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Jasper turned his head to Brielle. Although he was angry, seeing the aggrieved look on her face, he suddenly couldn't find the words to scold her.

Despite her poor character, Brielle still had a pretty face. Now, in her depressed state, she looked like a flower soaked by rain and this softened his heart.

"It's good that was solved. Just be careful in the future." Finally, he offered her some comforting words.

Brielle raised her head to find that Jasper's face was looking better. She leaned against his shoulder.

"Jasper, I want to act in a movie," she said in a coquettish tone. "Recently, I've taken an interest in a new film by Winslow Calderon. The film crew is publicly recruiting."

"You can go for an audition if you want," he answered perfunctorily. A cigarette hung from his mouth as he fumbled around for a lighter.

Feeling his impatience, Brielle froze for a moment. He wasn't as gentle with her as he had been before since her image had been damaged. He also no longer took her words seriously, and would always give her offhand answers.

It seemed that all men were bad.

Sometimes, Brielle wondered if Jasper had fallen in love with Ariana again.

Otherwise, why would he watch her so intently?

She clenched her fists, jealousy swelling inside her. She swore that she wouldn't let Ariana have a happy life.

"What are you thinking about? Are you getting unhappy again?" Jasper clicked his tongue. Women really were hard work, he thought to himself.

Brielle did her best to hide her emotions. "I'm not unhappy. I just wanted you to use your connections to help me. And maybe spend some money getting Mr. Calderon to give me a role."

"You want me to help you with this? Do you know how much that would cost? And do you even know how to act?"

Jasper considered all of the money he had already spent on Brielle, and became more impatient.

Her face turned cold. "I know what you're annoyed about. Isn't it about Ariana? I have an idea."

This piqued Jasper's interest. "What's your idea? As long as we kick Ariana out of the Anderson Group, the company will definitely be ours in the future."

Brielle leaned in close to him and whispered something in his ear. A cunning smile spread across her face.

“Would that work? Isn’t it working to Sarah’s benefit?” Jasper felt a little skeptical about the practicalities.

“This is the only way to get Sarah away from Ariana and stop them from making money in the short term,” Brielle considered.

Although this method couldn’t guarantee that Ariana would suffer, it was enough to make her feel bad for a while.

Brielle smiled confidently and raised her face to kiss Jasper. “Without Sarah, Ariana won’t be able to win the bet. Then you’ll be the winner.”

Jasper was very happy to hear this. He held Brielle close to him, unzipped her clothes, and stroked across her naked back and around her waist.

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She softened under his touch, and melted into him. Her lips parted slightly, as if she was intoxicated by him.

“Honey, you’re so smart to come up with this,” Jasper murmured before sucking hard on Brielle’s tongue. His trousers bulged.

Brielle groaned. She put her arms around his neck, and pulled herself up so her legs were wrapped around his waist.

“Jasper, what about the movie?” she asked, taking advantage of this moment of desire.

“What about the movie?” He buried his head in her body. His mind was elsewhere.

She grabbed his hair, and bit her lip, looking into his eyes. “Jasper, I would definitely do a good job in the movie. You just have to trust me again. Mr. Calderon’s movie is worth at least several billion at the box office. If you invest, you will definitely win the bet.”

By now, he had pulled her underwear aside and she was ready for him.

Jasper quickly unbuckled his belt and pushed himself inside her. As he did, he breathed out and said,

“I’ll figure something out with Mr. Calderon. If you want to act in a movie, just do it.”

Brielle was so touched by this and she responded to his thrusts passionately.

In the afternoon, Sarah and Ariana looked for apartments. The real estate agent was someone Sarah

knew. He was young and handsome, and seemed reliable.

They were looking around a one-bedroom apartment with one living room. It wasn't big, but it was well decorated and was self-contained.

Ariana also liked the amount of daylight it got.

"We don't need to see anymore. This one is good. Do I need to pay a deposit?"

The agent rarely met such a decisive client, so he matched her decisive energy and said, "No, since you're a friend of Sarah's, you're a friend of mine."

Sarah raised her hand and patted the agent on the head. "I'll treat you to dinner later."

The agent smiled at her sheepishly. "Then I'll go and print the contract."

When they walked out, Sarah nudged Ariana and asked, "Why did you choose that apartment? Didn't we see a few that were close to the company. This one doesn't seem comfortable to live in as it's so small, and it's far away from the company. It will take you an hour to get to work every day."

With a bitter smile, Ariana said, "I just don't want to live near the company. I'm afraid I'll get found out soon. I don't want Theodore to know where I live."

Sarah had always been curious about the relationship between Ariana and Theodore but wasn't sure

how to ask. When she heard Ariana say this, her curiosity increased even more. “Did you quarrel with him and run away from home? Why else would you move out so suddenly? And Mr. Anderson still doesn’t know you’re moving out?”

Without waiting for Ariana’s answer, Sarah continued, in a shocked tone, “You’re the CEO’s runaway bride! I’m screwed. I’m the one who helped you find an apartment. I’ll be Mr. Anderson’s first target for revenge.”

Ariana was speechless. She couldn’t understand what Sarah was thinking. “That kind of thing only happens in novels. It’s not that dramatic in real life. Theodore won’t do anything to me when he finds out I moved out.”

“Really? I don’t believe that.”

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Sarah could imagine Theodore knocking on every door in Eleymond as soon as he found out Ariana had moved out.

It was just her female intuition, and her judgment about men.

Ariana rolled her eyes. “Yes, really. Mine and Theodore’s marriage is just ridiculous.”

“How ridiculous? Tell me.” Again, Sarah’s curiosity had been piqued. She asked Ariana to tell her the whole story.

In the end, Ariana ended up telling Sarah how she married into the Anderson family and why she made a bet with Jasper.

She had wanted to tell Sarah when she asked for help with finding the apartment, but it wasn’t something she could say on the phone. After what happened this morning, the two were clearly good friends.

“No wonder Jasper and Donna always act hostile to you!” Sarah exclaimed. “But Donna is very bold.

After all, you’re still Theodore’s wife. How dare she?”

“I guess Donna doesn’t know my identity. She was probably just used by Jasper,”

Ariana said with a sigh.

“In that case, Jasper and Brielle will no doubt continue causing trouble for you.”

Sarah began to worry about Ariana’s situation. Ariana was now left to fight on her own in the Anderson family.

Ariana shrugged, and ended up comforting Sarah. “Don’t worry. Theodore’s still in charge of the

Anderson Group. He won’t just stand by and watch Jasper win the bet.

If Jasper and the others really want to do something to me, he won’t let them get away with it.”

Sarah gave Ariana a hug, “Even in the worst case scenario, I’m still here with you.

We can quit the Anderson Group and escape.”

Ariana smiled. Suddenly, a thought crossed her mind. “I will get divorced sooner or later, so don’t tell

anyone about this, especially the fact that I’m Theodore’s wife.”

“Don’t worry. I won’t tell anyone.” Sarah mimed zipping her lips.

Just then, there was the sound of footsteps outside. The agent returned with the contract, and the two

quickly stopped talking about the subject.

The apartment was then settled, the contract signed and deposit paid. Ariana planned to go back to the

Anderson family’s house to pack her things and move out the next day.

After dropping Ariana off at the bus stop, Sarah headed back to her own house. She stopped the car

and contemplated what she was going to have for dinner. She was not good at cooking, so the choice

was between going out to eat or ordering takeout.

She wasn't in the mood to go out to eat alone so she decided to order takeout.

As she stepped out of the car, a group of strong men, dressed all in black appeared in front of her. Her face turned pale and she was frozen in fear

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They all wore sunglasses, obscuring their identities. The leader's arms were muscular and his voice was deep and hoarse. It sounded like the voice of death.

"Miss Flynn, our CEO wants to see you."

Her voice trembling, Sarah asked, "Which CEO?"

The men moved out of the way to reveal a high-end shiny black car parked close by.

The window rolled down half way. There was a man's face hidden in the dark. He had a strong, handsome aura about him.

Sarah's hand slapped to her mouth. Her thoughts immediately went to Ariana.

She cursed to herself that what she said had now come true.

Ariana was fraught with nerves as she returned to the Anderson family's mansion, hoping to avoid a meeting with Theodore. But upon hearing from Judy that he was out, Ariana breathed a sigh of relief.

Setting down her bag, she picked up the warm and sweet-smelling soup that Judy had prepared, the scent alone stirring her appetite.

It was the food cooked by Judy that Ariana was most reluctant to leave behind if she moved out of the mansion. Judy's cooking was wonderful. It was no surprise that Helen had already started to gain some weight after staying at the mansion for just a few days.

As Ariana was about to take a sip of the soup, Helen came down the stairs in a stunning white wool dress, her long hair gathered into a high ponytail and revealing a forehead that shone with the light of the precious diamond jewelry adorning her neck and ears.

It was clear to Ariana that Theodore doted on Helen, and it was not hard to see why.

With her pure and delicate beauty, Helen was the kind of woman that most men would likely be drawn to.

As Ariana tasted the soup in front of her, she could feel Helen's burning gaze on her but refused to look up.

The latter approached her, sitting down with a sugary smile, saying, "Ariana, I thought you wouldn't

come back today.”

Ariana’s response was a cold one, and she didn’t bother to return the smile.

Helen’s smile grew wider at Ariana’s cold reaction. It was all part of Helen’s plan; the more Ariana felt the burn of her hatred, the happier Helen became. She relished in sabotaging Ariana’s happiness, shattering every little joy that she could get her hands on.

With Ariana’s eyes flickering with rage, Helen acted as if she was blind to her feelings, and spoke with feigned innocence. “By the way, I haven’t thanked you yet.

Your room is very comfortable. Thank you for giving it to me. I know you must feel uncomfortable that I didn’t tell you in advance. It’s my fault. Theodore has always spoiled me. I’m used to it. | hope you won’t be angry with Theodore.”

“Is that all?” Ariana threw the spoon into the bowl, making a clanging sound, and glared at Helen with a cold expression.

Helen hesitated for a moment, and then lifted her chin and said, “You dislike me so much that you can’t even bring yourself to talk to me?”

“I don’t know you, and we have nothing to discuss,” Ariana retorted and stormed off. to the kitchen with

her bowl.

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Undeterred, Helen trailed after Ariana and resumed their unfinished conversation.

“We will get to know each other if we talk more. After all, we will be seeing each other every day in the future.”

Ariana hit the tap hard, and the sound of the water was loud enough to muffle Helen’s voice.

Despite this, Helen persisted and asked, “What gift did you give Theodore on his birthday last night?”

But Ariana paid no attention and instead focused on cleaning the bowl.

Helen spoke up again. “I gave Theodore a sapphire cuff-link. He likes it very much.

He put it on as soon as he received it.”

Ariana’s brows furrowed, her emotions getting the better of her. She fought to keep her composure and not let her anger show.

As Ariana paused, Helen realized she had hit a nerve. Helen kindly turned off the tap for Ariana, and then prodded, “Ariana, did you not give a gift to Theodore?

That’s not good. A birthday is an important day, and Theodore will be sad.”

Ariana's patience with Helen was wearing thin. She turned around and let out a sharp retort, "It's none of your business!" Her tone was so cutting that it seemed to slice through the air.

Helen was taken aback by Ariana's sudden outburst and recoiled two steps. She was at a loss for words and could only utter a stuttering sound.

Tears welled up in Helen's eyes, and she began to whimper uncontrollably.

"What are you doing?" Unexpectedly, Theodore wheeled himself into the kitchen, catching Ariana and Helen in the middle of their heated exchange. Although he was sitting in a wheelchair, Theodore's commanding presence filled the room, as he was dressed impeccably in a sharp suit that suggested he had just returned from an important business meeting.

Meanwhile, Helen, with her eyes still moist, ran to Theodore and clung to his arm as if seeking refuge.

In a pathetic tone, she complained to him, "Theodore, I don't know why Ariana is so mean to me. I just asked her a simple question, and she scolded me."

Ariana was at a loss for words. Just as she was about to explain herself, she caught a glimpse of the sapphire cuff-link on Theodore's sleeve, clearly his preferred style.

It was apparent that Helen knew him well, and Ariana fell silent. All of a sudden, she didn't want to say anything. She turned on her heel and left the kitchen.

"Ariana."

Theodore's voice was unusually earnest as he called out to her, but Ariana didn't turn back and made a quick dash upstairs.

Frowning, Theodore watched her retreat, his heart heavy with concern.

Helen, who had been observing the scene from the sidelines, couldn't help but smirk to herself. She put on a pitiful facade as Theodore turned to her. "Maybe Ariana dislikes me; that's why she's so against me."

After a moment of contemplative silence, Theodore spoke gravely. "Since my wife doesn't like you, it's best that you don't show up in front of her anymore."

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"Theodore..." Helen gasped, her disbelief evident. She was at a loss for words.

Theodore refused to acknowledge Helen's existence any longer and left.

Helen's hands shook with anger, but she could not muster the courage to speak out.

The next day, after packing up her stuff, Ariana paced around her room. She was dreading the thought of confronting Theodore about her departure, and she was trying to figure out a way to slip away unnoticed.

She couldn't bear the idea of angering him, or worse, being stopped from leaving.

Ariana spent a long time nervously peeking out the window, searching for a sign of Theodore's departure, but his car was still there.

In the garden, Judy was supervising the landscaping team, giving them directions 'on how to move some of the plants around. When she caught sight of Ariana standing by the window, she assumed that Ariana was looking for Theodore.

"Ma'am, are you looking for Mr. Anderson?" she asked.

Ariana was startled by the sudden interruption, and her mind was still preoccupied with thoughts of how

to escape undetected. She hesitated for a moment before answering, feeling a pang of guilt for keeping her plans hidden from everyone.

Judy, who was busy in the garden, had no idea about Ariana's plan to escape from the mansion.

Thinking that Ariana was looking for Theodore, she kindly informed her of his whereabouts. "Mr.

Anderson took Miss Clarke to the hospital for a regular check-up early in the morning and won't be

back until the evening. If you need anything, don't hesitate to call him."

"Got it." Ariana breathed a sigh of relief, grateful for the unexpected luck that Theodore was not around.

She then smiled awkwardly and closed the window.

She suddenly felt like she was a fool. She had been waiting for Theodore to leave the house for so

long, but it turned out he had left for the hospital with Helen early in the morning.

She had promised herself to not feel sad anymore, but the feeling of disappointment had consumed

her. She sat on the sofa, sulking in despair for a long time. She didn't leave until the sound of silence

took over the garden.

March's rising temperature had gone unnoticed until Ariana stepped into the taxi, feeling a layer of

sweat on her forehead. She was unsure if it was due to the weather or her anxiety.

Finally, she successfully evaded Judy's prying eyes and left the Anderson family's mansion with her

belongings. Before heading to her office, she put her luggage in her rented apartment.

Sarah was lounging in the office chair, humming the melody of her latest song.

Upon seeing Ariana, she sat up straight with a hint of guilt. "Why are you here today? Isn't it your day off?"

Ariana tried to keep her voice steady. "I've moved my luggage out. I came here to pass the time."

Not noticing the guilty look on Sarah's face, Ariana sat in her chair and began checking her overflowing mailbox.

Ever since Sarah had made it big, invitations from advertisement agencies, variety show production teams, and even film and television crews poured in non-stop.

As Ariana sifted through the various scripts that had come in, she couldn't help but wonder if Sarah would be interested in acting. "Do you want to act in a film? Maybe you can gain something new if you broaden the scope," she suggested.

Sarah skimmed through the scripts that Ariana had picked out for her, but she didn't find them intriguing. "These scripts won't suit me," she said with a shrug. "I am just a singer, and I'm not sure if I'm good enough to act. I should leave that job to professionals. Instead, I would prefer to channel my energy toward making an exceptional album. If things go well, I would love to hold a grand concert."

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As they sat in the room, Sarah's mind drifted toward the bet between Ariana and Jasper. Trying to shift the conversation to a more lucrative topic, she tentatively suggested, "But since I'm not currently tied down, I can consider accepting some profitable offers for advertisements or variety shows."

Reading Sarah's mind like an open book, Ariana flashed a knowing smile and calmly retorted, "Relax.

Instead, channel your energy into perfecting your upcoming album. After all, a few mundane ads and TV programs won't resolve our underlying problems, but will only consume precious time."

Unconvinced, Sarah was unrelenting. "We need to seize every opportunity to make money. Trust me on this one."

Ariana was at the mercy of Sarah's insistence and quickly sifted through the numerous invitations that had accumulated.

Just then, Donna appeared and tossed a folder in her direction.

"Have a gander at this, it's the creme de la creme of opportunities the company has been scrambling for," Donna proclaimed.

Ariana accepted the folder with caution. Was it possible that Donna had had an epiphany and was now

being helpful? Or was this folder harboring another one of her devious plans?

As Ariana scanned the contents of the folder, her eyes widened in disbelief. Sarah had been selected to perform solo at a colossal government-run charity gala!

The top-notch resource in the entertainment industry, coveted by many famous stars, had unexpectedly fallen into the lap of Sarah's team.

This national-level charity event was more than just an opportunity to enhance the artists' reputation.

The chance to participate would catalyze their rise to stardom.

Such a proposal was a treasured opportunity, one that many dreamt of, but only a select few could lay hands on.

Ariana's eagerness to secure the highly-coveted spot was palpable as she swiftly replied, "When do we sign the contract?"

Donna's eyes gleamed with delight at the prospect of closing the deal. However, before she could even utter a single word, Sarah cut her off with a dissenting remark. "Sign? I don't agree."

Ariana's confusion intensified when Sarah pulled her aside with an intense gaze, murmuring, "Don't

accept this one. I won't go."

"Why?" Ariana inquired, bewildered. This opportunity was a rare gem, a once-in-a-lifetime chance to shine, and she couldn't fathom why Sarah would refuse.

Ariana had envisioned celebrating Sarah's success and raising a toast to their fruitful collaboration, but Sarah's behavior was casting a shadow of doubt in her mind.

Sarah cast a furtive glance at Donna to ensure that she wasn't eavesdropping before beginning to explain to Ariana painstakingly, "This national activity won't put any money in our pockets. Plus, I have to attend closed rehearsals and intensive training a month or two in advance to prevent any program leaks. It means I won't be able to generate any income for the next three months, and the release of my album will be pushed back. What about the bet with Jasper? Clearly, this is his plan to make you lose."

Ariana was well aware of Sarah's concerns. When she first saw the document, she had already considered the drawbacks that Sarah mentioned, but the opportunity was so enticing that Ariana couldn't bring herself to turn it down.

As an agent, Ariana knew that the best course of action was to prioritize Sarah's interests. She wasn't

the kind of person who put her own profits ahead of her artist's bright future.

Ariana met Sarah's desperate gaze and flashed a tranquil smile before saying, "I have pondered over your words. However, this decision is not yours to make alone.

You have to listen to me this time."

"No, you should think about it again," Sarah insisted.

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"You must trust me on this one," Ariana conveyed to Sarah with a serene voice and a pat on her shoulder. Then, she turned her back to address Donna.

Observing the two women whispering for what seemed like an eternity, Donna presumed the subject of their conversation. But who wouldn't be swayed by such a premium resource, especially when it was right in front of their noses?

Ariana's approach suggested that she had reached a decision, prompting Donna to put away her phone and feign busyness. "Have you made up your mind? If Sarah doesn't want to go, I'll give the opportunity to someone else," she inquired.

Ariana's response was unwavering. "Sarah will go. Just bring out the contract.

Where is it?" she asked, taking a pen and seal from the desk.

Donna's delight was unmistakable; she beamed from ear to ear. She quickly took out the contract from her bag, laid it on the desk, and urged, "Take a look. If everything is in order, sign at the bottom."

Fearful of any potential deceit, Ariana perused the contract meticulously, from start to finish. Once satisfied, she passed it to Sarah for her signature.

Donna promptly pocketed the signed document as if wary of Ariana's possible backtracking and proclaimed, "I have to go now. You can wait for the notice."

Apprehensive, Sarah regarded Ariana with a worried expression and posed a concern. "What about your bet? Look at Donna's expression. She's as cunning as a rat, and it's evident that she got what she wanted."

Ariana exhaled and reassured, "Don't fret. I'll find another way. You won't need me for these three months, and I'll be scouting for new talents."

"I'm worried that Donna won't give you any more opportunities," Sarah said. She knew Donna's methods well after working with her for over a decade. Donna had become even more arrogant and

audacious since Jasper joined the company.

With her mind weighed down by worries, Ariana let out a deep sigh, unsure of what her next move

should be. “I suppose I’ll have to wait and see. Jasper’s artists haven’t made much money recently, and

his biggest investment, Brielle, is in hot water. At least I’m not tangled up in any lawsuits, which puts

me in a better position than him,” she mused.

Upon hearing this, Sarah’s tense shoulders loosened a bit as she replied, “Okay, I’ll head home to pack

and get ready for the performance.”

“alright,” Ariana responded. She saw Sarah off at the parking lot, bought a cup of coffee, and made her

way back to the office. Lost in thought, she completely forgot to hit the elevator button.

A hand suddenly appeared, pressing the button for her.

It was only at that moment that Ariana realized the reason why the elevator never arrived—she had

forgotten to push the button.

She was about to thank the individual who came to her aid when she looked up and met the

smoldering gaze of Brielle.

Clad in a stunning midnight-blue satin dress and sleek black coat, Brielle was a picture of elegance and

grace. Her wavy, burgundy hair cascaded down her chest like the crimson tide, and her perfectly done makeup accentuated her beguiling eyes.

As Ariana locked eyes with Brielle, she couldn't help but think that Brielle was a vision of alluring extravagance.

With a sly grin, Brielle taunted Ariana, "Lost in thought, darling? Perhaps mourning the loss of your cash cow?"

Rolling her eyes, Ariana retorted with a sharp tongue, "Sarah will be back soon enough. But can you say the same about your tarnished reputation?"

Brielle's expression turned sour at Ariana's words.

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Unfazed, Ariana continued to press the issue. "And what brings you back to the company? Have you taken care of the mess with your former assistant?"

Brielle snorted dismissively, "Please, they were just a bunch of nobodies. I paid them off and made the whole problem go away."

Ariana nodded nonchalantly, "Well, good for you."

Ariana's placid demeanor masked her indignation. She couldn't believe the family, who seemed to care for the girl, were motivated by greed.

Despite Ariana's nonchalant expression, Brielle sensed her annoyance and felt happy. She snickered and said, "Have you heard of Mr. Calderon's new movie?"

"You landed the leading role?" Ariana looked at Brielle composedly, but inside, she was fuming. What kind of luck did Brielle have to secure a role in a Winslow Calderon production? He was Ariana's favorite director from her college days. It was evident that Jasper had spared no expense again.

Brielle was momentarily speechless and reluctantly replied, "No, I am playing the second supporting role."

Dreading Ariana's derision, Brielle hastened to add, "But it's an excellent opportunity, as Mr. Calderon's movie will feature top movie stars. It's more than enough for a newcomer like me."

Ariana's expression darkened, and she remained silent.

"Only Jasper can get these kinds of resources. Admit it, Ariana, you're not cut out to be an agent,"

Brielle said smugly as she sauntered into the elevator.

Ariana refused to share the elevator with Brielle and left, feeling the pressure of the situation.

She retreated to the small garden outside the building and immediately called Sonia, who confirmed Brielle's claims.

It was true that Winslow had formed a partnership with foreign investors for his new project, and the leading roles were to be played by A-list actors. Ariana learned that the first female supporting role had been offered to Daniela Cohen, a renowned star known for her sultry onscreen presence.

Sonia was seething with anger as she delivered the juicy news. "Your sister is quite the hotshot, isn't she? Bagging an incredible opportunity like this. I wouldn't be surprised if the movie producer announces it any minute now. She's going to be rubbing shoulders with the biggest names in the industry, all while grabbing the spotlight as a new actress. It's like she's hit the jackpot!"

Ariana thought for a while, and then an idea popped into her head. She confided in her trusted friend, "My dear friend, can I ask for your assistance?"

Without hesitation, Sonia replied, "Of course, just name it. Your business is my business."

Feeling grateful for Sonia's loyalty, Ariana whispered her plan. "If Brielle wants to be in the spotlight, why not give her a taste of it beforehand?"

After discussing the plan with Sonia, Ariana decided to retreat to her newly rented apartment to clear her mind.

As she entered the room, she was immediately struck by the cold, unwelcoming ambiance. There wasn't much furniture in the apartment, with only a single white suitcase sitting in the corner. It was a lonely sight, and Ariana couldn't help but feel a twinge of sadness.

Although she knew she should decorate the apartment to make it feel homier, she found herself standing still and lacking the motivation to do anything. The day had been exhausting, and the emotional turmoil she had been experiencing had drained her energy.

Ariana surveyed the room and let out a deep sigh. As she did, her gaze landed on the white suitcase, which reminded her of the haste with which she had packed her things that morning. She realized that she had left behind many items in the Anderson family's mansion, including half-eaten snacks and a doll that had been her companion for years. A pang of nostalgia washed over her, and she longed for the familiar comforts of her old home.

Upon second thought, Ariana decided that it did not matter much.

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As the evening sun beamed into the room, the dying flowers on the table swayed with the wind,

mirroring Ariana's own tumultuous emotions.

She slowly removed her coat and gazed out the window for what seemed like hours, feeling a sense of

restlessness and exhaustion as if she had been drained of all her energy. The emptiness of the

apartment, with its barren walls and lack of furnishings, only heightened her feelings of loneliness and

isolation.

When she had been at the Anderson family's mansion, despite Theodore's sullen demeanor, she had

never felt bored as he would often bicker with her.

Furthermore, Judy had been a constant source of care and comfort, always ensuring that Ariana was

well-fed and taken care of.

The clock on the wall ticked relentlessly, reminding Ariana of the time.

It was six o'clock, the time when the mansion was usually filled with the sound of clattering cutlery, the

chime of glasses, and Theodore's stern voice. She couldn't help but wonder if Theodore had noticed

her absence yet.

Ariana picked up her phone and scrolled through her messages, hoping to find something from him.

But the phone screen remained blank, devoid of any new messages or missed calls.

As the realization sunk in that she had no family now, Ariana felt a pang of loneliness and sadness.

She hugged her knees and buried her face, feeling the weight of her desolation.

“Perhaps it’s not the worst thing to have no family,” she murmured to herself, although the ache in her heart suggested otherwise.

She subconsciously placed a hand on her lower abdomen, grateful that at least she had the baby growing within her.

Trying to find solace, Ariana closed her eyes and attempted to calm herself, but her thoughts swirled and tumbled, leaving her in a state of confusion.

Ariana couldn’t help but wonder if Theodore would hold Judy accountable for her sudden disappearance. Perhaps he would even call her to interrogate her.

The mere thought made her heart pound like a jackhammer, and a pang of anxiety swept over her. If he did call, what tone would she use to answer him?

Would he let her return to the mansion?

But then she shook her head, feeling foolish for having such thoughts. After all, why would he care?

Maybe her departure had solved his problem.

As for Judy, Ariana vowed to personally apologize if she got the opportunity.

As the night fell, the starry sky outside her window seemed to mock her loneliness.

Ariana sat there, staring into the emptiness, waiting for Theodore's call or text, but none came.

As her heart began to cool, Ariana started to feel ridiculous. What made her think that he cared for her anyway?

The initial sadness soon transformed into a burning anger, and she resolved to treat herself with the utmost kindness. If no one would love her, she would love herself.

With a decisive click of her phone, Ariana ordered a lavish meal for herself. The thought of taking care of herself was so refreshing, it made her feel like a brand-new person.