

Chapter 58 Am I A Fool

Georgia had always been a favored maid under Shelia's care, rarely encountering real hardship.

Now, caked in muck, she shivered with disgust, vocally complaining about the foul stench.

Shelia watched with a cold expression as Georgia's disheveled state marred the setting.

Alicia's half-smirk made Shelia's irritation palpable, leading her to silently curse Alicia's manipulative ways.

Struggling to her feet, Georgia aimed for the living room to clean up.

Alicia, feigning surprise, inquired, "Georgia, where are you headed?"

"To take a shower, of course!" Georgia snapped back.

"Isn't your room past the living room?" Alicia reminded her, pretending to be helpful. "And Mrs. Yates is in there. Won't you bring the smell in with you?" she added, making Georgia pause and glance towards Shelia, sensing her displeasure from a distance.

Shelia's annoyance seemed to stem from a mix of disdain and frustration at Georgia's mishap, which made her hesitate.

Shelia was already in a bad mood and now Georgia had failed to teach Alicia a lesson and had fallen flat on her face earlier.

Alicia suggested subtly, "Why not wash at the fountain? It might lessen the stench a bit."

Seeing the sense in Alicia's suggestion, Georgia headed toward the fountain without further thought.

Alicia followed, offering, "Let me help you."

"You should help. This mess is your doing. You'll assist me in cleaning up later!" Georgia asserted, accustomed to bossing Alicia around.

Alicia nodded in agreement without protest.

As Georgia began to wash, the foul mess repelled the nearby fish in the pond, which quickly swam away.

Calm again, Georgia confronted Alicia. "You deliberately called me over, didn't you?"

Alicia blinked, her face a mask of innocence. "Georgia, how can you say that?"

Georgia, unfazed and visibly annoyed, retorted, "You claim you were picking flowers? That's a flimsy excuse. You staged a fall near two piles of dog mess to lure me there, didn't you?"

Alicia put on a show of being hurt. "You know we're not friends, Georgia. When I hurt my ankle, I never called for you. You came without being asked. Remember?"

"You—" Georgia faltered, searching for words, then burst out. "Why did you move when I pushed you? If you'd stayed put, I wouldn't have ended up on the ground!"

Alicia's eyes widened in disbelief.

"Really, Georgia? You pushed me. Why would I just stand there? Do you think I'm a fool?"

Georgia was left speechless once more.


She wondered how Alicia had become so defiant post-divorce. Previously, no matter how harshly she treated her, Alicia had remained silent.

As Georgia's face reddened with anger, Alicia offered a sly smile. "Relax, Georgia. It's only a bit of dog mess. Thankfully, it didn't get in your mouth."

Alicia then gestured towards the pond. "Let's get you cleaned up."

The moment Alicia's hand met the water, she gasped.

Before Georgia could react, Alicia seized her arm and hurled her into the pond.

At nearly forty, Georgia's lack of agility and inability to swim caused her to thrash about in a frenzy. 

Alicia, feigning concern, called out, "Are you alright, Georgia? Can you manage?"

Though she sounded worried, Alicia watched impassively, arms crossed, as the drama unfolded.

It was only when Shelia and a group arrived that they managed to rescue Georgia.

Terrified, Georgia clambered out, still screaming for help. "Help, Mrs. Yates, help!"

Shelia reprimanded her sharply. "Stop being such a crybaby!"

Stunned by Shelia's harsh words, Georgia regained her composure, wiped her face, and shuddered. "Mrs. Yates, I can't swim. I nearly drowned."

Shelia responded sternly, "That little pond could drown you? Why didn't you just die in there?"

"Mr. Yates, I mean it!" Georgia insisted.

Georgia gestured toward the pond, about to voice her complaint, but stopped short when she noticed Alicia standing in water that barely reached her knees.

Georgia found herself at a loss for words.

Someone chuckled.

Shelia whirled around, her fury mounting, and snapped, "Is that funny?"

In the very next moment, Shelia was taken aback.

Unseen until now, Caden was observing the scene from a short distance, amused by the spectacle.

Shelia quickly softened her tone upon recognizing him. "Oh, it's you, Caden. I mistook you for a servant and spoke too harshly. Please, don't take it to heart."

Caden paid no heed to her, instead focusing his attention on Alicia.

Alicia had just climbed out of the pond.

His gaze was intense, a subtle smile playing on his lips.

Feeling his stare, Alicia looked down and noticed her wet dress clinging to her figure.

She tried to adjust the hem of her dress awkwardly.

Although the fabric wasn't see-through, her dress loosened slightly after a few shakes but clung to her again quickly.

Dark clouds loomed overhead, and strong winds made Alicia shiver and sneeze.

Yet, no one seemed to notice her discomfort.

Georgia, still upset, lamented, "I don't understand what I did to upset Ms. Bennett. I asked her for help, and she pushed me into the pond and mocked me. Mrs. Yates, you have to defend me."

Shelia dismissed her. "Enough. You know how Alicia is. Why bother? You are much older than she is."

Alicia, realizing Shelia was indirectly validating Georgia's words, spoke gently. "Mrs. Yates, I was only trying to help. I didn't push Georgia."

Georgia, seething with anger at Alicia's feigned innocence, glared at her. "You're lying! Don't you worry about karma?"

As she finished speaking, the sky suddenly split with a bolt of lightning, quickly followed by a thunderous clap.