of the Hoffman residence through the back door.

The butler led Howard's uncle into the living room, then went upstairs to invite Bertram down.

"So it's Edwin. What brings you here?" Bertram descended the stairs, a smile on his face as he took a seat across from Edwin Winfrey.

The housekeeper then served some coffee.

Edwin sighed with a wry smile. "Isn't it all because of that brat? He's gotten himself into trouble again, Heaving my brother and his wife sick with worry."

Edwin had a straightforward conversation with Bertram. After mentioning Howard's actions, he explained the reasons behind them, making it clear that Howard had been instigated by Summer.

"Bertram, you've watched Howard grow up. You know what kind of person he is. If no one instigated him, he would never do such a thing. I asked Cillian, and he said that the last time Ms. Wilkin came to Jeahron, Howard had a strong hostility toward her. I checked the surv bottomed? My mom still teases me about it to this day. Howard and Ezekiel grew up together. Seeing their relationship remain as strong as ever brings me great comfort... Bertram, you know how much my brother and sister-in-law treasure Howard. Let's not let a stranger ruin our harmony."

On the surface, he implied that he wished for the two families to have a longstanding relationship. The underlying implication was that Bertram should hand over Summer. If Howard were to really end up in prison, it would strain the harmony between the two households. Bertram responded, "I've always considered Howard as my own nephew, so naturally, I don't want him to end up in jail. How about this? I'll call Summer out and ask her what happened. If she's indeed involved, I won't let her off the hook" "Ah, I always knew you were a fair man," said Edwin.

Bertram then sent a housekeeper upstairs to summon Summer,

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In less than two minutes, the housekeeper came downstairs, trembling with fear, as she responded, "Mr. Hoffman, Ms. Lovestone is not at home."

Bertram expressed his surprise. "Didn't she just come back?"

The housekeeper said, "Mrs. Hoffman mentioned that Ms. Lovestone wanted to travel out of town. She came back to pick up her things and left immediately."

Edwin glanced at Bertram, his expression filled with hidden meaning.

Who would believe that she just picked up something and left immediately, claiming it to be a trip out of town? Only a fool would.

Isn't she just trying to lay low for a while after seeing trouble brewing?

Upon Summer's departure, Bertram realized that she must be involved in the matter.

Confronted with Edwin's insightful gaze, Bertram felt his face heat up in embarrassment, a surge of anger brewing in his heart. "Go and ask Mrs. Hoffman where Summer has gone?" he demanded. "Mrs. Hoffman said she doesn't know either."

"She doesn't know?" Bertram chuckled, calling over his butler. He ordered, "Summer surely hasn't gone far. Take some men and bring her back." "Understood."

The butler acknowledged the order and was about to leave when a voice echoed from upstairs. "Hold on!"

Jasmine slowly descended the stairs, casting a glance at Edwin. "Bertram, what's happened? Why are you so insistent on getting Summer back?"

Upon seeing Jasmine's pretentious demeanor, Edwin couldn't help but scoff internally. He then proceeded to succinctly recount the events that had transpired.

Jasmine said, "So, you're saying that all of this is just your speculation. There's no concrete evidence to prove that Howard did this because of Summer, and Howard himself didn't admit to it, right?"

Edwin never did think highly of Jasmine, nor did he bother to engage her in conversation. He stood up, turning to address Bertram. "Bertram, the truth of right and wrong, I believe, is already clear in your heart. I won't say more. If you consider my Winfrey family to still be of

"Hey, Edwin, what are you talking about?" Bertram rose to his feet and gave Edwin a reassuring pat on the shoulder. "Don't worry. I'll definitely help out with Howard's situation. You go on home, and I'll let you know as soon as there's any news."

Edwin chuckled. "You've always been sensible and understanding. The Hoffman family's prosperity is all thanks to your presence."

A single sentence, full of understanding and reason, seemed to hint at something.

After Edwin left, Jasmine approached Bertram

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"Why did she run if it had nothing to do with her?" Bertram scoffed, looking at Jasmine. "With the recent weather changes, focus on taking care of Donovan. You don't need to worry about anything else."

"But after all, Summer is the only child of my brother and his wife," Jasmine said, her eyes welling up with tears. "Back in our hometown, my elder brother was always so good to me. He saved the best of everything for me. I was abused by my ex-husband, but without my brother's support, how could I have managed to divorce him so easily? If anything were to happen to Summer, how could I ever face my brother?"

"I know you're a person of loyalty and honor, afraid of letting your older brother down, but if you truly care for her, you shouldn't have spoiled her to this extent! If it weren't for Edwin telling me, I wouldn't even know about her stealing other people's photographic work." Bertram looked at his wife, her face delicate and beautiful, from meticulous care, and thought back to their first encounter when she was in a pitiful and destitute state. His tone remained stern, yet his demeanor had noticeably softened.

Tears welled up in Jasmine's eyes, a pitiful sight with a hint of coquettish charm. "She was indeed wrong in this matter, and I've already reprimanded her. If she can get through this ordeal, I promise to discipline her properly. Bertram, could you help her out this time?" Bertram's heart, once as cold as stone, softened. He patted his wife's shoulder, saying, "I can clean up her mess, but she must follow my arrangements from now on."

Jasmine paused, then tentatively asked, "What's the plan?"

Bertram glanced at her. "I haven't decided yet, but I won't harm her. I just won't let her idle around the house, stirring up trouble."

Before Jasmine could speak, he added, "If you refuse this, then hand her over to the Winfrey family for handling."

"I didn't refuse," Jasmine quickly replied, "I understand. You're her uncle, and you only want what's best for her. I'll make sure to explain everything to her properly" Once he finished speaking, Bertram turned his back, instructing his butler, "Call Ezekiel. Tell him to come back for a bit."

The butler responded, "Mr. Ezekiel called a while ago. He's already at the airport and will be home shortly."

"When he arrives, have him meet me in the study."

"Noted."

Twenty minutes later, Ezekiel arrived at the Hoffman residence.

Upon reaching the study room's entrance, he pushed the door open without hesitation. "Dad."

"You're back,"

Bertram lifted his head, languidly leaning against the back of his chair. He gestured for him to sit down

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and ordered coffee to be served. "You're aware of Howard's situation, aren't you?" he asked. 83%

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After taking a sip of his coffee, Ezekiel asked, "I heard that Howard's uncle came by. Is that right?"

"Right. According to his words, Howard was instigated by Summer, hinting me to hand over Summer."

Ezekiel had long been displeased with Summer. Edwin's proposal was exactly what he wanted. "Let's do as he suggests," he said..

Upon noticing a change in Bertram's expression, Ezekiel chuckled, guessing that Jasmine had whispered something to him. "What's wrong? You don't approve?"

Bertram cleared his throat, then mused, "He might be biased toward Howard, so his words might not necessarily be the truth. Perhaps he's just looking for

a scapegoat. Moreover, Summer is the only child of your uncle from the Lovestone family. The bond between siblings is profound, and your Aunt Jasmine might be afraid that Summer has been wronged, feeling guilty toward her deceased brother." Ezekiel knew it well that his father had been swayed by his wife, twisting Edwin's words.

He quirked a

corner of his lips, a hint of sardonic amusement flickering in his eyes. "If Mr. Edwin dared to confront you with those words, it's clear he believes the matter involves Summer. If you're unwilling to cooperate, the Winfrey family will undoubtedly harbor resentment. Ever since Bertram's expression slightly shifted. "When did I say I would offend the Winfrey family for her? I'm merely contemplating a solution beneficial to all parties. Isn't the Winfrey family just afraid of Howard being in trouble? As long as Howard is fine, they naturally wouldn't fixate "So, did you come up with a perfect solution?" Ezekiel asked, a playful smirk on his face, pretending not to notice Bertram's hidden agenda.

"I heard the victim was your friend. It would be best if you could personally speak with them. As long as they forgive Howard, we're open to any conditions."

"So this is what you meant by a perfect solution?"

Listening to Ezekiel's sarcastic tone, a twitch appeared in the corner of Bertram's eye. He said in a deep voice, "Isn't Ms. Wilkin your student? If you step in, she will surely show you some respect."

Previously, during the photography competition, things went awry on Ezekiel's side, which allowed Summer to take advantage. It was a struggle to resolve that issue, and then, on that day in the private room, Howard was disrespectful toward Lenora. Coupled with this rece Upon seeing Ezekiel's hesitation, Bertram fixed his gaze on him and spoke again. "Could it really be, as Howard said, that you've been beguiled by Lenora? Would you rather watch Howard go to jail and your cousin face trouble than lend a helping hand?" Ezekiel was about to

speak when a thought struck him. He lowered his gaze and chuckled coldly. "Indeed, I do have feelings for her. But whether she forgives Howard or not, that's her prerogative. Do you think I could force her against her will? It was because of me that she fell into such a pred

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her? If they couldn't sway her with threats and bribes, how could I possibly make her change her mind? This whole situation was originally a mistake made by Howie and Summer. You've always taught me from a young age to take responsibility for my actions. It wouldn't b "Howard ultimately grew up with you. Are you really going to stand by and watch him go to jail?"

"Of course not. That's why I chose to hand in Summer to the Winfrey family," Ezekiel said.

Bertram was rendered speechless.

"I figured she'd lay low somewhere else, so as soon as I got off the plane, I sent people after her. We might hear something soon," Ezekiel added.

"You..." Bertram glared at Ezekiel, taking a step back. "What will it take for you to finally let Summer off the hook?"

At that moment, he felt a tinge of regret for hastily agreeing to Jasmine's request. However, he had already given his word. How could he possibly go back on it?

Ezekiel chuckled. "Dad, didn't you say it yourself? As long as Howard

is safe, the Winfrey family won't trouble Summer. But you're asking me to plead with Lenora? That's absolutely out of the question. Since you don't want to hand over Summer, why don't you go personally? It would show

sincerity. As long as you can get Lenora to relent, everyone will be happy."

Hesitating for a moment, Bertram nodded. "All right. I'll go there myself, then."

"However, let me make this clear," he stated, "Even if Lenora finally relents, I won't let Summer off. I won't let her stir up trouble as she pleases here."

"What do you want to do?"

"After this incident, I'll send her abroad to study. She's not allowed to return without my permission," Ezekiel said sternly.

Actually, Bertram had a similar plan in mind. Upon hearing this, he nodded and said, "All right. I'll discuss this with your Aunt Jasmine."

After Ezekiel left, Jasmine carried a tray into the study.

She placed the tray at the corner of the table, served the chicken broth, and asked, "Bertram, what did Ezekiel say?"

"This brat... I asked him to go and plead with Lenora for Howard's settlement, but he refused. He claimed it was too shameful for him, insisting that if anyone should go, it should be me in person." Jasmine paused. "Does it really have to be this way?"

Bertram explained, "The Winfrey family and the Hoffman family have shared a century-long bond that can't be severed just like that. They're trying to save Howard. As long as Howard is safe, they naturally wouldn't continue to hold onto Summer. However, Howard's situation has alerted the higher-ups, and it's going to take some effort to resolve. At the very least, we need a settlement agreement from the victim to have any room for maneuver."

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Then, I'll go." Jasmine said with a gentle smile, "Since it's for Summer, I will personally make a trip to Jacaster. I'll apologize to Ms. Wilkin and her friend and persuade them to forgive Howard."

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Film crew.

Having just finished filming a scene, Lenora was in the makeup room, engrossed in the script.

A staff member peeked through the door. Spotting Lenora, he entered. "Ms. Wilkin, there's someone looking for you outside." "Who is it?" Lenora looked up from the script.

In this situation, it was clear that the visitor must have some connection with the actress. Otherwise, the staff wouldn't have made a special announcement. If not, fans would be lining up to meet their idol. "She said she's your mom."

unned for a few seconds, Lenora regained her composure and calmly told the staff member, "My mother left over twenty years ago. The person outside is definitely a fraud. Please ask them to leave." The staff member was taken aback for a moment. Did she mean "passed away" when she said "left"?

"All right. I'll have her leave right away."

The staff member arrived at the car parked outside the set's fencing, casting sidelong glances at Jasmine in the backseat. She appeared perfectly respectable. Who would have thought she was actually a fraud? She bluntly told Jasmine, "You should leave. Ms. Wilkin doesn't want to see you."

A frown creased Jasmine's elegant brows, a flicker of impatience flashing in her eyes. "Did you inform her of who I am?" she asked.

"Yes."

"What did she say?"

"Hey, you! I'm trying to save you some face here, but you just don't get it, do you? Do you know what Ms. Wilkin said? She said her mother passed away twenty years ago. You're nothing but a liar! What are you still doing here? Get lost!" The staff member turned and walked away.

Jasmine was baffled.

No wonder Lenora hadn't sought her out all these years. Had she been under the impression that her mother was dead all this time?

"Mrs. Hoffman, what should we do now?" the driver in the front seat asked, a puzzled look in his eyes.

Jasmine said, "Hold on a moment."

She pulled out her phone and had someone look up Lenora's phone number.

Previously, the two had communicated, but she had used a police officer's phone, so Jasmine hadn't taken note of it at all.

A few minutes later, the number was sent to her phone, and she dialed it right away.

"Ms. Wilkin, you have a phone call." The assistant approached, holding the ringing phone.

Due to her recent hectic schedule, Lenora hired a personal driver to help her with her transportation needs.

She also brought on board two temporary assistants; one to manage her growing number of photography appointments and the other to handle her drama production tasks. Additionally, she had a dedicated assistant for the charity foundation. She wasn't actually too fond of being referred to in such a cordial manner, but her assistant seemed to enjoy doing that.

The assistant was a senior college student who worked part-time. She had successfully bypassed the entrance exam for graduate school and only had a few classes left in the previous term. She had no classes

term, and her graduation thesis was almost completed. She decided to work temporarily, only for a months. Yet, it was perfect timing for Lenora because she wouldn't have another role after finishing this film.

Lenora cast a glance and noticed an unfamiliar number from Jeahron. For some reason, her thoughts inexplicably drifted toward Jasmine.

She instructed her assistant, "When you answer the call, tell them I'm working and will talk after I finish filming. Handle all unknown calls this way in the future unless they mention it's urgent. If they leave a message, you can notify me." "All right. I understand," the assistant replied.

Lenora's gaze fell upon the script, but her thoughts had drifted far away.

After more than twenty years of no contact, Jasmine's sudden appearance couldn't possibly be due to a surge of mother-daughter affection. There must have been something she needed.

But what could it have been?

It wasn't until others in the makeup room made a sound that Lenora snapped back to reality. She chased away the doubts in her mind and continued reading the script.

The assistant stepped aside to answer the call. "Hello, this is Ms. Wilkin's assistant. May I know who's speaking?"

"I'm her mother. Let her take the phone call."

The assistant was momentarily taken aback.

Lenora's mother?

However, if it was really Lenora's mother, how could it possibly be an unknown number?

Clearly, Lenora did not recognize the number.

The assistant glanced back to see the stage manager had already come to call Lenora for a scene rehearsal. She then spoke into the microphone. "I'm sorry, but Ms. Wilkin is currently working. If there's anything urgent, you can tell me, and I'll relay the message. I don't want you to please wait for your work before calling again."

"I'm her mother, not some random person and her the phone Jessie's tone was firm as she reserved her point."

The assistant responded, "I'm sorry, but Ms. Wilkin is currently occupied with work it's too late, I'll have to hang up now. You can call back when she is off duty."

After hanging up the phone, the assistant picked up the water cup and headed to the filming location.

Lenora was engaged in a scene with another actor, while the assistant of the other actor was on standby around the set.

The two of them started chatting, and somehow, the conversation veered toward online scams. The assistant, recalling the incident from earlier, couldn't help but vent to the other assistant, "Indeed, the moms of online scams nowadays are limitless. I even encountered one who pretended to be my mother."

"I've actually experienced something like this. Scammers would gather the voices and speech patterns of real ones and then use AI to simulate them. Sometimes, they couldn't even distinguish the difference."

"It's terrifying," the assistant exclaimed.

Just past three in the afternoon, Lenora finished filming and left the set, heading toward the car parked by the street.

Having an assistant indeed made things a lot easier. For instance, while Lenora was changing clothes in the dressing room, the assistant had already contacted the driver to bring the car near the set. This saved Lenora the trouble of walking to the parking lot. She was about to get into the backseat of the car when she suddenly heard a female voice calling from nearby, "Lenora!"

Lenora's figure abruptly halted.

She had only heard this voice once, yet it was incredibly familiar.

Unexpectedly, Jasmine demonstrated such determination. She was still waiting here.

It seemed like the matter was quite significant.

Lenóra turned her head calmly, looking at Jasmine with surprise. "It's you? What brings you here? I don't think I've done anything to offend you or your son this time, have I?"

Janine's face stiffened as she stepped forward in her stiletto heels, suppressing the dissatisfaction that had been brewing inside her for a long time. This has nothing to do with the last incident. I have something to tell you. Come with me."

She turned and started to walk away. After a few steps, she realized that Lenora was still standing where she left her. She hadn't followed her.

Lenora looked at her, her tone cool as she said, "You think I'll just go because you asked me to? Are we that close? If you have something to say, just spit it out. If not, I'll be on my way."

She was incredibly busy. There was an evening social event she had to attend where an individual was interested in joining the foundation with funding.

Although Lenora was reluctant to use the foundation as a means to make money, she knew she

couldn't outright reject everyone all at once. Instead, she decided to meet with them first before making any decisions. After all, there truly were people who genuinely wanted to donate. Jasmine clenched her fist, glancing at the passersby around her. "Are you sure you want to talk about it here?"

"Stop dawdling."

"Let me get straight to the point. Nora, I am your mother." Jasmine took a slow step forward, her gaze settling on Lenora's face, her eyes filled with indescribable emotions. "I've returned" Lenora found the situation rather amusing deep inside. She looked at her with a hint of sarcasm and sad "I don't have a mother. She passed away a long time ago."

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