

# Trading My Ex for His Uncle (Nyla)

## Chapter 861

"Brandon, you were just filling the emotional void I left in her life over the past five years. Give it time, and I'll show you who the right person for her really is!" Tom declared.

Brandon dismissed his provocation completely. "Mr. Genge, there's a difference between a devoted boyfriend and a scumbag ex who cheated and got caught in bed. I think Valarie knows how to choose." Ignoring the ugly expression that twisted Tom's face, he turned away, carrying Valarie in his arms. He helped her into the car and instructed the driver to start driving.

When the driver caught sight of Brandon's grim expression in the rearview mirror, he shuddered and nervously pulled down the privacy partition.

Only after the partition was fully raised, and Brandon made no objection, did the driver finally breathe a sigh of relief.

With the barrier up, the oppressive atmosphere dissipated, and the driver visibly relaxed.

In the back seat, Brandon's gaze fell on Valarie, who was leaning against the left door, fast asleep. His expression darkened. She seemed to be sleeping soundly.

Upon remembering the worry he'd felt when he couldn't find her and the anger that surged when he learned Tom had taken her, Brandon's jaw clenched. His gaze hardened, and he reached over, pulling her gently into his arms.

His movements disturbed a few strands of Valarie's long hair, which tickled her face, causing her to instinctively reach up and scratch.

Watching her remain blissfully unaware, Brandon felt a surge of anger rise within him. He gripped the back of her neck and bit down hard on her lush, red lips.

"Mmph... that hurts..." Valarie winced, frowning as she tried to push him away.

Brandon only intensified his advances.

Finally, after over a minute, he released her.

Valarie gasped for air like a fish out of water. Her lips, where he had bitten, were now even redder and more inviting.

Brandon closed his eyes, working to calm the turmoil inside, but he kept his grip on her hand tight.

"Valarie, since you've chosen to be with me, I won't let you go," he declared.

Valarie made a small sound and

burrowed closer into his embrace, her arms wrapping around

his waist.

After dropping Valarie off at home, Brandon was about to head back when his phone rang. It was Nyla.

"Brandon, did you get Valarie home?" Nyla asked.

Upon returning, Damon had

discovered that Tom had taken Valarie and learned of Brandon's efforts to retrieve her. Nyla had quickly called to check on Valarie's condition.

Brandon replied with a hum. "Aunt Nyla, you don't need to worry. She's fine. She just got a bit drunk."

Hearing this, Nyla felt a weight lift from her heart.

"Good. Make sure to get some rest," she said.

Just as Nyla was about to hang up, Brandon called out, "Aunt Nyla, I have something to ask you." "What is it?" Nyla asked.

Brandon hesitated. "Did Valarie... really like Tom?"

If she hadn't been fond of Tom, he wouldn't have had the confidence to say those things earlier.

Nyla lowered her gaze, pausing for a moment before replying. "No matter how much Valarie liked him in the past, that's all behind her. She won't go back to a man who cheated. The fact that she's willing to accept you shows you're important to her."

She added, "There's no point in comparing yourself to the past. What matters is that you're together now."

Brandon looked up at the dark sky, exhaling a warm breath. "Yeah, I understand. Thanks, Aunt Nyla."

He just regretted not meeting Valarie when she was ready to fully give herself to love.

## Chapter 866

The raw dislike in Valarie's eyes stabbed at Tom's heart like a sharp knife, and the pain radiated through him, nearly overwhelming him.

Tom began, "Valarie, I didn't understand my own feelings five years ago and did a lot of hurtful things to you. For the past five years abroad, I've thought about you every day. Valarie, I actually-" Valarie cut him off, "Tom, you're not about to say some nonsense about loving me, are you?"

Tom froze, guilt and affection flooding his expression as he looked at her.

"Valarie, can't you give me another chance?" he asked. "I promise I'll cherish you and won't make you sad again."

"Tom, you're overestimating yourself. I won't feel sad for you anymore. Your so-called love is just self-indulgence." Valarie's eyes showed no sign of softening.

"If you really loved me, would you have been in bed with another woman? Would you come to me now and ask for another chance while I'm seeing someone else?" she demanded. "If I were to get back together with you, how would I be any different from the person you were five years ago?"

She had lost all faith in him the moment she caught him cheating back then. Just looking at him now made her feel disgusted.

Tom's face paled, but he quickly regained his composure.

"Valarie, I know I made mistakes, and I understand that it's hard for you to forgive me right now," he said, trying to persuade her. "But I can wait. One day, you'll realize I'm the one who's truly right for you."

"If you have nothing else to do, maybe eat something," Valarie replied, rolling her eyes at him.

She thought how Tom must have come back from abroad with his brain scrambled.

Tom didn't press her further. His gaze shifted from her to Nyla, then discreetly away.

"I have other things to attend to. Enjoy yourselves," he said, standing up.

He straightened his suit and turned to leave.

Only after he disappeared from sight did Valarie's expression soften slightly. She looked at Nyla,

incredulous. "Do I look like I still have feelings for him? How can he be so confident?"  
en FindNovel

Even if every other man in the world vanished, she wouldn't look at Tom again.

Seeing Valarie fuming, Nyla couldn't help but laugh. "No, it's him who's not normal."

"Good. I don't want anything to do with that scumbag again!" Valarie huffed. The thought of her time with Tom unsettled her.

"Okay, don't be upset. He's not worth it," Nyla said soothingly.

Valarie agreed wholeheartedly. "Right. I'm going to grab some snacks. Do you want anything?"

"No thanks, I'm not hungry," Nyla replied.

"Alright," Valarie answered.

After Valarie left, Nyla leaned back on the sofa, glancing at Damon, who was chatting with others nearby. A smile crept onto her face.

When Damon noticed her gaze, he turned and his once-cold eyes softened immediately. He said something to the person next to him, then walked over to Nyla.

"Are you bored?" he asked, settling beside her, his faint scent of pine surrounding her.

Nyla looked up at him. "It's fine. Valarie is keeping me company."

"Mm. If you get bored or want to leave, just let me know. We can leave anytime," Damon reminded her.

Nyla replied, "Okay. Go ahead and do your thing. Don't worry about me."

This banquet was no different from a typical work event for the business people here. It was just a change of venue for business dealings.

As CEO of Prospectus Technology

Damon couldn't avoid the

crowd-even if he didn't plan to talk business, countless people would come seeking him out.

## Chapter 862

Brandon thought Nyla was right. What mattered now was that he was the one with Valarie. He wouldn't let her go, nor would he give Tom the chance to take her away.

...

The next day at noon, Valarie woke up with a splitting headache. Realizing she was in her bedroom, she paused and tried to remember how she had gotten back. All she recalled from the dinner the previous night was drinking too much and then Brandon coming to pick her up. After that, everything was a blank.

Brandon must have brought her home.

Rubbing her aching temples, she threw off the covers and got out of bed. While washing up, she noticed her lips were injured and leaned in closer to the mirror in disbelief. What happened? Had she fallen after drinking too much?

Aside from her lips, however, she had no other injuries.

Confused, Valarie finished getting ready and stepped out of the bathroom, intending to call Brandon to ask about her lips.

As soon as she checked her phone, she was shocked to see dozens of missed calls and various messages.

The first messages she noticed were from her ex-classmates at the dinner, along with several voice notes asking where she had gone.

Feeling puzzled, Valarie opened her class group chat and scrolled through hundreds of messages until she finally pieced together what had happened.

It turned out she had gotten into the wrong car the previous night-Tom had picked her up, not Brandon!

Moreover, according to their descriptions, Tom hadn't taken her back to the Weirs' right away. Instead, he had brought her to his own home, and it was Brandon who later went there to get her.

A wave of guilt washed over Valarie as she thought about how Brandon must have felt going to the Genge residence to take her back.

What would he think of her? Would he believe she still had feelings for Tom?

Suddenly, she remembered the injury on her lips, and her face went pale.

Could it have been from Tom...

She couldn't bear to think about it any longer. Taking a deep breath, she forced herself to calm down and dialed Brandon's number. After two rings, he answered.

"You're awake?" Brandon's voice was low, devoid of emotion.

Valarie spoke carefully. "Brandon... I'm really sorry. I got drunk last night, and I ended up in the wrong car..."

There was silence on the other end.

After waiting several seconds without a reply, she laughed dryly. "Brandon, when you picked me up last night, nothing happened, right?" "No," Brandon replied.

"That's good... Let's have lunch together later?" Valarie asked.

"I've already eaten," he answered.

Valarie checked the time and saw it was nearly 1:00 p.m. "Okay, never mind then. I'll go with you to the Genges' banquet this evening."

"I have to work late, so I might be delayed. You go ahead," Brandon said.

Valarie would have to be a fool not to realize that Brandon was upset. She bit her lip and said, "Brandon, I really did drink too much last night."

Brandon's tone remained calm. "Valarie, even if I were drunk, I wouldn't mistake another woman for

you or get into another woman's

Valarie lowered her gaze, unsure how to respond. She had messed up this time.

After a moment of silence,

Brandon's cool voice came through

again. have a meeting now. If 1.9

there's nothing else, I'm going to hang up."

"Okay..." Valarie answered.

As she listened to the dial tone, she tossed her phone onto the bed, feeling frustrated.

Alcohol really was a troublesome thing!

If she had known this would happen, she definitely wouldn't have drunk so much.

The more she thought about it, the more anxious she became, and her resentment toward Tom grew.

## Chapter 863

Tom had cheated on her five years ago, and now that she was in a new relationship, he was back to annoy her-what a persistent jerk!

After thinking for a moment, Valarie picked up her phone again and called Nyla.

"Nyla, are you going to the welcoming dinner for Tom at his family's place tonight?" she asked.

"I'm not planning to go. Why?" Nyla asked.

"You probably heard about what happened last night when I got drunk and mistook Tom for Brandon. I just explained to Brandon, but he was really cold. He's definitely upset.

"I want to go talk to Tom and make it clear that I don't want him bothering me anymore. Can you come with me?" Valarie asked.

If she went to meet Tom alone, Brandon would probably get even angrier if he found out.

Nyla sounded surprised. "Why not take Brandon with you? It would be more appropriate."

"Don't even mention it! I asked him to join me for the dinner, and he said he has to work late. It's obviously just an excuse," Valarie replied, sounding a bit defeated.

Nyla couldn't help but chuckle. "Valarie, if he's making excuses, just go to the Sumner Group and find him there."

"But..." Valarie hesitated. "He probably doesn't want to see me right now."

"No way! Have you been out of the dating game for too long? Have you forgotten that both women and men sometimes need a little coaxing? And you were in the wrong this time, so it's only right that you take the initiative to talk to him," Nyla advised. With Nyla's encouragement, Valarie finally decided to go to the Sumner Group first to find Brandon.

"Alright, but you have to go to the banquet tonight. I'm definitely going to clear things up with Tom at the dinner," Valarie requested.

Nyla sighed a little. "Okay, I'll go with you."

...

When Nyla headed downstairs with Damon in the evening, she was surprised to see a seven-seater van waiting for them. "Why the change of cars?" she asked.

"You won't have enough time to get your hair and makeup done if we go back and forth. I had the stylist and makeup artist come here to do it while we're on our way to the dinner. You can change in the car," Damon explained.

As he spoke, the driver opened the door for them.

As soon as Nyla got in, a makeup artist sat beside her, and a stylist took a seat behind her, starting to work in an organized manner.

"Ms. Kinsey, if you're tired, you can close your eyes and rest. We'll wake you up when we're done," they said.

After a long day of work, Nyla was indeed feeling a bit tired. She nodded and closed her eyes. She had only intended to rest for a bit, but she ended up falling asleep.

IMS

When she woke up, she found the car already parked outside the Genge residence.

The sky had shifted from daylight to night, and the car was dimly lit. Meanwhile, the stylist and makeup artist had left.

"You're up? If you're still tired, you can take another quick nap," Damon said, his deep voice sounding next to Nyla's ear and causing her to jump.

She sat up straight, took off the jacket draped over her, and handed it to Damon.

"Why didn't you wake me?" she asked.

Damon turned on the car lights.



"It's not that important of a dinner," he said, implying that her rest was more important.

Nyla checked the time and saw it was already 7:30 p.m. The dinner had started half an hour ago.

"Let's go in," she urged.

"Hold on." Damon stopped her and handed her two bags. "These arez your clothes and shoes. I'll wait for you outside. The windows are tinted, so no one can see inside. Don't worry."

Once Nyla took the bags, he opened the door and got out of the car. After Damon closed the door, Nyla took out the clothes from the bags.

## #Chapter 864

### Chapter 864

Damon had prepared a pure white, strapless long dress for Nyla, tailored at the waist and featuring a layered skirt. The bottom layer was made of white silk, while the top layer was sheer, adorned with sequins that shimmered under the lights.

The dress was simply elegant, and Nyla instantly fell in love with it.

The shoes were crystal heels with a crystal flower embellishing the toes glistening and stunning.

After changing into the dress and shoes, Nyla pushed open the door and stepped out of the car.

A cold breeze blew by, causing her to shiver involuntarily. The next moment, a warm coat was draped over her shoulders.

"Let's go," Damon said, taking her hand and leading her inside.

He walked half a step ahead of her, and she couldn't help but admire his tall, handsome figure. Her eyes sparkled with joy, and warmth spread through her heart.

As they entered Genge residence's hall, the space was brightly lit and bustling with people.

Valarie spotted Nyla and hurried over after exchanging a few words with the people next to her.

"Nyla, you finally made it! I've been waiting for you!" she called out.

"I got held up on the way," Nyla replied.

Damon looked at Nyla and said quietly, "I'm going over there. If you need anything, just call for me."

Nyla nodded and handed back the coat that had been draped over her.

Damon took the coat, nodded at Valarie, and walked away.

As soon as he was gone, Valarie grabbed Nyla's hand. "Nyla, the approach you suggested really worked! I pestered Brandon at his company all afternoon. He's still mad, but his attitude toward me is much better than before." "If you keep it up, maybe you'll be able to patch things up tonight," Nyla suggested.

Valarie nodded eagerly. "You have to come with me to find Tom. I want to talk to him properly."

I.ne

Nyla looked at her. "Valarie, should you maybe think this through? You and Brandon are fighting over Tom right now. If he finds out you're meeting with Tom privately, all your efforts today will have been for nothing."

At her words, Valarie hesitated, her brows furrowing.

Seeing her conflicted expression, Nyla lowered her voice. "I think you don't need to rush things with Tom. You don't even like him anymore, right? Just try to avoid him in the future."

Just as Valarie was about to respond, a cheerful voice interrupted them. "Aunt Nyla, I didn't expect to see you here!"

Valarie and Nyla turned to see a woman in a light blue spaghetti strap dress walking toward them.

As she approached, Nyla finally recognized her. It was Damon's niece, Charlotte.

She wasn't close with Charlotte, so she was surprised by her enthusiasm.

Valarie shot Nyla a look that said, "Who is she?"

Nyla replied quietly, "Damon's niece, Charlotte Sumner."

While they were talking, Charlotte had already reached Nyla.

"Aunt Nyla, I've mentioned several times to Uncle Damon that he should bring you to dinner with us. He always declined. I've wanted to meet you properly for a while,"

rlotte said.

Nyla smiled and greeted her. "Your uncle is over there handling business."

"I just said hi to him. Aunt Nyla, the real reason I came to find you today is something else," Charlotte replied.

Nyla's eyes widened in surprise. "What is it?"

Charlotte glanced at Valarie, looking hesitant to speak.

Valarie tactfully released Nyla's hand. "Nyla, I'm going to chat with some friends over there. I'll come find you later." "Okay," Nyla answered.

## Chapter 865

After Valarie left, Charlotte finally got to the point. "Aunt Nyla, does your father have a unit in Sunshine Paradise?" "Yeah, why do you suddenly ask?" Nyla replied.

Sunshine Paradise was where her family's old house was. Harrison had moved there after getting out of the hospital.

"That area is about to be redeveloped. It won't be long before someone comes to discuss compensation with your father," Charlotte explained.

"How do you know about this? And why are you telling me?" Nyla's gaze was cold as she looked at Charlotte.

Charlotte sighed. "My company is planning to collaborate with the Wilkie Group on that land, but the residents aren't keen on moving."

Seeing that Nyla remained silent, she paused before continuing. "I came here to ask if you could discuss it with Mr. Jayston. If you agree to be the first to relocate, I can help you apply for an extra unit."

"Ms. Sumner, I might not be able to help you with that. My dad might not want to move," Nyla replied.

All these years, he had held onto that old place because it was filled with memories of their family. Moreover, when Nyla last visited Harrison, she noticed that most of the

residents were older people who had lived there for decades and had formed deep attachments. That was probably why they were reluctant to leave.

"Aunt Nyla, the compensation could be in the millions, and each family would receive two units. I think you should talk to your father about it," Charlotte suggested.

She thought the offer was generous. If that land wasn't in such a prime location, the compensation would only be between 150,000 dollars and 300,000 dollars at most definitely not more.

Nyla shook her head. "I can't decide this, but I'll pass along what you said."

Upon hearing this, Charlotte sensed a chance and quickly said, "Thank you, Aunt Nyla!"

"If there's nothing else, Ms. Sumner, I'll take my leave," Nyla said.

"No need to be so formal. Just call me Charlotte," Charlotte replied.

"Alright. I'll go to my friend now," Nyla excused herself.

"Sure, Aunt Nyla. If there's any news, have Uncle Damon contact me," Charlotte said.

Nyla gave a slight nod and turned to walk toward Valarie.

When Valarie learned about the redevelopment of Sunshine

Paradise, she quickly grabbed Nyla's arm. "Nyla, if you hit the jackpot, don't forget about me! Soon

rich from the relocation

I ne

compensation, and I'm going to

I be

depend on you for support!"

Nyla chuckled. "Stop joking. Even if they redevelop it, that money is for my dad's retirement. It has nothing to do with me."

"That doesn't stop me from depending on you," Valarie teased.

While they were talking, someone tall approached them.

When Valarie saw I was Tom, her smile instantly vanished, and her expression turned cold. Tom didn't seem bothered by her indifference and sat down directly across from her and Nyla. "Valarie, can we talk?" he asked.

Valarie looked at him icily. "Tom, I

did intend to talk to you when I came to this banquet, but now I don't want to. Professionally, the business between the Weir Group and the Genges is not for me to discuss, and personally, we broke up five years ago-there's nothing to talk about."

Tom gazed at her with a mixture of helplessness and affection. "Valarie, you haven't changed at all."

Valarie

éwned and raised her gaze yup my dinner." Contoking

to him. Tom, could you stop looking at I'll so disgustingly? I'm a

T'll

## Chapter 867

"Okay," Damon said as he gently tucked a stray hair behind Nyla's ear and leaned closer to her.

Suddenly, Valarie's voice interrupted them. "Mr. Sumner, PDAs are prohibited!"

Damon was momentarily speechless. He pulled back from Nyla and turned to Valarie.

"Ms. Weir, I'll remember this," he said.

Valarie replied confidently, "When you marry Nyla, I'll definitely be one of the bridesmaids. By the way, what was it you said you'd remember?" Damon took a deep breath.

"I remembered that I ought to invite you over for dinner sometime," he replied.

Valarie raised an eyebrow. "Oh? I'm free any day. Feel free to contact me."

"Sure..." Damon muttered, his expression turning into a semi-sowl.

It seemed he would need to have a talk with Brandon soon about keeping his girlfriend in check.

Seeing Damon flustered was rare, and Nyla couldn't help but chuckle.

Damon glanced at her, his eyes silently reproachful.

Nyla forced herself to stop laughing.

"You should go talk business," she said.

Damon hummed in response.

After Damon left, Valarie sat down next to Nyla.

"By the way, I just saw Jane and Rebecca acting all sneaky. I wonder what they're up to," she said.

Recalling Jane's arrogant attitude during the fight between Mason and Wilhelm, Nyla instinctively frowned.

"Ignore them," she replied flatly.

"I'm just concerned they might be planning something against you," Valarie said.

Seeing the worry in Valarie's eyes, Nyla softened her gaze. "I'll be careful. Don't worry."

"Okay," Valarie said, though her eyes remained on Jane and Rebecca, who were huddled together in a corner. Her grip on her wine glass tightened.

Now that Nyla had Damon looking out for her, Jane and Rebecca likely wouldn't dare make a move.

With that thought, Valarie felt her anxiety ease. She made a mental note to remind Damon to have someone protect Nyla and Mason. Meanwhile, in the corner, Jane and Rebecca stood with displeased expressions.

Jane glared coldly at Rebecca, her tone scornful "Didn't you say you could handle Nyla? I've been waiting for a while and haven't seen you do anything. If you can't manage it don't waste my time with useless chatter."

Rebecca grimaced. "The person who was supposed to help me deal with Nyla has had some issues lately, so I haven't been able to implement the plan." Jane snorted derisively. "I shouldn't have trusted you from the start. Until I get the results I want, I won't give you that project we discussed."

When Rebecca first approached Jane, she had expressed interest in acquiring a project from the Wilkie Group. Jane had promised to hand it over to the Preston Group once Nyla was out of the picture.

Rebecca gritted her teeth.

"Ms. Wilkie, is it possible you have no real authority over that project, which is why you keep delaying?" she asked.

If she didn't get that project soon, she wouldn't have the chance to run off with Nathaniel's money before he killed her.

The bruises from his previous attacks still throbbed with pain, and she couldn't bear the thought of enduring that hellish torment again. If this went on, she would lose her mind.

Jane laughed mockingly, her tone

condescending. "You're in no

position to question me. Understand this-you're the one asking me for a favor, not the other way around Who give the project to is my choice." FindNovel

Won

She laid down her terms. "I'll give you another week. If there's still no progress, then the promises I made to you are void."

With that, she turned and walked away, not bothering to look back at Rebecca.

## Chapter 868

Rebecca watched Jane's proud figure walking away and clutched her dress tightly, rage burning in her eyes.

When Jane returned to Gabriel's side, he was deep in conversation with Shane from Starlite Enterprise.

Overhearing them discuss the Golden Waters Resort project, she remained alert. She held her glass and stood seemingly idly by Gabriel, but she absorbed every word they said.

"Mr. Hackett, I was quite interested in collaborating with the Wilkie Group, but they've been slow to respond. I had to sign a contract with Mr. Calnan from Start Vic," Shane said. "He transferred the funds to Starlite Enterprise's account this afternoon. We can consider collaborating next time."

Gabriel nodded. "Of course, Mr. Tonra. The investment this time is substantial. Let's work together on the next promising project."

Shane turned to Jane with a smile. "I admire your decisiveness, Ms. Wilkie. We must collaborate when the opportunity arises." Jane forced a smile. "Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Tonra. I still have much to learn from you."

"You're too humble. I'm sure the Wilkie Group will thrive under your leadership," Shane said.

This flattery struck a chord with Jane, and her smile became a bit more genuine. "I appreciate your kind words, Mr. Tonra."

"I still have business to discuss, so I'll excuse myself for now. Let's chat again soon," Shane replied.

Once he left, Gabriel turned to Jane. "Where were you just now?"

"I was chatting with a friend," Jane answered.

Gabriel didn't pry further. "You heard what Mr. Tonra said. The Golden Waters Resort project has gone to Start Vic. Don't bring it up with Grandpa anymore." Jane had approached Pedro several times recently, trying to persuade him to invest in the Golden Waters Resort project, but her efforts had been in vain.

Now that another company had secured the project, she had no choice but to let it go, no matter how reluctant she felt.

"Got it," she replied.

Seeing Jane's downcast expression, Gabriel tried to comfort her. "Don't worry. As long as your performance is better than Theo's, Grandpa will surely hand the company over to you."

Jane didn't respond.

Pedro had appointed her to manage the company because Theo had once been irresponsible. If Theo began to take the company seriously, she wouldn't just lose her position but probably the promised shares as well.

She had joined the company right after graduating and worked diligently for several years. Even if she hadn't achieved fame, her efforts counted.

She certainly wouldn't let Theo, that useless brat, take over the Wilkie Group without a fight.

With that thought, she looked up at Gabriel. "Gabriel, you'll help me, right?"

"Of course. You're my wife. Who else would I help?" Gabriel coaxed.



Jane's eyes brightened, and she smiled sweetly.

He'd better not betray her. Otherwise, she'd make sure he ended up with nothing.

...

The banquet concluded around 9:00 p.m.

Since the driver had a last-minute issue at home, Damon drove them back.

On the way, Nyla called Harrison to

inform him about the upcoming demolition of the house. His

response was exactly as she had

expected-he was firmly against it.

After hanging up, Damon asked, "How did you find out about the demolition of Sunshine Paradise?"

"Your niece mentioned it to me tonight. Don't you know that Charlotte is collaborating with the Wilkie Group?" Nyla asked. Damon kept his gaze on the road, speaking casually. "Not really."

To him, Charlotte's little company was small fry that wouldn't amount to anything, though it was enough to support her family.

## Chapter 869

"She told me tonight that if my dad was the first to agree to the demolition, he'd get an extra unit," Nyla said. Damon signaled left, stopping the car at the intersection to look at her. "Does your dad not want to move?" "Yeah, and I don't really want to either," she replied.

"Then don't," Damon said.

Nyla raised an eyebrow. "You're not the project manager. Just because you say we won't move doesn't mean we won't. Some people support the demolition, while those who disagree now are just trying to drive up the price." She didn't believe all the residents wanted to stay in that old, run-down neighborhood.

"I could buy that project," Damon suggested.

"If you have that much money, just give it to me," Nyla joked.

Damon handed her a black card without hesitation.

"This is my main card," he said. "All my savings are in it."

Nyla was taken aback-her first instinct was to refuse. "No thanks. I have enough money."

Damon didn't press her and took the card back. After all, once they were married, he intended to hand over his bank card for her to manage anyway.

"Are you sure you don't need my help with the demolition issue?" he asked.

"No. Maybe my dad will change his mind one day," Nyla replied.

Damon said nothing more, and the car fell into silence.

The quiet was soon broken by the sound of a ringing phone.

Damon glanced at the caller ID. It was Spencer.

He answered with his left hand and asked, "What's up?"

"Mr. Sumner, the investigation you asked Falcon to conduct has results. The details have been sent to your email," Spencer informed him.

Damon's expression grew serious. "Okay. I'll check it when I get home."

After the call, he drove noticeably faster, his demeanor shifting from relaxed to focused.

In less than half an hour, they arrived at the villa. As they walked inside

Damon told Nyla to go her

while he went to his study to handle some work.

Nyla nodded. "Okay."

Once in the study, Damon quickly opened his laptop, logged into his email, and accessed the files Spencer had sent.

What he found was a comprehensive dossier on Drake.

After reading it, his expression turned extremely grim.

On the surface, Drake was a senior executive at MK Company. Behind the scenes, he had close ties to the mafia in Meristate, serving the Nixons who backed MK Company, by handling various discreet matters for them.

The only connection he had with Nyla was through their mutual acquaintance, Rebecca.

It seemed Damon would have to start with Rebecca. He took out his phone and dialed Nathaniel's number.

"I'm sending you a file," he instructed. "I want to know within three days why Drake is investigating Nyla." "Sure, but I want Prospectus Technology's land in the south of the city in exchange," Nathaniel bargained. The line went dead..

Nathaniel knew Damon's character well. A lack of refusal meant negotiations were possible.

His phone buzzed shortly after. He opened the document Damon had sent.

At first, he wore a smile, but as he read further, his expression darkened, becoming almost livid.

That wretched Rebecca had been sleeping around while abroad, yet she had pretended to be innocent in front of him, manipulating his

feelings to have him deal with Nyla!

The thought of being outmaneuvered by such a woman made Nathaniel feel his dignity was being crushed.

He let out a cold laugh and walked out of the bedroom.

## Chapter 870

Nathaniel frowned when he didn't see Rebecca in the living room and called for a maid. "Where's Rebecca?"

Seeing his scowl, the maid quickly bowed her head, too fearful to meet his gaze. "Mr. Preston, Mrs. Preston said she couldn't sleep and went for a walk in the garden. She didn't take anyone with her." Nathaniel said nothing more and strode out the door.

In the garden's pavilion, Rebecca was on the phone with Sullivan.

"Sullivan, when are you going to take action? I don't have time to waste!" she hissed.

Dim streetlights cast eerie shadows across her face.

"Ms. Austen, opportunities don't come easily, and I've been injured recently. There's no chance to do anything," Sullivan replied.

His casual tone enraged Rebecca, and she growled, "Sullivan, I helped save your dad before, and I can cut off his medical expenses any time I want. I won't support a loser. If Nyla is still safe after a week, I won't pay a single penny to the hospital!" With what Sullivan earned, he couldn't possibly afford the exorbitant post-surgery recovery costs for his father.

Without her, how could he still sit comfortably as the drug research manager at Prospectus Technology?

A cold glint flashed in Rebecca's eyes. Taking her money but failing to do her bidding? Nothing in this world came that easily.

There was silence on the line for a moment before Sullivan finally replied, "Alright, I understand."

"Remember my deadline!" Rebecca warned before hanging up.

She put her phone away and turned to head back to the villa when she abruptly locked eyes with Nathaniel's cold stare. Her face went pale with fright. "N-Nathaniel... when did you get here? Why didn't you say anything?" she asked.

Nathaniel stared at her coldly. "Who were you just talking to?"

Rebecca instinctively tightened her grip on her phone. "N-No one. Just my cousin who borrowed some money. I told him to pay me back quickly..."

"Is that so?" Nathaniel scrutinized her with piercing eyes.

Rebecca nodded, handing him her phone. "If you don't believe me, you can call back and check."

Glancing at the phone she offered, Nathaniel sneered. "No need. I'm not interested. I came to find you for another reason." "What is it?" Rebecca asked.

Nathaniel questioned, "When you were abroad, you knew someone named Drake Mummery, right?"

The moment the words left his lips, Rebecca's face turned ashen, and she trembled uncontrollably. "I... I don't know him... Why are you asking me this?" she stuttered.

Nathaniel snorted. "The fact that I can accurately say the name means I already have information about your past interactions with him while you were abroad. You better think carefully before you answer.

Meeting his icy, piercing gaze, Rebecca felt her legs weaken, nearly collapsing. "Nathaniel... I do know him... but we haven't contacted each other since I returned to the country..."

A sharp slap echoed through the pavilion as soon as she said that.

Rebecca staggered back a few steps, a handprint quickly appearing on her cheek.

"I gave you a chance. Since you refuse to tell the truth, I'll beat it out of you until you do!" Nathaniel threatened.

As he spoke, he reached for Rebecca.

Rebecca's face drained of color as she turned to flee, but Nathaniel caught her hair first.

"Ah!" she screamed, terror etched on her face. "Nathaniel... please let me go... I'll tell you everything... I-Ah!"

## Chapter 871

Screams echoed from the pavilion, each one blending with the next, until a full half-hour passed before silence finally fell.

During this time, not a single servant appeared. The staff had grown used to Rebecca being hit, and nobody dared to intervene. After all, they were just employees, and Rebecca wasn't particularly kind to them. It was best to avoid trouble whenever possible. Rebecca lay motionless on the pavilion floor, barely conscious. Her body was covered in bruises, though her face remained unmarked.

Standing over her, Nathaniel looked down with a mix of disgust and hatred. He snarled, "Rebecca, if you hadn't lied to me, I wouldn't have had a falling-out with Damon. The Preston Group wouldn't be in this mess, begging for partnerships. You deserve every bit of this." Rebecca didn't reply. Her eyes were full of despair.

How much longer would this endless, miserable life continue? If she had known what returning to the country would cost her, she would never have come back.

It was too late now. There were no second chances. All she could do was find a way to escape.

Nathaniel crouched down, grabbed Rebecca's chin, and forced her to look at him when she remained silent.

"When you came back to the country five years ago, Drake contacted you several times. What did he want?" he asked.

Rebecca turned away, still silent.

Nathaniel let out a cold laugh. "You think you're safe if you don't answer?"

"He blackmailed me," Rebecca replied. "He said he'd release videos of us together if I didn't return to him."

Nathaniel sneered. "You really think

I'm that same fool from five years ago? Drake's an executive at MK

Company. If he really wanted yomet

JΘΠ

he'd have dragged you back overseas, not let you stay with me for five years.

"So don't give me excuses. I already know he was digging into Nyla's background. What I want to know is why?"

Rebecca's eyes widened in fear, and

she subconsciously clenched her hands. She looked at Nathaniel coldly and asked, "Since you could find this out, why can't you figure out why he's looking into Nyla?"

"Arguing will only make you suffer more. Do you want to go into the basement?" Nathaniel taunted.

Rebecca shuddered, fear flashing in her eyes. The basement of the Prestons' villa was her nightmare. She'd rather die than step in there again.

Nathaniel smiled in satisfaction when he noticed her fear. "Tell me what you know if you don't want to go there."

Rebecca took a deep breath. "I don't

know why he's investigating Nyla either. I just know that he suddenly wanted to come here after seeing Nyla's photo, and he warned me not to do anything to her or he wouldn't let me off."

Nathaniel squinted, his gaze skeptical. "Given his warning, how did you get away with causing Nyla's accident at sea? Explain that."

Rebecca shook her head. "I don't know... After Nyla's accident, he didn't contact me again."

To this day, she had no idea why Drake was after Nyla. As far as she knew, there was no connection between them.

Nathaniel threatened, "If I find out you've lied, I'll make you wish you'd never been born."

Rebecca trembled. "I've told you everything I know. He never really trusted me. He wouldn't share anything important with me."

"I'll look into it," Nathaniel warned. "You'd better pray that what I find matches what you've said."

## Chapter 872

With a final scornful look, Nathaniel strode away.

Rebecca stared at his back, her eyes burning with hatred. He despised her, but she felt no less resentment toward him.

Every day she endured his torment, desperate to escape this life. If she could go back, she'd never have let Nathaniel into her life.

When Nathaniel returned to his study, he immediately called Damon to recount everything Rebecca had just told him.

"Sounds like Drake might not have any ill intentions toward Nyla," he ventured.

Damon tapped rhythmically on his desk, his eyes cast down. "Thanks, but this doesn't really add up to what I need."

Nathaniel knew Rebecca's vague answers were hardly useful, so he said, "I wasn't planning to get anything out of this. I'll get Rebecca to reach out to Drake again, see if we can dig deeper. Then we'll talk." "Sure," Damon answered.

Damon hung up and set his phone down, a cold glint in his eyes. He only wanted peace with Nyla, yet trouble seemed to find them again and again.

If that were the case, he'd just have to eliminate each disturbance as it arose.

It was nearly midnight by the time Damon returned to the bedroom.

Nyla was sitting up with a book, her face calm and serene in the soft lamplight. Hearing the door, she looked up with a gentle smile.

"Work all done?" she asked.

Damon nodded. "Mm. Why're you still up?"

"I was waiting for you," she replied.

Warmth filled Damon's heart. "Next time, don't wait. If I'm working too late, I'll sleep in the study."

Nyla ignored his comment, and her voice remained soft as she urged, "Go shower. You must be tired."

"All right," Damon answered.

He grabbed a set of pajamas and headed into the bathroom.

As the shower ran, Nyla closed her book, placing it on the nightstand. She reached for her phone, playing a quick game to pass the time. Soon, the water stopped, and Damon emerged in his pajamas, toweling his damp hair. Once he was done, he climbed into bed.

As the bed sank with his weight and the scent of his after-shower lingered, the air felt damp.

Nyla reached for Damon's hair and found it only half-dried. She offered, "Let me dry your hair. It's cold, and

you might catch someoV

Damon usually let his short hair air-dry, but seeing the concern in Nyla's eyes, his gaze softened. "All right."

Nyla retrieved the hairdryer and motioned for Damon to sit in front of her. "Come here."

As she gently ran her fingers through his hair, the hairdryer buzzed quietly between them.



The only sound in the room was the warm rush of air, the soft glow of the bedside lamp casting a cozy light over them.

Nyla's fingers brushed Damon's ear

occasionally, sending a slight shiver down his spine. His gaze locked onto her, a sudden intensity flickering in his eyes.

Caught by the heat in Damon's gaze, Nyla felt a blush creep up her cheeks, her fingers momentarily stiffening around the hairdryer.

She bit her lip, a simple movement that seemed to enflame the air between them.

Damon's eyes darkened. Nyla's lips, slightly pale but now tinged with pink from her own bite, appeared as tempting as a blooming rose. It was impossible to resist.

Without another thought, his hand slipped around her waist, pulling her into his embrace.

## Chapter 873

Nyla let out a soft gasp as she found herself straddling Damon's lap, his muscles tense beneath her. Her face flushed, and she quickly looked away.

Turning off the hairdryer, she muttered, "All done. Let me put this away."

Before she could get up, Damon took the hairdryer from her and tossed it aside.

"What are you" Before Nyla could finish, Damon kissed her.

His scent of pine filled her senses, and her body trembled, melting into his embrace.

When Damon finally pulled back, their breaths were uneven, and their heartbeats pounded so loudly it was impossible to tell whose was whose. His hand glided down her waist, gently untying her robe, which fell open... The lights clicked off.

It took a while before the intimate atmosphere in the room finally calmed.

...

Only Tom and his secretary remained in the living room of the Genge villa.

Tom handed a bag to his secretary. "Send this to Meristate."

The bag was transparent, holding a used wine glass.

The secretary hesitated. "Mr. Genge, are we sure we can get DNA just from this glass Nyla used?"

"Just send it. Whether we can or not doesn't matter," Tom replied.

If the DNA could be extracted, that would be ideal. If not, he had other ways to get Nyla's hair.

His secretary nodded. "Understood. I'll send it right away."

After the secretary left, Tom pinched the bridge of his nose, feeling exhausted. His thoughts drifted back to the things Valarie had said to him that evening, and his expression darkened.

Her words had stung, but he wasn't one to give up easily.

Brandon was six years younger than Valarie. In Tom's mind, Brandon might be interested in Valarie, but only for fun.

When it came time to settle down,

Tom couldn't imagine Brandon marrying her. After all, Tom had

cheated on her once before-he

wasn't Worried about her seein

someone else now. He just needed

to make sure he was the one by her

side in the end.

...

Valarie and Brandon sat close together in his car outside the Weir gate, reluctant to say goodbye. She leaned against him, planning their next weekend together, when she suddenly sneezed.

"Is it too cold?" Brandon asked,

draping his coat over her shoulders.

"It's late. Why don't you go in and get

some rest? I'll come up with a few ideas for next weekend, and you can pick one."

Seeing that it was past midnight, Valarie nodded. "Okay. Drive safe and text me when you get home."

"Will do," Brandon said.

After watching him drive away, Valarie turned back to the house, where Phoebe was still awake, watching TV in the living room.

"Mom, why aren't you in bed yet?" she asked.

Phoebe turned to her. "Valarie, come sit with me. I need to talk to you."

Curious, Valarie changed into her slippers and joined her on the couch. "This couldn't wait until morning?"

## Chapter 874

"I couldn't sleep, so I thought I'd stay up a bit longer," Phoebe replied.

"Mm. What did you want to talk to me about?" Valarie asked.

Phoebe handed her a bank card, sighing. "You know how things are with your father's business. We don't know how much longer it'll hold out.

"Your dad and I have been saving this money for you since you were born. Originally, it was meant for your wedding, but we've decided it's better to give it to you now."

Valarie's smile faded as she looked at the card, hesitant to take it. "Mom, I can't take this."

"Take it," Phoebe urged. "Think of it as your wedding gift from us. There might not be anything left for you later."

Valarie shook her head. "I really don't need it, Mom. You should give it to Dad to help with the business instead "

Phoebe interrupted, "This isn't enough to save the company. And it's been saved under your name since you were born. Your dad and I have been adding to the account every year. Even if we go bankrupt, no one can touch it."

With a pause, Phoebe added, "We can see you're much happier now with Brandon than you were before. He seems like someone you can rely on. But no matter what happens, we want you to have options, Valarie. This money is your safety net." "Mom..." Valarie said softly.

Phoebe pressed the card into her hand and stood up. "It's late. Let's get some rest."

Valarie pressed her lips together and nodded. "Goodnight, Mom."

She went to her room with the card in hand, feeling a mix of emotions. She placed it on her vanity and let out a long sigh.

She decided to keep the card for now. If her father's company survived the crisis, she'd use the money to repay Nyla.

After locking the card in her safe, she grabbed her clothes and headed to the bathroom for a shower. As she stepped out, her phone rang-it was Brandon.

"Valarie, I'm home," he said, his voice deep and warm, like a soothing melody.

"Good. Get some rest. I'll see you tomorrow," Valarie replied.

"That's all?" Brandon sounded disappointed. "Nothing else you want to say?"

Valarie raised an eyebrow. "What else?"

"Like telling me you miss me. I've been thinking of you since the moment we said goodbye," Brandon confessed.

"Oh..." Valarie replied, putting the phone on speaker while she applied her skincare.

"You really don't miss me at all?" Brandon asked.

Barely able to contain a smile at wronged he sounded, Valarie's face mask

adju early slipped off as shapew

adjusted it. She hummed. "Maybe... just a little."

"How little?" Brandon pressed.

Valarie teased, "Maybe just enough to fit on the tip of a fingernail."

"Alright, I'll take that." Brandon sighed. "I'll look forward to earning more day by day." Valarie adjusted her mask again, murmuring playfully, "That depends on how you do." They chatted for a bit longer before saying goodnight.

The next morning, Valarie woke to a noise downstairs. She was about to call a maid to find out what was going on when there was a knock at her door.

"Ms. Weir, your parents are asking you to come downstairs.

in her.

there to see you," a bet

A bit puzzled, Valarie wondered why they'd need her for a guest.

## Chapter 875

"Alright, I'll be down in a moment," Valarie replied.

After dismissing the maid, she quickly freshened up and went downstairs within 20 minutes.

As soon as Valarie entered the living room, she saw Zayn's mother, Monica Eyman, sitting on the sofa. Her expression immediately darkened.

With a frown, she moved to sit beside Phoebe and coldly regarded Monica across from her. "What are you doing here?"

If it weren't for the Updikes' enabling, Zayn wouldn't have dared to treat her the way he did. The very thought made her stomach churn with disgust.

Monica had once acted so fond of her, even 'warning' Zayn in front of her to treat her better. For a time, Valarie had believed Monica truly liked her until she discovered that Zayn had a mistress who had already borne him a child-and that Monica knew about it. Monica even visited them regularly.

After learning this, Valarie lost all respect for her.

Monica forced a weak smile. "Valarie, I'm truly sorry for what happened with Zayn. I didn't raise him right, and you didn't deserve this."

Valarie remained silent, waiting for her to continue.

"Zayn loves you too much, that's all," Monica said.

"He let his emotions get the better of him and ended up hurting you. After all, you two are engaged.

"Could you let it go, just this once? I promise I'll make sure he treats you well from now on. If he ever wrongs you again, I'll be the first to punish him.

"I'll also take care of that woman and child he has outside. If you bear the family's heir, your child will inherit everything from the Updikes," Monica promised.

Phoebe couldn't stay silent any longer. "Mrs. Updike, what are you saying? Do you think we're selling our daughter? Do you honestly believe I'd let my daughter marry your son after what he did?

"And this wasn't just a mistake what he did was criminal! The Weirs will not let this go lightly!"

Her strong stance made Monica's face stiffen with anger.

"Mrs. Weir, are you sure you want to go up against the Updikes?" Monica asked.

She had lowered herself to come here to offer them an easy way out, but the Weirs were bold enough to defy her.

Valarie gently held Phoebe's arm, saying softly, "Mom, please go rest. Let me handle this."

Given how unreasonable Monica was, Valarie feared Phoebe might pass out from anger if she stayed any longer.

"But what if she tries to bully you?" Phoebe protested, frowning.

"This is our house. What could she possibly do to me? Besides, I want to handle this on my own," Valarie replied.

Seeing her daughter's determination, Phoebe reluctantly nodded. "Fine. But if you can't resolve this, have someone throw her out." "Got it," Valarie agreed.

After Phoebe left, Valarie turned

back to Monica and asked, "Mrs. Updike you mentioned taking care of Zayn's mistress and child. How exactly do you plan to 'handle' them?"

Monica hesitated. She hadn't intended to actually get rid of them. Her words had been meant to placate Valarie. In her mind, how could Valarie possibly matter more than her own grandson?

After a brief pause, Monica forced another smile. "I was thinking of sending them abroad permanently. They'd never come back-does that work?" FindNovel

Valarie scoffed. Sending them abroad? Who was Monica trying to fool?

Valarie would bet anything that Monica would just hide them temporarily, then bring them back the moment she dropped the charges against Zayn.

## Chapter 876

"Mrs. Updike, do I look like an idiot to you? Or are you just not thinking straight?" Valarie asked, her tone dripping with sarcasm.

Monica's expression stiffened in response.

"Then what do you want?" Monica demanded, her voice cold.

Valarie raised her eyebrows and said firmly, "Even if they're sent abroad, they could always come back. What I want is to sever ties completely."

Monica's face hardened. "Valarie, you're still just a young woman. Don't be so ruthless. Zayn's mistress may be at fault, but the child is innocent. I can't believe you'd suggest something so extreme!" Her gaze carried a note of disappointment, as though Valarie's words reflected poorly on her character.

Once, that look might have affected Valarie, but now Monica was no more than the mother of the defendant-a near stranger to her.

"Whatever ruthlessness I have pales in comparison to yours, Mrs. Updike. After all, you managed to raise a rapist," Valarie retorted.

"What did you just say?!" Monica shot up from her seat, pointing an accusatory finger at Valarie. "Say that again!"

Her face flushed, her eyes blazing with rage, as if she were ready to lash out.

"No matter how many times I say it, it won't change," Valarie replied coolly. "I won't be withdrawing my charges, nor will I accept mediation. Zayn is going to pay for what he did."

Monica sneered. "Fine. I had planned to support the Weir Group out of goodwill for Zayn's mistake, but with your attitude, you can expect the Weir Group to go bankrupt!"

Valarie rolled her eyes. "Don't let the door hit you on the way out."

If the Updikes could truly destroy the Weir Group, Zayn wouldn't have needed to get engaged to her in the first place. With Damon backing the Weir Group now, they had

nothing to fear from the Updikes. Monica stormed out, her fury palpable, vowing to make Valarie pay. As she climbed into the car, she snapped at the driver, "Take me to the office!"

"Yes, Mrs. Updike," the driver replied.

Just as the car began to move, Monica's phone rang.

Seeing it was her husband, she

answered, her anger barely

contained. "That witch Valarie won't

relent. You need to bankrupt the

Weir Group!"

She ranted for several moments before realizing Anthony hadn't responded. "Why aren't you saying anything?"

"Our company... is going bankrupt," Anthony's voice came through the phone, flat and weary.

"What?!" Monica's voice shot up, filled with shock. "Are you out of your mind? What kind of nonsense is this?"

Just yesterday, the Updike Group

had been fine, with several major deals signed. How could they be

facing bankruptcy overnight?

swnov

Monica briefly wondered if Anthony was losing his mind, perhaps due to the stress over Zayn being caught.

"It's true. You're losing access to your own funds, too," Anthony replied.

Upon hearing the despair in his voice, Monica's panic deepened. "What's going on? Stop scaring me!"

"I have a lot to deal with right now. Do what you can about Zayn. If nothing else works... then he'll have to pay for what he did," Anthony said before hanging up.



Monica immediately tried calling him back, but he didn't answer. She stared at her phone, her face etched with despair.

Yesterday, the Updike Group had been thriving. How could it be facing bankruptcy now?

In the CEO's office of the Updike Group...

Anthony set his phone down and dialed his secretary. "Prepare the car. We're going to see Mr. Genge."

The Updike Group had just one day left to survive. If he could convince Tom to spare them, maybe there would still be a chance.

## Chapter 877

An hour later, Anthony stood outside the Genge residence with a grim expression.

The butler greeted him, "Mr. Updike, Mr. Genge does not wish to see you. Please leave."

"I'll wait," Anthony replied firmly. "Until he's willing to see me."

"Mr. Updike, waiting is pointless. When Mr. Genge makes a decision, no one can change it," the butler said.

Anthony asked, "But what did I do to offend him? Why is he determined to destroy my company?"

The butler paused, then answered, "Mr. Updike, if you're looking to save your business, you'd be better off asking the Weirs for help."

With that, he closed the door. If Anthony understood the implication, he would not linger.

In less than a minute, Anthony turned and left.

...

Monica rushed to meet him outside the Weir residence.

The moment she saw him, she exclaimed, "Aren't you the one who said the company is on the verge of bankruptcy? What are you doing here at the Weirs'?"

"To ask Valarie to spare us," Anthony replied.

Monica's eyes widened in shock. "Anthony, have you lost your mind?!"

Even if the Updike Group was facing bankruptcy, Valarie would be the last person she would beg for mercy. What could Valarie offer when the Weirs were on the verge of bankruptcy too? Monica's anger flared as she recalled Valarie's accusation that Zayn was a rapist.

"I wasn't mistaken, and neither were you. I asked you to come here to plead with Valarie," Anthony said.

"I'm not doing it! If you want to, do it yourself!" Monica snapped.

Seeing the resistance in her eyes, Anthony did not insist. He stepped forward and rang the doorbell.

Monica grabbed his arm. "There's no point begging her! We should be focusing on ways to get our son out!"

Ignoring her, Anthony pressed the bell again, and soon a maid opened the door.

The maid's expression darkened upon recognizing them. "Mr. and Mrs. Updike, you're not welcome here. Please leave."

All of the Weirs' household staff had overheard Monica's earlier remarks in the living room, and they despised her for it.

Monica had never been humiliated

like this having a maid tell her she was unwelcome to her face. She grabbed Anthony's arm, huffing. "See? We're not welcome here. Let's got

She had barely finished speaking when Anthony slapped her.

Monica clutched her face in disbelief. "You hit me?!"

The maid watched them in shock, eyes darting between the two.

"You still don't understand how serious this is," Anthony said, his voice low and cold. "I'm here to beg for forgiveness. If you don't want to, I'm not forcing you. But don't stand in my way again, or it won't just be one slap."

Anthony glared at Monica, his resentment palpable. If she hadn't spoiled Zayn, the latter wouldn't have dared to cause such trouble, risking the Updike Group's survival.

en FindNovel

After a moment of stunned silence, Monica's eyes filled with tears. "Fine! Anthony, I want a divorce!"

## Chapter 878

All these years they had been married, it had always been Anthony who gave in to Monica. She was accustomed to having her way with him, so it was unlikely she would hold her temper now. What she could not tolerate most was Anthony hitting her in front of a maid.

Silence settled between them.

Anthony regarded Monica with tired eyes, devoid of the affection that once filled them.

Monica's heart pounded as she realized he might actually be serious.

"You" she began, her voice faltering.

He cut her off, "Fine. If you want a divorce, we'll divorce."

She stared at him, stunned. She had only intended the comment as a threat, never imagining he would actually agree.

As the shock wore off, it gave way to rage. Not only was he not apologizing for hitting her, but he was also so brazen about it.

"Fine! But don't you dare regret it!" She spun around, anger burning within her, and stormed back to her car.

Watching her drive away, Anthony remained silent. He turned to the maid at the door and asked, "Could you please let Mr. and Ms. Weir know that I'm here to apologize and ask if they'll see me?" The maid replied coolly, "I'll relay your message, but they may not agree to meet with you."

Anthony nodded. "Sure, thank you."

The maid closed the door and went back inside.

In the living room, Valarie was chatting with Phoebe when she noticed the maid enter.

"Have they left?" she asked.

The maid explained, "Ms. Weir, it appears Mr. Updike came to apologize. He even slapped Mrs. Updike when she tried to stop him."

"Mrs. Updike was so angry that she demanded a divorce, and Mr. Updike agreed She drove off in fury. Mr.

Updike is still at the door and has asked to meet with you and Mr. Weir to apologize." en FindNovel

Valarie remained unaffected. Setting down her cup, she replied, "Tell him I have no intention of settling. He's wasting his time here."

"It seems he's determined to wait," the maid added.

Valarie smirked. "If he wants to wait, let him."

The maid nodded and left. "I'll let him know right away."

Outside, Anthony's expression darkened further as the maid relayed Valarie's message.

"Alright, thank you," he said, his voice flat as the door closed, taking with it the last of his hopes.

"Mr. Updike, perhaps we should head back," Anthony's secretary suggested. "There's still so much to handle at the company."

Anthony was quiet for a long time

before he shook his head. "I'll wait

Those matters won't change the company's situation whether

handle them now or not."

The only way the company could be saved was by staying there until Valarie was willing to see him.

With a sigh, Anthony's assistant said nothing more.

Anthony must know better than him that seeing Valarie wouldn't change anything. Despite that, this was their only option. Even if it was likely a futile gesture, they had no other choices left.

Finally, by evening, the door opened.

Valarie drove out in her white BMW. When she noticed that Anthony was still there, she looked surprised.

## Chapter 879

As expected, Anthony knew how to handle serious matters-he had far more patience than Monica.

When he saw Valarie's car, he immediately ran in front of it.

"Mr. Updike!" his assistant exclaimed.

Valarie was startled and slammed on the brakes. Fortunately, she wasn't driving fast, and her car stopped just inches from Anthony.

Anthony's assistant hurried over, still shaken. "Mr. Updike, are you alright?"

"I'm fine," Anthony replied, his gaze fixed on Valarie through the car window.

With a calm expression, he added, "Ms. Weir, I'd like to talk to you."

Valarie opened her car door and stepped out, her face icy. "Mr. Updike, we have nothing to discuss. Please move."

"Ms. Weir, I only want to apologize," Anthony said.

Valarie scoffed. "Your wife came here this morning throwing insults, and now you're here acting all apologetic. Are you two playing good cop, bad cop, thinking I'm an easy target?"

"Ms. Weir, I am sincerely sorry for my wife's behavior," Anthony replied evenly. "As for Zayn, he committed a crime and should face the consequences. Whatever the court decides, I won't protest."

"If that's how you feel, Mr. Updike, then I have nothing more to say. I've received your apology. You may go," Valarie answered.

Anthony remained where he stood. "Ms. Weir, there's something else I wanted to ask of you."

"I doubt I can be of any help, Mr. Updike. You should try asking someone else," Valarie dismissed.

"Ms. Weir, you're the only one who can help," Anthony insisted.

Irritation flashed in Valarie's eyes as she asked, "What do you want?"

She tapped the steering wheel impatiently, a clear sign of her annoyance.

"Because of what Zayn did, Mr. Genge is now targeting the Updike Group. I was hoping you might speak to him and ask him to let the company go. I'd be willing to give you half of the Updike Group's shares in return," Anthony offered.

The offer stung, but he knew it was preferable to watching the company go bankrupt.

Valarie frowned and asked, "You're saying Tom is only going after the Updike Group because of me?"

"Yes, Ms. Weir... If you'd ask Mr. Genge to back off, I'll transfer half of the Updike Group's shares to you immediately," Anthony promised.

"Are you sure you're willing to hand over those shares?" Valarie asked.

"Absolutely. I even have the transfer

agreement prepared." Anthony gestured to the lawyer beside him, who immediately retrieved the document from his briefcase and handed it to Valarie.

She opened it and saw that it was indeed a signed agreement for half of the Updike Group's shares.

"Ms. Weir, the agreement is signed and notarized. As soon as you sign, it's effective," Anthony informed. After a quick read-through, Valarie made up her mind. An opportunity like this wasn't one to pass up.

She closed the document and told Anthony, "Mr. Updike, since you're so sincere, I'll consider it."

Anthony said urgently, "If you don't speak to Mr. Genge soon, the Updike Group can go bankrupt at any moment..."

Valarie looked up at him, her gaze

frosty. "That's your problem, Mr. Updike. If you want me to go to

Tom, you'd better work hard to keep the Updike Group afloat until then."

en FindNovel

Anthony's expression darkened, but he knew he couldn't argue. If he angered her, she might refuse to talk to Tom entirely, sealing the Updike Group's fate.

Forcing a smile, he replied, "Thank you... I hope you'll act soon, Ms. Weir. After all, you now own half of the Updike Group..."

## Chapter 880

Valarie smirked. "I know. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have things to do."

Anthony stepped aside with a nod, and Valarie got back into her car, driving off.

She had originally planned to meet Nyla, but changed her mind and headed straight for the Genge residence instead.

When she arrived, a maid greeted her, "Ms. Weir, Mr. Genge is waiting for you in the living room."

Valarie snickered. Tom had known all along she would come.

Entering the living room, she found Tom lounging on the sofa with a smile. She mirrored his expression and sat across from him.

"Tom, didn't I tell you I want nothing to do with you and don't want to see you again?" Valarie asked.

Although she was smiling, her gaze was icy, filled with disdain.

Tom was unfazed by her attitude. Calmly, he poured her a cup of coffee. "I can't stand seeing anyone bully you, so I did something about it. How is that wrong?" Valarie took the cup he handed her and promptly poured its contents into the trash bin beside her.

"I don't need your fake kindness!" she snapped.

Tom raised an eyebrow. "Fake? Is Brandon's affection any more real?"

"At least he's more genuine than you," Valarie shot back.

Her words wiped the smile off Tom's face.

"If he really cared about you, would he just stand by while the Weir Group teeters on the brink of bankruptcy? If he were truly genuine, wouldn't he have done something when he found out Zayn tried to

assault you?

"If what you consider 'genuine' is a show with zero effort or cost, then yes, he's very genuine," Tom taunted.

His mocking tone made Valarie frown.

"And what right do you have to criticize him? At least he doesn't cheat on me or disappoint me over and over again," she retorted.

Tom paused before replying, "Yes, I

made a mistake five years ago. But I

never touched anyone else. I just

didn't realize what I felt. Are you really going to judge me for one mistake?" en  
FindNovel

"Once unfaithful, always unfaithful. I'm not giving you another chance. If you mess up again, it's on me for being naïve," Valarie answered.

"I won't make another mistake. That's just your bitter assumption," Tom argued.

Valarie chuckled. "Don't you get it?

Whether or not you'd make another mistake, won't give you another chance. Stop with these pointless gestures. I don't need them. And leave the Updike Group alone™

QUMS

With that, she turned to leave.

Watching her go, Tom smirked. "Well, Valarie, if you trust Brandon that much, let's see if he can resist temptation."

Valarie halted, turning back to glare at him. "Tom, the more you meddle, the more I despise you. If you try anything with Brandon, I won't let you get away with it!"

Seeing her so fiercely defend Brandon wiped the smile from Tom's face, leaving him cold.

He stepped closer, an ominous tension filling the air. "Valarie, if you keep defending him, I can't guarantee what I might do."

Valarie held his gaze, unafraid. "Do whatever you want. It won't change anything, and I'm not scared. But don't think for a second I'll come back to you."



