

Chapter 9 Slap

Brielle's words hung in the air, breaking the tranquility.

Ariana's eyes widened with shock and anger. She wondered how Brielle could stoop so low as to expose her in front of her new husband.

She nervously glanced at Theodore. His face was as dark as thunder, and his jaw was clenched tight, showing that he was deeply upset.

Theodore had known about her previous relationship with Jasper, but hearing it from someone else must have hurt his pride.

Brielle's lips twisted into a sly smile as she spoke with feigned sincerity. "Mr. Anderson, I hope you can see what kind of person Ariana really is. Don't be kept in the dark."

Her eyes glimmered with malice as she watched Theodore, hoping to plant seeds of doubt in his mind.

But his response was unexpected. Raising an eyebrow and meeting Brielle's gaze, he said in a voice that was both casual and commanding, "I already know. Ariana is married to me now. Her past doesn't concern me."

Brielle was immediately stunned and speechless, her

plan to create trouble between the newlyweds thwarted.

Ariana was also at a loss for words as she stood there, watching Theodore expertly handle the situation.

Suddenly, Theodore turned to Ariana and asked, "You just let this woman stir up trouble between us?" 1

She could feel a sense of calmness in his voice, which gave her the confidence to confront Brielle.

Ariana strode toward Brielle with an icy determination, her eyes ablaze with fury.

Without changing her expression, she lifted her hand and delivered a resounding slap to Brielle's face that left it red and swollen. 5

Brielle recoiled, holding her cheek in shock before her fury ignited. "How dare you slap me, Ariana!"

Ariana sneered, her eyes cold as steel. "Consider this a warning, Brielle. Jasper is nothing but a worthless piece of trash, and you can have him. But if you ever try to provoke me again, you'll regret it."

"Ariana!" The humiliation was palpable on Brielle's face, as this was the first time she had ever been humiliated by Ariana in front of an outsider.

Enraged, she was about to retaliate, but Theodore swiftly intervened, "Enough!"

Holding Ariana's hand gently, Theodore said, his voice

was a calm balm that eased the tension, "Let's go home. There's no point in wasting our time on those who don't matter." 3

Without even casting a glance at Brielle, Theodore led Ariana away, leaving the other woman trembling with anger.

As she watched the couple walk away, Brielle knew that there was no point in following them, as Theodore's cold gaze made it clear that her attempts to incite them had been in vain. 5

As they rode back to the lavish Anderson family's mansion, the silence between Ariana and Theodore was suffocating.

He sat there, still and calm, with his eyes closed as if he was lost in deep thought or slumber.

The only sounds that could be heard were the rustling of their clothes and the steady sound of their breathing.

Ariana's mind was in a whirlwind of confusion and uncertainty. She felt uneasy, fidgeting in her seat and stealing glances at Theodore from time to time to see if he was awake.

She knew she had to break the silence, but the words wouldn't come out. Finally, she mustered the courage to speak, but her voice was barely above a whisper.

Theodore didn't react, and the silence hung heavily between them like a thick fog.

At her third attempt, Theodore's eyes suddenly snapped open, and they locked eyes. ²

Ariana froze for a second, her heart beating faster as she met his gaze. She blinked, coughed awkwardly, and turned away in embarrassment. "Don't get me wrong. I didn't peep at you. I just want to ask you something." ⁴

Theodore's lips quirked into a smile, his eyes glinting with amusement. "What do you want to ask?"

Ariana hesitated for a moment, her mind racing with questions she wanted to ask him. Finally, she blurted out, "Why did you say that to Brielle? Don't you want a divorce?"

Theodore smiled, and his voice was soft as he said, "What do you think? Is it because I have a crush on you?" ⁹

Ariana's face turned bright red, and she stammered, "What are you talking about? That's ridiculous."

Her heart skipped a beat at Theodore's teasing words. The heat rose to her cheeks as she fumbled for a reply.

Theodore's fingers suddenly tightened around her chin, forcing her to look up at him. His eyes were icy, his

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+120 Points at most

voice biting. "Don't be foolish, Ariana. I will never have feelings for you. You'd better not entertain such fanciful notions."

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