

Chapter 678 I Prefer You To Wear Your Own Clothes

Melissa felt an urge to shove Marcus away.

But when she gazed into Marcus' youthful, charming face, she froze. She acted like a docile kitten, letting him call the shots.

"Why aren't you putting up a fight?"

Marcus' voice was soft as if it was meant only for her ears in the quiet of the night. "You want this, don't you?"

Her cheeks flushed. She rested her hand on his shoulder. "I need to get inside."

But her effort was feeble against him.

Marcus didn't budge; instead, he leaned in and kissed her soft lips.

With tenderness, he whispered, "Don't stay out all night anymore."

Then, he released her.

Melissa made her way to the villa, with Marcus trailing behind, composed and unhurried.

Melissa found herself puzzled by Marcus' behavior.

Upon returning to the main bedroom where Matthew lay, Marcus unexpectedly followed.

She glanced at him.

Marcus stayed silent, his eyes growing darker. As she bent over to check on the child, he spoke, his voice close to her. His tone was earnest, gentle, like any husband talking to his wife.

"Matthew still cannot leave Julie. You weren't here last night. He cried for you. And I didn't want to disturb Julie."

Marcus' hand grazed Melissa's slender waist. "How about letting Julie move in here and look after Matthew? She can bring Yvonne here. And if Janet agrees, she can stay here too."

Melissa felt uneasy.

Keeping Julie and her family apart wasn't a good idea. But they were both working and did need someone to look after Matthew.

Melissa mulled it over, not noticing Marcus still had his hand on her waist.

Finally, she nibbled her lip and spoke up. "Then let's have Julie and Yvonne over. Yvonne's at school Monday to Friday. We can handle Matthew on the weekends by ourselves and give Julie a break."

It was a rare moment of peaceful agreement between them.

Marcus regarded Melissa in silence.

Then, a smile crept onto his face. "That's mighty considerate of you. Alright, let's go with your plan."

Melissa was taken aback.

Normally, Marcus would tease her relentlessly. But today, he was acting out of character.

Marcus, sensing her surprise, held her slender waist. "I prefer you to wear your own clothes. Go shower and change."

Melissa was exhausted after two days of hustle.

She craved a bath and a good rubdown. It took her a good two hours. When she emerged, Marcus was still in her room.

He was lounging against the headboard in a white robe, his long legs casually crossed.

The robe suited Marcus perfectly.

Melissa wrapped her robe tighter. "Why aren't you asleep yet?"

Marcus flipped through a magazine, nonchalantly. "I'm here trying to charm you. How can I sleep when you're not looking at me?"

He said his piece, then headed straight to the adjacent bedroom.

Melissa stared at the closed door.

She was baffled. What did he mean by trying to charm her? When had he become so audacious?

Bright and early, Matthew awoke, searching high and low for Minnie.

But Minnie was nowhere to be found.

Melissa, Marcus, and all the staff scoured the place, but Minnie remained elusive.

Just as Matthew started bawling, Jessie sauntered downstairs like royalty, hair wrapped in a towel and with cucumber slices on her face.

In her arms was Minnie.

"Minnie!" Matthew's sobs intensified.

Jessie struck a pose on the staircase. "Matthew, don't you recognize me anymore?"

Matthew hesitated, for the voice indeed sounded familiar.

Finally, he whispered, "Aren't you the lady who used to sell veggies at the market?"

Jessie was incensed.

She ripped off the cucumber slices. "Does the veggie lady look as good as me? Does she have a figure like mine?"

"I think my mom and aunt are prettier," Matthew replied honestly.

Rolling her eyes, Jessie handed over the dog. "This one insisted on sneaking into my bed this morning. I just went with it."

Matthew cuddled Minnie, showering her with kisses.

Observing Marcus' cocky demeanor and Melissa's affectionate gaze at the breakfast table, Jessie couldn't help but quip, "Looks like your son takes after Melissa more."

After breakfast, Jessie dashed upstairs, desperate for some shut-eye. She was running on fumes and needed to catch up on sleep.

As Melissa was about to fetch Matthew for breakfast, her phone buzzed. It was Albert.

She eyed the phone for a moment.

Sipping his coffee, Marcus piped up, "Why not pick up? Shouldn't you congratulate Mr. Waston on tying the knot? Huh! Funny, he's calling his subordinate right after getting hitched. Maybe his wedded bliss isn't all it's cracked up to be, huh?"

Feeling Marcus' barb, she snapped back, "You're just talking nonsense."

She then answered the call. "Mr. Waston."

On the line, Albert stayed silent for a beat. Then, he inquired about Jessie. "How's she holding up? Her folks didn't give her a hard time, did they?"

After pondering, Melissa replied, "Jessie's staying with me at the moment. You know her best, Mr. Waston. She'd been waiting for you til the night before her engagement, only to find out you tied the knot with another woman. You said your split was amicable. Now, she decided to let go and won't trouble you anymore. You shouldn't bother her either. Sometimes, too much attention can hurt."

Albert didn't argue or blame Melissa.

After a long pause, he sighed, "You're right, Melissa."

And with that, the call ended.

Melissa instructed Matthew to set the puppy down and wash up for breakfast. She'd instilled a healthy routine for him: early to rise, early to bed, and three square meals.

Matthew was a well-behaved kid.

Coincidentally, Melissa found herself seated beside Marcus. After she took a sip of her milk, Marcus quipped "You're quite the sage now, doling out life advice left and right. But what about your own life? Have you got any time to ponder that?"

"What are you talking about?"

Melissa played innocent but as she got herself a sandwich, she topped up his coffee.

Marcus observed her every move.

After a moment, he grinned and let the topic drop.

Melissa suggested, "You head to the office first. I'll stick around until Julie arrives. And I'll keep an eye on Jessie too."

At Melissa's mention of Jessie, Marcus glanced upstairs.

He remarked, "Even if Jessie struggles, she needs to move on. Albert's marriage is solid. Even if Jessie goes to Heron, it won't change anything. Albert has a wife now. You're her friend and you should tell Jessie to let go of him and move on with her own life. And if you keep coddling her, she'll never get over it."

As he spoke, Melissa studied his face.

Marcus smirk. "What? Have you never seen a handsome guy like me before?"

Melissa admitted honestly, "Nope, never."

Marcus' intense gaze held hers for a moment. Then, he dabbed his lips with a pristine napkin, ruffled Matthew's hair, and said, "I'm off to the office."

Matthew immediately scooped up Minnie, chiming "Bye, dad."

Marcus chuckled. He figured Matthew just wanted more time with the dog. Like mother, like son, with a mind of his own.

Less than an hour after Marcus departed, Julie showed up.

Julie was ready to lend a hand if Melissa needed it. Plus, having Yvonne stay with them would be a good arrangement.

Julie even opened up to Melissa, saying, "You know what I'm thinking? Shawn's raking in the money now. I'm worried he might blow it all, so Janet needs to stick by him. That's why Yvonne's staying with me. With no kiddos around, they can focus on their careers. And I can also help you taking care of Matthew."

Melissa inquired about Shawn's progress. She was genuinely pleased for him.

Just then, Matthew dashed over, wrapping Julie in a tight hug, bringing tears to her eyes.

Julie missed Matthew dearly too.

With Julie there, Melissa felt at ease heading to the office.

At noon, Melissa called but another servant picked up. The servant stammered, "Miss Green's up. She's with Matthew, waiting on Julie to cook them something."

Melissa breathed a sigh of relief. That was good news.

After hanging up, she sank into her leather chair, pondering Jessie's situation.

Bringing Jessie back wasn't just about providing her shelter. Jessie was in hot water with her folks. But they wouldn't dare cause a scene at Marcus' place.

Melissa owed Marcus yet another one.

As she mulled over this, the desk phone rang. It was the secretary's sweet voice. "Miss Brown, Mr. Fowler, CEO of the Fowler Group, wants to tee off with you this afternoon."

She was obviously referring to Marcus.

Golf?

They had breakfast together this morning. Why didn't he mention it then, instead of having his secretary to make the call and relay the message?

After a moment's thought, Melissa replied, "Three in the afternoon, then."

After hanging up, Melissa tapped out a message on WhatsApp.

"Lame-o!" She even added an eye-roll emoji.

It took Marcus about half an hour to reply.

"You weren't like this last night when I was on your bed. You wanted me bad."

Melissa's cheeks burned red.

Marcus had nailed it. She had desires too.

With Marcus parading around like that every day, who wouldn't feel something?

Before three in the afternoon, Melissa received more news.

And it was good news.

Alan agreed to invest in the Waston Group's project, which came as a pleasant surprise. Melissa quickly called for a meeting, instructing the PR department to spread the word.

Sure enough, before the stock market closed, the Waston Group's stocks soared.

Albert even called personally. "Melissa, you've proven me right. This is a game-changer."

With a small grin, Melissa replied, "As long as I don't disappoint."

After hanging up, Melissa was in high spirits.

Then, Marcus rang her. He sounded peeved.

"Why haven't you come yet?"

Melissa checked the time; it was already five.

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She apologized to Marcus, "Sorry, I got held up. How about we reschedule?"

Marcus' voice dropped as he replied, "You know what? If you let me have you tonight, we'll reschedule this to next time."

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