

Scarlett's POV:

Abner's hair was usually slicked back and neatly parted. Right now, it was a wet mess. I had not had the chance to look at him for a long time until now, and I realized that he was actually quite attractive. I found it a little funny that I did not notice that until I saw him drenched in the pouring rain.

I struggled to find the right words to say to him.

Before I could tell Abner my answer, Charles put his coat on me and dragged me away, forcing Abner to let go of my hand.

Charles led me to his car as I kept looking back at Abner.

Abner stayed on his spot and watched Charles force me into his car. The disappointed look on his face made me feel a horrible pang of guilt.

I had time to give him a decent answer. I should have just blurted it out before Charles could tow me away.

With one hand holding his umbrella, Charles opened the car door for me. His face darkened even more when he saw me still looking over at Abner.

"Get in the car, Scarlett."

I took a look at him, gritted my teeth, and got in the car.

After turning the ignition and making the engine hum to life, Charles drove away like he was running from the police. We did not speak the entire trip. We just sat there in uncomfortable silence, which was

beginning to become a routine for us. Of course Charles's reaction earlier bothered me, but at the moment, I was more worried about facing Abner tomorrow at work after leaving him hanging like that.

Soon, we arrived at the mansion. Charles walked into the house first, and I followed him.

"Hello, dear."

As soon as I entered the living room, Christine greeted me warmly, but before she could start a conversation with me, Charles grabbed my hand and dragged me upstairs. He moved so abruptly that everyone immediately followed us. They must have thought that he was going to beat me up or something.

"Charles, what are you doing? Where are you taking me?"

"Son, if there's any problem, just say it. You don't have to hurt your wife."

"What are you doing, Charles? Let go of Scarlett!"

Charles ignored Christine and Alice who were shouting at him from downstairs. He shoved me into the upstairs bathroom and kicked the door shut before his mother and grandmother could catch up with us.

He turned on the tap and turned me to face the sink. He stood behind me, grabbed my wrists, and put my hands under the running water. He rubbed my hands as if he intended to slough the skin off.

"What are you doing? You're starting to hurt my hands," I snapped at him, but he did not even slow down. Was he trying to wash Abner's touch off my hands?

But why?

I really did not understand why he even cared. Our marriage would end soon. I would no longer be his wife, and he would no longer be my husband. Why was he still acting like he was holding my reins?

"You're still my wife. You're still a married woman. You should behave like one," Charles replied through clenched teeth.

"All right, enough of this," I muttered and broke free from his grip. I turned off the tap, grabbed a clean towel off the rack, and started drying my hands. Charles put his hands on his hips and stared me down. "You know what, Charles, if you hadn't stood me up today, you wouldn't have had to deal with me tonight. We would've been out of each other's hair," I said, keeping my voice as level as I could.

"I didn't mean to stand you up. I had something urgent to deal with," Charles explained.

"Something more urgent than our divorce?"

"Something came up in the office, and I had to take care of it."

"I don't believe that. Nothing is more important to you than granting the final wish of Rita's life."

With that, Charles instantly stopped talking.

I pressed, "Well, since you were not free today, how about tomorrow? Or the day after tomorrow? Just put a date on it already. You can't possibly be unavailable all the time."

"Enough, Scarlett!" Charles suddenly yelled. His

sudden outburst startled me, but I refused to end our conversation without getting a definite answer.

"Just tell me when you're planning to get this over with, Charles! You want a divorce, don't you? And I already agreed. You're the one causing all the delays now, and you have the nerve to get angry with me? Whatever game you're trying to play here, I'm not interested. Just set a damn date!"

I did not bother to rein in my emotions anymore. All the waiting and stalling was starting to drive me insane. On top of that, I had to deal with Charles's overreaction to everything and also his attempts to control my life. I could not take any of it anymore.

Charles fell silent once again and flashed me a pained expression that could have broken my heart if I had not been so furious at him.

My old self would have lowered her voice and consoled him right then and there, but things were different now.

Just because I held a special place for him in my heart did not mean that he could trash it whenever he wanted.

We were at an impasse. Neither of us was willing to compromise.

After a while, just when I was about to give in, he suddenly sighed and said, "Tomorrow. Let's do it tomorrow."

I breathed a sigh of relief and set the towel on the sink. "Thank you," I muttered.

Charles was a tough guy to deal with.

But at the moment, I was just happy to get a commitment from him. Not uttering another word, Charles turned around and opened the door.

Christine, Alice, Michael, and Lawrence were standing outside and looking at us with mixed anticipation and concern.

They quickly stepped aside to let Charles pass.

I kept silent for a while and carefully planned my next words in my head. I had no idea if they heard everything Charles and I talked about.

While Michael and Lawrence turned on their heels and followed Charles, Christine and Alice walked into the bathroom and started comforting me.

"I'm so sorry about Charles, dear. You deserve better."

"Your grandma is right, honey. You do deserve better. Don't worry, we will help find you a perfect match."

Christine and Alice walked me out of the bathroom.

I forced a smile to assure them that I was all right.

Charles's POV:

I walked out of the bathroom feeling like my head was going to explode. Everything I laid eyes on pissed the hell out of me. I went to the balcony to try and calm down.

"Are you really going through with the divorce?"

Grandpa's voice came from behind me. I turned around and saw him walking over to me. My father

was right on his heels.

"Didn't you hear her earlier? She wants it done already." Saying that, I felt like my heart was being wrapped in barbed wire. I thought about Scarlett and I's confrontation in the bathroom just now.

"And what about you?" Grandpa stood beside me and looked into my eyes. "Do you want it? And are you really going to marry that actress once you end your marriage to Scarlett?"

"Grandpa..." I did not like the ugly emphasis Grandpa put on the word "actress" to describe Rita. He sounded like he was mocking her. "Rita doesn't have much time left."

"If that's your decision, then I respect it. But I'm allowed to be worried that Rita's just manipulating you. You may be all grown up, Charles, but I'm still

your grandfather. I still want the best for you. But if you don't want to heed my warning, then it's up to you." Grandpa heaved a deep sigh, gently patted me on the shoulder, and then left.

Even though my father just stood there and listened the entire time, I could tell from the look in his eyes that he thought the same thing as Grandpa.

"By the way, Christine and Alice are setting up a blind date for Scarlett." Before he disappeared downstairs, Grandpa turned around to leave one last remark.

"Right." It did not surprise me. My mother and grandmother had always been obsessed with giving Scarlett the best of everything. Since they struck out with me, they of course would restart their quest to find her a husband that she deserved.

"That's all you have to say to that?" Grandpa prodded,

unsatisfied with my reaction.

I looked up at him and flashed him the calmest expression I could muster.

We locked eyes for a few moments, and then Grandpa sighed, shook his head, and went downstairs. My father still did not say anything. He just stood there and stared at me, but his gaze was enough to make me feel like the biggest disappointment in the family by far.

After Grandpa and Dad left, I grabbed my laptop and locked myself in the study. I worked and worked until I was numb and completely distracted. The last thing I needed right now was to be thinking about Scarlett's blind date.

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