

Trading My Ex for His Uncle c 1241

Nyla asked, "What time did you get here?"

"8:00 a.m. sharp. At first, I thought you'd wake up in a few minutes, but after half an hour, you were still asleep. So I had no choice but to wake you up myself,"

Andre replied.

Nyla felt a little embarrassed.

Andre had just been sitting there, watching her sleep for half an hour?

"Sorry about that. If you see me dozing off next time, just wake me up directly," she said.

Andre smiled and nodded. "Alright. Now, let's start class. Today, I'll be teaching you about the basic structure of a company."

From 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Nyla lost count of how many times she had fallen asleep.

She tried to fight off her drowsiness, but Andre's voice was like a lullaby-so soothing it knocked her out instantly. Since the lesson was about business, a topic she had absolutely no interest in, there was no way she could stay awake.

When Andre finally announced that the lesson was over for the day, Nyla felt like she was hearing the voice of an angel. Her exhaustion vanished in an instant.

She stood up and looked at Andre. "Thanks for today, Andre."

If it weren't for him, she never would have realized just how uninterested she was in business-to the point where just listening to it put her to sleep.

Andre sighed, amused. "You fell asleep 23 times today. Let's hope you can stay awake a little longer tomorrow."

Nyla's smile stiffened. After a long pause, she finally said, "I'll try..."

"Alright, that's it for today. I need to report your progress to your mother. See you tomorrow," Andre said.

"See you," Nyla replied.

She had assumed all she needed to do was sit through the lessons in the study. But when she heard Andre say he had to report back to Emerald, she knew her mother would come up with more ways to make things difficult for her.

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Andre arrived at Emerald's study and knocked on the door.

"Come in," Emerald called.

Pushing the door open, Andre stepped inside. "Good morning, Ms. Kinsey."

Emerald set down the documents she was reading and stood up with a warm smile. "Andre, please have a seat."

They sat on the sofa, and Emerald asked a maid to bring coffee.

"How did the lesson go today?" she asked.

Andre hesitated for a moment before deciding to be honest. "Ms. Nyla has potential, but she doesn't seem very interested in business. She dozed off quite a few times during class." swnovel

Emerald was silent for a moment before speaking. "Maybe it's because she had to wake up so early this morning. She's not used to it yet.

"I'll be counting on you for the next month. She has no knowledge of business at all, so I hope you'll be patient with her."

"Since I agreed to help, I'll do my best. But I can't guarantee how much she'll actually learn," Andre warned.

Emerald nodded. "I understand. It's

up to her how much she absorbs

But more importantly, I hope that you two can build a good

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relationship over the next month." swnovel

Before bringing Nyla back, Emerald had already selected a few potential suitors for her.

However, at their first meetings, Nyla had openly admitted to being married before and even having a child.

After that, none of the other families were willing to proceed with a marriage alliance-except for Andre.

His family had once been on par with the Nixons, but due to certain setbacks they had fallen behind significantly. If he wanted to restore his family's status, an arranged marriage was the fastest and most convenient route. swnovel

That was why, even after learning that Nyla had been married and had a child, Andre still chose to give it a try.

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Andre nodded. "I understand. I know what I need to do."

"Good," Emerald replied.

"I have other matters to attend to, so I won't take up any more of your time. See you tomorrow," Andre said, excusing himself.

"Alright, I'll have Filipe see you out," Emerald answered.

After Andre left, Emerald returned to her desk and called for a maid. "Tell Nyla to come to the study."

Nyla had just returned to her room when a maid informed her that Emerald wanted to see her. Her expression immediately darkened with frustration.

When she arrived at Emerald's study, she didn't bother hiding her irritation-every bit of her dissatisfaction was written plainly on her face.

Emerald ignored it and said calmly, "I heard from Andre that you kept dozing off during your lesson today."

Nyla frowned. "Is that why you called me here?"

"You just need to answer the question, not ask your own," Emerald shot back.

Nyla resisted the urge to roll her eyes. "Yes. But there are two reasons for that. One, you had the service staff wake me up way too early. And two, I'm just not interested in business."

"If waking up early is a problem, then go to bed earlier. And if you're not interested, find a way to make yourself interested. No one here is going to cater to you," Emerald retorted.

Nyla scoffed. "I never expected you to, and I stopped having any hopes for you a long time ago."

Emerald nodded as if in agreement. "Good. Since you know that, then do as you're told and complete whatever tasks I assign to you."

"Don't worry. I'll play my role well as your pawn. But if you dare lay a hand on anyone I care about, then don't blame me for turning from a pawn into a sword," Nyla warned.

With that, she turned and walked out.

As she was heading back to her room, Delia suddenly blocked her at the corner of the hallway.

Delia glared at her. "The person teaching you today was Andre?!"

Seeing the jealousy in Delia's eyes, Nyla raised an eyebrow. "Yeah. Why? Do you know him?"

"I'm warning you-stay away f

him!

catch you trying to some

him, won't let you off!" Delia hissed. swnovel

Nyla smirked. "Oh, so you like him?"

"Shut up!" Delia frantically glanced around, ensuring no one else was nearby before glaring at her again. "I'm serious! Don't even think about it-he would never be interested in someone like you!" swnovel

"Someone like me?" Nyla echoed.

"Yeah! A shameless woman who's already been married and even has a bastard child!" Delia spat.

Nyla's gaze instantly turned ice-cold.

Before Delia could react, Nyla raised her hand and slapped her across the face.

A sharp, echoing slap filled the hallway.

Delia clutched her stinging cheek, staring at her in shock. "Y-You actually hit me?! How dare you?!"

She lunged forward, trying to slap Nyla

to year, but before she could , Nyla caught her writ

grip.

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"If I ever hear you insult my son again, I will slap you every single time," Nyla threatened coldly.

Delia struggled to break free, but Nyla's grip was stronger. Humiliation and fury burned in her eyes.

"So what if I insult him? Am I wrong? Your son is just a filthy little bastard!"

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Nyla struck Delia across the face again, leaving a bright red handprint on her other cheek.

Delia's eyes burned with fury as she struggled, screaming loud enough to attract the attention of the service staff.

When the maids saw the two of them grappling in the hallway-especially with Delia clearly at a disadvantage—they looked alarmed.

One immediately ran off to inform Emerald.

Emerald's face darkened when she heard that Nyla and Delia were fighting in the corridor. She got up from her chair and strode toward the door.

From a distance, she could already see the two of them locked in a chaotic struggle.

Her eyes flashed with anger as she snapped at the maids nearby, "What are you standing around for? Separate them immediately!"

Snapped out of their daze, the maids rushed forward to pull them apart.

Delia looked utterly disheveled

her hair a mess, her clothes rumpled, and both

cheeks marked with vivid red slaps. She glared at Nyla with unmasked hatred.

When Delia saw Emerald, tears immediately welled up in her eyes.

With a pitiful sob, she whimpered, "Mom... she hit me!"

Emerald's gaze swept over Delia's miserable state before landing on Nyla, who— aside from slightly tousled hair—looked completely unharmed.

Her expression turned cold. "Why did you lay hands on your sister?!"

Nyla let out a soft laugh. "Ms. Kinsey, I don't recall having a sister who calls my son a bastard."

Emerald frowned and turned to Delia, her gaze sharp. "Did you really say that?"

Delia shook her head frantically, tears still streaming. "Mom, no! She's lying! I never said that—"

"If you didn't, then you didn't," Emerald said sternly. "Now wipe those tears away. You're a grown woman—stop sniveling like a child."

She then turned back to Nyla, her expression even icier. "You not only attacked your sister, but now you're lying to my face? Truly, you have no sense of decency!" fo swnovel

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Nyla let out a cold laugh. "Oh, so when I say something, you don't believe me. But when Delia denies it, you take her word without question. What a wonderful mother you are to her." Swnovel

Her mocking tone only fueled Emerald's anger.

She turned to the maids and ordered, "Lock her in the attic. No food, no water. She doesn't come out until I say so."

"Yes, Madam," the maids answered.

Behind Emerald, Delia shot Nyla a smug, triumphant look, as if the two of them, their monet mer foolishness. Between

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would

always take her side-never Nyla. swnovel

Nyla had long since given up expecting anything from Emerald, so there was no disappointment, only indifference.

Soon, the maids led Nyla away.

Just as Delia was about to leave as well, Emerald stopped her. "Come to my study."

Upon seeing her mother's serious expression, Delia's heart began to pound. Could she have guessed the truth?

Nervously, she followed Emerald into the study. As soon as the door closed behind them, Emerald's palm landed hard on her face.

This was different from when Nyla had hit her in anger.

This time, Delia simply stared at her mother in shock, unable to process what had

just happened. Tears welled up again.

"Mom..." she whimpered.

"Shut up! How could I have raised such an idiot?" Emerald snapped.

Delia bit her lip and lowered her head, her voice trembling. "Mom, I'm sorry..."

Emerald took several deep breaths, forcing herself to calm down. "Do you know why I hit you?"

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Delia shook her head, then quickly nodded under her mother's sharp gaze.

"Yes... I shouldn't have called Nyla's child a bastard," she muttered.

Emerald's expression didn't soften. If anything, she looked like she wanted to slap her again.

Delia shifted uncomfortably. "Mom... was I wrong?"

Watching her daughter's clueless, hesitant expression, Emerald felt an

overwhelming sense of regret. She had spoiled Delia too much-never taught her

to be calculating. And now, she had grown this stupid.

"I'm not mad at you for what you said," Emerald said coldly. "I'm mad because you made a scene and embarrassed yourself in front of the servants."

If word of this got out, Mary would have a field day mocking them in front of Edward.

Before Mary entered the picture, Edward had grown distant from Emerald, but at least he hadn't actively resented her and the children.

Ever since Mary became his mistress, she had constantly instigated, poisoning him against them. Now, Edward couldn't stand the sight of her or their kids, nitpicking at everything they did.

Just the thought of it filled Emerald with frustration.

And Delia... Well, Delia was a fool. The girl was cruel, yes—but stupid.

"Mom, I'm sorry. I won't do it again," Delia murmured.

Emerald narrowed her eyes. "I'm not saying you can't deal with Nyla. I'm saying you need to do it properly. If you're going to make a move, don't leave any loose ends. Understand?"

Delia looked confused, understanding only a little. She didn't dare voice it, however, and quickly nodded. "I understand."

Emerald knew Delia would obviously do something stupid again. She sighed but couldn't bring herself to scold her anymore. "Go sit down. Let me treat your face."

Delia obediently sat while Emerald retrieved the first-aid kit.

As Emerald cleaned up after treating Delia's

reachounds, Delia suddenly

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reached out and hugged her around the waist, resting her head on her shoulder. swnovel

"Mom, I'm sorry for disappointing you again..." she apologized.

Emerald softened, patting her back. "Alright, alright. You're not a child anymore.

Enough with the dramatics. Go back now. I have work to do."

"No matter how old I am, I'll always be your baby," Delia said stubbornly.

Emerald chuckled. "Alright, that's enough. I really have work to do."

Delia pouted. "Fine. Will you have lunch with me today?"

"I can't. I have errands to run. Eat by yourself," Emerald replied.

"Oh..." Delia's mood visibly dropped.

Emerald sighed, pinching her daughter's cheek with a smile. "Alright, don't mope. I'll bring you your favorite Black Forest cake tonight."

"Yay! Thanks, Mom!" Delia chirped.

Watching her daughter's mood flip so easily, Emerald smiled. Delia was still a child. She wondered if she'd ever grow up.

Once Delia left, Emerald packed up

her files and made a call to Fle

instructing him to prepare the car. Then she grabbed a few documents and left the house. fo swnovel

Back in her room, Delia called over one of the maids. "Go up to the attic and douse her with cold water. Let's see

Pthat helps her remember her

place."

Swnovel

Chapter 1245

The maid hesitated. "Ms. Nixon, isn't this a bit too much?"

After all, Nyla was still Emerald's daughter. The weather was freezing, and she had already been locked in the attic.

Even though Emerald didn't care much for her, if something happened to Nyla, the one to take the fall wouldn't be Delia-it would be the maid herself.

Delia shot her a cold glance, eyes filled with contempt. "If you don't want to do what I asked, you can leave right now. The estate has no need for useless people."

The maid quickly relented. "I'll do it, Ms. Nixon! Please don't fire me."

"Then what are you waiting for? Go now!" Delia snapped.

The maid turned and rushed out, fetching a bucket of ice-cold water before heading to the attic.

At present, Nyla was sitting in the pitch-dark attic, slumped against the wall.

She had woken up early that morning, hadn't slept well, and had even gotten into a fight with Delia. Now, she was completely drained.

Just as she was about to drift off to sleep, the attic door suddenly creaked open.

Before she could even lift her head, a bucket of freezing water was dumped over her.

The attacker acted swiftly, slamming the door shut and scurrying away before she could react.

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Back in Delia's room, the maid reported that she had done as instructed.

Delia smirked. "Good job. As long as you keep doing what I tell you, you'll be rewarded."

The maid looked uneasy. "Ms. Nixon, it's so cold, and there's nothing in the attic. What if something happens to Ms. Kinsey?"

She had only wanted a stable job to support her family-not to get involved in anything dangerous.

Delia chuckled. "Don't worry. Even if something does happen, no one will blame you."

If Nyla caught a fever or fell ill, it would be her own fault for having such a weak constitution.

In fact, Delia hoped she'd burn up so badly that she turned into a fool-then she'd finally stop trying to seduce Andre.

"Alright..." the maid muttered nervously.

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Emerald had been out negotiating a business deal. Since the discussion ran late, she decided to stay overnight at a hotel owned by the Nixons, only returning to the estate early the next morning.

As soon as her car pulled up at the entrance, she spotted Andre, who had arrived to tutor Nyla.

It was then that Emerald suddenly remembered-she had ordered Nyla to be locked in the attic the day before.

With everything that had happened, she had forgotten to have her released.

It was just one night. Surely, nothing serious had happened.

After exchanging a few pleasantries with Andre, the two walked into the estate together.

Upon entering the hall, Emerald turned to a maid. "Go get Nyla. Her tutor is here." The maid nodded. "Yes, Madam."

Ten minutes later, she came rushing back, looking panicked.

Emerald was sipping coffee with Andre when she heard the hurried footsteps. She turned to the maid with a frown. "What's got you in such a panic?"

"Madam, there's something I need to tell you," the maid said urgently.

Emerald's frown deepened, her voice turning cold. "What is it? Is Nyla throwing a tantrum and refusing to come?"

If that was the case, she'd leave her locked up for a few more days and see how long she could hold out.

"No, Madam... Ms. Kinsey has a fever. She's unconscious," the maid informed her.

"What?!" Emerald set down her coffee with a sharp clink. "Go get the doctor. Her health is ridiculously weak."

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As Emerald spoke, she was already heading toward the attic.

Andre quickly got up and followed. "Ms. Kinsey, I'll come with you." Emerald paused for a moment before nodding. "Alright."

Then, she shot a look at the maid. "Go ahead and tend to her first."

Understanding the underlying order, the maid nodded and hurried off.

Emerald changed direction and led Andre to Nyla's bedroom. On the way, she subtly slowed her pace, deliberately engaging him in small talk.

Andre narrowed his eyes slightly, a thoughtful look flashing across his face.

It seemed Emerald didn't care for her long-lost daughter nearly as much as she had claimed at the banquet. Otherwise, she wouldn't be chatting idly with him or walking so leisurely after learning that Nyla had fallen ill.

Moreover, from the way she had ordered the maid to "tend to" Nyla first, it was likely an attempt to cover up something she didn't want him to know.

By the time they reached Nyla's room, the family doctor had also arrived, carrying his medical kit.

After greeting Emerald, the doctor immediately went to check on Nyla.

She lay on the bed, her lips dry and pale, her cheeks burning with an unnatural flush. Beads of cold sweat glistened on her forehead.

The doctor took her temperature and conducted a brief examination before turning to Emerald. "Madam, Ms. Kinsey has caught a cold, which led to a fever. I'll prescribe her some medicine. Once the fever breaks, she should be fine."

Emerald nodded. "Good. As long as it's nothing serious."

After writing the prescription, the doctor handed it over, and Emerald instructed a maid to prepare the medicine.

Then she turned to Andre. "Nyla probably won't be able to attend lessons for the next couple of days. You should come back later in the week."

Andre nodded. "Of course. Her health is the priority. I'll return in a few days."

"Good. I'll have Filipe see you out. Sorry for the trouble," Emerald said.

"It's no trouble at all," Andre replied.

Filipe led Andre toward the entrance, where they ran into Delia.

Delia's face lit up with surprise and joy at the sight of him. "Andre! What are you doing here?"

She wore an innocent expression, as if she had no idea he was Nyla's tutor.

Andre smiled. "I'm Ms. Kinsey's private tutor now, Ms. Nixon. I come here every morning to teach her."

"Oh, I see! I heard my sister is sick today, so I guess there's no class?" Delia asked.

Andre nodded. "Yes, she's recovering. I'll return in a few days."

"So you're heading back now?" Delia asked again.

"Yes," Andre answered.

"Oh, that's perfect! I was about to go shopping, but my car broke down. Can you give me a ride to the mall?" Delia asked.

Filipe, who had remained silent, furrowed his brow slightly. Something about Delia's enthusiasm toward Andre felt off.

Andre blinked in surprise before smiling politely. "It would be my pleasure."

"Thank you!" Delia chirped, then turned to Filipe. "You don't need to see Andre out—I'll do it. Also, let my mom know I won't be home for lunch."

Filipe lowered his head slightly. "Yes, Ms. Nixon."

Delia and Andre walked side by side, and she chatted animatedly with him, her face glowing with a smile. She seemed far more lively than usual.

Watching them disappear into the distance, Filipe frowned before turning back toward Nyla's room.

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As Filipe reached Nyla's bedroom door, he overheard Emerald reprimanding the maids inside.

"I only told you to lock her in the attic. Who told you to leave her in this miserable state?!" she barked.

None of the maids dared to speak. They kept their heads down, barely even breathing, afraid of drawing Emerald's attention.

Filipe knocked on the door before stepping inside. "Madam, Ms. Kinsey just arrived in Meristate. She's probably not used to the climate yet, so her health is still fragile. It's not surprising she caught a cold after being locked in the attic overnight."

Emerald took a deep breath, suppressing her irritation, then turned to ask Filipe, "Has Andre left?"

"Yes, Madam. I walked him out, but we ran into Ms. Nixon on the way. She said her car had broken down and asked him for a ride to the mall. They left together," Filipe reported.

Emerald's expression darkened. She might not know much about Andre, but she knew her own daughter all too well.

Delia had never shown interest in getting close to men. And with all the cars in her garage, was she really expecting Emerald to believe that every single one of them had broken down?

"Understood. When she gets back, tell her to come see me," Emerald instructed.

With that, she cast a cold glance at the maids still standing there in silence before walking out of Nyla's bedroom.

As for Nyla-still lying sick in bed-she was of no use to Emerald at the moment, so there was no point in wasting any more time on her.

Filipe turned to the maids. "Take good care of Ms. Kinsey. She needs to have fully recovered by the morning after tomorrow. If not, none of you will have a job here anymore."

Leaving them with that warning, he hurried after Emerald. "Madam, should we send someone to keep an eye on Ms. Nixon?"

After all, she seemed far too interested in Andre.

"No need. Just make sure she comes to see me when she gets back. And from now on, when Andre visits, don't let Delia have any opportunity to meet with him," Emerald ordered.

"Understood, Madam," Filipe answered.

By the time Delia returned to the estate, evening had fallen.

As soon as she stepped into the hall, she spotted Emerald sitting on the couch, her expression unreadable and her sharp eyes fixed on her.

Feeling uneasy, Delia quickly averted her gaze. "Mom, shouldn't you be busy with work around this time?"

"I thought you didn't care what I was doing anymore," Emerald replied.

A flicker of guilt crossed Delia's face as she stole a glance at Emerald, trying to gauge her mood. "Of course I care. I always care about you."

"Do you care about me, or do you care about Andre?" Emerald shot back.

Delia's expression froze. She feigned confusion. "Mom, what are you talking about? I don't understand. My car broke down today, so I simply asked Andre for a ride. And we're friends anyway-what's wrong with letting him give me a lift?" "Swear to me that you have absolutely no other feelings for him," Emerald dared. Her sharp gaze sent a wave of unease through Delia.

"Mom, what are you saying? Why would I have feelings for him?" Delia asked.

Emerald nodded. "Good. Then starting tomorrow, you are not to have any further contact with him."

"What? Why?!" Delia immediately protested.

"Because I've chosen him as Nyla's fiancé," Emerald answered.

Besides, Andre's family status wasn't worthy of Delia. Her daughter's husband couldn't be too far beneath the Nixons.

Delia scowled. "Y-You chose him as her fiancé?!"

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Delia had assumed Andre was nothing more than Nyla's private tutor. She never expected that Emerald had handpicked him for an arranged marriage!

"That's right," Emerald confirmed.

"No way! I don't agree with this!" Delia protested.

Emerald remained indifferent. "And what right do you have to disagree? What does this have to do with you?"

A heavy silence fell over the room.

Emerald stared at Delia coldly, waiting for an answer.

Delia clenched her fists, lowering her head.

After a long pause, she finally looked up, her eyes resolute. "Mom, I like Andre. I won't let him be with another woman."

Now that she had spoken her truth, a weight lifted off her shoulders. For the first time, she looked Emerald straight in the eye, determination blazing in her gaze.

"If this is about marriage, why does it have to be Nyla? Why can't it be me?" she demanded.

Emerald's voice turned ice-cold. "Delia, I must have spoiled you too much. Starting tomorrow, your credit cards will be frozen. You can come talk to me when you've come to your senses."

With that, she stood up to leave.

Delia quickly stepped in front of her, blocking her path. "Mom, how can you cut off my cards?! What's so wrong about wanting to be with Andre?"

Emerald's gaze remained cold. "What part of him is worthy of you? He comes from a declining family. Forget about you-even any half-decent family wouldn't consider marrying their daughter to him."

"Then why are you marrying him to Nyla? Isn't she your daughter too?" Delia pressed.

"You and she are different," Emerald replied.

"What's the difference? She already has a husband and child. She doesn't

deserve to marry Andre!" Delia exclaimed.

"Even if she didn't exist, I still wouldn't let you be with him. You need to let this go," Emerald said.

Pushing past her, Emerald walked toward her study.

Delia stood frozen, her eyes red with frustration. She watched her mother's retreating figure but didn't dare follow.

Back in her bedroom, she heard a knock at the door.

A maid entered cautiously. "Ms. Nixon, Ms. Kinsey had a fever all day... She only just recovered not long ago. But Madam doesn't suspect you."

Delia shot her a cold glance. "And so what if she did? Do you really think she'd punish me over Nyla?"

The maid hesitated before quickly replying with a flattering smile, "Of course not! Ms. Kinsey could never compare to you in Madam's heart."

"Alright, you can go," Delia dismissed her.

After sending the maid away, she threw her purse onto the bed in frustration, her mind consumed by thoughts of Andre.

From the moment she first laid eyes on him, she had fallen for him. She had never imagined marrying anyone else, and she absolutely wouldn't let another woman—especially Nyla—take him away.

Yet she couldn't openly defy Emerald.

Everything she had now was because of Emerald.

Edward had abandoned her and Brian. If Emerald abandoned her too, she would have nothing.

Lying on her bed and staring at the ceiling, Delia felt utterly lost. She had no idea what to do.

Nyla sat propped up against the headboard in her room, gazing out the window. Her eyes were weary.

How much longer until she could return home to Damon and Mason?

Maybe she really shouldn't keep fighting against Emerald.

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Being stuck in the mansion meant there was no way for Nyla to pass on any

useful information, even if she did learn something valuable. With that thought, a determined look flashed in her eyes.

For the next two days, Nyla stayed in her room, recovering. It wasn't until the third morning that she finally went downstairs for breakfast.

At the dining table, only Emerald and Delia were present. Brian was nowhere to be seen.

When Delia saw Nyla, she snorted and turned her head away, pretending not to notice her.

Emerald's expression remained aloof. "How's your cold?"

"It's getting better. Thank you for arranging the doctor," Nyla replied.

Seeing Nyla act so obediently, Emerald froze mid-sip of her coffee. She raised an eyebrow and studied her with a scrutinizing gaze.

After all, every time they'd met before, Nyla had been sharp-tongued, always saying something to provoke her. But today, it was as if she were a completely different person.

Suppressing her suspicions, Emerald replied calmly, "Since you're feeling better, I'll have Filipe call Andre. You'll resume your lessons today."

Nyla nodded. "Okay."

Just as she responded, the harsh scrape of Delia's knife and fork against her plate broke the moment, drawing both Nyla and Emerald's attention.

Emerald's face darkened slightly. "Delia, if you're done eating, leave. It's rude to disturb someone else's meal."

Delia's grip on her utensils tightened, her hands trembling slightly as if she were barely holding back her anger.

After a long pause, she shot Nyla a glare and coldly said, "I won't give up so easily!"

With that, she slammed her knife and fork onto the table and stormed out.

Emerald looked displeased. "She's becoming more and more unrefined."

Nyla pulled out a chair and sat down, smiling. "She's still young. In a few years, she won't be so willful."

Emerald studied her, growing more certain that something was off. Nyla never used to speak like this.

"Nyla, I advise you not to try anything underhanded. Otherwise, I have plenty of ways to make you regret it," she warned.

"I'm not trying anything," Nyla said. "I had time to think while I was sick. If I keep going against you, I'm the one who suffers. Since I'm already in Meristate, there's no point in making things difficult for myself."

Seeing that Nyla seemed genuinely at peace, Emerald gave a cold nod. "Good. As long as you understand."

After breakfast, Emerald left, and Nyla headed for the study.

When Andre pushed open the study door, he was surprised to see Nyla reading a book on microeconomics. For a moment, he thought he had the wrong room.

Hearing the door open, Nyla looked up and smiled when she saw him. "Andre, you're here."

"Mm." Andre walked into the room, closed the door behind him, and sat across from her. "Did something happen these past few days?"

Confusion flashed in Nyla's eyes. She shook her head. "No. Why?"

"Because you seem like a completely different person. Before, you slept through most of the morning during our lessons. Today, you're reading economics books," Andre pointed out.

Nyla couldn't help but smile. A bit of life returned to her pale face. "Well, whether I like it or not, I have to study. The only difference is whether I do it painfully or happily. I choose the latter."

Andre smiled. "I like your attitude. Let's start the lesson, then."

Nyla nodded. "Okay."

Andre set his laptop down on the desk, ready to begin, but just then, a knock sounded at the study door.

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The next moment, Delia pushed the door open and entered.

"Andre, my mom recently gave me a company to manage, but I don't know how to run it. I'd like to learn how to manage a company. Can you teach me too?" she

asked.

Nyla raised an eyebrow when she saw that Delia had changed into an outfit that accentuated her figure, her face heavily made up and her hair carefully styled.

After these past few incidents, she finally understood Delia's feelings for Andre.

Andre, seemingly unaware of Delia's deliberate effort to dress up, turned to Nyla and asked, "Do you mind if Ms. Nixon joins the lesson?"

Delia winced slightly. Frowning, she snapped, "Andre, I'm asking for your opinion. Why are you asking her?"

Andre replied calmly, "Ms. Nixon, when your mother invited me here, she only asked me to tutor Ms. Kinsey. If you want to join, it's up to Ms. Kinsey to agree first."

At this, Delia bit her lip, her displeasure evident.

She glared at Nyla and spoke in a warning tone. "You wouldn't deny me, would you?"

If Nyla refused, Delia would resort to the same tactics she had used before to ensure that Nyla couldn't attend class or see Andre.

Nyla raised an eyebrow. "Sure, as long as you call me 'big sister,' I'll let you join the lesson."

"What?!" Delia's face twisted with disbelief and anger. "I refuse!"

She didn't want to call Nyla "big sister." To her, Nyla was nothing more than someone from a lower class. The idea of addressing her that way was worse than death.

Nyla smiled. "You don't want to? Then that's fine. We're about to start, so please leave."

Delia raised her chin defiantly. "I won't leave. What can you do about it?"

Andre, feeling helpless, had heard plenty about Delia's spoiled personality, but now he was witnessing it firsthand.

"You don't have to leave," Nyla said "But I'll have Filipe call Ms. Kinsey and tell her that you're disrupting the lesson, and I won't be able to dearn anymore."

Delia hesitated. It wasn't that she feared Emerald's punishment, but she was afraid Emerald would forbid her from seeing Andre again.

Reluctantly, she told Nyla, "Change the condition. I'll agree to anything except this."

"That's my only condition. If you can't do it, you can leave now," Nyla replied. "You!" Delia was furious, her face red. "You're doing this on purpose!" Nyla nodded. "You can think of it that way."

To Delia's surprise, Nyla admitted it outright. She froze for a few seconds before realizing there was no way out.

Just as she was about to turn and leave, she caught a glimpse of Andre out of the corner of her eye.

Suppressing her fury, she turned back to Nyla. "Fine. I'll do it."

Biting her lip, she forced the words out. "Big... sister..."

Nyla almost pretended not to hear her, but when she saw Delia's face, twisted with suppressed frustration, she smiled instead. "Okay. Just remember, next time you come for a lesson, you have to call me that

again!"

Delia ground her teeth, then pulled out a chair and sat down at the desk. "Andre, we can start the lesson now."

Nyla spent the entire morning attentively listening to Andre explain economics. Whenever she felt drowsy, she pinched her thigh hard to stay awake.