



Chapter 85

Smiling, Karla asked, "So, what now?"

"I will make Peterson suffer more. The video from last night had gone viral," Duncan said, his determination evident. He walked towards his bike parked in the parking space, with Karla following closely.

As they reached the bike, Karla couldn't help but inquire, "Where are you going?"

"I'm going to see Abigail," Duncan replied, glancing back at Karla.

Karla's eyebrows furrowed in confusion. "Why are you going to see her?"

Duncan paused, reflecting on his thoughts. "She helped me. We need to talk. I feel she did something more for me."

Karla twitched her mouth and folded her arms, clearly not convinced. "I'm coming with you."

Duncan turned towards her, a determined expression on his face. "No. You're not."

Karla seemed taken aback by his response, but Duncan's decision was final. He hopped on his bike and revved the engine, ready to embark on his journey to meet Abigail, leaving Karla behind with a mixture of curiosity and concern.

She pinched Duncan's shirt, effectively stopping him from zooming off. "You're not going anywhere without me," she asserted firmly.

Duncan turned to face her, slightly annoyed. "You think so? Why do you always want to go with me?"

Karla sighed, her eyes rolling. "I don't want to. I'm actually heading to the Imperial Hotel, and I bet you're going there to see Abigail, so we've got the same destination."

Duncan's frustration grew. "Take your car," he said, almost yelling.

"I didn't come with it," Karla replied, her voice tinged with exasperation.

Duncan narrowed his eyes at her, suspecting she had deliberately left her car behind. "You did it on purpose."

Karla shook her head, her patience wearing thin. "No, I didn't. You just love to argue. Geez." With that, she hopped on the bike without seeking permission from him, determined to accompany him whether he liked it or not.

Duncan adjusted one of the mirrors on his bike, allowing him to steal glances at Karla as she seemed oblivious to his growing irritation while she grabbed a helmet hung at the back of the bike and put it on.

With a final sigh, he informed her as he started driving, "I'm just giving you a ride there, and nothing else. Do go your separate ways when I get there without even telling me 'goodnight'."

Karla responded with a nonchalant "Hmm," seemingly unaffected by Duncan's request.

"I thought your cousin stayed at your place, so why do you want to spend the night in the Imperial Hotel?" Duncan questioned, his curiosity getting the better of him.

"She's out for the night, Duncan," Karla replied casually as if it were a simple explanation.



Duncan's eyebrows furrowed in confusion. "Then why the Imperial Hotel? You do know it's Abigail's hotel."

Karla shrugged, her noncommittal gesture not offering any further clarity.

"Yes, it's her hotel, and so what? You don't need to remind me of that," Karla answered defensively, her tone slightly sharp.

Duncan observed her defensive response. "You don't seem to like Abigail," he stated, pointing out the obvious.

"It's obvious, and likewise, she," Karla retorted, her words laced with a hint of disdain.

Duncan felt his frustration mounting as he responded. "You know what, you..." Duncan's words were abrupt as he momentarily became speechless. Then he increased the speed of the bike, causing Karla to instinctively clutch tightly onto him.

"Don't touch me," Duncan exclaimed, his voice strained.

Karla's grip tightened, her resolve unyielding. "If it's your plan to make me fall by driving at this speed, then I'll make sure we fall together," she countered, her words laced with a mixture of defiance and determination.

Duncan's eyes widened at her unexpected response. "You think I'm as awful as you? Nonsense," he retorted, a note of disbelief in his voice.

Karla chuckled, leaning in closer as she muttered, "You're not awful."

When Duncan arrived at the hotel, he parked his bike and Karla got down, mirroring his actions. They both removed their helmets, and

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Duncan led the way towards the entrance. However, he soon noticed that Karla was following closely behind him. He abruptly stopped and turned swiftly to face her, causing her to startle.

"Are you trying to outsmart me?" Duncan asked, his voice laced with a mixture of surprise and suspicion.

Karla blinked, taken aback by his sudden reaction. "Look, I'm your partner, and I want to know what you and Abigail are talking about too," she explained, a hint of determination in her voice.

Duncan's expression hardened. "No. I'll tell you about it later. You can't see Abigail with me," he stated firmly.

"Why?" Karla inquired, a tinge of curiosity coloring her words.

Duncan sighed, his frustration evident. "You annoy her. She's upset, and one of the main reasons I'm here is to soothe her," he explained, his tone tinged with a touch of exasperation.

Karla nodded, understanding dawning on her. "Hm, I see," she replied, realizing the need for Duncan's solo interaction with Abigail and respecting his intention to comfort her. But she wasn't ready to back out.

Taking a deep sigh, Karla continued, her voice filled with a mixture of remorse and determination. "Okay, I was a bit rude to her this morning, and I accept my mistake. But I promise you that I won't annoy her when I see her. Just let me come with you so we can talk like a team."

Duncan's expression remained stern as he contemplated her request. "No," he replied firmly. "You're a forced team member. And, most importantly, if you're coming with me, then you have to promise me that you'll apologize to Abigail..."

Karla hesitated for a moment, realizing the weight of her words. "Alright, I promise," she blurted out impulsively, her sense of responsibility overcoming her initial resistance.

"Good," Duncan acknowledged, satisfied with her response.

However, as Karla's words settled in, a wave of doubt washed over her. She silently questioned herself, "Why did I say I will apologize?" Uncertainty clouded her thoughts as she prepared herself for the upcoming encounter with Abigail, unsure of the consequences her promise might entail.

Duncan, with a confident demeanor, straightened his sleeves with a subtle flourish. His eyes sparkled with anticipation as he stole glances at Karla who appeared to be lost in her thoughts. The corners of his mouth curled into a warm smile, and he couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement to see how Karla would apologize to Abigail.

"So, let's go in," Duncan suggested, gesturing towards the entrance of the hotel. He turned to head inside, eager to meet Abigail.

However, just as they were about to proceed, Karla's phone suddenly rang. She raised a hand apologetically, indicating that she needed to address the call. "Excuse me, I will just quickly answer this call," she explained, her voice tinged with a hint of regret.

Duncan nodded understandingly, his smile still lingering on his face. "Fine. I will wait for you at the foyer," he replied graciously, his eyes briefly meeting Karla's before he turned and walked away.

Left alone, Karla took a deep breath, trying to maintain her composure. As she stared at her phone screen, she noticed that the caller was her father, Samuel. Her smile faded, and a flicker of concern crossed her

features. She knew that her father rarely called her unexpectedly, and the timing of the call seemed unusual.

Summoning her strength, Karla answered the call, her voice steady but tinged with a touch of apprehension. "Hello, Mr. Burton?" she greeted, trying to sound formal.

Karla's father sensed the lingering resentment in his daughter's voice as she addressed him formally. The distance between them was palpable, and he knew that repairing their strained relationship wouldn't be an easy task. Clearing his throat, he mustered the courage to speak.

"Dear, how are you doing...?" He began, his voice gentle and filled with a mixture of concern and regret.

"I'm fine," Karla replied curtly, her tone revealing her lingering anger. "If you're calling because one of the informants you've planted in the company informed you that I didn't do much at the company today, then go on and scold me."

Samuel's heart sank at the bitterness in Karla's words. He quickly reassured her, "No, dear. That's not it. Actually, I called to apologize for the other day."

Karla rolled her eyes, a mixture of frustration and disbelief evident on her face. She took a step forward, her body language reflecting her growing impatience and a desire for genuine resolution. The weight of their unresolved issues hung heavily in the air.

Karla's frustration and resentment bubbled to the surface as she shut her eyes, her voice tinged with bitterness. "Apologize for yelling at me simply because I spoke back to your Ciara, your freaky wife?" she questioned, her words laced with anger and hurt.

Samuel remained silent, his face reflecting a mix of emotions. Karla's subconscious mind nudged her, reminding her to show some respect for her father's sake. Despite their differences and issues, Ciara was his wife, and she needed to acknowledge that. Karla realized that her outburst might have been too harsh and regretted her words.

Taking a deep breath, Karla managed to swallow her pride and offer an apology, though it was evident that she struggled with it. "I didn't mean to insult your wife, but..." she trailed off, unable to find the right words to articulate her feelings.

Samuel looked at Karla, his expression a mixture of understanding and sadness. He recognized the difficulty she faced in admitting fault and appreciated her attempt at an apology. Seeking reconciliation, he asked, "Do you forgive me?"

Karla hesitated, her mind still grappling with conflicting emotions. "Hm. I'll think of it," she responded, her tone suggesting that forgiveness wouldn't come easily, though she held nothing against him.

Samuel, sensing a shift in Karla's disposition, felt a glimmer of hope that she had indeed forgiven him. He understood that forgiveness might take time to fully manifest, but he remained optimistic that their father-daughter relationship could be repaired.

As Karla posed the question, "Is there anything else you want to say before I hang up?" Samuel's reluctance and excitement mingled within him. He saw an opportunity to bridge the gap between Karla and someone who wanted to speak with her.

Reluctantly and with a hint of anticipation, Samuel responded, "Yes. Someone wants to talk to you. I'm passing the phone to her."

With a mix of curiosity and uncertainty, Karla held her breath, waiting to hear who was on the other end of the line.

"Hello...Karla."

Karla's face contorted with displeasure as she recognized Ciara's voice on the other end of the line. Her initial instinct was to pass the phone to her father, dismissing any desire for conversation with Ciara.

"Pass the phone to my father," Karla demanded, her voice firm and resolute.

However, before the call could be transferred, Ciara pleaded, "Karla, please just listen to me. I..."

Karla interrupted her, her tone cold and dismissive. "Tell my father that we'll talk later." With that, she abruptly hung up, feeling a mix of frustration and determination to avoid any interaction with Ciara.

Taking a deep sigh, Karla composed herself and headed inside the venue. As she reached the foyer, she scanned the area but couldn't spot Duncan. Disappointed that Duncan hadn't waited for her, but undeterred, she decided to proceed to Abigail's office. It seemed like a more appealing option than waiting indefinitely in the foyer.

In Abigail's exclusive office, Duncan was standing before her desk, a serious expression etched on his face. Abigail, seated behind the desk, looked up from her work, her gaze fixed on Duncan.

As Duncan took a deep breath, he addressed Abigail with a sincere tone, "Abigail, I'm sorry for asking you to leave earlier. I didn't mean to."

Abigail, caught off guard by the genuine expression on Duncan's face,

found it difficult to maintain her anger. She could see the honesty in his eyes and felt her emotions waver. Rising from her seat, she walked up to him, her voice filled with a mixture of frustration and vulnerability.

"You really upset me, Duncan," Abigail uttered, her voice tinged with a hiss. "You asked me to leave because of Karla, and I felt it was insulting. Also, I just..."

Before Abigail could finish her sentence, Duncan slowly pulled her into a hug, silencing her words. At that moment, his embrace communicated his sincere apology and gratitude.

"Sorry and thank you, Abigail," Duncan whispered, his words filled with genuine remorse and appreciation.

Abigail, taken by surprise by Duncan's unexpected gesture, felt her anger dissipate, replaced by a blush that tinged her cheeks. The warmth of his embrace and the sincerity in his voice created a shift within her, stirring emotions she hadn't expected.

She found herself caught up in the moment, she had longed for his embrace. As she wrapped her hand around him and closed her eyes, savoring the closeness, the door unexpectedly opened, and Karla walked into the room. Abigail's eyes flew open, meeting Karla's startled gaze, and she arched an eyebrow in curiosity.

Duncan, sensing the tension in the room, released himself from Abigail's hold and turned to face Karla, who wore a somber expression. His voice was quiet as he addressed her, "Karla, go on and do what you promised."

Abigail's gaze shifted between Karla and Duncan, her curiosity piqued by their interaction. She wondered what promise Karla had made and how it had led to this moment.



Karla maintained an unapologetic expression, her demeanor guarded. The silence stretched, creating a sense of anticipation, until finally, Karla spoke up.

"I'm sorry, Abigail," Karla offered, her voice carrying a hint of sincerity.

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