

## Chapter 59 Can't Stand Manipulators

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Rain fell in heavy sheets, pounding the ground with each drop.

A sudden burst of thunder made Georgia shriek, her hands clutching onto Shelia out of instinct.

The foul smell of dog poop still clung to her, and Shelia's expression twisted in disgust.

With a shove, Shelia pushed Georgia away.

Caden laughed softly. "Why are you screaming, Georgia? Alicia's the one in trouble. That thunder sounds like nature giving her a warning."

Alicia shot him a cold glare.

The rain only grew stronger, and Shelia, fed up, pushed Georgia aside and hurried inside to clean herself up.

Another rumble of thunder echoed overhead.

For a moment, Caden's face darkened as he turned his eyes towards Alicia.

For reasons unknown, Alicia had darted into the pond, her hands frantically moving as if searching for something.

The heavy rain blurred the view, making it hard to see what she was up to.

Caden walked closer, his brow furrowed. "What exactly are you looking for?"

Alicia lifted the hem of her skirt as she continued to feel around in the water. She mumbled, "I think I dropped my phone in here."

Caden glanced down, skeptical.



Seeing his hesitation, Alicia urged, "Don't just stand there. Help me find it."

Caden wasn't fooled. "Is this another one of your tricks? Like what you pulled on the maid?"

Alicia snorted in response. "Believe what you want."

She continued her search, moving a few steps to the side.

Suddenly, she let out a loud cry. "Ah! I found it!"

Caden squinted through the downpour. It was hard to make out what she was holding, but it looked like something.

Alicia wiped the rain from her face, her hair sticking in wet strands to her cheeks. She glanced up at him and said, "Give me a hand. Pull me up."

Seeing how drenched and miserable she looked, Caden reluctantly extended his hand.

But just as Alicia's hand about to grasp his, she quickly changed to the other hand.

Without warning, she placed something into his palm.

Caden froze. He didn't know what it was at first, but the slimy texture told him everything he needed to know.

It was a toad. A toad!

His face darkened with revulsion.

With a sudden jerk, he flung it aside, his entire body shuddering in disgust.

Alicia erupted into laughter.

Caden, notorious for his aversion to anything unclean, was repulsed beyond measure.

The mere thought of touching that toad would likely haunt him for days.

His face darkened, a storm brewing behind his eyes.

Sensing that she might have gone too far, Alicia stopped laughing and tried to climb out of the pond.

In her haste, she lost her footing on the slick mud and tumbled back into the water, her knee striking a sharp stone.

A sharp pain shot through her leg, and her vision momentarily blurred as she gasped.

Caden glanced at her, his expression softening ever so slightly.

Alicia tried to regain her balance, but her injured knee refused to support her weight. Her hand shook as she reached out. "Help me up."

Caden, his tone casual but cold, replied, "Miss Bennett, don't you know? I can't stand women who pretend to be innocent." He paused, his eyes narrowing. "Whatever you've learned from your books, it won't work on me."

Alicia could only stare at him, speechless.

Without another word, he turned his back on her and began walking away.

As the thunder rumbled above her, Alicia, torn between fury and pain, felt as though the sky itself was about to strike her down.

Seeing that Caden was really leaving, panic set in, and she scrambled to her feet, forgetting her pain in her haste to follow him.

The storm intensified, as if mirroring her frantic state.

Caden had been ready to leave, but the downpour forced him to reconsider. Soaked to the bone, he had no choice but to change.

It had been ages since he had stayed at the Yates Mansion, and he had nothing of his own left there.

Shelia, ever the dutiful hostess, fetched a set of clothes belonging to her son Joshua. She smiled and said, "You and Joshua are about the same size. Why not just wear these?"

Caden, flicking droplets of water from his sleeves, responded with icy indifference, "I'm not one to settle. Don't bother yourself."



His words were colder than the rain that pelted down.

Shelia's smile faltered, her embarrassment clear.

Caden had never liked his stepmother, and Shelia despised him in return, though she tried not to show it.

But in the end, there was little choice. Caden was far more accomplished than her son, Joshua.

And now, with the inheritance at stake, Shelia knew she had to play the part of the perfect wife and mother, even if she could barely tolerate Caden's presence.

Shelia bit back her anger and made her way to the master bedroom.

Jerald leaned against the headboard, resting.

Recently, he'd been getting stronger, even managing to walk a bit, slowly regaining his old strength.

While Shelia changed her clothes, she kept her back to him, tears silently falling.

Jerald frowned. "What's the matter?"

Shelia shook her head. "It's nothing. I'm used to it."

"Used to what?" Jerald's patience wore thin. "Stop crying and just tell me."

Shelia turned to face him, her clothes in disarray, tears streaking her cheeks, making her look pitiful.

Seeing her state, Jerald motioned for her to come closer and sit beside him. "Who upset you?"

Shelia bit her lip. "Jerald, don't be mad at Caden. He lost his mother so young, and without her, he grew bitter and angry. He resents me. It's really all my fault from back then—"

Jerald didn't let her finish. "Did he hurt you?"

Shelia's tears flowed harder.



Her silence spoke louder than any words.

Jerald's expression darkened. "Has he forgotten his place? This is the Yates family."

Shelia patted his chest gently, trying to calm him. "I'm fine. Please don't get upset."

But just as she said this, Jerald began to cough, a metallic taste filling his mouth.

Shelia rushed to him. "See, you're still too quick to anger."

She left to fetch his medicine, opening the door and catching sight of Caden on the stairs.