

Chapter 39

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The next morning, the Lennarts were having dinner. Zinnia found herself using her eyes as a tool to search for Duncan around the house while she enjoyed a peaceful breakfast with her family. She had not seen him when she woke up and so she was wandering where he had gone.

Taking a look around the dining room, Ma'am Luna asked about Duncan's whereabouts.

"And where is that irresponsible husband of yours, Zinnia?"

Unsure of his location, Zinnia simply answered, "I don't know."

Laila took the opportunity to express her disdain, remarking, "Well, it is good we did not get to see his ugly face this morning."

Her comment was laced with bitterness. But Zinnia remained composed and focused on the task at hand - delivering the presentation to get the contract. She didn't know why she felt a bit anxious and she was trying to act cool to hide it. She had done over a couple of presentations for the company before and succeeded in getting the deals but this one was different and she wasn't thinking of giving failure the slightest chance to slip in.

"Anyway, I hope you are ready for the presentation, Zinnia?"

Zinnia lifted a brow and nodded, glancing at her Grandmother.

"The success of the presentation is crucial, I am sure you know that. You need to get us that deal."

Zinnia, exuding confidence, nodded in acknowledgment. Deep down, she



relished the chance to prove herself one last time and get on her grandmother's good book. Subtly, she enjoyed the discomfort that her unwavering confidence caused in some of the family members, most especially, Lisa and Marcus whom she caught grimacing.

With determination burning in her eyes, Zinnia got eager to see Duncan so she could assure him again and tell him that she was going to get the contract. She saw this as an opportunity to assert her capabilities and demonstrate her commitment to both her family and her professional endeavors. As her family continued their breakfast conversation, Zinnia silently made a mental note: "I'll get this." She was ready to tackle the challenge and make the most of the day ahead.

After breakfast, Duncan entered into the house. As he walked into the living room, he met a different pair of eyes glaring at him.

"Where were you earlier?" Zinnia asked, waking up to him with a mean expression.

"I went jogging around the neighborhood," Duncan answered.

"You're jobless, it seems. Oh, I forgot you got fired and soon you won't have any work to earn something from. It's almost 9 am and you are still at home. Great," she sarcastically said. "Listen to me, Duncan. You better get everywhere cleaned then come to the office and do your work while I will do what I am used to doing, which is winning."

Hearing that, ma'am Luna smiled partly before saying, "I will head to the company first today. I need to check the accounts and other important things that have been going on. Marcus, follow me and give a report."

"Okay, grandmother." Marcus nodded.

Maybe Luna patted Zinnia on the shoulder. "I am looking forward to

hearing good news from you later in the day."

"Definitely."

"Alright." Ma'am Luna left the house with Marcus.

"You said you will be giving your presentation by 11 am, right?"

"Yes, mother."

"I wish you good luck."

"Thanks, but I'm destined to win."

"Even against me? I doubt that dear wife," Duncan thought. Before he spoke. "Oh, the deal. You think you'll get it?"

"Duncan, I am certain I will. I don't think only."

"Let's see."

"Just watch then. Once I get this deal, your life will be worse here."

"And if you don't?" Duncan came closer and said, almost whispering, "You will do the cleaning for a week."

Hearing that, Laila yelled, Infuriated. "How dare you, Duncan?!"

"Oh, mother, let it be. My husband is now becoming cocky, it's fine. I will teach him a lesson after I get this deal. Mark my words, Duncan."

"Fine."

Zinnia eyed him and left, pushing him back a little with her stiffened shoulder. She was annoyed by his audacity to dare her and kept chanting '

You will pay for your impudence, Duncan' as she left the house.

An hour later, Babette was in the CEO's office, meticulously arranging some important files on the desk which Duncan would take along with him to the venue for the presentation. It was a crucial task for her, and she needed to ensure that everything was in order for the upcoming presentation. As she worked, she also took the opportunity to review the finished presentation that had been sent to her by Duncan the night before. He had asked her to go through it and check if the details were correct and other things summing it up was fine.

While engrossed in her work, the office door suddenly opened, and someone unexpectedly walked in. Babette looked up and was pleasantly surprised to see her assistant, Nicholas, standing there. Nicholas, who typically addressed her by her first name, had a warm smile on his face that almost captivated her.

"You're doing your job diligently, Manager Swan," Nicholas remarked, acknowledging Babette's focused efforts.

Babette lifted her head a bit, meeting Nicholas's gaze with a smile of her own. "I always do, Nick. You're welcome back," she replied, appreciating his recognition of her hard work. He had been away for a couple of weeks to tend to other matters of the company on behalf of her.

Nicholas seemed genuinely concerned and wanted to ensure that Babette hadn't been under too much stress. "I hope you didn't stress," he said, his tone filled with genuine care.

Babette's smile widened as she reassured him, "No, not at all." She was confident in her abilities and handled the responsibilities with grace and composure.

At that moment, Babette and Nicholas shared a brief connection, a silent understanding of their professional dynamic. Despite the formalities of their positions, their genuine respect and camaraderie shone through. But Babette's smile slowly vanished when Nickolas started walking up to her, saying,

"You lied. I know you've been working so hard since Madam Zelda's son took over."

"Oh, you know about him?"

"Yes. I met him a couple of days ago. Madam Zelda introduced me to him."

"What? You were here a couple of days ago?"

"Yeah, but you weren't at the office."

"Okay. Well, I need to return to what I am doing."

"Let me guess, you're going through a presentation he's going to give later today."

"Great guess. You're right."

"Why are you doing that like you're his assistant? You can easily give it to someone else who would do a great job like you too."

"I am not his assistant but I'm the manager. And...I enjoy doing things for him."

"What? Why? Do you...like him?"

Babette fixed her eyes on him and suddenly smiled. "Maybe. He's likable."
"

"You're talking of someone and smiling so much, I don't know why that kind of upsets me." Locking his eyes onto hers, Babette blinked uncontrollably before looking away as the door opened and Duncan walked in.

Both greeted him.

"Babette...?"

"Yes, sir, the presentation is great."

"Okay then. I will leave now."

Babette handed over the files to Duncan and Karla walked in, looking worn out.

"Hey, you're ready?" Karla asked, pulling up her cheerful mode.

"I am. You look tired," Duncan observed.

"Oh, really?"

"It doesn't look like you slept all night," Babette mentioned.

"She was probably working out all night," Duncan joked with a serious face and Abigail walked in with Lena who was holding a suit.

"Hey, Duncan."

"Good morning, Abigail. I wasn't expecting to see you here." 1

"It's like a special day today, so I came over to personally wish you all the best."



"Oh. Thank you very much."

"You're welcome, but are you dressing like this to go over and give your presentation?"

Duncan nodded as they all gave him a no-no look.

"No way. Wear this." Abigail took the suit from Lena and handed it to Duncan. "Something told me that you didn't think about your outfit so I got up early this morning to get you a befitting suit that will uphold your status."

"That's thoughtful of you, Abigail. Thanks. I'll go and change into this. Babette, inform Jack that I'll be out soon."

"Okay, sir." Duncan headed to his personal restroom to get changed.

Ten minutes later, Duncan emerged from the restroom, his appearance transformed as he now donned a sleek suit. Abigail and Karla, who had been patiently waiting for him in the hallway, were taken aback by his new and polished look. The suit seemed to enhance his confidence and presence, creating a stark contrast from his previous casual attire.

Expressing her admiration, Abigail couldn't help but comment, "You look fantastic in that suit, Duncan!" She was glad that she was the one who got him the suit, and seeing him wear it so well brought a sense of pride and elatedness.

Duncan graciously thanked Abigail once again for her generosity, acknowledging the role the suit played in his professional transformation. He checked his watch, realizing that time was of the essence. The impending presentation and the deal it could potentially secure weighed heavily on his mind. Duncan was determined to make a

lasting impression and secure the desired outcome. His mind was set up to win.

Just as he was about to leave, Karla, sensing the urgency of the situation, stopped him. She remembered something important that she felt the need to share with Duncan before he headed off. However, before she could utter a single word, Duncan was approached by Babette, who had just arrived on the scene.

Recognizing the need to prioritize the imminent presentation, Duncan swiftly made the decision to leave with Babette, trusting that Karla's information could be relayed to him later.

"Let's talk later, Karla." With a brief nod of acknowledgment, he bid Karla farewell and hurriedly departed with Babette by his side, leaving Abigail with a sense of awe for him.

"Gosh, I should have told him earlier," Karla thought.

"What do you want to tell him, Karla?" Abigail asked, a bit curious.

"You don't need to know."

"I couldn't care less. You're always late, Karla. I guess that's why Duncan kind of cherishes me more than you."

"You're not that important to him. Stop thinking highly of yourself." With that, Karla left.

Around 12 p.m., Duncan strolled purposefully down the well-lit hallway of the venue building. The air was filled with a mix of anticipation and nervous energy as he prepared himself mentally for the upcoming presentation. His mind focused on the task at hand, he exuded an air of confidence.

As Duncan made his way down the hall, he noticed the door of one of the conference rooms swing open, and Zinnia, his wife, stepped out. He was sure that she had just finished her own presentation, and her face still carried traces of the adrenaline rush she must have experienced, but with a complacent smile too. But, Zinnia failed to recognize Duncan as he approached her.

With a touch of mischief, Duncan decided to play along. As he walked past Zinnia, he made no effort to acknowledge her. He maintained a neutral expression, pretending not to know her. It was a playful act, designed to catch her off guard.

However, Zinnia, driven by her own achievements, abruptly halted Duncan's progress, stopping him in his tracks. A sense of pride emanated from her as she spoke, her voice carrying a hint of arrogance. "I think you should head home, whoever you are," she said, her tone laced with self-assurance. "This deal is already mine. Don't waste your time."

Duncan, maintaining his composure, let a small smile play upon his lips. He had expected this reaction from Zinnia, knowing how competitive she could be.

Instead of engaging in a verbal confrontation, he chose a different path. Without uttering a word, he turned away from her, gracefully walking away.

Zinnia, caught off guard by Duncan's calm response, stood there astonished, her pride momentarily deflated. As she watched him disappear into the room she just left, frustration and disappointment welled up within her. She couldn't comprehend his lack of reaction, and the power dynamic seemed to shift in an instant.



"Who the hell is he? What an arrogant fellow." She thought.

A mixture of anger and disbelief surged through Zinnia, and she couldn't help but curse under her breath. "I do not care. I should just go back to the company and wait for the good news call and the contract to come. I got this already." She chuckled and turned away, continuing down the hall with a renewed determination.