

## Chapter 5 Dry My Hair

Helena's eyes drifted to Alden's ear, lingering there before she asked softly, "You can hear me?"

Alden's lip curled slightly. "Well, I can read your lips just fine. And frankly, your expression already gave away you're here to ask for something."

With embarrassment, Helena pressed her lips together, warmth flooding her cheeks.

What was she even thinking? Given all the contempt Alden had been through because of his deafness, did he really need to fake it?

Drying his hair casually, Alden said, "Ratings for Nexus TV's Nine O'clock News were already weak. Pulling our advertising was just practical business."

Helena thought for a moment. Perhaps the Wilson Group's decision truly had nothing to do with her.

That was logical. Alden was merely her husband on paper; he'd never make such significant choices just for her sake.

Maybe she'd read too much into his actions.

Trying once more, she softly argued, "But the station has been firing people—"

Alden smoothly interrupted her. "Tell me something, Helena—are you genuinely happy just presenting the weather?"

His question caught Helena completely off guard, the slight edge in his voice undeniable.

Once, Helena had nearly been promoted to news anchor. But fate intervened cruelly on her first day live when her mother dragged her to the hospital for an emergency blood donation to her half-sister.

Missing her debut meant ridicule at work, forcing Helena into humiliating pleas just to remain employed—as a lowly weather anchor.

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Three long years later, she was still stuck reading weather reports while less qualified colleagues like Eleanor climbed to prime slots.

Happy? Not even remotely. Yet her income was critical for her

father's medical expenses. That was the bitter truth.

"Anchoring the news is always my goal at Nexus TV. But if I'm fired now, there's nothing I can do," Helena admitted softly, fighting back a tear. "Sorry for bothering you with my problems, Mr. Wilson. It wasn't right."

Turning hastily to leave, Helena felt a firm grasp on her wrist.

"Help me dry my hair," Alden instructed casually.

Helena stared back in confusion, searching his face, but Alden revealed nothing in his steady gaze.

She nodded, unable to refuse.

Years spent caring for her sick father made this task second nature.

Helena gently towel-dried Alden's hair with practiced patience, then picked up the hairdryer.

As her slender fingers brushed softly through his hair, something shifted quietly inside Alden.

The gentle hum of the dryer masked the quickening beat of his heart. A brief, unnoticed smile touched his lips before he hid it.

Once alone, Alden reached for his phone and dialed Xavier, his assistant.

"Reinstate the advertising for Nexus TV's Nine O'clock News," Alden instructed.

Surprised, Xavier asked, "But didn't you say investing in Nexus TV wasn't worthwhile?"

"It matters to Helena. That's enough reason. And sign her up for the news anchor auditions." Alden absently turned the cochlear implant in his palm.

Helena was right—he didn't really need it anymore.

One year ago, Alden underwent complex surgeries to restore his hearing. Yet pretending otherwise had strategic perks in navigating certain business complexities.

"I'll take care of it," Xavier said cautiously. "After today's interview aired, your family started stirring up trouble again."



Amusement flickered in Alden's eyes. "Ignore their drama. Stick firmly to our plans."

The following day, Helena had just wrapped up her noon segment when she learned the good news. Nine O'clock News's advertising was restored.

Surprise flickered across her face. Alden had seemed so indifferent last night—she didn't expect he'd reconsider.

"Eleanor, you're incredible! How on earth did you persuade Alden to restore the advertising?"

Passing by the break room, Helena overheard a cluster of female coworkers excitedly praising Eleanor.

Surrounded by admirers, Eleanor bragged arrogantly, "Please, Alden is just some deaf guy from his father's previous marriage. Everyone knows the real heir is his brother, Rylan Wilson. I went to dinner with Rylan, and he handled it."

Helena slowed her steps thoughtfully.

So, Alden's brother Rylan was the one who actually controlled the Wilson empire? Maybe Alden hadn't refused to help her—maybe he simply lacked the authority.

A faint pang of guilt gripped her.

He'd done plenty already, letting her marry into his family in place of Emily. Helena felt guilty for overlooking his struggles while selfishly demanding more.

Helena sighed and pulled out her phone, thinking about calling Alden to apologize—but she paused, unsure how to begin.

Before she could decide, her mother Gemma's number flashed on her phone.

"I sent you Stacey's wedding invitation. Why haven't you responded yet?" Gemma scolded sharply.

Helena recalled the digital invite she'd received the previous night. Stacey Simpson—Emily's cousin—was marrying Terry Marshall, Helena's boyfriend for four years.

In theory, it wasn't strange for exes to go on and marry someone else.

But the invitation clearly stated that Stacey and Terry had shared three "wonderful" years before deciding to get married.

That was when it hit Helena—Terry had been cheating on her for three of the four years they were together.

Helena laughed bitterly to herself. Her cherished "first love" had been a total sham.

Gemma, irritated by Helena's silence, snapped, "Stacey's family has always been a good business ally of our family. Stop being childish. Stacey even said your history with Terry doesn't bother her; she invited you specifically to be her bridesmaid."

Helena's hands balled into fists at her sides.

So, Stacey knew everything but still chose to embarrass her publicly. Clearly, this wasn't innocent goodwill—it was outright humiliation.

"Alright," Helena replied steadily. "I'll be there."

Attending wasn't a problem—since Stacey insisted, she would go. But she wouldn't leave without dropping off a "special" wedding gift.

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