

Chapter 31

"You're a fool, Zinnia. A big FOOL." Those words had stung Zinnia's heart so deeply and she felt like the ground should open and swallow her. The stinging sensation lingering where her grandmother's slap had landed, made tears almost swell in her eyes, but she clenched her hands, fighting back her tears.

The room suddenly felt suffocatingly large, each pair of eyes fixed upon her, magnifying her humiliation. The disappointment etched across her grandmother's face cut deep, a painful reminder of her transgression.

As Zinnia glanced around, she could see the shock reflected in the eyes of her family members. They stared at her, their expressions were a mix of disbelief and discomfort, witnessing the unexpected that happened. It was a huge shock because Ma'am Luna had never raised her hands to slap Zinnia before.

But what infuriated her, even more, were the subtle smirks on the faces of Marcus, Lisa, and Aaron. Their silent laughter at her expense only fueled her frustration. She felt a surge of anger at their insensitivity, their failure to grasp the gravity of the situation.

"I'm sure you morons are happy. Curse you all," she thought.

Amidst the chaos of emotions swirling within her, her mind raced to the reason behind this public humiliation. Her thoughts turned to the missing flash drive, the one that Peterson claimed to be swapped. It was mysterious to her. She couldn't help but suspect that someone had dared to enter her office earlier and did that.

Seeking to calm her grandmother, Zinnia's trembling hand reached out, attempting to placate ma'am Luna. With a gentle and remorseful voice,

she spoke, her words a mixture of apology and explanation, desperately hoping to bridge the widening divide between them.

"Grandma, I'm sorry about Peterson's outburst, but believe me when I say that..."

Zinnia couldn't finish talking as ma'am Luna held up her hand, forcing her to keep quiet.

"Not another word." She eyed Zinnia who lowered her gaze to the floor. Ma'am Luna glanced at Lisa as she approached.

"What are you saying, Zinnia? I never realized that you've become so irresponsible. Tsk, tsk, tsk." She clicked her tongue, shaking her head as she pouted.

"So who dared to enter the mighty Zinnia's office and swap the flash drive now?" Aaron asked, humorously and burst into laughter.

Lisa attempted to laugh but her hand flew to her mouth when ma'am Luna shifted her glare to Aaron, making him go quiet as a mouse. She cleared her throat and took a step closer to Zinnia as she took out her phone from her pocket.

"Well, unfortunately, the leaked video of Peterson's flopped presentation is going around. You all see this." She played a video and showed it to everyone. In the video, Peterson was seen inserting a flash drive into a laptop with a big smile. He pointed at the projector screen and everyone seated around the table in the room averted their gaze to the screen. But Peterson's big smile disappeared when the screen started displaying him flirting with some girls in a club, dancing with strippers as he tucked some thousand dollar notes into their tank tops and kissed them lustfully. The surprise showed in the other's face and one of the men



yelled, forcing Peterson to quickly take out the flashdrive from the laptop. He was seen trying to pacify them and explain but was stopped by the security guards that had quickly been sent for by one of the men and he was tossed out like trash.

"That promiscuous freak," Zinnia couldn't help but whisper with gnashed teeth.

"Wow, Peterson really has great times behind your back, Zinnia," Marcus mocked.

Aaron chuckled and said, "Honestly, bro. Zinnia, your Peterson was a big sex freak it seems."

"Shut up!" Zinnia yelled, unable to keep her cool anymore. Ma'am Luna ogled at her, causing her to quiver. "Grandmother, please hear me out."

"Not a word more. You're a disgrace too," Ma'am Luna spat and headed to her room.

"Pff, you made some big talk earlier that you were going to clean the mess Marcus made, but you just worsened it by giving Grandma hope and angering her now."

"Just shut up, Lisa," Zinnia requested rudely, rolling her eyes.

"You've got no right to tell me what to do, duh!" Lisa fired.

"Aunt Laila, I guess your children are just incapable like your son-in-law," Aaron muttered, driving Marcus to approach him.

"You better watch what you say, Aaron. To get on my nerves," Marcus warned.

"Alright. See ya." Aaron shrugged and left the room.

As Zinnia's gaze followed Arnold's retreating figure, a wave of disgust washed over her. She knew all too well the path he was heading towards, seeking solace and escape in the depths of a bustling bar. It pained her to witness him seek pleasure. She was sure he was going to spend more than usual because of the humiliation she faced.

At that moment, Lisa approached her, leaning in with a touch of condescension in her voice. The words stung, piercing through Zinnia's armor of resilience.

"Now, I don't think Grandmother would ever think of giving you greater responsibilities. You'll never take over the business, sorry to say." Lisa's remark only served to ignite a fit of fiery anger within Zinnia.

Zinnia felt her frustration intensify, her mind clouded by suspicion. Lisa's cutting words triggered a flicker of doubt.

Could it be possible that Lisa had been the one to swap the flash drive? The thought lingered in Zinnia's mind, casting a shadow of doubt over her family bonds. Then the next minute, she cursed the bond she had with Lisa.

Yet, despite the nagging suspicion, Zinnia chose to push the idea aside, at least for the time being. She knew that jumping to conclusions without concrete evidence would only lead to further discord within the family. Instead, she decided to focus her efforts on the task at hand – finding the truth behind the missing flash drive and restoring order within her own professional sphere.

Laila, feeling disappointed too, walked up to Zinnia as the others headed to their rooms.

"Zinnia, how could..."

"Mother, please. Don't give me an earful now, I've had more than enough in just a few minutes from grandmother, spare me." Zinnia sighed and left for her room. Immediately, Duncan walked in. Seeing him, Laila walked up to him, fuming.

"You good-for-nothing, you're just returning home. Where have you been? You weren't here to protect your wife from my mother's lashing. You just keep disappearing to only God knows where and returning later."

"Good evening, mother..."

"Shut up! There's nothing good about this evening. If you were around I'm sure you would have enjoyed seeing my daughter being insulted. If you were man enough, nothing of such would have happened. I regret having someone like you as a son-in-law, you're worthless. Aargh!" She screamed in anger and a satisfactory smile appeared on Duncan's face as watched his angry mother-in-law mount the staircase

Duncan chuckled and headed to the room. When he entered the room, he met Zinnia pacing with a confused and bothered expression on her face.

"Are you okay, Zinnia?" Duncan asked, making her stop and flick a hot stare at him. He closed the door behind, pulling a concerned expression.

"I'm sure you really want me to say I'm feeling bad so you can have the best laugh of your entire pathetic life."

Duncan arched a brow, acting oblivious. "What do you mean?"

"I meant what I said."

Duncan shrugged. "I don't know. Anyway, I heard that Peterson lost the deal..."

"Oh, yes, and that I was greatly Insulted by my grandmother, right?"

"Oh, did that happen? I thought you were so dear to her and..."

"Shut up, don't piss me off."

"Okay, sorry. But, isn't Peterson Rogers your mighty lover?"

Zinnia's brows slowly lifted as she knew what Duncan was going to say next.

"I mean...you cheated on him with me, but what happened? He failed you and you got humiliated."

"Shut your mouth! Leave this room now!"

Duncan let out a soft laugh to her surprise.

"I'm your husband, Zinnia."

"Fuck that! This is my room. Get lost!" She started pushing him out of the room till Duncan stepped out and she slammed the door to his face before letting out an infuriated scream that caused Duncan to burst into laughter as he headed downstairs.

As Duncan's laugh grew distinct, Zinnia's anger subsided in little bits. She shut her eyes and took a deep breath. She grabbed her laptop from the bed, sitting on the couch as she opened it.

"No, I am not a disappointment, I'm Zinnia, I am Zinnia Lennart," she chanted. "I'm sure there's a way for me. I'll find the way, definitely."



She started going through the laptop, searching for vital news regarding the deal Peterson lost. She fixed her eyes on the glowing screen of her laptop, her gaze intense and determined. She furiously typed away, her fingers dancing across the keyboard in search of a way to redeem herself in her grandmother's eyes. Each click echoed her desire to prove her worth and regain the trust she had lost.

Frustration etched its mark on her face as she encountered dead ends and unhelpful information. The vital news she sought seemed to elude her, slipping through her grasp like sand. She felt a flicker of despair creep into her heart, threatening to extinguish her hopes of finding a solution.

In a moment of anger and resignation, Zinnia groaned and was on the verge of slamming the laptop shut, ready to give up on her quest. But just as her hand hovered above the lid, a glimmer of something caught her eye, a tiny spark of hope that compelled her to pause.

Lowering her head, her eyes fixated on the screen, a broad smile slowly spread across her face. She couldn't help but exhale a mix of relief and excitement, her body tingling with newfound energy. At that moment, she knew she had found a way, a solution that could pave the path to redemption.



With an exuberant burst of triumph, Zinnia threw her fist into the air, a physical manifestation of her renewed determination. "Yes," she exclaimed, her voice filled with both certainty and enthusiasm. "I have a way."


She started laughing as she closed the laptop and got on her feet.

"Now, everyone will see my worth." Duncan's face flickered in her mind, causing her to ball her fist but her smile remained. "I know you secretly

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want me to go down, worthless husband, but it'll never happen." She inhaled, a smirk snarling up on her face as she stared vaguely at the door.

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“So guys, what way do you think Zinnia just found? I would love to know your anticipations regarding the coming chapter. Please like, share, and kindly comment your thoughts regarding the chapters...” 

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