

Your Guise 981

Chapter 981

"Where's James?" He asked, placing the fruits he just bought on the table and looking around.

"I... chased him away," Esther admitted quietly, feeling a bit embarrassed.

"Why did you do that?" Richard was surprised. Everyone could see how much James loved her, so why would she do such a thing?

"Because... I broke up with him."

Richard was taken aback. "Why?"

"I found out how Mobius died. It was because of me, so I can't be with James like nothing happened," Esther explained, hugging her head and looking pained.

"Don't you think this is ridiculous?" Richard didn't hold back. "First of all, Mobius's death wasn't your fault. He made his own choices, and it was his skills that led to the accident, not you. Secondly, Mobius did everything out of love for you, not expecting anything in return but for you to be happy. You're making him out to be a bad person."

Esther hadn't realized Richard knew so much. "I didn't mean that. That's not what I meant. I never blamed him. I just..."

"What I said still stands. If Mobius was still alive, he'd want you to be happy. He kept his distance from you because he wanted you to have a healthy relationship."

Esther seemed to be moved by his words and nodded silently. "Yes, you're right. I shouldn't be so selfish."

"James is innocent. Ending things with him over this will only make it harder for you to find happiness in the future," Richard advised, his tone firm but caring.

Richard's words were a stark reality. Though they were harsh, they were the truth.

Esther bowed her head, reflecting on her stupid actions.

Pearl tugged at Richard's sleeve. "Alright, she's unwell. Stop scaring her."

"I'm not scaring her. I just want her to understand the situation." Staring at Esther, he continued in a heavy tone, "Some things are gone forever once you let them go."

"Okay," Esther nodded. "I understand."

Pearl looked at Esther's pale face, feeling her heart ache. "It's okay, calm down. James is understanding and rational. If you want to make it up with him, it doesn't have to happen right away. Rest well and see him when you're feeling better."

Esther's heart felt heavy, but she was too unwell to express it. "Okay."

Pearl gently touched Esther's hair, comforting her. "Don't worry too much. It's not as bad as you think."

Since Esther fell ill, the shoot stopped. She could only stay at the hospital and recover so she could return home with Pearl. As for the loss they suffered, Pearl covered it so it wasn't a big issue.

After getting back to their country, the first thing Esther did was to visit the firm to see James.

But as she entered, she was blocked by a woman dressed in office attire.

Chapter 982

The woman didn't look familiar, but she was pretty. She looked haughty and seemed to be hostile. "Who are you? How could you just walk in?"

"... A friend," Esther replied hesitantly. They had broken up, so she couldn't claim to be his girlfriend anymore.

"Friend?" the woman scoffed, eyeing Esther up and down. "Why would Mister James be friends with someone like you?"

"What do you mean 'someone like me'? Why wouldn't he be friends with me?" Esther felt her anger rising.

The woman looked down on Esther. "Look at the way you're dressed. Our lawyer is a refined man, so he wouldn't mingle with someone like you."

Esther laughed bitterly. "You're new here, aren't you? You don't know anything."

The woman raised her chin defiantly. "Yes, I'm new, but I know him quite well. You wouldn't stand a chance to talk to him."

Esther sensed that this woman was only interested in James's good looks and wanted to flaunt herself in front of him to catch his attention. She wouldn't let someone like her near him.

"Do you know that I'm his ex-girlfriend?" Esther asked pointedly.

The woman's jealousy flashed briefly before she composed herself. "Of course not. So you're his ex. That's why you're dressed like..."

Esther's eyes almost shot fire. Why did this woman keep attacking her?

Observing the woman's arrogance, Esther decided to stand up for herself. This woman was walking all over her just because she was polite?

Esther straightened up, crossed her arms, and gave the woman a once-over. "What's wrong with the way I dress? I don't see any issue. And as for you, you're all covered up. You have a terrible figure, don't you?"

The woman felt embarrassed, realizing her own lack of confidence. She weakly retorted, "I'm not trying to compete with you."

Esther glanced at the woman's chest with disdain. "If you're so conservative, why did you unbutton two buttons? But it's pointless because there's nothing to see there anyway."

Having worked in the entertainment industry for a while, she was familiar with such tactics. The woman criticized Esther for not dressing modestly, yet she was the one trying to seduce James. She hated women like her.

The woman hastily covered her chest, feeling both embarrassed and enraged. "It accidentally popped open. Don't assume things."

Esther found the woman repulsive. "Oh, spare me the excuses. With your size, there's no way it could burst open."

Unable to come up with a retort, the woman retreated into the firm, closing the doors and glaring at Esther triumphantly, as if to say, "See, you can't get in'.

Esther was fed up with the woman's behavior but didn't know what to do. She took out her phone to call James, but he was on another call.

Chapter 983

Esther felt lost when it seemed like James had blocked her.

She checked her messages and noticed their couple's display picture had changed. She attempted to send a message there, realizing he hadn't blocked her there.

[Hello?]

There was no response, but Esther wasn't ready to give up. She sent another message, only to find herself blocked there as well.

Running out of options without being able to call or text him, Esther grew frustrated. With a guard dog at the door, she couldn't even confront James directly. What was James doing...

She felt sad at first, but then she remembered she pushed him away and stopped feeling that way.

But even after her actions, James hadn't said a word. How could she give up over these minor setbacks?

She approached the door and knocked.

The woman glanced at her briefly and ignored her.

"Open the door," Esther demanded.

Though the door was soundproof, the woman could still make out Esther's words. "No," she replied curtly.

"If you don't open the door, I'll break it down," Esther threatened with a smile, causing the woman's expression to change.

Realizing it was an anti-theft door, the woman knew Esther wouldn't be able to break it. However, if James heard the commotion, he might blame her for not treating their guests properly.

Considering her options, the woman reluctantly opened the door. "Come in," she muttered.

Esther entered with her head held high, feeling victorious, and flopped down onto the couch. "Get me a glass of water," she ordered.

The woman's face turned red with anger. It wasn't a big request, but she didn't want to do anything for Esther.

"Why are you still standing there? Get me a glass of water. I've been talking so much my throat is dry," Esther insisted.

Forcing a smile, the woman replied, "The water cooler is over there. You can get it yourself."

"As a guest, I've never heard of having to fetch my own water. Who taught you how to entertain guests? Why did James hire you?" Esther fired off questions.

The woman had no answers but feared James's opinion. Afraid of being fired, she reluctantly got a glass of water from the cooler and approached Esther.

However, as she handed over the glass, she intentionally spilled it on Esther's hand.

Chapter 984

Though the water wasn't scalding hot, Esther still yelped as it touched her hand.

"Ah!"

Esther inspected her reddening fingers, then demanded, "What are you doing? Why did you spill it on my hand?" Was the girl already seeking revenge?

"I didn't. You didn't hold it properly, so it spilled," the woman retorted, her demeanor now pitiful, a stark contrast to her earlier arrogance.

"Are you trying to frame me?" Esther glared at her, about to say more when a cold voice interrupted.

"I really didn't expect someone would make a scene here."

Upon hearing the familiar voice, Esther couldn't contain herself. She stood up and turned to face the man she had been thinking about endlessly. Seeing him in a suit, though weary, she couldn't help but say, "James, I—"

"Why did you come here?" There was no warmth in his eyes, just coldness.

Nothing. I just wanted to see you. I know I was wrong, so I came to apologize." Esther lowered her head, trying to make herself seem smaller.

She had often stood there, looking sorry whenever she made a mistake, and James would always forgive her. But this time, his response was different. He just looked at her coldly.

"Are you done? If you are, please leave."

Esther looked up in disbelief. Seeing the chill in his eyes, she wished she could disappear, her heart heavy.

"Do you hate me?"

"I wouldn't say hate, but I don't want to see you," James replied bluntly.

Tears welled up in Esther's eyes at his words. "James, please don't be so cold to me. I'm sorry—"

"Why should I speak kindly to you?" He sounded impatient. "You don't work here anymore. I'll have someone send your things to you."

"I—" Esther tried to speak, but James cut her off.

"Alright, it's time for you to leave," James said firmly, turning away. "Don't let me see you here again."

Esther felt as if her heart had been squeezed tightly. She stood there, watching James walk away, unable to say a word.

"I told you. He didn't want to see you, but you insisted," the woman remarked, seeing Esther's pitiful state.

It was the first time she had witnessed James's merciless side since starting her job here. While he was typically reserved, he still maintained a level of respect toward others.

However, his hatred for this woman named Esther was so intense that it made him lose his composure.

Chapter 985

Esther felt like crying, but she refused to do so in front of this woman or in public.

"Alright, don't cry. You shouldn't come back here anymore. Mister James doesn't want to see you," the woman remarked, seeing Esther's change in expression. She handed her a napkin, perhaps feeling sorry for her.

Esther accepted the napkin, wiped her tears, and let out a sigh. "I understand now."

"Good. So don't show up here again," the woman advised.

"I mean I understand, but that's exactly why I'll keep coming back!" Esther declared.

The woman wanted to take back the napkin. "Why are you so stubborn? Can't you see how he looked at you with disdain? Why would you still stick around?"

"You've only seen him look disdainful, but have you considered that side of him only came out because I'm the only one who could make him so angry?" Esther argued. That meant she was important to him, or he wouldn't have been so upset.

"I give up. You're like a persistent little dog," the woman said with an eye roll, but her tone wasn't entirely negative. "You don't look ugly, and your voice is nice. Why would you keep throwing yourself at him?"

Esther shook her head and took a sip of water. "Because I know he loves me and can't forget about me, and I still have a chance. Why shouldn't I try?"

"How can you think you have a chance?" The woman was done discussing this and turned her attention to a new arrival, prompting her to tell Esther, "You should leave now."

Esther burst out laughing. "Alright. What's your name?"

"Why? Are you planning to file a complaint?" The woman eyed her cautiously. She didn't believe Esther would easily become her friend after their confrontation, even if she wasn't wicked. They had almost started a fight, and she had even spilled water on her.

"No. I think you're quite adorable," Esther replied, thinking the woman was a bit arrogant but not malicious. If she wanted to keep coming back to see James, perhaps this woman could help her.

"I'm Summer Novak."

Esther looked at her face and repeated, "Summer Novak. That's a beautiful name."

Placing her hands on her hips, Summer proudly said, "Of course. My mom went through a lot of names before picking this one for me."

Realizing that James's visitor was about to come out, Summer urged Esther, "The visitor is here to see Mister James, and he'll be out soon. Leave before he sees you, or else."

"Or else what?" Esther paused.

"Are you stupid? We'll be in trouble!" Summer rolled her eyes and opened the door. "Just go. If you want to talk to him, come back tomorrow at 3 pm. He has an empty slot, but don't tell him I told you!"

Esther jumped in excitement and gave her a quick peck on her cheek. "Thanks, Summer. I'll be back tomorrow!"

Chapter 986

Before Pearl went back home with Richard, she asked him to take Saule away before informing Dustan and Susan.

Richard then brought Mobius's ashes back, causing a commotion in the family.

Everyone felt devastated learning about Mobius's death, especially Susan. Her cries were heart-wrenching as she held onto the box tightly.

Dustan stood there, staring at the brown box, his lips quivering. "Rick, your brother's ashes are in there?"

Richard felt heavy-hearted and could only nod.

"My dear Mobius! How could you leave us like this?" Tears streamed down Susan's face. Mobius was her favorite son, the youngest, beloved by his parents.

But that's life. People could be here one day and gone the next, leaving behind a pile of ashes. How could she not be upset?

"Please don't be too sad, Mom. We can't bring back the dead," Richard said softly.

Susan took a deep breath to calm herself. "How did he die?"

"The race car was going too fast, and there was an accident, so..."

Susan ground her teeth. "Could someone have tampered with the car? Mobius was skilled. I can't believe it was just an accident. If he wasn't a good driver, he wouldn't have been chosen to train. I believe someone is behind this."

"I know you might not believe this, but it's the truth. No one did anything," Richard said, though he knew the truth was more complicated.

Although this was linked to Esther, it wasn't her fault. But Susan might not see it that way and might blame Esther for everything.

Susan hugged the box tighter, sobbing harder after she heard that. "My Mobius..."

"Alright, let's not cry. Crying won't bring him back," Dustan finally spoke up. He was also extremely distraught but felt he had to maintain composure as the head of the family. Yet he couldn't bear to see Susan in such pain.

"He's your son too. So what if I cry? Don't talk to me," Susan retorted. "You're still hung up on Beah. That's why you don't care about us, mother and son."

"I've told you countless times, I don't have feelings for her anymore. I know you're sad that our son is dead, but do you think I'm not? I love our family. Stop making baseless accusations," Dustan replied, frustrated.

Susan felt her anger rising at Dustan's response. "What..."

"Enough arguing. Let's discuss Mobius's funeral arrangements," Richard intervened.

Susan broke down, unable to bear the weight of her grief. Her weak heart couldn't handle it, and she collapsed, her vision darkening as she fainted.

Chapter 987

Pearl stood there, watching. She didn't want to get involved with their family matter, but the moment Susan fainted, she rushed forward.

Checking Susan's pulse, Pearl confirmed it was just a fainting spell due to overwhelming emotions, letting out a sigh of relief. "She's fine. Let's get her to her room to rest," she instructed.

Ramona hurried over and assisted Susan to her room, leaving only three of them remaining.

"Where's Hanzel and Sean? Why haven't they returned yet?" Richard asked.

Dustan looked like he aged ten years, his voice weak. "I've asked the butler to inform them. They should be back soon."

Richard had a bad feeling. He feared for Hanzel and Sean's safety, considering accidents often occur when emotions run high.

After half an hour, the two finally arrived, bringing relief to everyone.

"What happened, Rick?"

Hanzel had always been close to Mobius, so when he heard the news, he was devastated. "Is he really dead?" He stared at the box of ashes and couldn't believe his brother was in there.

"Yes, there was an accident during his race," Richard replied, his own heart heavy with the weight of the truth. He didn't want to keep repeating what had happened. Every time he said it, his heart ached more.

Sean remained silent, but his troubled expression spoke volumes. Though not blood-related, he and Mobius had grown up together.

He never imagined this day would come. Mobius, the most carefree of the siblings, had always been by his side, even in the face of adversity. Even a person like Hugo didn't do anything to him. How could an innocent young man like him leave them?

Sean looked up, struggling to hold back tears. "How did the accident happen?" he inquired, sensing there was more to the story. "I have a feeling there's something we're not being told."

Richard met Sean's gaze, recognizing his sharp intuition. "There's no hidden reason. He was simply driving too fast."

Hanzel wiped away his tears. "No, that doesn't make sense. He's a skilled driver. Why would he take such a risk?"

"Maybe he was just eager to win," Richard suggested.

Sean squinted, hands tucked in his pockets as he stood apart. The explanation didn't sit right with him. "But Mobius wasn't the type to care about winning at any cost. Why would he speed up just to win the race? He's a racer. Wouldn't he know how dangerous that was?"

"Do you know you rub your sleeves when you lie, Rick?" Sean remarked suddenly, a strange look in his eyes.

Richard looked at his hand and realized he wasn't doing that, but Sean chuckled, giving him a weird look. "I lied. Did you fall for it?"

Chapter 988

Richard realized he had fallen for Sean's trap and eyed him warily.

"Alright, we'll have to take your word for it for now." Sean patted Hanzel's shoulder, his use of "for now" meant he didn't believe Richard.

Richard's expression darkened. He knew Sean was trying to outsmart him.

Sensing tension rising, Pearl intervened to defuse the situation. "There's nothing suspicious here. Mobius sped up and caused the accident."

"Pearl, I had feelings for you before, so I respect you, but it's best you stay out of our family matters," Sean stated firmly, though he softened it with a smile. "You don't need to be involved in this, okay?"

The Sean who made everyone uncomfortable was back, leaving Pearl with a sinking feeling in her stomach.

"I believe we should seek justice for Mobius." Hanzel, holding the box of ashes, glared with hatred and determination. "I will find out who caused all this no matter what it takes."

"Go ahead then." Richard knew that they had made up their mind, so he didn't stop them. "But let's arrange Mobius's funeral first."

"Of course. He's not just your brother, he's ours too. We'll give him a grand send-off," Sean declared coldly, his implication clear.

"There's no point talking if you've made up your mind." With that, Richard took Pearl's hand and left.

After watching them leave, Hanzel turned to Sean. "Why are you so harsh with Richard? What's wrong? Do you still hate him?"

"This has nothing to do with our past. It's about Mobius's death," Sean deflected, not wanting to reveal his suspicions to Hanzel.

Hanzel wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed. He was dating Pearl's friend, so if he shared Sean's plan with his girlfriend, and she in turn told Pearl, it would disrupt his investigation.

Sean smiled reassuringly, patting Hanzel's shoulder. "Don't overthink it. Focus on helping with the funeral arrangements." He would handle the rest.

Though Hanzel didn't fully grasp the situation, he sensed the deep-seated animosity between his brothers.

"How do you think Mobius died? He loved racing and was always cautious. It doesn't make sense for him to speed up randomly," Hanzel pondered.

Sean avoided the question. "I wonder too," he replied cryptically. "It's strange. Richard was always meticulous, so how could he overlook this?"

He cursed inwardly, entertaining the possibility that Richard might have intentionally ignored things.

Chapter 989

Sean struggled to accept the idea that Richard could be capable of such evil, but the evidence pointed in that direction. He couldn't ignore his suspicions any longer.

Hanzel carefully placed the box of ashes in a corner, his emotions overwhelming him. "Sean, I know you're busy with work and don't often get to come back. You can go back and return for the funeral," he suggested, tears streaming down his face. "Mobius wouldn't want you to put your life on hold. He was always so full of life."

Sean was touched by his brother's words. "Okay, I will."

He decided to take some time off to start his investigation. If Richard was truly involved in this, he wouldn't let him get away with it.

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Pearl sensed something was off when Richard led her out.

"I have a question, Richard," Pearl spoke up as they got into the car. "Why do I feel like something's not right?"

"Because you're correct," Richard replied, his tone serious. "But I didn't want to cause any panic by saying anything."

Pearl raised her brows. "Are you suggesting Mobius's death wasn't just an accident?"

"Yes."

"You didn't mention he sped up because of Esther, to avoid leading them astray?"

If the family grieving their loss discovered a connection to Esther, they wouldn't spare her any sympathy. This would be the case even if she wasn't directly responsible.

Pearl couldn't help but sigh at Richard's thoughtfulness.

"How could I not realize something even they could?" Richard said.

Mobius wouldn't have risked his life like that unless there was something else at play. However, he didn't say anything at the hospital, as if there were no external factors and it was all his fault.

"But now they suspect you. Do you think they believe you killed Mobius?" Pearl voiced her concern. She worried that if the brothers suspected each other, it could lead to further complications.

But who would benefit from their conflict?

She considered potential suspects, such as Hugo, the Jesseltons, and Lawson Enterprises, but identified no clear motive. While all appeared suspicious, none seemed to have a reason. Mobius had nothing to do with any of them, so why would they harm him?

"Let's focus on finding the crashed car for now," Richard suggested, his mind already racing with plans.

Pearl was a little troubled. "But what if it's been cleaned before we can examine it?"

"I arranged for the car to be sent back before our return. It should be here by now," Richard assured, his gaze fixed ahead as he steered the car forward.

Chapter 990

Both Richard and Pearl were seasoned racers, confident in their ability to diagnose any issues with the car themselves.

While on the road, Pearl couldn't shake the feeling of gratitude to Richard for shielding Esther. "Richard, thanks for protecting Esther," she expressed her appreciation, touched by his gesture.

She was quite surprised by it, expecting him to reveal all the suspicious details for discussion. Instead, he deliberately omitted any mention of Esther.

"I did it for you," Richard replied simply, his words enough to show how much he loved her.

Pearl was overwhelmed by a mix of emotions—gratitude, surprise, and more.

She calmed herself down as they arrived at an abandoned warehouse on the outskirts of the city. Richard had chosen this secluded location to prevent any interference with their investigation.

Upon entering, they found the warehouse undisturbed. Richard unlocked the steel doors with a rusty key, revealing a red race car inside. Despite the damage, it was clearly a high-end vehicle.

Pearl's heart sank as she took in the extent of the damage, realizing the severity of Mobius's ordeal. He... suffered a lot.

"The impact must have been devastating at high speed," Pearl commented, trying to mask her sorrow. If foul play was involved, it was a despicable act indeed.

Richard examined the car closely, his eyes filled with sadness. "I suspect the brakes were tampered with."

Pearl nodded, understanding. They forced the door open to inspect the brakes, finding some damage but nothing conclusive.

"If not the brakes, then what?" she wondered aloud, puzzled by the sudden acceleration.

Richard looked troubled as he circled the car, finally turning his attention to the tires. "Do you think something was wrong with the tires?"

Pearl examined the tires, noticing they appeared darker than usual. "Is it just me, or do these tires look darker than the rest?"

Richard took a closer look, confirming Pearl's observation. The darker shade raised suspicions.

Pearl, using her medical knowledge, leaned in and detected an unusual scent amidst the familiar odors of burnt rubber and gasoline.

It was... lubricant!