

Chapter 2 Finally Got Her With Your Elaborate...

"Remove that gaudy dress and tacky jewelry. You don't need a ceremony to be my wife." Alden's commanding voice reverberated through the room as Helena glanced up, bewilderment etched across her features.

Alden continued outlining his demands with cold precision. "No one outside the family learns about our marriage. No divorce until the development project concludes. And absolutely no scandals. Meet these conditions, and the money is yours. Clear?"

Before Alden's patience evaporated completely, realization dawned on Helena.

Was he actually agreeing to let her take Emily's place?

Fearing he might reconsider, Helena hastily removed her necklace and earrings, then slipped out of her wedding gown, leaving herself vulnerable in only her undergarments.

"Planning to leave here half-naked?" Alden's voice carried a hint of mockery.

Helena froze, reality crashing back upon her.

With casual indifference, Alden extracted a ring from his pocket and slid it onto Helena's slender finger.

Surprise flickered across her face; the band encircled her finger perfectly, as though crafted specifically for her.

"This ring must be quite valuable," she ventured cautiously. "I'll guard it carefully and return it when we divorce."

Alden remained silent as Helena placed the matching ring on his finger.

Without ceremony or family blessings, they got married at the City Hall.

Alden handed Helena the keys to their new residence and instructed his assistant, Xavier Ashton, to personally escort her

there.

Only after Helena had completely vanished from sight did Alden answer his friend Dorian Morrison's call.

"Finally got her with your elaborate scheme?" Dorian chuckled deviously.

Alden rotated the wedding ring on his finger, then opened his palm to examine the crimson smudge left by Helena's full lips, arching an eyebrow.

"We're legally married now. No schemes involved," he stated flatly.

"You're claiming a man's touch actually alleviated your anxiety episode?" Inside a consultation room, Helena's friend and psychotherapist, Valeria Clark, maintained a professional expression while documenting Helena's condition.

Helena reclined on the couch, thoughts drifting elsewhere.

That was precisely how the event had unfolded. Alden had helped her, and somehow they'd ended up married.

Two months had elapsed, yet her marriage still felt like an illusion. Helena exhaled deeply. "Valeria, do you believe my condition can ever be cured?"

She had diligently pursued therapy, dreaming of one day marrying and having children naturally. Now that goal seemed to dissolve into impossibility.

She had married Alden—a man who would never sleep with her.

Valeria glanced at the wedding band adorning Helena's finger, visibly irritated by its presence.

"Your psychological barriers stem from memories you lost twenty years ago. Once those memories resurface, healing should progress quickly. But speaking as both your doctor and friend, I recommend a comprehensive health assessment immediately."

Helena straightened, anxiety flaring. "Why?"

Valeria's expression remained deliberately neutral. "You married a complete stranger without consulting me. It's reasonable to suspect your brain might have suffered some unknown trauma."

Helena fell silent, Valeria's sarcasm cutting deeper than intended. It was Valeria who had secured her father's primary physician and even covered several months of medical expenses. As a friend, Valeria had already done too much for her.

Helena couldn't impose further burdens upon her.

Fortunately, the Simpson family had honored their agreement, returning her father to the nursing facility. She merely needed to endure until the development project concluded, when Alden would divorce her without question.

After her session, Helena bid Valeria farewell and proceeded directly to the adjacent Nexus TV building.

As a weather anchor, today she stood ready for any unscheduled weather broadcasts.

Backstage, Eleanor Murphy, the evening news anchor, chatted animatedly with female colleagues.

"Have you heard? Alden, the Wilson Group heir who recently returned from abroad, is visiting the station today for an interview."

Helena's hand trembled noticeably as she applied makeup, the lipstick slipping to leave a jagged streak across her lips. Alden was coming to the station?

Throughout these past two months, he had barely set foot in their shared home.

They had rigorously adhered to his demands, keeping their relationship concealed. Due to her profession, Helena departed early each morning, their lives remaining entirely separate.

She had never imagined encountering her newlywed husband at work.

Eleanor clicked her tongue dismissively. "Heir? Haven't you heard? Alden suffered an accident that stole his hearing entirely. How could his family possibly entrust such a vast empire to someone... damaged like him?"

"If he's disabled," another voice said with casual cruelty, "why not remain abroad living off family wealth?"

Eleanor's laughter sliced through the air. "He probably returned to prevent the family property from slipping to his brother. Such a shame though—he's quite handsome. If not for his... condition... he'd certainly be worth pursuing."

"Careful, Eleanor," someone warned with mock concern. "After such trauma, who knows if his ears were the only casualty?"

Another wave of laughter rippled through the room, sharp and venomous.

Just beyond the partially open door, Alden stood motionless, his expression carved from stone as the familiar barbs of mockery washed over him. Such derision had become a constant companion.

Xavier bristled with indignation. "Mr. Wilson, I'll go—"

Before he could complete his threat, Helena—who had been silently applying makeup—rose abruptly from her seat. She slammed her compact onto the table with deliberate force, the sharp crack echoing like a thunderclap.

The gossip evaporated instantly as every head swiveled toward Helena, eyes wide with surprise at this unexpected disruption.

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