

Chapter 69

In her penthouse, Karla focused on arranging the dining table, meticulously placing the silverware, plates, and glasses in their designated spots. She took pride in creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for her and Julie to enjoy their dinner together. The aroma of the food she had prepared filled the air, adding to the anticipation of the meal.

As Julie entered the dining room, engrossed in her music with a headset on, she immediately noticed the delightful scent. She paused for a moment, momentarily distracted from her music.

"Hm, a pleasant aroma is filling everywhere, I guess I know why now," Julie remarked with a smile, acknowledging Karla's efforts.

Rose, appeared from the kitchen, carrying a steaming bowl of stew. She nodded respectfully to Julie.

"She's really happy to see you again, Ms. Julie," Rose said warmly, her voice reflecting genuine fondness.

Karla's face lit up at Rose's words. The bond between her and Julie was special, and it warmed her heart to know that Julie's presence brought joy to Rose as well.

Rose placed the bowl of stew on the table, carefully ensuring it was centered. However, her time with them was coming to an end.

"I need to leave now, Ms. Karla," Rose announced, her voice tinged with a hint of regret.

Karla looked up from the table, a mix of gratitude and understanding in

her eyes. She appreciated Rose's assistance but knew that she was capable of taking care of herself and Julie for the evening.

"Thank you for all your help, Rose," Karla expressed sincerely, her voice filled with appreciation. "You can take your leave, Rose. Please give my regards to your children," Karla said kindly, acknowledging Rose's impending departure.

"Alright, Miss..." Rose began to respond before Karla interrupted her.

"Don't forget to take all the items I bought for your children last time. You left them behind the day before yesterday," Karla reminded her, her voice carrying a hint of concern.

Rose's expression turned apologetic. "Yes, I'm sorry about that. I had a lot on my mind. Thank you for reminding me. I'm sure they will appreciate it. It seems like you put a lot of thought into the toys and other things. I can't imagine how much it must have cost you, probably over two grand."

Julie, who had been silently observing the interaction, raised an eyebrow in surprise at the generosity displayed by her cousin.

"They deserve even more," Karla replied with sincerity. "Goodnight, Rose."

Rose bowed slightly in gratitude and bid them farewell. As she left, Karla and Julie were left alone once again, ready to enjoy their dinner together.

But blinking in surprise, Julie said, readjusting on the seat. "Why do so much for your househelp, Karla?" She lifted a brow, staring at Karla seated across her on the table. "Don't you think making her kids seem like they've got a connection with you is too much? Geez, you're not their 'Aunt'."

Karla leaned back in her chair, a warm smile on her face as she listened to Julie's response. She understood her cousin's surprise and the skepticism that came with it.

"Hey, Cous," Karla began, her voice filled with genuine affection. "I love Rose and her children, and I do consider myself to be their 'Aunt.' It's not about trying to make them seem connected to me, but rather, it's about showing them love and care. It's about brightening their lives and making them feel valued."

Julie waved her hand dismissively and shrugged, still trying to process Karla's perspective. "Okay, Mother Teresa," she quipped, a hint of teasing in her tone.

Karla chuckled softly, not taking offense. "Call it what you will, but I believe that spreading kindness and generosity is never a bad thing. And if I can bring a little happiness into the lives of those who matter to me, then it's all worth it." 1

Julie couldn't help but smile at Karla's response, a hint of admiration in her eyes. While she may not fully understand her cousin's motivations, she respected Karla's genuine compassion and willingness to make a difference in the lives of others.

While Karla blessed the food, Julie's mind wandered elsewhere, unable to fully engage in the moment. Karla noticed this and motioned at her to start eating.

"Hmm, so won't you tell me about the winsome, Karla?" Julie asked with a mischievous smile.

Karla, caught off guard, replied, "Huh? Who are you talking about?"

"Come on, the guy earlier," Julie persisted, her curiosity evident. "The one who dropped you off today."

Karla realized that Julie was referring to Duncan. However, she chose to feign ignorance, knowing the likely conversation that would follow. "Um, I can't remember," Karla replied, trying to deflect the topic.

Julie's playful smile grew wider, unconvinced by Karla's response. She could sense that there was more to the story than her friend was letting on.

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