

### Chapter 37

Back in the office, the tension was building with each passing second. After Marcus told them how he got the video, he started wondering who dropped the flash drive in his office. For him, he could only think it was someone else who wished ill for Lisa and it baffled him the more of who could be Lisa's enemy. Whatever prompted the person to drop the flash drive in his office or whoever the person was, he didn't care. He was more happy that through the flash drive, he was able to get back at Lisa too for being insolent and pompous to him earlier that morning.

"I am so ashamed of you, Lisa," Ma'am Luna groaned. "You know I had hopes for you because you have never disappointed me, I wanted to give you a chance but you ruined it by stooping so low and committing such a shameful act. I regret ever believing in you."

"Ah, grandmother, don't take this to heart, please," Bella uttered, intervening for her daughter's best interest. "I am sure Lisa didn't mean that. She only wanted to prove that she was capable too."

"But now she has proven that she can never be capable of doing anything. She's as useless as anyone else in the family."

"Mother-in-law, please..."

"You should just be quiet, Bella. Do not try to justify our daughter's actions. It was wrong. Zinnia got blamed woefully by Peterson and Mother the other night. It was wrong," George stated.

"Oh, brother, I am glad that you are upholding the truth, unlike your shameless wife," Laila uttered.

"Grandmother, what are you going to do now about Lisa's deed?" Marcus



asked, expecting a severe punishment for Lisa. "You shouldn't let this slide."

"I definitely won't, Marcus," Ma'am Luna firmly said.

"Please, mother-in-law, pardon Lisa this time. She had not done anything wrong before. Please overlook this, I kindly ask that you temper justice with mercy," Bella requested.

But ma'am Luna's mind was made up. Taking her eyes away from Lisa and her mother, she fixed them on the projector screen and took a deep breath, ready to announce her judgment.

"Lisa is suspended from her position in the company till further notice and your credit card will be limited to five thousand per month till further notice too."

"What?" Lisa's jaw dropped upon hearing her grandmother's declaration. She couldn't fathom how she was going to live well by depending on only five thousand dollars for a month. She was used to partying with her close friends on weekends in a lavishing resort and using over ten thousand dollars to satiate herself. She couldn't imagine trying to manage five thousand dollars for a whole month. For it was like giving her sand to give out in exchange for food. She opened her mouth to say something but the warning look she got from Ma'am Luna stopped her. She nudged her mother to intercede for her.

Bella, understanding her daughter's deep pains, spoke up. "Mother-in-law, suspension till further notice? That's too much. And how would she survive with only five thousand dollars a month?"

"You can seek the answer to that from the bums in the streets," ma'am Luna uttered with no emotion as she took her purse from the table.



"Exactly. Grandmother is right, Aunt Bella."

"Shut up, Marcus," Bella shunned, almost yelling. She couldn't bottle it any longer so she voiced out her long withheld complaints. "This is wrong, mother-in-law. What did Lisa do to deserve these harsh punishments from you? She only took the flash drive and I am sure that is not worse than the deed of Marcus. He made us lose 50 million dollars but you didn't suspend him from his position nor limit his credit card..."

"Hey, it's because Lisa is far from being my son, Marcus," Laila proudly stated, irking Bella. "My son has done a lot for the company. He works more than your daughter and with no matter of time, the mess he made would be cleaned. Don't compare your Lisa to even Zinnia."

"You're talking gibberish, Laila. Mother-in-law, please take back what you say. This is unfair. You're being unjust to Lisa."

"Unjust?" Ma'am Luna frowned, returning her gaze to Bella. "Did I hear you right, Bella?"

Knowing full well that daring to admit what she had claimed would be bad for her, Bella said nothing but shook her head.

"Good. You better keep your mouth under control or I might end up punishing you too for your daughter's deed, got me?"

"I understand, mother-in-law. I am sorry. But..."

"No buts, Bella!" Ma'am Luna bawled, infuriated. "My declaration is final," She stated and hissed.

"It's okay, mother. What next now? Who will represent our company?" George asked.

Marcus waved, straightening his suit coat. "Uncle, you don't need to ask that. I am still here to uphold our company's image. I can prepare a better presentation."

"The day for the presentation is just a day away, Marcus," George reminded as Bella eyed Marcus.

"That's not an issue, uncle. I can get the presentation ready by tomorrow morning and..."

Ma'am Luna held up her hand, silencing Marcus as she said, "That won't be necessary. You won't be the one to represent the company. Zinnia's presentation is still outstanding. She'll be the one to do that."

Zinnia smiled as she covered her mouth to stop her from letting out a scream in excitement.

Ma'am Luna rolled her eyes, trying to keep her anger in control, and warned, "Zinnia, you better not let me down."

"Sure, I won't, grandmother."

Feeling angry, Marcus took his laptop and stomped out of the room after Ma'am Luna left.

"So, Bella, how are you feeling now?" Laila asked, walking up to her.

Bella hissed. "What do you mean?"

"Come on, don't act oblivious now. You made big talks in the dining room this morning. You were so confident that Lisa would beat my Zinnia. You were stupidly overconfident over a presentation that you obviously knew that your daughter stole."



"Don't you dare insinuate that my daughter is a thief."

"She is, dear sister-in-law."

Bella took a step forward to retort but got stopped by George. "Let's just leave, Bella." George motioned to Lisa and left. Bella followed him.

Lisa took a step forward to leave but Laila stopped her. "You should be the last one to leave this room. That would be best." With that, Laila left, chuckling.

"Lisa, poor you, you lost to me. Don't worry, I understand. Aunt Bella probably talked you into doing that and you had no other option than to take Peterson's flash drive. I know you wanted to cause me pain by doing that, though you succeeded but I am the one having the last laugh now. Thank you for taking the flash drive, if you hadn't done that, Peterson would have likely gotten the contract. But now I will make the presentation and get the contract. Thank you for giving me such a big chance to be at the top."

"There's a saying that- one shouldn't count its chicks when they haven't hatched. You know that well, right?"

"I don't care about what you say. You were such a big fool to think that no one would get to know about your fake presentation. Now watch and see me get to the top."

"You'll never be at the top," Lisa scoffed and Zinnia burst into laughter as she watched her leave the room.

Meanwhile, outside the meeting room, Lisa met Duncan by the door. He mockingly congratulated her for getting the chance to represent the company.



"I am happy for you, Lisa. You are great. "

Seeing the smile dancing on his lips, Lisa knew well that he was only feigning to irk her. "To hell with you. Don't you dare talk to me, you filthy trash!" She hissed and left. Duncan smirked and entered the office. He met Zinnia laughing.

"Congratulations, dear wife."

Hearing him congratulate her, Zinnia stopped laughing and walked up to him at the door. "I don't need a lowlife to congratulate me. I am sure you don't mean it. You want me to fall, don't you? But I also know that you don't want me to fall because you know without me, you won't be working in the company and your worthless life will be more miserable."

"Really?"

"I am certain. Isn't that why you returned? You're nothing without me and that won't ever change. I will represent the company and get the contract, nothing will get in my way."

"You know this saying - pride before the downfall. Right?"

Zinnia sneered. "Fools like you and Lisa are daring to act smart, nice. Don't you dare give me a lecture when you're nobody. I am better than a hundred of you, get that into your rubbish head. I am the best."

"Okay. I wish you all the best."

"To hell with it." Zinnia glared at him and left the room

The anxiety that Duncan had been trying to suppress surfaced in his expression after he heard Zinnia's footsteps grow distinct.



He decided to go to the Walton Group of companies. When he arrived there, he saw Abigail stepping out of her car in the parking lot. He walked up to her to thank her better for what she did.

"Duncan, I thought I wouldn't see you here and will have to wait for a little while."

"I'm glad you're here. I want to properly thank you."

"Oh, but I got your appreciation message. You don't need to thank me all the time."

"It was a big thing you did for me in such a little time, Abigail."

"I am glad I was able to help you. How did it go?"

"It was clean."

"Uh...you mean?"

"It went well. Everyone got fooled by the fake video. Xia made it look like a real footage."

"You were worried for no reason, Miss. Xia did a good job," Lena stated. Abigail smiled, acknowledging her.

"Uh, where is she?" Duncan asked, looking around Abigail's car.

"Who are you talking about?"

"Xia. She's your personal bodyguard, right?"

"Yes. She didn't come along. She's handling something else for me."



"Alright. I wanted to thank her personally."

"You're so humble, Duncan," Abigail thought as her smile broadened.

"Anyway, relay my thank you to her."

"Sure, I will. I actually came so we could talk about your preparations regarding the presentation."

"Oh. That's thoughtful of you, Abigail. Let's go in."

Abigail took some steps forward but stopped when she heard her phone rang. Lena took out her phone from Abigail's purse which she was holding and handed it to her.

"Thank you. It's an important call. Go in, Duncan, I'll come in later."

"Alright." Duncan headed into the building.

He was shocked to find Karla in his office when he walked in. She was focused on the computer on his desk.

"What are you doing here?"

"I was trying to make something for your presentation."

"You shouldn't do that for me. I can handle it."

"Really? Well, you..." Karla instinctively stopped talking as she noticed the anxiety in Duncan's face as he took his seat. She walked over to the front of the desk and stared at him. "What happened? Are you okay?"

"Do I look okay?"



"You don't and that's why I asked."

"You don't need to know."

"Excuse me, I am your partner. So tell me."

Duncan didn't want to argue and he felt he would have a bit of relief if he told her about his worry.

"It is going to be Zinnia."

"Sorry, what do you mean, Duncan?"

"She will be the one to represent the Lennart Sky company."

"Really? So?"

"I am a bit worried because Zinnia is really experienced in making great presentations."

Understanding his worry, Karla walked over to him to give him a bit of courage with her words. "You shouldn't be. You can topple her, Duncan."

Duncan said nothing but abruptly stared at the door until Karla placed her hand on his which was lying on the desk.

He tilted his head and lifted his eyes to meet her solacing gaze, then they locked eyes.

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