

The Double (or More ?) Life of The Fake Heiress

#Chapter 1 - Read The Double (or More ?) Life of The Fake Heiress Chapter 1

Chapter 1

Chapter 1“Mira, back from the race already?” Mrs. Thompson called out as she stood in the doorway of her quaint corner store.As the old lady's voice caught her attention, Mirabella, decked out in sleek black cycling gear, smoothly applied the brakes to her bike. With a practiced toe-touch to the ground, she removed her helmet, and her long ponytail cascaded down, giving her an air of effortless grace and cool beauty.Mrs. Thompson couldn't help but sigh internally as she watched Mirabella.

She really was something special. Even riding a bike, she exuded an aura that set her apart from the rest.“Oh, by the way, it looked like you had visitors at home — they arrived in a car so fancy, it'd make your head spin! My son said it's worth a fortune, probably more than any car in our whole town...” Mrs. Thompson exaggerated with her hands as she spoke.Mirabella listened thoughtfully, her delicate features betraying no particular emotion.Noticing Mirabella's silence, Mrs. Thompson cautiously looked around before leaning in closer, lowering her voice conspiratorially, “Mira, tell me the truth. How did your family come to know such wealthy folks? Or did you... perhaps offend someone?”Mrs. Thompson remembered that there was also a commotion involving a fancy car at Mirabella's house last year.Mirabella's eyelids twitched slightly, and she couldn't help but give a wry smile at Mrs.

Thompson's wild speculation. To avoid any misunderstanding, she replied softly, “Maybe they're like, distant cousins or something.”As soon as she said this, confusion spread across Mrs. Thompson's face, but before she could probe further, Mirabella had already put her helmet back on and waved goodbye. “I better get going, Mrs. Thompson.”Mrs. Thompson watched Mirabella ride away, murmuring to herself, “Wasn't her family known for being hard up?”Where did these wealthy distant cousins come from?***As Mirabella approached her house, she could already see the fancy black sedan parked in the alley outside the gate. It bore the majestic emblem of an eagle in flight, with a stately and dynamic body. It's a Bentley, no less, worth a pretty penny.

A mysterious smile played at the corners of Mirabella's lips as she dismounted her bike and deftly pressed a few clips. In the blink of an eye, the bike folded down into a size that was even more compact than an 11-inch laptop.With the gate ajar, she easily picked up the folded bike and stepped onto the property. She hadn't even reached the main house when a series of sharp voices cut

through the air. "Mom, why are you so stubborn? What's so precious about this old place that you insist on staying?" "I've told you, I bought you a big, beautiful house in the city, complete with a caretaker to look after you. It's far better than here in every way." Just look at this dingy floor, the faded walls, and the leaking roof whenever it rains. Does any of that scream 'comfort' to you?" "Your health isn't the best, yet you choose to live in this damp, moldy old house. Others might think we're poor, or worse, that your children are neglecting you..." Still in the yard, Mirabella paused thoughtfully as the words reached her. But then, she lifted her chin with resolve. Truth be told, since she'd body hopped into this body, she hadn't really taken a good look at the place she was living in. The house was a quaint two-story cottage with a yard, the kind you'd find out in the countryside. It had red brick walls topped with black shingles, and the walls were untouched by paint or tiles. In some areas, due to the passage of time, dark, moldy streaks had etched their presence into the surface. All in all, it was the epitome of 1980s architecture—undeniably old and tattered. Mirabella touched the tip of her nose and mused that she had lived in these rough conditions for over a year with relative ease. Just then, the shrill voice inside the house ceased. Mandy emerged, dressed in a black lace gown and a violet silk scarf tied around her neck. Her makeup was impeccable, her hair pinned up with a diamond clip, exuding an aura of a high-society lady. She paused upon seeing Mirabella standing in the yard, taken aback. But quickly, Mandy gathered her wits, concealing the complex emotions in her eyes, and asked with indifference, "What are you doing here?" Mirabella regarded Mandy calmly, her eyes a serene pool, her mind drifting. A year ago, she'd jumped in this body for reasons unknown.

Back then, the original body wasn't called Mirabella but Mirabelle, a pampered daughter of a newly wealthy family in Ashford. A few months ago, she was abruptly informed that this body was not a true Gilbert family child but was switched at birth by a nurse. Her biological parents were just an ordinary working couple, not only lacking in wealth and influence but also burdened with four seemingly unmotivated sons to support—a heavy load by any measure. Mandy, her foster mother standing before her, discovered that her biological daughter lived in poverty while she raised a poor family's child in luxury. Perhaps Mandy felt her dormant maternal instincts stir due to this stark contrast. She saw her biological daughter appear gracious and sweet-spoken, so she quickly brought her back home, renaming her and inviting her to the family with haste as if to compensate for any past neglect. As for the faux heiress Mirabella, though born into wealth, she was never truly cherished by the Gilbert family. She spent her childhood in a small town, raised by Mandy's mother, and was rarely visited, even once a year. With the real daughter

reclaimed, the counterfeit had to step aside. So, before the Davis family came to reclaim Mirabella, Mandy told her she didn't deserve the Gilbert name nor to stay there—a sentiment as clear then as Mandy's cold demeanor now. Mirabella collected her thoughts and nonchalantly withdrew her gaze from Mandy. Mandy, noticing the shift, furrowed her brows, her anger flaring. "What kind of attitude is that?" she snapped. Hearing the rage in the question, Mirabella raised an eyebrow playfully and replied with a sly smile, "And what, may I ask, is your current title?" At that, Mandy's well-maintained face darkened instantly. Clearly, no matter how long you raised someone else's child, they remained wild and without a shred of manners or propriety. At that moment, Mandy's thoughts turned to her biological daughter, Summer. Raised in a modest household, she exuded elegance and grace, excelled in her studies, and possessed diverse talents. Now scouted to be a star, Summer was seemingly born to bring pride to the Gilbert family. In contrast, Mirabella, the foster daughter, was no match for Summer in any way, save for her looks. Mandy took a deep breath, recalling the purpose of her visit. Her eyes hardened as she pondered for a few seconds, then she reined in her anger. "Since you're here, there's something I want to make clear today, and I hope you can take care of it," Mandy declared with a return to her aristocratic demeanor. Though she spoke of hope, the undercurrent of her words suggested a command rather than a request. Mirabella chuckled, and before she could respond, her grandmother, Catherine — who had raised her from childhood — made her presence known. Catherine gently patted Mandy's arm, signaling her to tone it down before turning her softened gaze to Mirabella. "Mira, you're back. How did the competition go?" With a nonchalant hum, Mirabella replied, "Not too bad, I guess." "Did you win?" asked Catherine, the excitement clear in her voice. "Yeah, first place," Mirabella responded casually, without a hint of pride in her eyes, as if clinching the top spot was a walk in the park for her. Upon hearing this, Catherine was so delighted that she wiped away a tear. "Good girl."

Mandy frowned, not understanding, and questioned Catherine, "First place in what competition?" Catherine turned to her with a proud smile and began, "You might not know, but Mira is not only a stellar student but also..." Losing interest as Catherine didn't directly answer her question and instead started praising Mirabella's academic achievements, Mandy interrupted with impatience. "Okay, I get it. You don't need to prop her up in front of me. She didn't even qualify for the county high school with her grades. If it weren't for the Gilbert family footing the bill, she'd probably be stuck in some party school." Pausing, Mandy cast a scornful glance at Mirabella. "A fake stone will never be mistaken for a diamond, no matter what." Catherine looked worriedly

at Mirabella, fearing the words might have hurt her. "You haven't been involved in her life for years. You have no idea what Mira is like now..."Mandy sneered dismissively, cutting her off again. "Mom, she's not my biological daughter nor your real granddaughter. Her name is Davis, and whether she does well or not is none of my concern, and I don't want to hear it."Catherine's face tensed, harsh and dry words stuck in her throat. After a moment, she managed to mutter, "Mira is my granddaughter!"Mandy massaged her temples, perplexed by Catherine's delusion. "She's been living off the Gilbert family for seventeen years while my daughter suffered. Mom, get a grip. Don't just recognize anyone as family! You see her as kin, but she might just be using you, trying to swindle some money to send back to her real parents..." "You stop!" Catherine trembled with rage. "I raised Mira myself.

I know exactly what kind of person she is, so don't you dare cast your malicious suspicions on her."Mandy's face turned ashen with anger. "You can't tell right from wrong. Mom, I think you're really sick in the head."Now in her sixties and with a heart condition, Catherine grew pale and clutched her chest tightly in response to Mandy's harsh words. Seeing this, Mirabella placed what she was holding on the ground and quickly moved to Catherine's side. She helped Catherine to a nearby wicker chair and took her wrist in her hand, checking her pulse.

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Mirabella's eyes were tinged with concern, and after a few seconds, her grip loosened as she asked in a slightly grav tone. "Is your chest troubling you again?"

Catherine managed a strained smile as she clasped Mirabella's hand reassuringly, shaking her head gently. "Granny's fine, dear. It's just the same old issue. Don't you worry about me."

Mandy, standing nearby, was taken aback by Catherine's sudden distress. Regaining her composure, she instinctively pushed Mirabella aside. "Mom, are you having another one of your episodes? Are you in pain? Should we go to the hospital?"

Mirabella's brow furrowed at being pushed away. She cast a glance at Mandy before turning and walking back into the house.

As Mandy fumbled for her phone to call an ambulance, she couldn't help but sneer at Mirabella's retreating figure. "Mom, can you believe this? This is the thanks you get for raising her. You're in agony, and she just walks away.... Shaking her head, Mandy started dialing 911.

Not long after. Mirabella emerged from the house, carrying a mug in her hands. Mandy hung up the call and turned around to see Mirabella helping Catherine drink something. Her brow furrowed, and she snatched the mug. only to find it wasn't just water. She demanded with a sharp tone, "What are you giving my mother to drink?"

The gaze Mirabella leveled at the snatched mug was suddenly fraught with an icy, foreboding intensity. Her normally pleasant features were wiped clean of any expression. Confronted with this unfamiliar side of Mirabella, Mandy recoiled, her heels clicking backward in retreat. "What... what kind of look is that?" Her voice had lost its earlier assertiveness.

“Mandy, give me the mug. That’s the medicine Mira got especially for me,” Catherine, now regaining some composure. said as she patted her chest and reached out a hand.

Mandy’s eyes widened in disbelief. Instead of handing back the mug, she flung the remaining contents onto the ground, “Medicine? What can some small-town girl possibly know about medicine? This is just reckless!”

As Catherine watched the spilled medicine on the floor, she hurried to explain, “Mira’s medicine...”

But Mandy cut her off without giving her a chance to speak, “Enough! Calm down. The ambulance will be here shortly. We'll get you checked out properly at the hospital. You can’t just take any old remedy, you know you could make things worse.”

Shaking her head in exasperation, Mandy turned her attention back to Mirabella, “And you carelessly medicating my mother. If anything were to happen, you wouldn't be able to fix it. I'll give you this one pass because we were once family, but you need to leave. Don’t stick around here any longer.”

“Mandy, stop it!” Catherine said, both anxious and angry. She looked at Mirabella, “Mira, this is your home. Don’t listen to her.

Please stay...”

Mirabella glanced at the medicine on the floor. Fortunately, Catherine had already consumed ‘most of the medicine. Too weary to argue with her former foster mother, Mirabella slowly knelt in front of Catherine. Her eyes, clear and calm. gazed into hers as she spoke deliberately, “Honestly, it’s about time you had some peace and comfort.”

Catherine stared at her, a sudden and indescribable panic welling up inside her. Her pale lips trembled, and after a moment, she asked hoarsely, “Mira, did you... did you overhear what we were discussing inside earlier?”

Chapter 5

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Mirabella's laugh was a rare bloom of gentleness on her usually frosty face. She tenderly smoothed the wisps of silver hair at her grandmother's temples, her voice softening like one might use to coax a child to sleep. "I've sorted out all the transfer paperwork. It's time for me to head out. You've got to take good care of yourself. Remember to take your meds on time, okay? Once I'm settled back in the city, I'll come by for a visit. Deal?"

Catherine felt the soothing touch on her cheek and struggled to swallow, her throat parched. After a moment, she grasped Mirabella's hand in her own. "Alright, I'll do as you say, my dear,"

"Good," Mirabella said, nodding in satisfaction.

Mandy, who had been standing by, felt a pang of jealousy. She had talked herself hoarse, trying to persuade her mother to come back to the city with her without success. Yet here was this brat, uttering just a few words, and her grandmother acquiesced? She had clearly underestimated Mirabella's ability to charm and cajole!

Just then, the wail of an ambulance siren announced its arrival outside. Soon after, thanks to Mandy's insistent demands, the paramedics carried Catherine to the ambulance. Before leaving for the hospital, Mandy did not forget to give Mirabella a few parting shots, warning her to make herself scarce.

Once Mandy had departed, Mirabella ascended the stairs to her room and pulled out a suitcase from under the bed, already packed and ready. Even without today's drama courtesy of Mandy, Mirabella would have left soon anyway.

In the months since she had transformed from Mirabelle to Mirabella, she had stayed not only because she was concerned about Catherine's health but also because she was in the middle of her junior year of high school. So, she had made a deal with her biological parents. Once the semester ended, she would transfer schools for her senior year. Mirabella drew a letter from an old desk drawer, dusted off the edges with her slender fingers, and slipped it into her backpack.

Dragging her suitcase, Mirabella had just closed the gate when a car honked nearby. She looked up, squinting at the sleek black sedan that was making the noise. Despite its modest Volkswagen badge, the car's lines were cool and slick—a subtle flamboyance under its low-profile exterior.

A figure emerged from the car, a black baseball cap on his head. He leaned casually against the door, watching. Mirabella approach.

Mirabella arched an eyebrow, a hint of nonchalance on her elegant face. As she drew near, her lips curled into a half-smile. “Have you been waiting for me?”

The man crossed his arms, his chiseled chin tilting upward as he gave Mirabella a once-over. His gaze finally rested on her suitcase with a teasing tone. “What’s this? Did you get kicked to the curb?”

Mirabella shot him a glance. “Eavesdropping isn’t very gentlemanly, you know.” James chuckled lightly. “Did you forget our houses are only separated by a half—wall? “So what’s your point, neighbor boy? You’re loitering here just to mock your lifesaver?” Mirabella quipped, her arms folded, a

playful smirk on her lips.

After nearly a year of knowing her, James had transitioned from grinding his teeth in annoyance to acceptance of Mirabella’s refusal to call him by his name, insisting on ‘neighbor boy’ instead. Of course, he was also privy to some of the melodrama of Mirabella’s life.

“What’s your plan now?” James asked, his eyebrows lifting. Under the brim of his cap, his features were striking. especially those dark eyes. They were like a night sky full of stars.

He paused, then added, “Of course, if you’re out of options, my door’s open for you... temporarily.”

Mirabella gave him a sidelong look and a silent ‘tsk’ in her heart before placing her suitcase squarely in front of him. “How about this? I’ll give you a chance to repay your debt.”

Chapter 6

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James’ gaze dropped to the deliberately placed suitcase before him, and he could almost hear her unspoken request. A soft chuckle escaped his lips, “So, where do you need me to drop you off?”

Mirabella's delicate brows arched playfully as she snapped her fingers with a swagger that carried a hint of roguish charm. "The train station."

The small town might not have been much to look at, but it was decently located with its quaint little train station. However, the biological parents of the body she now inhabited lived in Ashford, and there was no direct train. A transfer would be necessary.

At her words, James gave her a quizzical look. "That's it?"

"That's the favor," Mirabella confirmed with a nod. Noticing the complexity in his expression, she pondered for a moment before adding, "But if you feel like driving me to the train station is too easy a way for you to repay your debt, I'm cool with you dropping me off at the city airport instead. After all, we're practically neighbors, and it's not likely we'll cross paths again."

The train station was a mere twenty—minute drive, whereas the city airport was a good three to four hours away.

Beneath the brim of his baseball cap, James' expression grew even more intricate, and a rare crack appeared on his usually composed face. He contemplated whether to share a bit of his background with this naive girl, lest she remain oblivious to the golden opportunity she was about to miss.

Four hours later, at the city airport. from the

Mirabella stepped out of the car and retrieved her luggage trunk. After a moment's thought, she approached the driver's side and tapped on the window.

The glass slid down smoothly as James looked over at Mirabella, one eyebrow raised in quiet inquiry. Mirabella fished out a small, unbranded bottle from her bag. "This is for you. Farewell until we meet again." Without waiting for a response, she tossed the bottle into the car and, spinning on her heel hauled her suitcase away.

James picked up the bottle that had landed precisely in the car's side compartment. A playful glint shone in his eyes. He watched the retreating figure of Mirabella, his long fingers tracing the edge of the bottle cap, his lips curving into a faint smile.

So, until we meet again, huh?

In the hospital, inside the doctor's office.

Mandy stared at the doctor in disbelief. “Doctor, are you telling me that my mom’s heart condition has improved significantly?” Holding a stack of test results, the doctor nodded again. “Yes, the data indicates that she’s in good health. As long as she avoids any major stressors, the chances of her experiencing angina are quite low now.”

Mandy was still dazed. She found it hard to trust the doctor’s words, because her mother had been suffering from angina for decades, and specialists at major hospitals had only offered grim prognoses.

“By the way, Ms. Mandy, has your mother sought treatment at another facility or taken any new medications recently?” the doctor inquired. He had been Catherine’s primary physician for years, attending to her each time she fell ill. However, she had barely visited the hospital in the past year, and today’s checkup results were certainly a surprise.

Mandy shook her head in confusion. “No, she’s been at home. I’ve tried to take her to the hospital multiple times, but she refused. She hasn’t undergone any treatments, and as for medication...” Her voice trailed off as the image of Mirabella giving her mother a cup of brown liquid surfaced in her mind.

As Mandy fell silent mid-sentence, the doctor pressed with a note of concern, “Ms. Mandy?”

Chapter 7

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Mandy snapped back to reality, vigorously shaking her head. “No, my mom hasn't been taking any other medications.” She thought she was going out of her mind. If the doctors were at their wits end, where on earth did that brat get her hands on a cure?

The doctor, hearing this, quipped with a chuckle, “Well, that’s quite the miracle, isn’t it?” Mandy managed a weak smile, her mind already set on getting a full check-up for Catherine once they got her back to Ashford.

By the time Mirabella reached Ashford, it was 10 p.m. She stepped off the plane, and her phone immediately flooded with a barrage of texts and

Messenger alerts. Before she could even glance at them, her phone started to ring. It's an unknown number.

Her finger hesitated for a moment before she pressed the answer button, and a young, unfamiliar male voice came through. The caller was none other than Emmitt, her blood brother.

Although Mirabella was a bit surprised that Emmitt would be at the airport, she quickly remembered sending a message to her grandmother, Catherine, before boarding. Without much inquiry, she replied casually. "I'll be out in five minutes."

After hanging up, Mirabella slid her phone into her pocket nonchalantly and followed the airport signs towards baggage claim. She breezed through the exit with her luggage in tow. Her gaze scanned the crowd waiting at the arrivals hall. Her eyes finally locked onto a tall, young man who was busy on the phone.

Adjusting the strap of her backpack, Mirabella made her way toward him, pulling her suitcase behind her.

A few months back, when her biological parents had come to claim her, they had shown her photos of her four brothers. With her strong memory and the Davis family's distinct genetics, she recognized him almost instantly.

Emmitt ended his call wondering if his never—before—met sister should have appeared by now, and scrolled through his phone to find a picture of her he'd saved on Messenger. Just as he lifted his head, ready to match the face to the photo, he saw a young girl already standing in front of him.

She was dressed in a crisp white tracksuit, with a black backpack slung over her left shoulder and a modestly sized suitcase in her right hand. Her face was bare and radiant, her features strikingly beautiful, and at that moment, her clear, bright eyes were fixed on him without a hint of shyness.

Emmitt paused, glanced down at the photo on his phone, and could vaguely make out the resemblance in their features, but he still asked uncertainly. "Mira?"

Mirabella nodded, her response coming out in a drawn-out, "Yeah." Scratching his head, Emmitt's handsome face wore an expression of disbelief. "You look... kinda different from your picture." Mirabella's eyebrows arched

slightly. Being quite tall, she easily caught a glimpse of the photo on Emmitt's phone. The girl in the

photo had braids dangling over her chest, and cheeks blushed to an exaggerated bloom, complete with a cliché peace sign pose—a quintessential country bumpkin look.

Mirabella felt a twitch at her temple, remembering the old selfie she had carelessly picked out from the phone when Emmitt added her on Messenger and asked for a photo. No wonder Emmitt looked so taken aback by the comparison. Clearing her throat, Mirabella replied without batting an eye, “Guess I’m just not photogenic?”

Emmitt's gaze fell once again upon her overly pretty face, grimacing involuntarily.

Chapter 8

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With a face like that she could totally slay Hollywood's A-listers, couldn't she? If she was not camera-ready, what about those celebs who lived off their good looks?

Emmitt suddenly felt that his sister, whom he was meeting for the first time... was a bit weird. What was up with that?

As he was internally rolling his eyes, Mirabella's voice came through once more. “But you, you're different too.” Mirabella said with a teasing edge, giving Emmitt a meaningful look.

Dressed to the nines in a designer suit, his every move exuded an aristocratic charm that clashed with the rumors of a lackadaisical and ‘poor boy’ upbringing.

A playful glint crossed Mirabella's eyes. Interesting.

Emmitt was about to ask Mirabella what she meant by ‘different when something—or someone—caught his eye. His lips curved into an indulgent smile, and he waved through the air, “Summer.”

Mirabella tilted her head, following his gaze, and spotted a tall woman in a white sundress approaching at a swift pace. She was wearing sunglasses, making it impossible to discern her features at first glance.

“Sorry, I’m late, Emmitt. Traffic was a nightmare,” panted Summer, her voice still catching her breath.

“No worries,” Emmitt shook his head, noting the beads of sweat forming on her forehead. He pulled out a pack of tissues from his pocket and handed it to her.

Taking the tissues, Summer gracefully removed her sunglasses, hooking them onto her dress’ neckline, and flashed a sweet smile at Emmitt. “Thanks, Emmitt.”

With a gentle pat on her head, Emmitt’s gesture was nothing but affectionate.

Mirabella watched their interaction with a slowly forming smirk. There was no need to ask outright-she already figured that Summer was the girl she was switched at birth with at the hospital.

Summer had since been taken in by the Gilbert family and adopted their surname. She wasn’t strikingly beautiful, but she did exude the refined, gentle demeanor that Mandy, her adoptive mother, had boasted about. The white dress added an graceful touch to her presence.

Feeling Mirabella’s unabashed scrutiny, Summer finally turned her attention to her as if just realizing she was there. Summer was. visibly taken aback.

Mirabella was stunning, with sparkling eyes like the shimmer of a lake and a casually hooked smile that suggested a mix of mischief and cool detachment. She was the epitome of effortless charisma.

“Right, this is my sister, Mira.” Emmitt chimed in, nodding towards Mirabella.

Summer’s grip tightened on her purse at the words ‘my sister’ from Emmitt’s lips, feeling as though something had been taken from her. The smile on her face lost its earlier ease.

Emmitt, oblivious to Summer's expression, turned back to Mirabella. “This is...”

"I know," Mirabella interrupted lazily, glancing at her watch. "Shall we grab some grub?"

With that, Emmitt didn't bother introducing Summer further. Instead, he took Mirabella's suitcase. "Look at me, all talk. Let's head to the car. Mom and Dad were worried you might be hungry. They just called to check in."

Mirabella hummed in acknowledgment, not bothering with pleasantries, and adjusted her backpack strap before following Emmitt out.

Summer watched them leave, one following the other, feeling ignored in a way she'd never experienced before. Mirabella's return not only captured Emmitt's attention but also managed to diminish Summer's presence without a fuss. She had expected a country bumpkin, but clearly, Mirabella was anything but simple.

As Summer pondered, her moment of solitude was shattered by a chorus of excited squeals, and in the blink of an eye, she found herself encircled by a group of eager girls.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9

"Is that Summer?"

"OMG, I can't believe I'm bumping into my idol at the airport in the middle of the night. This is like, the best moment. ever!"

"Summer is so gorgeous in real life, and she seems super sweet too."

"Could we get an autograph, please, Summer?"

The gaggle of teenage girls surrounding Summer were anything but discreet with their booming voices, quickly drawing the attention of other travelers in the airport. Many paused to look in their direction, and both Mirabella and Emmitt turned to watch the scene unfold.

Summer seemed taken aback at first as if she hadn't expected to encounter fans here, but then she composed herself, her lips curving into a shy smile as she greeted them softly, not refusing their requests for photos. However, her gaze kept flickering, almost imperceptibly, towards Mirabella.

“Summer’s been a natural at dancing and singing since she was a kid,” Emmitt began to explain to Mirabella, his eyes on Summer amid the crowd. “She recently joined a girl group, and her agency has high hopes for her. They got her onto one of those talent shows that’s pretty hot online. Those girls are probably her fans.”

Mirabella didn’t seem envious in the slightest, simply responding with a nonchalant “Hmm” before feeling her phone vibrate in her pocket. She withdrew it to check the message.

Y: [Boss, | need help ASAP!! Mirabella massaged her temples, visibly annoyed, and shot back a single word. [Scram.] Y: [You can’t just leave me hanging, boss.]

A trace of amusement tugged at Mirabella’s lips as her slender fingers tapped a curt reply on the screen: [Sort it out yourself.] After sending the message, she promptly dumped the contact into her block list.

After typing out a lengthy plea and hitting send, ‘Y’ was greeted with a cold: [Message failed to send because the recipient has blocked you.]

Meanwhile, as Mirabella had been engrossed in her messaging. Summer finished posing with the group of girls and approached. The girls, reluctant to part ways with their idol, trailed behind her, two of them still recording with their phones.

Mirabella pocketed her phone and looked up just in time to catch the two girls still filming. She narrowed her eyes ever so slightly and smoothly pulled out a black face mask to slip on.

Seeing Mirabella suddenly donning the mask, Summer seemed puzzled but then appeared to sigh of relief, perhaps remembering something. The Davis family was known for their striking good looks. She didn’t really want her fans capturing Mirabella’s face on camera.

After a brief pause, Summer spoke softly, “Sorry about that. | didn’t expect to run into fans at the airport and hold things up.” Her tone suggested an apology, but the tilt of her chin betrayed a hint of showing off in front of Mirabella.

Mirabella’s eyes were cool and detached as she glanced at Summer before looking away, her demeanor nonchalant.

“It’s fine, let’s go.” Emmitt said.

Emmitt’s car was rather modest, a sedan in the mid-range price bracket, not a luxury model, but not a beater either. It was clear he wasn’t the sort to idle his days away with nothing to do as rumors suggested.

After loading the luggage into the trunk, Emmitt glanced at his watch, then turned to Summer, who was standing nearby, and asked, “How did you get here. Summer?”

Summer looked at Mirabella, her eyes flicking back and forth, before she replied, “The family driver dropped me off.” Chapter 10

Emmitt was about to say something when Summer stepped forward and looped her arm through his. Her voice tinged with a playful whine. “Emmitt, can | talk to you about something?”

Chapter 10

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Emmitt’s brow furrowed slightly as he felt his arm being tugged, but he didn’t pull away. “What’s up?”

Summer’s eyes sparkled with a playful cuteness on her meticulously made-up face. “I’ve been filming a show for a while now and haven’t visited Mom and Dad in ages. | feel kinda bad about it. Plus, Mira just got back from the countryside, and she’s probably feeling a bit out of her element. | was thinking of staying at home for a few days. spend some time with the folks, and help Mira get settled in.”

Emmitt mulled over her words for a few seconds before nodding. “Sounds good. We’ll all feel better knowing you’re there to show Mira the ropes.”

Summer let out a chirpy “yeah” and tilted her head slightly towards Mirabella with a playful jerk of her chin. Then she let go of Emmitt and hopped into the passenger seat, assuming the air of someone quite at home.

Mirabella raised an eyebrow, a wry smile hidden beneath her mask, but said nothing. She calmly opened the back door of the car and slipped in.

During the drive home, Summer chattered away to Emmitt about all the behind-the-scenes action from her time on a reality TV show, glancing in the rearview mirror at Mirabella, who had now removed her mask, seemingly trying to catch a glimpse of envy on her face. But Mirabella seemed to be in her own world, absorbed in her phone, indifferent to the conversation.

It was a monumental blow to Summer's sense of superiority. She consoled herself with the thought that maybe this country girl, unfamiliar with the world of showbiz, simply couldn't grasp the significance of her stories, hence her nonchalant demeanor.

Switching gears, Summer turned her attention back to Mirabella and asked, "By the way, Mira, we're the same age, so you must be starting your senior year of high school, right?"

Mirabella's slender fingers paused on her phone screen before she slowly lifted her head. Her face was bathed in the soft glow of the car's interior lights, softening the sharpness of her features. She responded with a soft "mm—hmm."

Summer's eyes flickered with intrigue, finding Mirabella's husky voice and laid-back demeanor oddly captivating. Gathering her composure, Summer forced a smile and said. "I heard from my Mom that you'd sorted out your transfer when you left Grandma's."

She emphasized the words 'Mom' and 'Grandma' just a tad, though it would take a keen ear to notice.

Mirabella's lips curled into a half-smile as she glanced at Summer. Her breath hitched, and she averted her gaze, avoiding eye contact and losing the casual tone of her voice. "Have you picked out a school yet? Do you need my dad's help? I remember Mom mentioning your grades weren't exactly..."

"No need, I've already chosen a school" Mirabella interjected casually, cutting her off.*

Summer was taken aback, the word "okay" sticking in her throat. After a moment, she forced—a stiff smile and asked, "Really? Which school?"

Emmitt, who was driving, glanced at the rearview mirror, surprised by the exchange. He wasn't home often due to work but was aware that his parents had been fretting over which high school to transfer their mistakenly switched

daughter to, as she had been raised in a small town. They were concerned about her poor academic performance and were reluctant to send her to an average public school. Yet, if they pulled strings to get her into a prestigious high school, they feared she might struggle to keep up and feel inferior.