

Scarlett's POV:

"Rita is in the hospital." Charles obviously did not intend to open the door.

The doorbell rang again as if it would never stop unless the door was opened. It seemed that the unexpected visitor was a stubborn person. If it were not Rita, then who else could it be?

Charles turned his head toward the door and frowned. He seemed to already know who was standing outside.

"Okay. I'm not sticking around to find out who that is. I'm going to hide out somewhere." I stood up and tried to find a place to hide.

Even though Charles and I were only having breakfast and had not done anything that crossed the line, I still did not want to cause any trouble.

Charles looked at me with a complicated look in his eyes. Then, he walked toward the door. He strode over so fast that I was not able to hide.

"Hi, Charles."

The first thing Rita did after Charles opened the door was look over his shoulder into the living room. She spotted me right away by the dining table.

They were not married yet, but I was already regarding them as a couple, and I was the outsider who should not be in Charles's apartment at this time of day. That was how I felt whenever I was around them.

Charles stood at the door as if he was blocking Rita's passage. Rita said lightly, "Charles, why are you standing in my way like that? Are you hiding another woman in there that you don't want me to meet?"

"Only Scarlett is here," Charles said calmly and then moved aside to let Rita in.

Rita came in and asked me with a smile, "Hello, Scarlett. What are you doing here so early? Is there a problem?"

"Why don't you ask Charles?" Rita was asking a question that she already knew the answer to, and I was not going to fall for it. I really could not stand the pretentious air that she put on, so I diverted the question to Charles and let him deal with it.

Charles fixed his eyes on Rita's white high-heeled shoes and muttered, "We're discussing going to the

law firm later to file the divorce."

"And?" Rita seemed to think of something. Then, she turned to me and said in a sickeningly sweet voice, "Scarlett, we have known each other for a long time. If you need anything, don't hesitate to ask me. I will do anything in my power to help you."

Her tone and body language gave her away. She was marking her territory. She was telling me not to meet with her future husband behind her back.

"Thanks for the offer, but I can file my own divorce, thank you very much," I retorted, reining in my annoyance.

I did not want to stay any longer, so I grabbed my purse and headed for the door. When I passed by Rita, she held my hand and flashed me her best puppy dog face.

"I mean it, Scarlett. You're like family to me, and I'm really sorry you and Charles didn't work out. But you have to understand that love can't be forced. Love should be mutual in order for it to be real. The more you hold on to what's not meant for you, the more you delay what is. You don't want to waste your time on someone who's in love with somebody else, do you?"

"Don't worry, Rita. After Charles and I divorce, he's all yours. I'm not going to try and chase after him." Rita truly fancied herself a great actress, but I was not in the mood to be in one of her scenes.

"Oh, sweetie, that's not what I meant. I truly want you to be happy." Rita looked at me as if I were the one who wronged her.

"Well, thanks. Have a nice life, too." I felt so disgusted that I wanted to throw up.

"I apologize if I touched a sore spot. I won't speak of it anymore, but if you need help with anything, my door is always open. Please remember that."

Rita spoke to me as if I were one of her closest friends from way back, but in truth, she was just establishing her dominance.

In Charles's home, she was the queen, and I was the enemy that she wanted to keep close. She was acting like Charles's dainty little girlfriend, but with the right motivation, she would sink her claws into him and chain him to her side.

She thought that I could not see through her schemes, but I could smell them from a mile away. Having had enough of her little show, I marched out of Charles's apartment and never looked back.

As I saw myself out, I heard Charles bark at Rita,
"Stay here and wait for me to come back."

It was a stern order that Charles uttered in a voice I
had never heard him use before.

But then again, I did not have to care anymore.

I walked to the elevator and waited for it to arrive.
When I heard footsteps approaching me, I pumped
the down button anxiously. All I could think about was
how much I wanted to get out of there.

My tolerance for Charles and Rita today had already
run out.

Thanks to my bad luck, Charles caught up with me
before the elevator arrived. Before he could say
anything, I muttered, "I'm going home to get the
marriage certificate. I forgot to bring it with me."

Charles did not say anything for a long time. After what felt like an eternity, he finally said, "Rita's never been here before. I've never told her about this place."

If that were true, then that meant Rita was stalking her own boyfriend, which I found pathetic.

Then, I remembered that she bumped into me at the restaurant near the TV station on my first day at work.

What if she were following me that day, too? What a crafty woman! She had been shadowing me and Charles all along.

But I did not understand why Charles would keep a secret from Rita. Why did he not tell her about this

place when he was supposed to be head-over-heels in love with her and was desperate to marry her? I turned around and watched him carefully.

"The apartment is under your name. It's written in the agreement," Charles said. So that was it? He did not tell Rita about this place because it belonged to me?

"Oh, I see." So Charles was not trying to keep secrets from Rita after all.

The next moment, the elevator doors whirled open. I was about to walk in when Charles suddenly grabbed my hand.

He pushed me into the elevator and trapped me in a corner. My heart leapt to my throat as he held me by the jaw and crashed his lips into mine.

He kissed me so deeply that I gasped for air.

I braced my hands on his chest and tried to push him away, but the more I tried to break free from his grasp, the more he pushed his body against mine. I kept my eyes wide open, and I watched pain, guilt, and passion twist the fine contours of his face.

I was practically punching him away, but all my efforts ended up in vain.

He did not stop until my phone rang. He let go of me, caught his breath, and apologized, "I'm so sorry, Scarlett. I couldn't fight it anymore."

As my eyes burned with tears, I shoved him away and slapped him across the face. I pointed a finger at him and screamed, "Screw you, Charles!"

He was the one who served me with divorce papers my first day back home. What the hell was he doing

trapping me in an elevator and then kissing me?

What did he think of me? Some bimbo he could have fun with whenever he grew tired of his sick girlfriend?

Before the elevator doors closed, Charles stepped out. He stood there and looked at me with such a dejected expression. I hurriedly wiped my tears away as they fell.

I closed the elevator doors as Charles ran his fingers through his hair in frustration. As the elevator went down, I fished my phone out of my purse and checked my call log. Then, I wiped my mouth on the back of my hand.

I got a missed call from Abner and a text message.

"It's raining today. I can pick you up if you need a ride to work later."

"No, thanks. I can manage."

I refused directly. Now I planned to get back home, get our marriage certificate, and file for divorce. I was done being caught up between Charles and Rita. Time to break free.

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