

## Chapter 25 Who Started It

Joshua stayed calm and composed. "Alicia, you already know what I want."

"I really don't," Alicia shot back. "Since you're already at the hospital, maybe you should consider getting a mental health evaluation."

With that, she ended the call.

Joshua didn't try calling again.

After taking a moment to settle herself, Alicia turned to Caden. "Your father is critically ill."

Caden sat in silence for a moment, his expression unreadable.

Then, he pulled out his phone and made a call.

His only instruction was clear. "Do whatever it takes to keep him alive."

Alicia's eyes briefly flickered with surprise.

She had heard the rumors that Caden and Jerald were never on good terms.

Given how unforgiving Caden could be, she assumed he wouldn't care at this point.

It appeared he still had some regard for family, or maybe, it was more about securing the inheritance.

Alicia chose not to ask further or dwell on it.

After a brief pause, she stated her position clearly. "I've divorced Joshua. I won't help him anymore."

This also meant she wouldn't oppose Caden.

She had no intention of getting involved with anyone.

Caden's eyes lost their coldness as he observed her.

"You're giving up so quickly?"

Alicia nodded in response.

Caden seemed intrigued. "With your personality, I expected you to turn Joshua's world upside down."

Alicia felt a sharp ache in her chest, followed by overwhelming fatigue.

She opened the window slightly to let some fresh air in.

The wind stung her eyes. "I don't have the strength to fight him, and there's no need."

Her words came out firm, but her voice was so gentle that even a stranger could sense the lingering emotion and attachment.

A sardonic smile appeared on Caden's lips.

"He's tough, but now that Gerry is backing you, at least you've been able to release some of that frustration."

Alicia turned to face him. "Liliana's song hasn't even been released yet. It's too soon to talk about victory or defeat."

"Why pretend to be modest? Wasn't Gerry's support for you clear enough today?" Caden raised his eyebrows, sarcasm spilling from his eyes.

Alicia froze for a moment.

She felt irritated by his hostile tone. "What do you mean by 'support for me'?"

The way he said it made it sound like there was some kind of secret arrangement.

Caden casually responded, "Oh, I must have misunderstood."

That remark made Alicia's blood boil.

He acted like he hadn't said much, but in truth, he had already said everything.

If Alicia argued, she knew she had no solid ground. If she didn't, the anger inside her would continue to simmer.

She let out a sharp sneer. "You must be quite skilled at this, Mr. Ward. Do you often use your charm to close business deals?"

He raised his eyebrows slightly. "Not often, just when the situation calls for it."

Alicia found herself momentarily speechless.

Unable to stop herself, she asked, "Caden, do you really have no sense of shame?"

Caden laughed at her question. "Did you leave me with any dignity when you manipulated me, Miss Bennett?"

Alicia thought back to what she had done.

Her expression softened slightly. "You were the one who started it!"

"Really, now?" He asked with a hint of amusement, "Was it me who opened the door for you at the private cinema that night?"

Alicia went quiet. She was completely thrown off by the sudden change in topic.

Without missing a beat, he added, "And was it me who undid my own belt?"

Alicia's eyes went wide with disbelief. She quickly tried to cut him off. "Shut up!"

Caden continued in a leisurely tone, "And it was me who took off my pants and held my—"

Without hesitation, Alicia lunged forward and clamped her hands over his mouth.

She practically threw herself at him. "I said stop talking!" she said through gritted teeth.

They were in a taxi, not a private place.

The driver had even turned off the music, obviously paying close attention, with his ears practically tuned into their conversation, just shy of chiming in.

How could Caden have no sense of decency?

Realizing this, he finally stopped speaking.

He stayed still while she pressed against him, and then he whispered, "So, who started this whole thing?"

Alicia shivered from the warmth radiating from him.

She quickly withdrew her hand.

Noticing her reaction, Caden chuckled. "What's this sudden blush? Are you reflecting on our little escapade?"

A tingling sensation coursed down Alicia's spine, and she instantly denied it. "I'm blushing because you've made me angry!"

She reluctantly stated, "If I had known it was you that night, I would have rather died than slept with you."

Caden chuckled softly in her ear. "Yet it was this body you loathe so much that you held onto and desired time after time."

Alicia's face felt like it was on fire, and in a burst of anger, she viciously bit his cheek.

After the bite, she went back in her original spot.

Caden rubbed the spot where she had bitten him, remaining silent while a smile played on his lips.

After a moment, Hank's call came through.

"I have some information that hasn't been confirmed. I'm not sure if I should share it with you yet."

"Go ahead and say it."

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 +120 Points at most

Hank lowered his voice and said, "It seems Lilliana's song this time was ghostwritten."

Caden remained unfazed. "Let her do as she wishes."

Hank responded, "She's being dishonest, and you're just going to let it happen? That's incredibly unfair to Miss Bennett."

Caden let out a cold laugh.

"Are you starting to feel sympathy for her? Perhaps if a nude photo of yours surfaces during the next meeting, you might find some calm."

Hank was left speechless.

Alicia suddenly sneezed from her seat.


Because of his keen hearing, Hank caught the sound and expressed slight surprise. "Mr. Ward, is there a woman with you?"

Caden glanced over at Alicia.

"Yes, in a way."

"Then I won't interrupt you, Mr. Ward," said Hank.



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