

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Teach me

he call came sooner than expected.

Jason's phone vibrated once, and he answered immediately.

"Scott."

I watched his expression carefully as he listened. His face became still, focused, and dangerously calm.

After a brief pause, he said, "Understood."

He ended the call and turned to me.

“Everything is ready.”

I nodded, feeling my focus sharpen instantly.

“Then we move.”

Jason agreed without hesitation.

We prepared quickly. We changed into black clothing, keeping our gear light and efficient. There was no room for excess or mistakes. This was not a full-scale operation. This was precision,

Two people.

In and out.

Jason checked his equipment while I reviewed the building layout one last time. Entry points, blind spots, heat signatures-everything was clear in my mind.

Three contained.

One moving.

A trap.

And we were walking into it anyway.

Jason stepped closer and adjusted something on my shoulder. His touch lingered just a second longer than

necessary.

“Stay close,” he said quietly.

I gave him a small smirk. “Try to keep up.”

For a brief moment, something softened in his expression.

Then the door opened.

I turned-and froze.

“Pamela?”

She stood there, already dressed in black, her arms crossed and her expression firm.

“You didn’t think you were doing this without me,” she said.

I exhaled slowly.

115

Ha

+15 Bonus

“Pam...”

gaze didn't soften. “You got kidnapped, rescued yourself, and now you're walking into a trap. And you didn't think to call me?”

“This isn't the same,” I said calmly. “We're going in quietly.”

“I can be quiet,” she replied immediately.

“I know you can,” I said. “That's not the problem.”

Jason remained silent, watching, letting me handle it.

“We only planned for two people,” I continued. “Less movement. Less risk.”

Pamela's jaw tightened.

“I'm not staying behind while you-”

“Pam,” I interrupted gently.

I stepped closer, lowering my voice slightly.

“I need you here.”

She paused, still tense, but listening.

“If something goes wrong,” I continued, “we need someone outside who understands everything. Someone who can react fast.”

I held her gaze.

“Someone I trust.”

Her expression shifted slightly.

She looked away for a moment, then exhaled.

“I hate this,” she muttered.

“I know.”

I turned toward Marcus.

“Marcus, keep her here.”

He looked up from his screens and smirked slightly.

“Babysitting duty?”

Pamela shot him a glare.

“I am not-”

“You’re backup,” I said calmly. “The most important one.”

That stopped her.

She understood.

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+15 Bonus

Marcus leaned back in his chair.

ve got you,” he said. “We’ll be your eyes.

Jason finally stepped forward.

“We move now.”

His voice was firm, leaving no room for argument.

I nodded.

And without looking back, we walked out together.

Jason didn't take the main car.

Instead, he led me to the side of the property, where something sat under low light, almost blending into the

shadows.

At first, I didn't fully register it.

Then I did.

A motorcycle.

Sleek.

Black.

Minimalist.

It looked less like a vehicle and more like a weapon.

I stepped closer, my eyes tracing the lines of it.

“It’s... silent,” I said.

Jason nodded. “Fully custom. No engine noise. Built for situations like this:”

Of course it was.

I ran my fingers lightly over the frame, unable to hide the small smile forming on my lips.

“I love it.”

Jason watched me for a second, something softer crossing his expression before it settled back into focus.

“Unique model,” he said. “There’s nothing else like it.”

That didn’t surprise me either.

He swung one leg over the bike with practiced ease, settling into place like it belonged to him.

Which it did.

He grabbed a helmet and handed it to me.

“I’ll ride,” he said. “You hold on.”

I took the helmet, putting it on as I stepped closer.

Then I paused.

A thought crossing my mind.

“Teach me,” I said.

Jason raised a brow slightly.

“To ride,” I clarified. “I’ve always wanted to learn. I just... never had the time.” 4

There was a brief silence.

Then-

Jason chuckled.

Low.

Amused.

“Well,” he said, glancing at me, “there’s finally something I can teach you.”

I narrowed my eyes slightly, but the corner of my lips lifted.

“Don’t get used to it.”

He smirked.

“Hold on tight,” he said.

I climbed on behind him, my arms wrapping around his waist naturally.

The moment I did-

I felt it.

The shift.

The tension beneath his calm.

The focus.

Ready.

The bike started without a sound.

No roar.

No vibration.

Just movement.

We slipped into the night like we weren't meant to be seen.

And as the city lights blurred around us-

My grip tightened slightly.

Not out of fear.

Y₅₅

+15 8chus

Out of certainty.

Because wherever this led-

We were going together.

P

Support

Share

+15 Bonus

55

Starts

+15 8chus

Stains

We arrived at a Warehouse on the industrial side of the city, not far from the university campus.

It was quiet.

Too quiet.

The kind of silence that didn't feel natural.

It pressed in around the building, heavy and still, like even the night was holding its breath.

"There are no guards," I murmured.

Jason didn't answer immediately.

Because he saw it too.

That was the problem.

He slowed the motorcycle before reaching the warehouse and turned into a narrow alley two buildings down.

Out of sight.

Out of range.

Hidden.

He stopped the bike smoothly, the engine never making a sound.

For a moment, neither of us moved.

Then he removed his helmet.

I did the same.

We left them there.

No need to carry anything extra.

No need to leave a trace that mattered.

Jason looked toward the warehouse, his gaze sharp.

“Too clean,” he said quietly.

I nodded.

“A trap,” I replied.

We stepped into the shadows.

No wasted movement.

No unnecessary sound. 1

We moved side by side, keeping close to the walls, slipping between dark corners and blind spots like we belonged there.

Jason took the lead when needed.

Mo

I adjusted when necessary.

didn't speak

Didn't need to.

The closer we got-

The heavier the air felt.

There were no lights inside.

No visible movement.

No guards.

No security.

Nothing.

And that-

That was worse than anything else.

We reached the edge of the building.

Jason paused, his hand lifting slightly-a silent signal.

Stop.

Listen.

I stilled instantly.

We waited.

Nothing.

No footsteps.

No voices.

No movement.

Jason glanced at me briefly.

Ready?

I nodded once.

Always.

He moved first, slipping along the side of the warehouse toward what looked like a secondary entrance.

I followed, keeping close, my senses sharpened.

Every sound mattered.

Every shadow.

+15 Bonus

Every shift in the air.

reached the door.

Unlocked.

Jason's hand hovered over it for a second.

Then he pushed.

Slowly.

Silently.

The door opened without resistance.

Darkness greeted us.

Cold.

Cedella

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Waiting.

I stepped inside first this time.

Because whatever was waiting in there-

We were already too far in to turn back.

We didn't go far before we found it.

An elevator.

The doors were already open.

Waiting.

I stopped.

Jason did too.

We both looked at it.

Then at each other.

The display arrow pointed down.

Lower level.

Of course it did.

"Too obvious," I whispered.

Jason nodded slightly.

But I had already turned away.

"I checked the building plans," I murmured, grabbing his hand and pulling him with me.

+15 Bonus

"Not everything matches."

ed him toward the stairwell instead.

As we moved, I tilted my head slightly, signaling toward the corner.

Cameras.

Jason adjusted instantly, shifting our path just enough to keep us in the blind spots.

We stayed in the shadows, moving along the edges, careful, precise.

We reached the stairwell door.

Jason paused.

Then reached into his pocket and pulled out a small device.

A signal jammer.

He placed it carefully against the frame.

Then he pointed.

A thin wire ran along the edge of the door.

Silent alarm.

I nodded.

Together, we disabled it.

No sound.

No alert.

Then we entered.

The stairwell was dim.

Concrete.

Cold.

We moved quickly but silently, climbing the stairs without speaking.

One floor.

Nothing.

Second.

Empty.

Third.

Fourth.

Still nothing.

+15 Bohus

Too clean.

To controlled.

It wasn't until we reached the fifth floor-

Just below the rooftop-

That something shifted.

I stopped.

Raised my hand slightly.

Jason froze instantly.

We had arrived.

I could feel it.

Not hear.

Not see.

Feel.

Jason stepped forward, placing another signal jammer on the door.

Then he carefully exposed the wiring.

Another silent alarm.

He cut it cleanly.

No hesitation.

No trace.

He looked at me.

I nodded.

He pushed the door open.

And everything changed.

Chaos.

1

The room was filled with cages.

Metal.

Cold.

Lined across the space like some twisted storage system.

Some had names.

Labels.

+15 Bonus

But they were all-

Empty.

I stepped inside slowly, my eyes scanning everything.

The floor was stained.

Dark patches.

Old.

Layered.

Not clean.

Not forgotten.

Used.

My stomach tightened.

This wasn't just containment.

This was something worse.

Jason moved beside me, his posture shifting, sharper now, more dangerous.

"This wasn't temporary," he said quietly.

No.

This was routine.

My gaze lifted.

Cameras.

Everywhere. 1

One pointed toward the elevator.

Another at the main entrance.

Two covering the stairwell.

Others-

Facing the cages.

Watching.

Recording.

Always recording.

I stepped back slightly, tracking the angles.

Tracing the lines.

+15 Bonus

15

713

Calculating coverage.

I exhaled.

Relief.

Small.

Controlled.

Jason glanced at me.

“What?”

I tilted my head slightly.

“We stayed out of range,” I said.

His eyes flicked to the cameras again.

Then back to me.

A small nod.

Good.

Because that meant-

We hadn't just walked into his trap.

We had slipped past his eyes.

For now.

But as I looked around the room again-

At the cages.

At the stains.

At the silence-

I knew.

We weren't the first ones here.

And whatever had happened in this place-

Was far from over.

BIG SALE: 3500 bonus free fou you

D

Support

Share

+15 Bonus

get it

717

The DCWY

The ace

moved deeper into the room.

Careful.

Measured.

Every step deliberate.

The further in we went-

The worse it became.

The cages weren't random.

They were organized.

Labeled.

Cataloged.

I forced myself not to focus on that.

Not now.

Because something else caught my attention.

A wall of screens. 1

Old monitors.

New ones.

All connected.

All active.

Live feeds.

Jason stepped beside me as I reached them.

Neither of us spoke.

We just looked.

Camera angles shifted across the screens.

The elevator.

The entrance.

The stairwell.

Then-

Another feed.

My breath caught.

}|

+15 Bonus

A different room.

Brighter.

Contained.

And inside-

Emilian.

Jason went still beside me.

Emilian stood in the center of the frame.

Perfectly composed.

Except-

He wasn't.

His movements were sharp.

Sudden.

Uncontrolled.

In front of him-

A man on the ground.

Cooper Becker.

Emilian's father.

And Emilian-

Was hitting him.

Again.

And again.

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Borrowed textbooks 153

The sound wasn't there-

But I could feel it.

The impact.

The violence.

His father barely moved anymore.

+15 Bonus

But Emilian didn't stop.

He kept going.

Like he didn't see him as a person.

Like he was-

Fixing something.

Correcting something.

Then-

He laughed.

My stomach dropped.

It wasn't loud.

It wasn't wild.

It was wrong.

Sharp.

Unstable.

Maniacal.

Jason's hand tightened slightly at my waist.

"That's not control," he said quietly.

I shook my head slowly.

"No."

My eyes stayed locked on the screen.

“That’s what happens when control breaks.”

Emilian stopped suddenly.

Mid-motion.

His hand froze in the air.

Then slowly-

He turned.

Toward the camera.

My breath stilled.

Because for a second-

It felt like he was looking directly at us.

TAR

+15 Bonus

+15 Bonus

Watching.

Seeing

Knowing.

Then-

His lips curved.

A slow.

Deliberate smile.

Jason stepped slightly in front of me.

Instinct.

Protective.

But I didn't move.

Because now-

There was no doubt.

We hadn't just found him.

He had been waiting.

Emilian stopped.

Then slowly-

He stepped back from his father's body.

Cooper Becker didn't move.

Emilian adjusted his sleeve with unsettling calm, as if nothing had happened, as if the violence we had just witnessed meant nothing at all.

Then-

He looked directly at the camera.

At us.

And smiled.

"Amber, darling," he said smoothly, his voice finally coming through the speakers.

"I was not expecting you just yet."

My spine stiffened.

His head tilted slightly, studying the lens like he could see through it.

"How did you manage to escape that husband of yours so easily?"

Silence fell between Jason and me.

But this time-

wasn't heavy.

It was sharp.

Clear.

I turned slowly toward Jason.

His eyes were already on me.

And we both understood.

Emilian didn't know.

Not fully.

He wasn't accounting for Jason.

He was following old data.

Old patterns.

Old assumptions.

Amber works alone.

Amber handles things herself.

Amber doesn't rely on anyone.

A slow realization settled in.

Jason had just become-

The variable.

The one thing Emilian hadn't calculated.

The ace.

I felt Jason shift beside me.

Subtle.

Controlled.

But I knew him.

I could feel the change.

The focus sharpening.

The strategy shifting.

This wasn't just a confrontation anymore.

This was an advantage.

+15 Bonus

I looked back at the screen.

A Emilian.

Still watching.

Still waiting.

And for the first time-

I smiled.

Because for all his planning-

For all his control-

He had missed something.

Someone.

And that-

Was going to cost him.

Jason leaned slightly closer, his voice barely above a whisper.

"Then let's keep it that way."

I nodded.

Because now-

We weren't walking into his trap.

We were rewriting it.

P

Support

Share

+15 Bonus

+15 8chus

Invisible

stepped closer to the screens.

Jason's hand brushed mine briefly, a silent question.

I squeezed back once.

I've got this.

I tilted my head slightly, looking straight at the camera.

At him.

"Emilian," I said calmly.

A pause.

His smile widened on the screen.

"You came sooner than expected," he replied, his tone almost pleased. "I thought you'd take longer to find me."

"I don't like being watched," I said.

His eyes sharpened slightly.

"And yet," he murmured, "you've always been so... fascinating to observe."

I crossed my arms.

"You should have introduced yourself," I said lightly. "Instead of hiding behind Oscar."

A flicker.

Small.

But there.

“I was studying,” he replied.

“For years?” I asked.

“Yes.”

No shame.

No hesitation.

Jason shifted beside me, but stayed silent.

Letting me lead.

“You broke into our room,” I added.

Emilian’s lips curved.

“You left your work exposed.”

Not denial.

1/10

Confirmation.

miled faintly.

“So you needed to interfere to keep up.”

That landed.

I saw it. 1

A tightening.

A crack in that perfect composure.

“I adapted,” he corrected.

“No,” I said softly.

“You cheated.”

Silence.

Cold.

Sharp.

Jason's presence behind me felt heavier now.

More dangerous.

Emilian straightened slightly on the screen.

"You misunderstand the nature of this," he said.

I tilted my head.

"Do I?"

His gaze darkened.

"You were chosen," he said.

"By your father," I replied.

A pause.

"Yes."

"And you think that makes me yours?"

Another pause.

Longer this time.

Then-

"I don't think," he said quietly.

"I know."

+15 Bonus

2/10

+15 Bonus

I let out a small breath.

Almost amused.

“That’s your first mistake.”

Silence.

Jason’s hand moved to my back.

Grounding.

Steady.

“You built this whole... system around me,” I continued. “Watched me, studied me, interfered when you couldn’t keep up.”

Emilian didn’t interrupt.

“But you never actually knew me.”

That hit.

Harder.

Because this time-

He didn’t respond immediately.

Then-

His expression changed.

Subtly.

Colder.

“Then allow me to correct that,” he said.

And suddenly-

The lights flickered.

Jason’s hand tightened instantly.

Then-

Clang.

The doors behind us slammed shut.

I turned sharply.

Locked.

Sealed.

A soft hiss filled the room.

My eyes snapped downward.

300

Mist.

in at first.

Then thicker.

Spreading across the floor.

Jason stepped closer immediately, pulling me slightly behind him. 1

“Gas,” he said under his breath.

I grabbed his arm.

“No panic,” I whispered. “We don’t know the effect yet.”

The mist continued to rise.

Slow.

Controlled.

Intentional.

I looked back at the screen.

Emilian was still there.

Watching.

Smiling.

“Welcome,” he said softly.

My pulse didn’t spike.

It steadied.

Because this-

This was what he wanted.

A reaction.

Fear.

I gave him neither.

“To the bride games.”

The words hung in the air.

Cold.

Final.

Jason shifted beside me, already scanning exits, angles, options.

But I didn’t look away.

+15 Bonus

4/10

“Either you fail...”

The mist reached our knees.

“...and die...”

Jason’s grip on me tightened.

“...or you win...”

Emilian leaned slightly closer to the camera.

“And become my wife.”

Silence.

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Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

c 154

Twisted.

I let out a slow breath.

Then-

I smiled.

Small.

Sharp.

“You really should have done more research,” I said calmly.

Jason glanced at me.

I didn’t look at him.

Because my eyes stayed locked on Emilian.

“I don’t lose.”

The mist kept rising.

The doors stayed locked.

And somewhere-

Deep inside-

I knew.

This wasn’t just a trap.

This was his test.

And he had no idea-

He was about to fail it.

The mist kept rising.

+15 Bonus

5/10

Cold.

Min.

Too controlled to be random.

Jason shifted slightly beside me, his body angling just enough to shield mine.

And that's when I noticed it.

The screens.

Every angle.

Every feed. 1

Every camera-

Showed me.

But not him.

My eyes narrowed.

I took a step to the side, pretending to adjust my stance.

Watching.

Testing.

Nothing.

No reflection.

No movement.

No trace.

Jason was-

Invisible.

My lips parted slightly.

I leaned just enough to murmur under my breath.

“...you’re not on the cameras.”

Jason didn’t look at me.

Didn’t react outwardly.

But I felt the smallest shift in him.

“My suit,” he whispered back. “Light reflection. Bends angles... makes me disappear in most feeds.”

I blinked.

Then slowly-

+15 Bonus

6/10

I arched a brow.

want one.”

There was the faintest hint of amusement in him.

Even now.

Behind us-

the mist kept rising.

On the screen-

Emilian leaned closer.

“Speak louder, Amber,” he said, voice echoing through the room. “I didn’t catch that.”

Of course he didn't.

Because for the first time-

He was missing something.

Someone.

I turned fully toward the camera.

Composed.

Unbothered.

And smiled.

"Well," I said lightly, "I can't marry you."

A pause.

His expression didn't change.

"Why not?" he asked.

Simple.

Direct.

Delusional.

I tilted my head slightly.

"Because," I said, almost casually-

"I'm already married."

Silence.

Heavy.

Jason stilled beside me.

+15 Bonus

7/10

On the screen-

Emilian didn't react immediately.

And that-

That was the reaction.

A delay.

A fracture. 1

Then-

His smile returned.

But it wasn't the same.

Thinner.

Sharper.

"Temporary obstacles," he said calmly.

I let out a soft laugh.

"No," I corrected.

"Permanent."

His gaze darkened.

"I can fix that."

Jason's hand moved instantly-

finding my waist.

Pulling me closer.

Not hiding.

Claiming.

I didn't look at him.

Didn't need to.

Because I could feel it.

That shift in him.

That line he was about to cross.

I spoke before he could.

"You've been watching me for years," I said, my tone steady. "And somehow you still don't understand something very simple."

Emilian said nothing.

+15 Bonus

8/10

Waiting.

I gave it to him.

"I don't belong to anyone."

A beat.

Then-

I added, softer.

"But I chose him."

Jason's grip tightened.

Not possession.

Not control.

Something deeper.

Something chosen back.

On the screen-

Emilian's expression finally cracked.

Not fully.

But enough.

Enough to see it.

Anger.

Real.

Raw.

“You chose wrong,” he said.

I smiled.

“That’s your second mistake.”

The mist reached higher.

Thicker now.

Jason leaned in slightly, his voice low.

“He’s losing control.”

Good.

Because that meant—

He was reacting.

+15 8cnus

9/10

And when someone like Emilian reacts-

They make mistakes.

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P

Support

Share

+15 Bonus

get it

10/10

Fotortoned

Entertained

The mist thickened.

Not enough to choke.

Not enough to panic.

Just enough-

to distract.

I forced myself to breathe slowly.

Controlled.

Measured.

Jason stayed close.

Too close.

His hand at my waist hadn't moved.

And that-

That was becoming a problem.

On the screen, Emilian smiled again.

"Let's begin," he said.

I didn't answer.

"Phase one of the Bride Games."

The words echoed, almost ceremonial.

“You like challenges, don’t you, Amber?”

I crossed my arms.

“Depends on who’s asking.”

He chuckled softly.

“There is a bomb,” he said.

Jason’s grip tightened.

I didn’t react.

Not outwardly.

“Located in your university,” Emilian continued. “A place you seem to have such... fond memories of.”

My eyes flicked briefly to the screens.

C

+15 Bonus

He tapped something out of frame.

And coordinates appeared.

Exact.

Precise.

Jason leaned closer, his voice low.

“He’s not bluffing.”

I already knew that.

“Disarm it,” Emilian said calmly. “From here.”

I glanced around.

And there it was.

A laptop.

Placed deliberately on a metal table.

Waiting.

Of course.

I walked toward it.

Jason followed instantly.

Silent.

Present.

Always there.

I sat down.

Opened it.

The system was already active.

A countdown flashed onto the screen.

00:19:47

Nineteen minutes.

I exhaled slowly.

“Cutting it close,” I muttered.

“You work well under pressure,” Emilian replied.

I ignored him.

My fingers moved.

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

“Since you already lost one,” I continued, “does that mean you’re down a honeymoon now?”

Sdence.

Then-

Emilian laughed.

Not amused.

Sharp.

Cold.

“There is no version of this where you leave,” he said.

I didn't react.

Didn't break eye contact.

Because that-

That told me everything.

He believed it.

Truly.

"I know you came alone," he continued, his voice lowering. "You always do."

Jason's grip tightened.

Invisible.

Unseen.

Unaccounted for.

“You slipped out on your own,” Emilian went on. “No one knows where you are.

A beat.

“You’re isolated.”

Another beat.

“And when this ends...”

His gaze darkened.

“You’ll stay.”

Silence filled the room.

Heavy.

I let it stretch.

Let him sit in his certainty.

+15 8çnus

ne ning ker

Then-

miled.

Slow.

+15 8chus

Almost pitying.

“That’s your third mistake.”

Jason shifted slightly behind me.

Closer.

Present.

Real.

I leaned just enough to the side-

not enough for the cameras to catch him-

but enough to feel him there.

And I spoke.

“You’ve been watching me for years, Emilian.”

A pause.

“But you never realized something very important.”

His expression tightened.

I tilted my head.

“I stopped being alone a long time ago.

Jason brushed his fingers against mine, a brief and deliberate signal.

I did not look at him or react, but I understood immediately.

Through the corner of my eye, I followed the direction of his movement without turning my head. At the far end of the room, there was a small door, barely noticeable and slightly ajar. The mist was thicker there, curling out steadily.

That was the source.

Of course it was.

Jason began to move away from me, step by step, carefully staying within the cameras' blind spots we had already identified. Little by little, he disappeared from view.

He was hunting now.

Which meant I had to keep Emilian distracted.

I stepped closer to the camera and crossed my arms, as if bored.

Behind me, Jason vanished completely.

Emilian's voice came again, smooth but edged with something sharper.

Tell me something, Amber."

I tilted my head slightly. "What is it?"

"Where have you been staying these last few days?" he asked. "You disappeared. I could not find you.

I let out a soft laugh, light and dismissive.

"No," I said. "It was not a new property."

I smiled.

"It was Jason's."

I let his name linger intentionally.

“The location is not exactly a secret,” I added casually. “You probably just did not look hard enough.”

There was a pause.

Then a shift.

Subtle, but unmistakable.

Jealousy.

Perfect.

From the corner of my eye, I saw Jason reach the door. He pushed it open just enough to slip inside.

And then he was gone.

“You are lying,” Emilian said.

I shrugged lightly. “Am I?”

Another pause followed.

Then I heard it.

A sharp click.

Final.

The atmosphere in the room changed.

The mist thickened slightly, and the lights dimmed.

New screens flickered to life around me, showing different angles and feeds.

And then I saw them.

Three figures.

Bound.

Bruised.

+15 Bonus

the tria missing Buckers

Barely conscious.

The three missing Beckers.

Alive.

For now.

My jaw tightened, but I did not let it show.

Emilian was watching me closely.

“There is a puzzle,” he said calmly. “You will find it, and you will solve it.”

I said nothing, already scanning the room again.

“And if you fail,” he continued, “they die.”

He paused, then added softly, “And you will be the one responsible.”

I inhaled slowly, forcing myself to remain steady.

This was not about saving them.

Not for him.

This was about control.

About breaking me.

I stepped forward, my eyes moving across every detail in the room.

The cages.

The screens.

The stains on the floor.

The door Jason had disappeared through.

“There is always a pattern,” I murmured.

“There is,” Emilian agreed.

Of course there was.

Emilian did not create chaos.

He created systems.

Control.

Obsession.

Which meant the puzzle was not random.

It was personal.

I turned slowly, taking everything in again, searching for anything out of place.

+15 Bonus

Somewhere in this room-

hidden in plain sight-

was the answer.

I smiled faintly and looked straight at the camera.

“Alright,” I said.

“Let us play.”

BIG SALE: 3500 bonus free for you

Support

Share

+15 Bonus

get i

|

+15 Bonus

Why should I care?

moved deeper into the room, forcing myself to ignore the screens for a moment.

The cages.

The men.

The threat.

All of it could wait.

This was a puzzle.

And Emilian never did anything without intention.

I slowed my steps and began to observe more carefully. What had looked like scattered debris at first glance began to form a pattern the longer I looked.

There were pieces everywhere.

Metal components.

Wires.

Joints.

Small mechanical parts.

Not random.

I crouched down and picked up one of the pieces. It was light, precise, and clearly manufactured with purpose.

Not scrap.

I turned it in my hand, my eyes narrowing slightly.

This felt familiar.

I stood and moved to another section, picking up a different piece. Then another.

A joint.

A wiring cluster.

| A partially assembled frame.

Then I noticed the papers.

I reached for them and unfolded one.

Schematics.

But incomplete.

I found another sheet a few steps away. Then another.

The instructions were not in one place. They were spread across the room, fragmented, as if someone had taken something whole and deliberately broken it apart.

why sheted care?

+15 8cnus

This was not chaos.

This was disassembly.

My breath slowed.

I had seen this before.

Not here.

At the university.

At the competition.

The video Jason had shown me.

The robot.

The one Emilian had destroyed.

I straightened slightly.

“This isn’t just a puzzle,” I said calmly.

On the screen, Emilian watched me.

Silent.

Waiting.

“You want me to rebuild it,” I continued.

A slow smile appeared on his face.

“Of course.”

I did not look at him again.

I moved.

Quickly now.

I began gathering the pieces, sorting them in my hands, identifying where each one belonged. The instructions were deliberately scattered, but the logic behind them was still intact.

This was not just about skill.

It was about memory.

Understanding.

Recognition.

“You always liked this one,” Emilian said.

I ignored him.

“This was the one you improved mid-competition,” he continued. “The one that beat me.”

I picked up the central frame and began assembling it, locking the first pieces into place with practiced precision.

Why showdicare?

+15 Bonus

“You remember it perfectly, don’t you?” he added.

allowed myself a faint smile.

“I don’t need to remember,” I said.

“I understand it.”

Silence followed.

My hands moved faster now, connecting parts, aligning components, reconstructing what had once been destroyed.

The mist still surrounded me.

The heat still lingered.

But it no longer controlled me.

Because this-

This was mine.

My field.

My strength.

Piece by piece, the robot began to take shape.

And somewhere beyond the walls, hidden from view, Jason was moving as well.

I kept working.

Piece by piece, the robot came together beneath my hands, the structure solidifying, the wiring aligning exactly where it needed to be. My movements were steady now, precise, controlled.

The mist still lingered, but it no longer dictated my focus.

“Tell me something, Emilian,” I said without looking up.

He didn’t answer immediately.

He was watching.

Always watching.

“Why should I care if the Beckers die?” I continued calmly.

Silence followed.

Then-

“Because you would not let that happen,” he said.

I almost smiled.

“You would not allow anyone to die under your watch,” he added, his tone certain.

That certainty irritated me.

Why wholed rearo

I placed another component into position and locked it in place.

You are sorely mistaken,” I said.

My voice was steady.

Cold.

“If I were absolutely sure there would be no repercussions,” I continued, “I would end them myself”

Silence.

This time-

it was different. 1

He hadn’t expected that.

Cedella

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Connecting.

Tracing.

Breaking through the first layer of access.

Easy.

Too easy.

“Layered system,” I murmured. “He wants me inside.”

Jason leaned slightly over me.

“Then we take control from the inside.”

I nodded.

Second firewall.

Stronger.

More complex.

I cracked it.

But then-

My breath hitched.

Subtle.

But there.

The mist.

The mist kept rising around us, thin but persistent, curling along the floor and slowly climbing higher. It wasn't enough to obscure vision, but it was enough to interfere-with breathing, with focus, with control.

I forced myself to steady my hands as I worked on the laptop. The countdown glowed on the screen, each second ticking away with quiet precision.

Jason stood close behind me, his presence grounding and distracting at the same time. I could feel the heat of him, the tension in his body, the way he was holding himself back-for me.

Something wasn't right.

Not just the gas.

The cameras.

I glanced up at one of the screens again, pretending to check the angle, but really watching for something else.

Watching for him.

Nothing.

No reflection.

Entertand

No shift.

No distortion.

I leaned slightly closer to the laptop, keeping my voice casual.

“Emilian,” I said, as if mildly curious, “what kind of gas are you using?”

There was a pause.

On the screen, he tilted his head slightly, studying me.

“Why?” he asked.

I shrugged lightly, keeping my tone even.

“Just wondering what you thought would be enough to stop me.’

Another pause.

Then he smiled.

“It’s just an aphrodisiac,” he said smoothly. “Nothing lethal.”

I kept my expression neutral.

Of course it wasn’t lethal.

That would defeat the purpose.

“After all,” he continued, his voice lowering slightly, “you are the prize.”

Jason’s hand tightened at my waist.

I didn’t react.

Didn’t give him the satisfaction.

“Today,” Emilian went on, “would be the engagement, the wedding... and the honeymoon.’

Silence filled the room for a brief second.

Then I smiled.

Slow.

Sharp.

“Efficient,” I said lightly.

Jason shifted behind me, and I could feel the anger rolling off him now-controlled, but barely.

I kept my eyes on the screen.

Because now I knew something he didn’t.

He wasn’t seeing everything.

He thought I was alone.

+15 Bonus

He thought he had control.

He thought the gas would weaken me, distract me, make me easier to handle.

He was wrong.

My fingers moved faster across the keyboard.

Breaking through another firewall.

The system resisted, layers of encryption shifting and adapting, but I pushed through it.

Focus.

Breathe.

Ignore the heat.

Ignore the distraction.

Jason leaned slightly closer.

“Talk to me,” he murmured.

“Almost in,” I said quietly. “He’s watching, but not everything.”

A beat.

Then Jason understood.

“He can’t see me,” he said under his breath.

“No, he can’t, i’m not sure what kind of camera he has here, but he does not feel your presense at all,” I confirmed.

The countdown blinked again.

00:11:02

I leaned closer to the screen, eyes scanning rapidly.

The final layers were coming up.

Complex.

Adaptive.

Designed to slow me down.

But not enough.

Never enough.

I paused for a fraction of a second and looked back at the camera.

At Emilian.

“You really planned all of this,” I said, almost conversationally.

His smile returned.

+15 Bonus

+15 Bonus

“For you,” he replied.

Nilted my head.

“And yet,” I said softly, “you’re still missing pieces.”

A flicker crossed his expression.

Small.

But there.

Good.

Let him doubt.

Let him question.

Because while he was watching-

While he was talking-

While he thought he was in control-

I was already inside his system.

And this-

This was only the first move.

The mist clung to my skin now.

Warm.

Heavy.

Distracting.

I exhaled slowly, forcing my fingers to keep moving across the keyboard, even as my focus slipped in and out.

“Emilian,” I said, my voice steady despite the heat crawling under my skin, “you know... this might have worked.”

A pause.

His attention sharpened instantly.

“Oh?” he asked.

I swallowed, my breath catching slightly as Jason shifted behind me.

Too close.

“Maybe a year ago,” I continued, forcing the words out, “when I was still with Oscar...”

My hand slipped.

Just slightly.

The cursor blinked.

+15 Bonus

Wrong input.

Nenched my jaw.

Jason moved instantly.

“Let me,” he murmured.

His hands replaced mine on the keyboard, movements precise, controlled, as he picked up exactly where I left off -breaking through the next layer without hesitation.

I leaned back slightly, closing my eyes for a second.

Focus.

But it was getting harder.

The heat.

The proximity.

The way his breath brushed the back of my neck-

I inhaled sharply.

On the screen, Emilian leaned forward.

“Why not now?” he asked, voice quieter, more intent.

I laughed.

Soft.

Breathless.

“Because,” I said, opening my eyes again, “my husband keeps me entertained... and satisfied.”

Support

Share

The three missing Beckers.

Jason stilled behind me.

I felt it.

The shift.

His heartbeat-fast, uneven-pressed against my back.

The mist thickened.

And for a second-

Everything blurred.

Then-

Jason moved.

His hand steadied my waist as he leaned in-

and then-

He bit me.

Sharp.

Sudden.

Pain shot through my neck-

clean, precise, real.

I gasped.

And just like that-

The fog shattered.

My mind snapped back into focus.

The heat faded into the background.

The distraction broke.

Pain.

Clear.

Grounding.

I inhaled deeply, my thoughts locking back into place.

“Got it,” I said, my voice steadier now.

Jason pulled back just enough, his hand still at my waist, anchoring me.

Trusting me.

+15 Bohus

The final line of code stared back at me.

The countdown blinked.

00:03:17

I moved fast.

Precise.

Decisive.

Breaking the last safeguard-

rerouting the system-

isolating the trigger-

And then-1

I pressed Enter.

The screen froze for a fraction of a second.

Then-

DISARMED

The timer stopped.

Silence.

I exhaled slowly.

On the screen-

Emilian didn't move.

Didn't speak.

But I could see it.

That crack again.

Wider this time.

I leaned back slightly, letting my head tilt just enough to meet the camera.

And smiled.

“First phase cleared,” I said calmly.

Behind me, Jason’s hand found mine again.

Steady.

Certain.

And this time-

+15 8cnus

There was no doubt.

We weren't just surviving his game.

We were beating it.

The word DISARMED still glowed on the screen.

Steady.

Final.

My breathing slowly returned to normal, though the heat from the mist still lingered beneath my skin.

Jason's hand remained in mine.

Grounding.

Constant.

I lifted my gaze back to the camera.

Emilian hadn't moved.

But I could see it now.

The fracture.

Small.

But growing.

I tilted my head slightly, studying him the same way he had studied me for years.

“Tell me something,” I said calmly.

He didn’t answer immediately.

Waiting.

So I continued.

“What happens if I win?”

A pause.

His eyes narrowed slightly.

“This is your game, isn’t it?” I added lightly. “Three phases.”

I leaned back just enough, my tone turning almost conversational.

“In your mind... that would be the engagement, the wedding, and the honeymoon.”

Jason’s thumb brushed against my hand.

Silent approval.

Cedella

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Borrowed textbooks 157

This wasn’t about morality.

It was about control.

Consequences.

Choice.

I finished assembling the final external components, stepping back just enough to take in the structure.

The robot stood complete. 1

Except for one thing.

The chip.

I picked it up slowly, turning it between my fingers.

The final piece.

The key.

I lifted my gaze to the screen.

“What instructions did you give it?” I asked.

A pause.

Then-

“Use the chip,” Emilian said.

His smile returned.

“And find out.”

I studied him for a moment longer.

+15 Bonus

Then looked back down at the robot.

course.

Nothing was ever simple with him.

I stepped closer.

And inserted the chip.

The system activated instantly.

Lights flickered to life.

Soft at first-

then steady.

The robot powered on.

And whatever came next-

was already in motion.

Support

Share

+15 Bonus

Sloppy

+15 8chus

The robot powered on.

At first, nothing happened. A low mechanical hum filled the room as its systems initialized, faint lights flickering beneath its frame.

Then it moved.

Slowly, its head lifted, and a beam of light projected forward.

The wall came alive.

A video began to play.

Clips.

Fragments.

Moments.

My life.

I stood still, watching as scene after scene unfolded. Meetings, entrances, conversations, movements-moments I did not remember being observed.

But I had been.

Watched.

Recorded.

Collected.

My jaw tightened slightly.

This was not simple surveillance.

This was obsession.

The images shifted.

More recent now.

Clearer.

Closer.

And then-

I saw it.

Jason and I.

Standing in front of my building.

Kissing.

The moment played in full detail before transitioning to the next frame.

THODDY

My breath stilled for just a second.

at had been recent.

Very recent.

Which meant-

He had been close.

Closer than I thought.

My fingers curled slightly at my sides.

I pushed the reaction down.

Not now.

Jason was not beside me.

For a brief moment, the thought surfaced.

Where is he?

What did he find behind that door?

But I did not let it distract me.

I trusted him.

If he had not returned, it was because he was doing something important.

Something necessary.

I focused back on the projection.

Because that was what mattered now.

The image changed again.

The quality dropped.

Grainier.

Older.

And then-

I saw her.

Myself.

Younger.

Fifteen.

The memory surfaced instantly.

I remembered this.

+15 Bonus

217

I was standing in my room, facing a maid.

looked nervous.

Cornered.

“She had been selling my clothes,” I said quietly.

The video continued.

“You thought I wouldn’t notice?” my younger self said, her voice sharp and controlled.

The maid denied it.

Tried to lie.

I did not raise my voice.

I did not lose control.

I stepped closer.

Certain.

Unyielding.

Even then.

Even at fifteen-

I had been this way.

The video froze.

The image of my younger self remained projected against the wall.

Silence filled the room.

Then Emilian spoke.

“I have watched you grow.”

I inhaled slowly.

Not fear.

Something colder.

“You have always been like this,” he continued. “Sharp. Controlled. Uncompromising.”

A pause.

“Perfect.”

My expression did not change. 1

I kept my eyes on the projection.

On the girl I had been.

C

+15 Bonus

On the version of me he thought he understood.

Then I smiled.-

“You watched,” I said calmly.

A pause.

“But you never understood.”

The projection continued, more clips flickering across the wall.

More moments.

More proof of years of observation.

For a brief second, my mind flickered back again.

Jason.

Still gone.

Still unseen.

Good.

That meant he was working.

I trusted that.

And because of that-

I did not hesitate.

I did not look away. 1

Disgust curled low in my stomach, sharp and immediate, but I did not let it reach the surface.

He wanted a reaction.

He would not get one.

I tilted my head slightly, studying the images as if they were nothing more than data.

“Tell me something, Emilian,” I said calmly.

A pause followed.

He was listening.

“When did you decide to start watching me?”

Silence stretched.

I crossed my arms loosely, my posture relaxed, my tone almost casual.

“And how many times,” I continued, “did you manage to get into my room to record?”

The words left my mouth as if they carried no weight.

+15 8chus

4077

As if they did not make my skin crawl.

Aif the thought of it did not ignite something cold and violent inside me.

On the screen, Emilian’s expression shifted.

Not guilt.

Never that.

Recognition.

Interest.

“You noticed,” he said softly.

I smiled faintly.

“I always notice,” I replied.

A pause.

Then-

“I began when you were fifteen,” he said.

The number landed.

Heavy.

Precise.

“You were... efficient even then,” he continued. “Disciplined. Observant.”

I did not react. 1

“Your routines were predictable,” he added. “That made access easier.”

My fingers curled slightly against my arm.

But my expression did not change.

“How many times?” I asked again.

He tilted his head.

“Enough,” he said.

Not a number.

Worse.

A certainty.

A pattern.

A habit.

I let out a small breath.

+15 Bonus

5/17

“Sloppy,” I said.

Aflicker crossed his face.

“You think so?” he asked.

I nodded slightly.

“If I had been looking for you,” I said calmly, “I would have found you.”

Silence.

Sharp.

Measured.

Because now-

This was no longer about what he had done.

This was about what he had missed.

I shifted my weight slightly, still facing the screen.

“You watched me for years,” I continued.

A pause.

“And somehow,” I added, “you still don’t understand me.”

His gaze darkened.

I smiled.

Because beneath the calm-

Beneath the control-

The disgust was still there.

Cold.

Focused.

And waiting.

“For someone so obsessed,” I said softly, “you missed the most important part.”

I tilted my head slightly, still looking at the screen.

“Thank you,” I said softly.

There was a pause.

“For showing me where to start breaking you.”

+15 Bonus

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Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

+15 Bonus

no exit

projection flickered once more before fading into darkness.

For a brief moment, the room felt still again.

Too still.

I straightened slightly, keeping my expression composed as I looked back at the camera.

“So what now?” I asked.

A pause.

“I won,” I added calmly.

My tone remained even, almost indifferent.

“Are you going to let the Beckers go?”

I tilted my head slightly, as if considering it.

“Or better yet,” I continued, “keep them restrained until I get there. I would prefer to deal with them myself.”

Silence.

Then-

Emilian laughed.

The sound cut through the room, sharp and wrong.

Not controlled.

Not measured.

Unhinged.

It echoed against the walls, stretching longer than it should have, breaking the calm that had defined him until

now.

For the first time-1

He sounded like he had lost control.

Completely.

The laughter faded slowly, leaving something darker behind.

“You think you won?” he asked.

His voice was different now.

Rougher.

Unstable.

I did not answer.

Because I already knew.

There was always another layer.

Another move.

Another test.

“Phase three,” he said.

The screens flickered back to life.

New footage replaced the old.

My breath slowed. 1

Focused.

Prepared.

And then-

I saw it.

Multiple feeds.

Familiar locations.

Too familiar.

The Asher estate.

The Sun estate.

Different angles.

Different entry points.

And in each one-

A device.

Small.

Precise.

Hidden.

Bombs.

My chest tightened.

Just slightly.

But I did not let it show.

On the screen, Emilian watched me closely.

“Come and get me,” he said softly.

A pause.

+15 Bonus

“Before I blow them up.”

Sence filled the room.

The weight of it settled slowly.

Deliberately.

Because this-

This was no longer just a game.

This was escalation.

Control through destruction.

I studied the screens carefully, taking in every detail.

Every angle.

Every placement.

Because panic would not help.

Only strategy would.

I lifted my gaze back to the camera.

“You’re getting sloppy,” I said calmly.

A flicker crossed his expression.

“Am I?” he asked.

I nodded slightly.

“You’re reacting now,” I said. “Not planning.”

Silence.

Sharp.

Because he knew it was true.

I stepped forward slightly.

“You lost control,” I added. “And now you’re compensating.”

His gaze darkened.

But I did not stop.

“Threats are not strategy,” I said. “They’re desperation.”

The room felt heavier.

Tenser.

Because now-

+15 8chus

He wasn't just watching

was unraveling.

And that made him-

More dangerous.

But also-

More predictable.

I glanced once more at the screens.

At the bombs.

At the stakes.

Then back at him.

“Alright,” I said.

A small smile forming.

“Let’s finish this.”

Because now-

This wasn’t about winning.

It was about ending him.

Before he took everything else with him.

I turned away from the screens without hesitation.

If he wanted me to come to him, then I would-but not like this, not trapped, not controlled.

I moved quickly toward the main door and grabbed the handle, pulling hard.

It did not move.

Locked.

Of course it was.

C

+15 Bonus

I did not waste time. I turned immediately and crossed the room toward the small door Jason had found earlier, the one where the mist had been coming from.

“Jason?” I called, keeping my voice low.

There was no answer.

I reached the door and tried the handle.

It did not move.

Locked.

I pushed harder, testing it with more force.

Still nothing.

Sealed.

My jaw tightened, but I stepped back, forcing myself to think instead of react.

There had to be another way out.

There was always another way out.

I began to move around the room, checking every wall, every corner, every possible exit point.

I pressed against panels, searched for hidden seams, tested surfaces that could conceal mechanisms.

Nothing.

I moved faster, more urgently now, scanning every detail, refusing to accept what was becoming obvious.

There was no exit.

I forced myself to keep going.

I found an electrical panel and crouched in front of it, prying it open.

Inside, the circuits were burned.

The wiring was blackened.

Fried.

Deliberately.

I stilled.

He had not just locked the doors.

He had destroyed the system. 1

I closed the panel slowly and stood, my mind racing as the realization settled in.

Emilian had never intended to give me a real chance to win.

Not the bomb.

Not the puzzle.

Not the robot.

All of it had been a distraction.

A way to keep me here.

Contained.

Occupied. 1

While everything else moved forward.

I turned back toward the screens.

+15 8çnus

The Asher estate.

The Sun estate.

The bombs.

Everyone inside.

Family.

Staff.

People who had trusted me.

My chest tightened.

At least the children were not there.

Alice.

Alex.

Rose.

Prev

Cedella

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

With Mrs. Sun.

Safe.

That thought grounded me for a fraction of a second.

But it was not enough.

Because everyone else-

Was still in danger.

Dozens of lives.

People who had done nothing wrong.

I exhaled slowly, forcing the emotion down, turning it into something sharper.

More controlled.

No. 1

I refused.

I refused to be the reason so many people died.

This was not strategy.

This was not control.

This was destruction.

+15 Bonus

+15 Bonus

I turned again, searching the room one more time, more carefully now, forcing myself to look for anything I might have missed.

I checked the walls again, the floor, the ceiling, the cages, the tables, every surface.

Nothing.

No hidden door.

No secondary exit.

No override.

There was no way out.

I stopped in the center of the room, finally allowing the truth to settle.

I was trapped.

For a brief moment, my thoughts flickered back to Jason.

Where was he?

What had he found behind that door?

But I pushed the questions aside.

I trusted him.

If he had not come back yet, it meant he was doing something that mattered.

Something that could change this.

And until then-

I would not stand still.

I lifted my gaze back to the cameras.

To him.

“You do not get to decide how this ends,” I said quietly.

Because even trapped-

even surrounded-

I was not done.

And I was not going to lose.

Support

Share

717

|

+15 Benus

Jason POV Into his blind spot.

Jason POV

I followed the cables.

They ran along the walls, partially hidden, feeding into the systems that powered everything in that room-the mist, the projections, the cameras.

Control.

That was what Emilian had built.

And control always had a source.

I moved in silence, keeping to the shadows as I traced the wiring deeper into the structure behind the walls. The suit bent the light around me, keeping me out of sight, turning me into nothing more than a distortion in the dark.

The further I went, the quieter it became.

Until I found it.

A hidden room.

I stepped inside without making a sound.

Three bodies were tied to chairs.

The missing Beckers.

All unconscious.

Their condition was clear at a glance. Their faces were bruised, their clothes stained, their bodies slack from either exhaustion or repeated blows.

They were alive.

But barely.

They would need medical attention.

But they were not my priority.

Amber was.

I moved past them, following the cables further, deeper into the structure.

Then I heard it.

Her voice.

Calm.

Controlled.

And his.

Unstable.

I followed the sound carefully, step by step, until I reached a wall.

+15 8ghus

At least, that was what it looked like at first.

Then I realized.

It was not a wall.

It was a mirror.

I stepped closer.

And there he was.

On the other side.

Emilian. 1

Standing just a few feet away.

So close I could see every detail of his face, every small movement, every crack in the control he was trying to maintain.

He did not see me.

He was too focused.

Too consumed.

Looking straight through the glass-

at Amber.

I remained completely still, watching, listening.

“You are not leaving,” Emilian said, his voice low, almost reverent. “I am never letting you go.”

My jaw tightened. 1

His hand lifted and pressed lightly against the glass, as if he could reach through it, as if she were already within his grasp.

“I am taking everything with me,” he continued.

A pause.

His smile stretched.

“The Sun family.”

Another pause.

“The Asher family.”

His eyes darkened.

“The Beckers.”

A beat.

“And the Vinnys.”

Silence followed.

Heavy.

Final.

This was not a threat.

This was a decision.

Something in me shifted.

Cold. 1

Focused.

There was no negotiation left.

No strategy that involved restraint.

He was not trying to win.

He was trying to destroy everything.

And that meant I did not need to hold back.

I glanced at the cables feeding into the system, tracing them quickly, identifying the control points.

Then I looked back at him.

So close.

Unaware.

For the first time since we walked into this place-

I had the advantage.

And this time-

I was not going to let him take anything else.

I stayed still for a moment longer, watching him through the glass.

Listening.

Memorizing.

Emilian was completely focused on Amber.

Good.

That meant he was blind to everything else.

I shifted my attention away from him and began scanning the room.

There had to be a way out.

A way in.

+15 Bonus

٢١

+15 Bonus

A way to move without triggering whatever else he had prepared.

gaze moved across the walls, the floor, the ceiling, searching for anything that did not belong.

Anything out of place.

Then I saw it.

A small square cut into the wall.

Low.

Almost hidden.

Covered by a thin, textured curtain, no more than three feet tall.

Not meant to be seen.

Not meant for someone like me.

An exit.

Or an access point. 1

I moved toward it slowly, keeping my steps silent, my presence nonexistent. The suit continued to bend the light around me, keeping me invisible even at this distance. 1

I reached the opening and crouched slightly, pulling the curtain aside just enough to inspect it.

A narrow passage.

Tight.

But enough.

A way through.

I glanced back once more at Emilian.

Still talking.

Still unraveling.

Still convinced he was in control.

He had no idea.

Not yet.

My expression hardened.

Because now-

This was no longer about strategy.

This was about ending it.

I lowered myself and slipped through the opening without making a sound.

Into the passage.

Into his blind spot.

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Support

Share

+15 Bohus

get it

+15 Bonus

Onto him

Nept my eyes on the screens, forcing myself to remain calm as Emilian continued to talk.

His voice filled the room, smooth in places, fractured in others, slipping further from control with every word.

But then I saw it.

One of the side cameras shifted slightly, catching movement at the edge of the frame.

A shadow.

Silent.

Prev

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Precise.

Jason.

He was moving toward Emilian without making a sound, each step measured, each movement hidden by the suit.

He was almost on him.

I did not react.

I did not let my expression change.

I kept my breathing steady and my eyes fixed forward, as if I had seen nothing.

Emilian continued speaking, too absorbed in his own delusions to notice.

“I will take care of you, Amber,” he said softly.

I said nothing.

“Before the end of the day,” he continued, his voice lowering into something more intimate and possessive, “you will be in my arms, begging to stay.”

My stomach turned.

“And once you understand how much better I can make you feel,” he added almost reverently, “you will never want to leave me.”

A sharp wave of disgust moved through me.

I winced before I could stop it.

Then I whispered, barely audible, “You should not have said that.”

Emilian smiled.

He mistook it for defiance.

For rebellion.

For something he could still control.

At least-

Until Jason hit him.

+15 Bonus

The punch landed hard against Emilian's face with a brutal crack. His body snapped sideways before crashing to the-ground.

Jason stepped over him, fury radiating from every line of his body.

"Stay the fuck away from my wife," he said angrily.

For one stunned second, the room went silent.

Then Jason moved again.

There was no restraint in him now.

No calm strategy.

No measured control.

He did not stop at one blow.

He grabbed Emilian by the front of his shirt and dragged him up just enough to hit him again.

And again.

And again.

Every strike was precise.

Violent.

Personal.

Emilian tried to move, tried to recover, but Jason gave him no space to breathe and no chance to think.

I stood perfectly still, watching.

Because this was no longer a game.

This was the end of Emilian's control.

And Jason was making sure he felt every second of it.

I watched Jason hit him again.

And again.

And again.

Each strike landed with the force of weeks of restraint finally broken.

Emilian was no longer fighting back. He could barely lift his arms, barely gather himself before Jason dragged him up and sent him crashing down again.

For a brief moment, I let it happen.

Because part of me understood it.

Part of me wanted it too.

But we did not have time.

The screens were still active.

The bombs were still real.

I stepped forward quickly.

“Jason.”

He did not stop.

He hit Emilian again.

“Jason.”

My voice was sharper this time.

He froze mid-motion, chest rising hard, one hand still fisted in Emilian’s shirt.

He turned his head slightly toward me, rage still burning in his eyes.

I held his gaze.

“Emilian has a device,” I said quickly. “According to him, it will blow up the Asher and Sun estates.”

The words cut through the room harder than any scream could have.

Jason went completely still.

The fury in him did not disappear.

It changed.

Focused.

Deadly.

He slowly released Emilian, letting him collapse back to the floor.

Then he crouched beside him, grabbing him by the jaw and forcing his face up.

“Where is it?” Jason asked coldly.

Emilian laughed weakly through bloodied lips.

A broken, ugly sound.

I stepped closer, my eyes moving across the room, already searching.

Because if there was a trigger-

We would find it.

And if there was not-

We would make him give it to us.

٢١

+15 8chus

Lost

Jason crouched beside him, one hand locked around Emilian's jaw, forcing his face upward.

“Where is it?” Jason asked coldly.

Blood ran from the corner of Emilian’s mouth. For a second, he only stared.

Then something in him broke.

His breathing turned uneven. His eyes darted wildly, no longer focused, no longer controlled.

He began to whisper.

“No...”

His voice was thin and strained.

“No, she works alone.”

He shook his head weakly, as if trying to reject what he was seeing.

“She always works alone.”

His breathing became sharper.

“I made sure we were hidden. I made sure no one could find us.”

He was not speaking to us anymore.

He was speaking to the version of reality he had built for himself.

The lie he had lived inside.

I stepped closer and looked down at him. 1

“You were wrong,” I said calmly.

His eyes snapped to me.

“Jason was here from the start.”

Silence hit the room.

Real silence.

The kind that comes when something fundamental shatters.

Emilian’s face went pale beneath the bruises.

His lips moved, but no words came out.

Jason tightened his grip slightly and leaned closer.

“Amber does work with a team,” he said, his voice low and cutting.

A pause.

“But they have to be on the same level as her.”

+15 Bonus

+15 Bonus

His expression hardened

And you are way below.”

The words landed harder than the punches had.

Emilian stared at him, breathing fast, panic replacing obsession.

For the first time since we entered that building-

He looked small.

And for the first time-

He understood he had already lost. For a moment, Emilian only stared at us.

Then he laughed.

The sound was wrong from the very first breath. 1

Too sharp.

Too high.

Too empty.

It echoed through the room in broken bursts, rising into something openly maniacal. There was no control left in it, no polished calm, no careful mask.

Only collapse.

Jason's grip tightened, but Emilian kept laughing, blood on his mouth, eyes bright with madness.

Good.

Let him unravel.

Because while all of his attention was fixed on Jason-

Mine was elsewhere.

I turned back to the computer he had given me access to earlier.

The same system he had been so proud to control.

The same system he believed only he understood.

I sat down and my fingers moved across the keyboard immediately.

Fast.

Precise.

No wasted motion.

Behind me, I could still hear Emilian laughing, then coughing, then trying to speak through it.

I ignored him.

I was already inside his network.

+15 Bonus

The interface opened in layers, hidden directories unfolding one after another as I bypassed his protections. Maps appeared on the screens.

The Asher estate.

The Sun estate.

Multiple red markers lit up across both properties.

Not one device.

Not two.

Multiple bombs.

My jaw tightened.

He had planned for mass casualties.

He had planned for chaos.

I opened the first control panel and began disconnecting the triggers.

One by one.

The first marker disappeared.

Then the second.

Then three more.

Behind me, Jason said something low and dangerous that I did not fully hear,

It did not matter.

I kept working.

There were too many devices, too many fail-safes, too many linked detonators.

But he had made one mistake.

He assumed panic would slow me down.

It never had.

I rerouted one circuit, killed another signal, and forced the next device offline.

More red markers vanished.

The Asher estate began to clear.

Then the Sun estate.

My breathing stayed steady.

My hands never hesitated.

Because every second mattered.

And while Emilian lost his mind behind me-

I was dismantling everything he had built.

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Support

Share

4

+15 Bonus

get it

+15 Bgnus

Not over

The last red tuarker disappeared from the screen.

Both estates were clear.

The bombs were offline.

For the first time since we entered that building, I allowed myself one slow breath.

Then I kept going.

Because I was already inside his system.

And men like Emilian never built only one layer of damage.

I opened the hidden financial directories buried beneath the security programs. Shell companies, ghost accounts unregistered holdings, transfers routed through names that did not exist.

Becker money.

Hidden money.

Stolen money.

My expression did not change.

I created two encrypted transfers and moved the first wave of funds out of their private accounts.

One account for Rose.

One account for Iris.

A small compensation for everything the Becker family had put them through.

Not enough.

But a beginning.

I continued digging deeper, exposing more hidden assets as I went. Properties, offshore reserves, undeclared investment pools, trust funds disguised under false entities.

I began to siphon them out.

Some I froze.

Some I rerouted.

And much of it, I sent directly into verified charitable foundations, shelters, children's programs, and legal aid organizations.

Let their money repair what they had spent years destroying.

Behind me, Jason had moved away from Emilian and was already on his phone.

His voice was clipped and cold.

“It’s clear,” he said. “Move now.”

A pause.

+15 Bonus

7

Then-

(es. Bring everyone.”

He ended the call and looked at the screen, straight at me.

I nodded.

Minutes later, the building changed.

Heavy footsteps thundered through the corridors.

Commands were shouted.

Doors were breached.

The first team entered in tactical gear, weapons raised, followed by police officers securing every room behind them.

Military.

Police.

Prepared.

Efficient.

They moved toward the bound Beckers first, cutting restraints and calling for medical support.

Others moved for Emilian.

He was dragged up from the floor in cuffs, still bleeding, still laughing under his breath.

No one looked amused. 1

No one looked merciful.

I turned back to the screen and completed one final transfer before shutting the system down.

Then I stood.

The game was over.

And this time-

We had taken everything back.

I was about to shut the system down when something else caught my eye.

More red markers.

Hidden in secondary folders, buried beneath the estate files I had already cleared.

I opened them immediately.

My jaw tightened.

The Becker family property.

The Vinny estate.

+15 Bonus

He had planted bombs there too.

Not just against us.

Against everyone.

Even his own blood.

Of course he had.

By the end, destruction was all he had left.

I did not hesitate.

My fingers moved across the keyboard again, breaking through the additional controls, isolating the triggers, forcing the devices offline one by one.

The first marker vanished.

Then another.

Then three more.

The Becker property cleared.

I shifted to the Vinny estate and repeated the process, moving faster now, tearing through his remaining safeguards with no patience left for precision.

One device.

Two.

Five.

All gone.

The final red marker disappeared.

Every property was clear.

Every bomb was dead.

I exhaled sharply, my hands finally stilling over the keyboard.

And right then-

The door exploded inward.

Police officers stormed the room first, weapons raised, shouting commands. Tactical teams followed behind them, spreading through the space with practiced speed.

For one second, everything became noise.

Boots.

Orders.

Metal.

Movement.

+15 Bonus

Then Jason was in front of me.

crossed the distance in two strides and pulled me into his arms.

Hard.

Immediate.

Certain.

I went into him without resistance, the adrenaline still burning through me, my hands gripping the back of his

shirt.

He held me like he needed to confirm I was real.

Like I was still there.

I pressed my face briefly against his chest and let myself breathe.

The room around us was chaos.

But inside his arms-

It was safe.

By the time we were escorted out of the warehouse, the sky was beginning to lighten.

Police vehicles surrounded the building. Ambulances had arrived. Officers moved in every direction, securing evidence, carrying out the unconscious Beckers, and loading Emilian into an armored transport.

He was finally silent.

Jason never let go of my hand.

Even when we were asked to leave.

Even when statements began.

Even when the adrenaline started to fade and exhaustion tried to settle in.

We were taken directly to the police station.

The ride was quiet.

Not uncomfortable.

Just heavy with everything that had happened.

Once inside, we were escorted into an interview room and asked to make a full report.

The warehouse.

The bombs.

The surveillance.

The kidnappings.

The hidden assets.

Everything.

at beside Jason at the table while officers prepared files and recording devices.

One detective apologized for the delay and told us that several important parties were already present.

That made me look up.

Important parties.

I did not like the sound of that.

The door opened.

And my expression hardened immediately.

Martin Vinny walked in.

The head of the Vinny family.

He was dressed perfectly, calm, composed, not a trace of panic on him.

As if his estate had not just been wired with explosives.

As if he had not been connected to kidnappings, forced marriages, and criminal alliances.

As if he belonged there.

My eyes narrowed.

He was supposed to be behind bars.

Jason's hand tightened around mine beneath the table.

He had noticed it too.

Martin smiled faintly, like we were meeting at a business event instead of a police station.

"Amber," he said smoothly. "Jason."

I did not return the greeting.

"What is he doing here?" I asked the officers.

The room shifted uncomfortably.

No one answered immediately.

That was answer enough.

Jason leaned back slightly, his voice colder than I had heard it all night.

“Interesting,” he said. “So this is the kind of station we are dealing with.”

Martin’s smile did not fade.

“I am here voluntarily,” he said. “To cooperate.”

I let out a soft laugh.

+15 Bonus

“Is that what we’re calling it now?”

Because if nien-like him could walk freely into a police station after everything we had uncovered-

Then this was not over.

Not even close.

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In charge

M

+15 8çnus

Martin Vinny behaved as if the station belonged to him.

He stood near the center of the room with perfect posture, speaking to officers in a familiar tone, nodding at people as they passed, carrying himself like a man who expected to be obeyed.

It was deliberate.

A performance.

A reminder that power did not disappear just because someone stepped inside a police station.

Jason and I sat down at the table.

We mostly ignored him.

He made small comments as the officers prepared the report, offering observations no one had asked for, acting as though he were part of the investigation.

Neither of us acknowledged him.

When the recording began, we gave our statements.

But not the full truth.

A cleaner version.

A safer version.

A useful version.

I folded my hands on the table and spoke calmly.

“I was called to a location and trapped inside the building,” I said. “Once inside, I was forced to participate in a series of games and tasks.”

The officers wrote quickly.

I continued.

“There were threats made against multiple families. I was able to access a computer system and disable explosive devices placed on several estates, including the Vinny property.”

That made Martin look at me.

I did not return the glance.

Jason spoke next, his tone steady and controlled.

“I arrived later after losing contact with Amber. I entered the building to extract her.”

No mention of the suit.

No mention of the hidden rooms.

No mention of what he had done to Emilian.

“We did not know who was inside when we arrived,” I added. “We only discovered later that Emilian Becker and

FYI

+15 Bonus

members of the Becker family were involved.’

That was true.

Just not all of it.

The detective looked between us.

“You are saying this was all orchestrated by Emilian Becker?”

Jason answered before I could.

“That is what we found.”

Again-

True.

But incomplete.

Martin Vinny leaned back in his chair, watching us carefully now.

Trying to find cracks.

Trying to measure what we were withholding.

He would find nothing.

Because Jason and I did not need to rehearse.

We understood each other too well for that.

We gave them enough truth to move the case forward.

Enough truth to protect ourselves.

And enough truth to remind everyone in that room-

We were not the ones on trial.

Martin Vinny had remained quiet through most of our statement, but I could feel his attention sharpening with every word.

He was not listening for facts.

He was listening for weakness.

For something he could challenge.

For a way to shift the room.

Then he looked directly at me.

“You are telling me,” he said slowly, “telling all of us, that you disabled bombs in multiple locations using only a computer?” ¹

He let out a short breath that was almost a laugh.

“And you expect us to believe that?”

- 15 Bonus

The room went still.

Ben the officers stopped writing.

Martin leaned forward slightly, his gaze fixed on me.

“You want us to believe that a businesswoman, while being held captive, somehow managed to disable explosive. devices, hack databases, and extract information?”

He shook his head.

“All while trapped inside a room?”

There it was.

Not doubt.

Dismissal.

The old habit of men like him.

If a woman was competent, then she must be lying.

If she was successful, someone else must have done the work.

I did not answer immediately.

I let the silence stretch.

Let everyone in the room feel what he had just said.

Then I smiled.

Small.

Polite.

Sharp.

“Yes,” I said calmly.

Another pause. 1

“That is exactly what I am telling you.”

A flicker crossed his face.

He had expected defensiveness.

Excuses.

Anger.

Instead, I gave him certainty.

I leaned back slightly in my chair.

“You seem to think being a businesswoman excludes intelligence,” I continued. “It does not.”

His jaw tightened. 1

+15 Bçnus

“Managing companies, negotiating acquisitions, building systems, reading people, solving problems under

pressure-those are skills, Mr. Vinny.”

I tilted my head.

“I simply applied them faster than your side expected.”

One of the officers coughed into his hand, hiding what looked suspiciously like amusement.

Martin’s expression hardened.

“That is not proof.”

“No,” I agreed. “The proof is that the estates are still standing.”

Silence.

Heavy.

Clean.

Jason, beside me, said nothing.

He did not need to.

But I felt the quiet approval in the way his hand brushed mine beneath the table.

I kept my eyes on Martin.

“You should be less concerned with what I am capable of,” I said softly.

“And more concerned with why your property needed saving in the first place.”

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Support

Share

get it

x

-XII

+15 Bonus

keep us here

he silence after my answer was satisfying.

Brief.

But satisfying.

Martin Vinny's expression had hardened, though he was careful not to let it slip too far. Men like him hated being challenged in public, especially when they believed they held the room.

Before he could speak again, Jason leaned forward.

His tone was calm.

Too calm.

The kind of calm that usually meant someone was about to be cut apart politely.

“Mr. Vinny,” Jason said, “perhaps a better question would be this.”

Martin turned toward him.

Jason’s gaze did not waver.

“Why would the Becker family target your estate if you were supposed to be allies?”

The room shifted instantly.

That was the real question.

Not what I had done.

Why they had needed saving at all.

Martin’s jaw tightened for a fraction of a second.

Small.

But visible.

Jason continued before he could answer.

“And as for Amber’s abilities...”

He glanced at me briefly, then back at Martin.

“She has a master’s degree in computer science.”

Silence followed.

One of the officers looked up sharply.

Another stopped writing for a second.

Because now the room had context.

Not a miracle.

Not an impossible story.

A qualified woman using skills she had earned.

Jason leaned back again, voice still even.

“So yes,” he said. “I believe she can disable bombs, breach systems, and extract information while under

pressure.

A beat passed. 1

“The real mystery is why you seem so invested in pretending she cannot.”

Martin's face became unreadable.

That usually meant he was angry.

Good.

I folded my hands calmly on the table.

Jason had not raised his voice.

He had not defended me emotionally.

He had done something better.

He had reframed the room.

Now everyone was looking at Martin.

Exactly where they should be looking.

The room stayed quiet after Jason's last words.

No one rushed to answer.

No one moved to defend Martin Vinny.

For the first time since we arrived, the weight in the room had shifted fully away from us.

Exactly where it belonged.

Jason and I stood at the same time.

The movement was so natural it looked rehearsed, though it wasn't.

We had simply reached the same conclusion together.

We were done here.

I turned to face the officers. 1

My posture was straight, my voice calm, measured, impossible to misread.

“Gentlemen, if that will be all...”

I let the words settle for a moment.

“I am really tired.”

A small pause.

+15 8çnus

+15 Bonus

“It has been a long, exhausting, and quite frankly deeply traumatic day.”

No one interrupted.

“I have shared all the information I had.”

I glanced briefly at the files on the table, then back at them.

“If you require anything further, you may contact my legal team tomorrow.”

One of the detectives straightened immediately.

Another looked uncomfortable, as if only now remembering that I had been kidnapped, trapped, threatened, and nearly killed.

Good.

Let them remember.

I offered a polite smile that carried no warmth.

“But tonight,” I said softly, “I am leaving.”

Jason stepped beside me, close enough that I could feel the steady heat of him at my side.

Solid.

Certain.

I was about to turn toward the door when Martin Vinny spoke.

“I am not done with you.”

The room went still again.

I slowly looked back at him.

But Jason moved first.

He turned toward Martin, and the coldness in his eyes changed the air in the room more effectively than any

raised voice could have.

“I believe, Martin,” Jason said evenly, “that you have no grounds to keep us here.”

A pause.

“But do not worry.”

His expression did not change.

“I am sure your companies will continue to grow while you sit here trying to play good cop, bad cop with the victims of this whole mess.’

The silence sharpened.

Jason took one step closer.

Not threatening.

Worse.

||

+15 Bonus

Certain.

mess,” he continued, “that you helped create in the first place.”

Martin’s face hardened instantly.

For the first time that night, he looked less like a man in control and more like someone who had been seen too clearly.

No one in the room interrupted.

No one defended him.

No one asked us to stay.

I let myself smile.

Small.

Satisfied.

Then I turned toward the door.

Jason's hand found the small of my back.

And together-

We walked out.

Support

Share

“

+15 Bonus

My favorite bar

Jason’s hand remained at the small of my back as we left the station together.

The air outside felt colder.

Cleaner.

After everything inside, even the night felt easier to breathe.

We had barely stepped onto the front steps when a man pushed away from a nearby vehicle and started walking toward us.

Tall.

Broad-shouldered.

Military posture.

The kind of presence that did not need to announce itself.

Jason's expression shifted slightly.

Recognition.

“Scott.”

The man reached us and clapped Jason on the shoulder with the easy familiarity of someone who had known him for years.

Then Jason turned toward me.

“Amber, this is Scott Higgins.”

I extended my hand.

He took it firmly, offering a respectful nod.

“It is good to finally meet you,” Scott said. “I have heard a lot.”

“Hopefully not all of it,” I replied.

A brief smile crossed his face.

Then it faded.

He became all business.

“We were ready to move in much earlier,” Scott said. “The teams were in position and waiting for Jason’s signal.”

He glanced at Jason.

“You gave the go-ahead two minutes before we breached.”

Jason’s jaw tightened slightly.

He already knew there was more coming.

Scott nodded once.

(9)

+15 Bonus

“We had to hold position before that.”

Why?” I asked.

His expression hardened.

“Because Mr. Vinny arrived at the site.”

Silence.

I exchanged a glance with Jason.

Scott continued.

“He was not alone. Another man arrived with him.”

“Who?” Jason asked.

Scott shook his head.

“We could not identify him.”

The words settled heavily between us.

Unknown.

Unidentified.

At a scene rigged with bombs, kidnappings, and hidden rooms.

That was not coincidence.

“That delayed the operation,” Scott said. “We could not risk moving blind without knowing whether they were involved, armed, or additional hostiles.” ¹

My mind was already moving.

Martin Vinny had gone to the site before appearing at the station.

With someone else.

Someone hidden.

Meaning the night was not over.

Not really.

Jason's hand pressed slightly more firmly against my back.

Grounding.

Protective.

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Scott looked between us.

“I figured you’d want to know immediately.”

I nodded slowly.

“You were right.”

Because now we had a new question.

d somewhere in the dark-

Someone else had walked into that warehouse...

And walked back out.

Scott studied us for a moment beneath the streetlights.

Then his expression shifted, some of the tension leaving his face.

“You two look like hell,” he said bluntly.

I almost laughed.

Almost.

“That bad?” I asked.

“Worse,” he replied. “Which is why I’m making an executive decision.”

Jason gave him a look that suggested he already knew where this was going.

Scott jerked his thumb toward the street.

“Come have a drink.”

Jason raised a brow.

“At this hour?” “At

Scott smirked.

“It’s always the right hour at my place.”

I looked between them.

“Your place?”

Scott’s grin widened.

“My favorite bar.”

A beat.

“I own it.”

That made me blink.

Of course he did.

Jason exhaled quietly, somewhere between resignation and amusement.

“We’re not staying long,” he said.

“That’s what everyone says before the second round,” Scott replied.

Twenty minutes later, we stepped into a low-lit bar tucked into an older part of the city.

+15 8cnus

It was warm, polished, and surprisingly elegant. Dark wood lined the walls, music played softly in the background, and the atmosphere felt private enough for secrets.

Not crowded.

Selective.

Scott pushed open the private side entrance and led us inside like he had done it a thousand times.

Which he probably had.

The moment we entered, several heads turned.

Not toward Scott.

Toward Jason.

I noticed it immediately.

The pause.

The double takes.

The way shoulders straightened.

The way conversations lowered.

Interesting.

Scott led us toward a long table near the back where several men and women were already seated.

Military bearing.

Sharp eyes.

Relaxed posture hiding readiness.

“My team,” Scott said.

They barely looked at him.

Their attention stayed fixed on Jason.

One of them stood so quickly his chair nearly tipped.

“Sir.”

Jason grimaced slightly.

“Don’t start.”

Another woman laughed under her breath.

Too late.”

I looked at Jason.

Then at the table.

Then back at Jason.

5

+15 8спив

“What exactly is happening?” I asked.

ott barked out a laugh and dropped into a chair.

“You didn’t tell her?”

Jason said nothing.

Which was answer enough.

Scott gestured broadly toward him.

“For us,” he said, “Jason isn’t just some contractor.”

A pause.

“He’s a legend.”

The table nodded like this was obvious.

I folded my arms slowly. 1

“A legend.”

Jason looked deeply unimpressed with the entire conversation.

One of the younger officers leaned forward.

“He completed missions people said were impossible.”

Another added, “He extracted teams no one could reach.”

A third shook his head.

“There are stories about him in training.”

I stared at Jason.

“You have training stories?”

Scott lifted his glass.

“They study him.”

Jason muttered something under his breath that sounded like regret.

I smiled.

Slowly.

Because suddenly, several things about him made much more sense.

The calm under pressure.

The impossible gadgets.

The way danger seemed to sharpen him instead of shake him.

He noticed me looking and narrowed his eyes slightly.

31

+15 Bonus

“Don’t.”

That only made my smile widen.

I took the seat beside him.

“Oh no,” I said softly.

“This is the part where I ask questions.”

BIG SALE: 3500 bonus free fou you

Support

Share

+15 Bcnus

get it

scopre capo

+15 Bonus

Ambrosia project

New people around the table laughed.

Jason rubbed a hand over his face.

Scott looked delighted.

Before anyone else could speak, a woman seated across from me stood and walked around the table.

She was poised, athletic, and carried herself with the quiet confidence of someone who knew exactly what she could do.

She extended her hand.

“I’m Sierra.”

I took it.

“Amber.”

She smiled warmly.

Unlike the others, who seemed half in awe and half intimidated by Jason, Sierra looked completely at ease.

“I’m on Scott’s team,” she said as she sat beside me. “And I’ve worked with Jason before.”

There was familiarity in her tone, but no awkwardness, no hidden agenda.

Just respect.

And an immediate friendliness toward me that I appreciated more than I expected.

“Perfect,” I said. “Then you can answer my questions.”

Jason muttered something under his breath.

Scott laughed openly.

Sierra crossed one leg over the other and glanced at Jason with clear amusement.

“Where would you like me to start?”

I tilted my head.

“With the part where everyone in this room looks at him like he’s some kind of celebrity.”

That earned a few grins around the table.

Sierra did not hesitate.

“Because he is.”

I looked at Jason.

He looked away.

Sierra continued.

“Jason went through a special level of training that very few people are ever invited into. Most wash out. Some

never finish.”

Her expression shifted slightly.

More serious now.

“He didn’t just finish. He broke records.”

The room grew quieter.

Even the people who had already heard the stories listened again.

“Most of the benchmark records are still under his name,” she said. “Speed. Accuracy. Tactical adaptation. Survival scenarios. Field extraction times.”

I raised a brow.

“All of them?”

Sierra smiled.

“Most.” 1

Jason reached for his drink like he wished it were stronger.

“He’s the mark to beat,” she added. “Every new class measures themselves against what he did.”

I turned toward him slowly.

“You’re homework.”

Several people laughed.

Jason did not.

Sierra leaned closer, lowering her voice just enough to make it more entertaining.

“He also has the highest mission completion rate on record.”

That surprised me less than it should have.

Of course he did.

“He finishes what he starts,” I said quietly.

Jason glanced at me then.

Only for a second.

But it was enough.

Sierra’s smile widened.

“Oh, that’s not even the part they love most.”

I blinked.

“There’s more?” 1

The table became visibly more interested.

Scott looked like he had been waiting for this exact moment.

Serra nodded solemnly, though her eyes were sparkling.

“To the men, he is also a legend for something else.”

Jason set his glass down.

Slowly.

“Sierra.”

Too late.

She ignored him completely.

“He is the man who rejected the advances of Ana Buenfila.”

A murmur went around the table.

Apparently even now that name carried weight.

I looked between them.

“And who is Ana Buenfila?”

Sierra answered immediately.

“The Secretary of Defense’s daughter.”

A beat.

“And the military darling.”

Another beat.

“And a woman famous for causing drama wherever she goes.’

Scott coughed into his drink to hide a laugh.

I turned back to Jason.

Very slowly.

“You rejected the defense minister’s dramatic daughter?”

Jason’s expression was blank.

Too blank.

“It wasn’t relevant,” he said.

The entire table disagreed silently.

I smiled.

Slow.

Dangerous.

+15 8cnus

5|

+15 Bonus

“Oh,” I said. “It’s relevant now.”

turned fully toward Jason, ignoring the way everyone at the table was pretending not to listen while clearly listening to every word.

“So,” I said lightly, “when exactly were you with the military?”

Jason let out a slow sigh.

The kind that meant he already regretted the direction of this conversation.

He ran a hand through his hair before answering.

“Right after college.”

That alone caught my attention.

He leaned back in his chair, gaze fixed on the table for a moment.

“I was caught hacking a site.”

I raised a brow.

“That sounds more like you.”

A few people laughed.

Cedella

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Jason did not.

“It turned out the site was a trap,” he continued. “Built by the military to attract hackers they considered useful.”

Scott lifted his glass.

“Ambrosia Project.”

The name settled over the table with immediate recognition.

Even those who had been smiling grew more attentive.

Jason nodded once.

“They gave me a choice. Prison... or the program.”

I studied him quietly.

“And you chose the program.”

“I chose not to waste years in a cell,” he replied dryly.

That earned another round of laughter.

But Jason was not finished.

“The generals told me there had only ever been one hacker who successfully took the information they needed...”

He paused.

“And was never caught.”

Something about the way he said it made me still.

Then I laughed.

Not polite laughter.

Not controlled amusement.

A real laugh.

Full.

Bright.

Unrestrained.

The sound seemed to ripple through the room.

Several people stared.

A few smiled without meaning to.

Even the bartender glanced over.

Jason looked at me sharply.

And then I saw it.

The moment it dawned on him.

His eyes narrowed.

Slowly.

He leaned closer.

“You are playing with me, Amber.”

His voice had dropped.

Low.

Accusing.

Almost disbelieving.

“You did not.”

I said nothing.

I only smiled.

The silence that followed was louder than laughter.

Scott lowered his drink.

Sierra straightened beside me.

Both of them were staring now. 1

Surprised.

??

+15 8cnus

Curious.

Trying to recalculate everything they thought they knew.

Scott spoke first.

“No way.”

Sierra looked between us.

“Amber...”

I rested my chin lightly on my hand and looked at Jason.

“What?” I asked innocently.

“You never asked.”

Support

Share

51

+15 Bonus

A

C

+15 Bonus

John Stait

The table erupted.

Scott nearly choked on his drink.

Sierra covered her mouth, laughing openly now.

Several members of the team began talking at once, trying to process what I had just implied.

Jason only stared at me.

Half accusation.

Half disbelief.

And something else beneath it.

Something dangerously amused.

I was enjoying that expression far too much.

Then the room shifted.

Not loudly.

Not dramatically.

But the kind of shift that happens when someone important enters a space and everyone notices before they speak.

Conversations lowered.

Several people straightened instinctively.

Even Scott looked toward the entrance.

I followed their gaze.

A man in his late fifties walked in with the easy confidence of someone long accustomed to command.

Well dressed.

Sharp-eyed.

Silver at the temples.

The kind of presence that did not need introduction.

I knew immediately who he had to be.

John Stait.

Secretary of Defense.

Ana Buenfila's father. 1

He had apparently arrived in time to hear the last part of the conversation.

Wonderful.

His eyes found Jason instantly.

Then he smiled.

Warm.

Familiar.

Far too familiar.

He walked straight toward our table.

“Son,” he said as he reached Jason.

“How are you?”

The entire table went silent.

I slowly turned to look at Jason.

John Stait clapped him on the shoulder like a proud relative.

“I heard you got married,” he continued.

Then he glanced around theatrically.

“Where was my invitation, eh?”

Silence.

Absolute silence.

I looked at Jason.

Then at the hand still resting on his shoulder.

Then back at Jason.

“Son?” I repeated softly.

Scott was staring into his glass with the concentration of a man trying not to laugh himself unconscious.

Sierra had gone completely still beside me.

No one wanted to miss what happened next.

Jason closed his eyes for one brief second.

The expression of a man betrayed by the universe itself.

Then he opened them and looked at me.

“It is not what it sounds like.”

That only made it worse.

I smiled.

Slowly.

+15 8chus

· |

+15 Bonus

“Oh?” I said.

Then by all means, Jason...”

I gestured politely toward the Secretary of Defense.

“Explain.”

Jason looked like a man calculating whether escape through the nearest wall was still possible.

I was enjoying myself immensely.

John Stait laughed, rich and unbothered, clearly delighted by the discomfort around the table.

“I suppose this is the wife, then?”

His gaze moved over me, assessing but not unkind.

“You always did like pretty little things,” he said to Jason.

Then he shook his head with theatrical disappointment.

“Though I must say, Ana was stunned you actually decided someone was worth marrying after making it clear, time and time again, that you were waiting for someone.”

That caught my attention.

Waiting for someone.

Interesting.

I turned fully toward him, smiling with perfect composure.

“Well,” I said smoothly, “I do not believe we have been properly introduced.”

I extended my hand.

“A pleasure to meet you, Mr. Stait.”

He took it.

Firm grip.

Curious eyes.

“I am Amber Asher.”

A small pause.

“Jason’s wife.”

Before anyone else could speak, Jason interrupted.

His voice was calm.

Certain.

“She is the one I was waiting for.”

The words fell into the room like a stone into still water.

Everything rippled.

one laughed.

No one moved.

Even Scott looked surprised.

I slowly turned to look at Jason.

He was already looking at me.

No hesitation.

No embarrassment.

No attempt to soften what he had said.

Only truth.

Something in my chest tightened unexpectedly.

Warm.

Sharp. 1

Dangerous.

Then I smiled.

Slowly.

The title had landed exactly the way I intended it to.

But his words had landed harder.

Clearer.

Deeper.

I turned back to John Stait and tilted my head slightly.

My smile did not change.

“And do be sure to thank your daughter for me.”

That broke the silence.

Several people at the table straightened immediately.

Scott lowered his drink very slowly.

Sierra looked ready to witness history.

John Stait raised a brow.

“Oh?”

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+15 Bçnus

“I believe if it were not for her, Jason would have been completely overrun by women during his time in the

any”

The silence that followed was exquisite.

Then John Stait threw his head back and laughed.

Loudly.

Genuinely.

Even louder than before.

Jason said nothing.

Which, in this case, was wise.

John looked at Jason with open amusement.

“She has teeth,” he said approvingly.

I folded my hands lightly in front of me.

“I find they are useful.”

Scott finally lost the battle and laughed into his glass.

Several members of the team followed.

Even Sierra was smiling openly now.

John Stait nodded once, still amused.

“No wonder you finally married.”

I glanced at Jason.

He was looking at me now.

Not embarrassed.

Not annoyed.

Something warmer.

Something far more dangerous.

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P

U

Share

Support

get it

+15 Bcnus

Staying alive

laughter around the table slowly faded, though the warmth of it remained.

Even after everything that had happened that night, the room felt lighter now.

Less like a battlefield.

More like something dangerously close to normal.

John Stait remained standing beside the table, one hand resting on the back of an empty chair.

His sharp eyes moved between Jason and me with clear interest.

“I hear the two of you had an adventure tonight.”

The word adventure was doing an incredible amount of work.

Jason exhaled quietly, already knowing this was not a man who accepted vague answers.

Still, he kept it brief.

“We were lured to a warehouse,” he said. “Amber was trapped inside. There were hostages, surveillance systems, and multiple explosives placed across several estates.’

John’s expression sharpened.

“Emilian Becker was behind it,” Jason continued. “We neutralized the situation.”

Again-

brief.

Controlled.

Suspiciously incomplete.

John Stait looked unimpressed by the summary.

Then his gaze shifted to me.

“And where exactly did Amber fit into this neutralization?”

Jason answered without hesitation.

“She deactivated the bombs.”

Silence.

Not the heavy silence of conflict.

The attentive silence of interest.

John straightened slowly.

“All of them?”

Jason nodded once.

“Across four properties.”

+15 Bemus

That changed the room.

Even the people who already knew some version of the story looked at me again, as though reevaluating old information with new weight.

John Stait's expression became intent.

Focused.

"She identified the devices remotely?" he asked.

"Yes," Jason said.

"She accessed the system, found the placements, and shut them down before detonation."

John looked at me fully now.

No amusement.

No social charm.

Just sharp professional curiosity.

“That is not a common skill set.”

I lifted one shoulder lightly.

“Neither was planting them.”

A slow smile touched his mouth.

“Fair answer.”

He pulled out the empty chair and sat down beside us instead of leaving.

That alone told everyone at the table something had changed.

“I think,” he said calmly, “I would like to hear the longer version of this story.”

I told him the story.

Not every detail.

Not the parts that belonged only to Jason and me.

But enough.

I explained the warehouse, the games, the hidden cameras, the bombs, and the system
Emilian had built around

obsession and control.

Then I said the part that mattered most plainly.

“Emilian Becker was my stalker.”

The table went quiet again.

No one interrupted.

No one made light of it.

+15 8cnus

Even Scott's usual amusement disappeared.

continued, explaining the years of surveillance, the recordings, the hidden files, the way he had turned my life into a collection.

When I finished, John Stait sat back slowly, studying both of us.

Then he looked at Jason.

"Is this the woman you told them about?"

Jason's expression changed instantly.

A fraction tighter.

More guarded.

“The one you said could have accessed military servers without getting caught?”

I turned my head very slowly toward Jason.

Annoyed was too small a word for what I felt.

He noticed.

Of course he noticed.

“That is not what I said,” Jason replied smoothly.

It was the voice of a man lying with experience.

Scott looked down into his drink.

Sierra suddenly found the table fascinating.

Neither of them wanted to be involved.

Which told me everything.

John Stait ignored Jason completely and turned to me.

His tone became direct.

Professional.

No games now.

“Amber.”

He held my gaze.

“Were you the one who took a look at the special servers?”

The room stilled.

Every sound in the bar seemed to fall away.

I looked at Jason once.

He was already preparing damage control.

That alone was entertaining.

Then I looked back at John Stait.

I smiled.

Small.

Careful.

Unreadable.

“That depends,” I said calmly.

“On whether we are discussing a crime... or an achievement.”

For one suspended second, the entire table waited.

Then John Stait laughed.

Not politely.

Not quietly.

A full, genuine laugh that drew glances from across the room.

“I like her,” he said, pointing lightly in my direction.

Scott shook his head as if none of this surprised him anymore.

Jason looked like a man reconsidering every life choice that had brought him here.

John leaned back in his chair, still smiling.

“No, Amber. We are not discussing a crime.”

A pause.

“We are discussing a potential job offer.”

That earned several reactions at once.

Scott raised a brow.

Sierra looked openly interested.

Jason looked immediately suspicious.

John continued as if this were perfectly normal.

“The image of the flowers you left us could not be removed from the screens for weeks.”

I blinked.

Once.

Then frowned.

“The flowers?”

+15 Bonus

He nodded.

Beautiful arrangement. Very memorable.”

I stared at him for a moment, then shook my head.

“I did not leave any flowers.”

Now it was his turn to look confused.

I folded my hands on the table.

“I left an audio file on loop.”

A pause.

“The song Staying Alive.”

Silence.

Then Scott nearly fell out of his chair laughing.

Sierra covered her mouth. 1

Several members of the team openly lost composure.

John Stait stared at me for two full seconds.

Then laughed even harder than before.

He slapped the table once.

“That was you?”

I tilted my head.

“I am beginning to think someone else took credit for my work.”

Every eye in the room turned slowly toward Jason.

Jason closed his eyes briefly.

The expression of a man betrayed by history itself.

Scott pointed at him.

“You told them it was symbolic cyber-floral warfare.”

The room erupted.

I turned to Jason with dangerous calm.

“You rebranded my prank?”

He opened one eye.

“It sounded more professional.”

That only made everyone laugh harder.

+15 8cnus

516

John wiped at the corner of one eye and shook his head.

Amber Asher,” he said, still amused, “I am liking this job offer more by the minute.”

P

Support

Share

+15 8cnus

Cedella

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Borrowed textbooks 165

John Stait was still watching me with clear amusement and growing interest.

He looked entirely too serious about whatever offer he was considering.

That alone was dangerous.

I lifted my glass and took a slow sip before setting it down again.

Then I met his gaze.

“Any job offer,” I said calmly, “will have to wait.”

He raised a brow.

“Oh?”

I nodded once.

“Yes.”

I let out a quiet breath.

For the first time that night, I allowed a hint of exhaustion to show.

“I have not had a decent amount of sleep in months.”

The truth of it settled more heavily than I expected.

Because now that everything had stopped moving-

I could feel it.

The weight.

The fatigue.

The strain of surviving one crisis after another without pause.

John’s expression shifted.

Still interested.

But softer now.

More understanding,

“A fair condition,” he said.

Scott lifted his drink.

“The smartest thing said all night.”

Sierra nodded in agreement.

“Sleep first. Negotiate later.”

I smiled faintly.

+15 Bonus

+15 Bonus

“Exactly.”

Then I glanced sideways at Jason.

“And if anyone tries to recruit me before I’ve slept for at least three uninterrupted days, I’ll consider it a hostile act.”

That earned another round of laughter.

Jason’s hand settled over mine on the table.

Warm.

Steady.

Grounding.

“Noted,” he said.

I looked at him.

“Good.”

Because right then, more than victory, revenge, money, or offers-

What I wanted most-

Was rest.

Eventually, the night began to wind down.

The adrenaline had burned off, the laughter had softened, and exhaustion was finally catching up to both of us.

It was time to leave.

Jason and I stood together, saying our goodbyes around the table.

Scott shook Jason’s hand and clapped him on the shoulder again.

Sierra hugged me warmly and told me she expected updates.

Others offered handshakes, nods, and amused looks that still had not faded.

More than one person congratulated Jason.

Not for surviving the night.

Not for the mission.

For me.

“Exceptional taste,” one of them said.

“You’re a lucky man,” another added.

Jason looked vaguely uncomfortable under the attention, which only made it more entertaining.

Before he could answer, I did.

“Luck had nothing to do with it,” I said calmly.

Several people looked at me.

did Jason.

I smiled faintly.

“Jason is simply amazing.”

Silence followed.

Short.

Complete.

Jason actually looked speechless.

The legendary Cronos, feared by enemies and admired by soldiers, defeated by a compliment.

Scott burst out laughing first.

The rest followed quickly.

I only reached for Jason’s hand.

“Come on,” I said softly.

He let me lead him out without argument.

Still silent.

Still stunned.

Outside, the city felt quieter than before.

The streets nearly empty.

The sky beginning to pale.

Jason called for a car, and we waited together in the cool night air, our hands still linked.

Neither of us spoke much.

We did not need to.

When the car arrived, we climbed in and let the silence carry us home.

By the time we reached the fairy house, the world felt still.

1 No sirens.

No voices.

No danger.

Only silence.

The gates opened.

The house stood glowing softly in the dark, untouched and waiting.

+15 8çnus

I stepped out of the car and inhaled deeply.

Men exhaled.

Long.

Heavy.

Inside, everything was quiet.

The children were asleep.

The lights dimmed.

The chaos of the night felt impossibly far away.

I climbed the stairs slowly.

As I passed, I let my fingers glide over the railing.

The smooth curve of it.

The familiar texture beneath my hand.

Something real.

Something safe. 1

I sighed.

Not from fear.

Not from pain.

From finally being home.

I do not remember reaching the bedroom.

I remember Jason's hand at my back.

The quiet warmth of the room.

The bed.

And then-

Nothing.

For the first time in longer than I wanted to admit, sleep took me completely.

No alarms.

No plans.

No fear.

No need to stay alert.

Only warmth.

+15 8gnus

+15 8gnus

At some point during the night, I had curled into Jason without thinking.

When I woke later, I was still there.

Safe in his arms.

His body wrapped around mine, one arm secure at my waist, his breathing deep and steady against the back of my

neck.

Even asleep, he had not let go.

It might have stayed perfect.

Peaceful.

Quiet.

If not for the sudden weight that landed on the bed.

Then another.

And then shouting.

“Lunch time!”

I opened my eyes just as Alice bounced beside us and Alex climbed over the blankets with zero respect for sleeping adults.

Rose stood at the edge of the bed looking proud of the coordinated attack.

Jason groaned behind me.

“You missed breakfast,” Alex announced looking upset.

“That was the goal,” Jason muttered.

I laughed before I could stop myself.

The sound felt rusty from disuse.

Mrs. Sun appeared in the doorway with the expression of a woman who had witnessed the invasion and approved

of it.

“You two slept through breakfast,” she said. “And nearly through lunch.”

I sat up slowly, hair a mess, dignity questionable.

Then I noticed she was not alone.

Behind her stood Mr. Sun.

And my grandfather.

Mr. Asher.

That changed the air instantly.

Neither man looked relaxed.

Neither had come for a family lunch.

Jason sat up beside me, alert in a second.

children seemed to sense it too, growing quieter.

I pushed the blankets aside and met my grandfather’s eyes.

“What happened?”

Mr. Sun answered first.

His voice was calm.

Too calm.

“The Vinny family has made their move.”

The last traces of sleep vanished immediately.

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Support

Share

24

+15 Bonus

get it

X

+15 Bonus

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Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Tacos

Amber POV

Jason sat up fully, awake in an instant.

The warmth of sleep vanished from him so quickly it was almost unsettling.

He looked at everyone gathered in the doorway and spoke with calm authority.

“Please, give us a second to get dressed.”

His tone was polite, but it carried the kind of certainty people instinctively listened to.

“We’ll meet you downstairs, alright?”

The children looked between us, clearly curious and only mildly interested in respecting boundaries.

I had already grabbed the blanket and pulled it tightly around myself, suddenly far too aware that half the family was standing in my room.

Jason glanced at me from the corner of his eye.

He noticed everything.

Always.

Alice climbed off the bed first.

“Don’t take too long,” she said seriously.

Alex pointed toward the hall.

“There are tacos.”

That, apparently, was the true emergency.

Rose nodded in agreement and took Alice’s hand.

“We’ll save you some,” she promised.

Despite everything, I smiled.

“Thank you,” I said.

The three of them left after we reassured them we would be downstairs shortly.

Their footsteps thundered away down the hall.

Silence followed.

A more complicated one.

My grandfather remained in the doorway for several seconds, staring at Jason, then at me, then at the blanket still clutched in my hands.

After a moment, he sighed.

Long.

+15 Bcnus

Resigned.

Without another word, he turned and walked away.

Mr. Sun followed him.

Mrs. Sun lingered just long enough to give me a look that was somehow amused, knowing, and entirely unhelpful.

Then she left as well.

The door closed.

At last.

The room became quiet again.

I exhaled slowly and loosened my grip on the blanket.

Jason looked at me.

Then at the door.

Then back at me.

“Well,” he said dryly, “that could have gone worse.”

I stared at him.

“My grandfather just found me in bed with you.”

Jason considered that.

“He found us sleeping, we are married and they entered our room without.”

I narrowed my eyes.

“That is not the point, we forgot to lock the door.”

A pause.

Then his mouth twitched.

“It is a very good point, though,.”

I threw a pillow at him.

He caught it easily.

And for one brief second before the next battle downstairs-

The room felt light again.

I turned toward Jason and let out a tired breath.

“Well,” I said, “we did know everything would be chaotic.”

I shook my head slightly.

“I just thought we would have time to at least sleep, you know?”

I ran both hands through my hair, pushing it back from my face.

Exhausted.

But amused.

Because somehow, despite everything, I could still laugh at the absurdity of it all.

“In four months,” I continued, “I went from working tirelessly for someone else’s gain...”
1

I counted softly on my fingers.

“To working for myself.”

“Escaping.”

“Being recognized for my work.”

“Finding out I had a stalker.”

“Managing my own company.”

“Getting married.”

“And even becoming a mother.”

I let my hands fall to my lap and looked at him.

“Things really do change.”

The room grew quiet.

Not heavy.

Just still.

Jason watched me for a long moment, something unreadable moving behind his eyes.

Then he reached out and tucked a strand of hair behind my ear.

A small gesture.

Gentle.

Intimate.

“They do,” he said quietly.

His hand lingered for a second before sliding to my cheek.

“But for what it’s worth...”

A pause.

“You made every change look effortless.”

I laughed softly.

“That is a lie.”

+15 Bonus

“It isn’t,” he said.

Raised a brow.

“I was kidnapped yesterday.”

“You rescued yourself,” he replied immediately.

I stared at him.

Then laughed again, fuller this time.

Of course that was his answer.

He leaned forward and pressed his forehead briefly to mine.

“We’ll get dressed,” he murmured.

“Then we’ll go downstairs.”

Another pause.

“And then we’ll survive whatever chaos comes next.”

I closed my eyes for just a second.

Letting myself rest in the warmth of him.

Then I smiled.

“Fine,” I said softly.

“But after that, I’m demanding another nap.”

Share

Support

+15 8chus

⁂

+15 Bonus

Worth it.

Jason got out of bed without another word.

I watched him cross the room, still half distracted by everything waiting downstairs.

Then he reached the door.

And slid the lock into place.

I blinked.

“Jason-”

He turned and walked back toward me with calm purpose.

Too calm.

Too certain.

Something about that made me instinctively move backward across the bed.

He reached me in seconds and pushed me gently but firmly back onto the mattress.

I let out a startled laugh and tried to slip away.

“They’re waiting for us,” I protested, trying to dodge past him.

He caught my wrist easily and pinned me in place with nothing but his weight and a look.

“They can wait.”

I narrowed my eyes.

“Jason.”

His expression did not change.

If anything, it grew more dangerous.

More amused.

“It is my turn to be with my wife,” he said quietly.

The words landed with enough force to still me for a moment.

“Everyone else,” he added, leaning closer, “can wait.”

I should have argued.

I should have insisted we go downstairs.

I should have remembered the family, the crisis, the Vinny move, the people gathered around the table expecting

Instead-

I forgot all of it.

Time passed differently after that.

+15 Bonus

Warmly.

Softly.

With laughter stolen between kisses, whispered threats that neither of us meant, and the kind of closeness that made the rest of the world disappear for a little while.

By the time we finally made our way downstairs, we were both freshly showered and entirely too aware of how late it had become.

The dining room was full.

Everyone was already seated.

Plates half-finished.

Coffee refreshed.

Conversations paused the moment we entered.

Of course they did.

Iris spotted us first.

Her eyes widened with immediate triumph.

She turned toward the rest of the table and announced loudly-

“You see? I told you they must have taken a shower, and that is what took so long!”

Silence followed.

Mrs. Sun looked delighted.

Mr. Sun coughed into his napkin.

My grandfather closed his eyes briefly, as if asking the universe for patience.

I stopped walking.

Jason, beside me, looked entirely unrepentant.

I turned to him slowly.

“This,” I said under my breath, “is your fault.”

He pulled out my chair like a gentleman.

“Worth it.”

True to her word, Alice had indeed saved some tacos for us.

They were arranged carefully on a plate beside my seat, guarded with the seriousness of a royal treasure.

I smiled the moment I saw them.

“Thank you,” I said.

Alice lifted her chin proudly.

+15 Bonus

“I told them not to touch yours.”

Jason sat beside me, looking entirely too pleased with himself and far too rested for a man who had delayed a family meeting.

Still, I was hungry enough to let that battle wait.

Lunch-though it felt far closer to dinner by then-passed quickly.

The table filled with noise, overlapping conversations, and the kind of easy chaos that only came from family.

At the far end of the table, Alex, Alice, and Rose were fighting over a single taco.

Not because there were no others.

There were plenty.

A full tray of them, untouched.

But apparently that particular taco had become priceless through the simple fact that someone else wanted it.

“It was mine first!”

Alice declared.

“You touched it last!”

Alex shot back.

Rose said nothing at all and simply tried to steal it while they argued.

Iris watched the entire scene with a delighted expression, as if she had been handed front-row seats to the best entertainment in the city.

Even Mr. Sun was smiling now.

My grandfather tried to remain stern and failed.

Mrs. Sun openly encouraged the drama.

Then Iris turned toward me.

Her whole face lit up.

“Amber,” she called.

The table quieted slightly.

“I can read now.”

She sat up straighter, pride shining through every word.

“Well... more or less.”

That earned a few laughs.

She ignored them.

“And I can write my name.”

Cedella

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Then she added with even greater triumph-

“And everyone's here.”

My chest tightened unexpectedly.

Warm.

Immediate.

“That is incredible, Iris,” I said softly.

She beamed.

“Do you want to see?”

“Yes,” I answered without hesitation. 1

She jumped from her chair so fast it nearly tipped over.

Alex abandoned the taco war immediately.

Alice followed.

Rose was already halfway around the table.

The children gathered around Iris as though she were about to reveal state secrets.

I looked at Jason.

He was watching them too.

Quiet.

Softened.

For one brief moment, with tacos, laughter, and children arguing over nonsense while celebrating letters-

The world felt healed.

As the meal came to an end, the table slowly settled.

The last tacos disappeared.

Drinks were refilled.

The children were still talking over one another about Iris's reading progress and the great taco dispute as if both were matters of national importance.

Then Mrs. Sun set down her glass and smiled sweetly.

A dangerous smile. 1

"Children," she said, "why don't you all go play while we discuss boring grown-up things?"

Three small faces turned suspicious immediately.

"That means secrets," Alice said.

+15 Bgnus

"That means no," Alex added.

Rose crossed her arms in solidarity.

I almost laughed.

For a moment, it looked as though negotiations might fail completely.

Then Iris stood. 1

Calm.

Certain.

Older than her years in the quietest ways.

"Come on," she said. "We're going to have fun."

That got their attention.

“What kind of fun?” Alex asked.

“The fun kind,” Iris replied.

Apparently that was enough.

She gathered them with effortless authority and led them from the room, the others following after only minor protest.

As she passed me, I mouthed a silent thank you.

She smiled without slowing down.

Then the room became quieter.

Truly quieter.

The kind of silence that only comes when children leave and adults remember why they were waiting.

I turned back to the table.

My grandfather.

Mr. Sun.

Mrs. Sun.

Jason beside me.

All of them suddenly more serious.

I folded my hands in front of me.

“Okay,” I said.

I looked from one face to the next.

“Now tell us what it is the Vinny family did.”

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Support

Share

git it

|

15 Bonus

Find out

silence after my question lasted only a moment.

Then Mr. Sun leaned back in his chair and let out a slow breath.

“The Vinny family moved first thing this morning.”

My grandfather’s expression darkened.

Mrs. Sun looked openly offended.

That alone told me it was something bold.

Or insulting.

Probably both.

Mr. Sun continued.

“More specifically, Martin Vinny issued a public statement.”

Of course he did.

I leaned back slightly.

“And?”

My grandfather answered this time, voice clipped with irritation.

“He spoke about what happened yesterday.”

I frowned.

“He acknowledged the attack, condemned the Becker family, and publicly stated that you were the one who stopped the bombs from going off.”

That made me still.

Not because it was praise.

Because nothing Martin Vinny did was free.

Mrs. Sun scoffed.

“He thanked you.”

A pause.

Then, with visible disgust-

“And invited you to join the military, saying talent like yours should be used to save lives.”

I blinked once.

Then slowly turned toward Jason.

He already looked annoyed.

Good.

Prev

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

I was catching up quickly.

Sun was not finished.

“He also offered to buy your company.”

Now I laughed.

Short.

Sharp.

Disbelieving.

“To take it off your hands,” my grandfather said flatly.

The room went quiet again.

There it was.

The real move.

Not gratitude.

Not recognition.

Acquisition.

Control.

He had publicly praised me, aligned himself with heroism, tied my name to national service, and then positioned himself as the man ready to “help” by removing the burden of ownership.

Elegant.

Predatory.

I rested my elbow on the table and touched my temple lightly.

“So,” I said calmly, “he tried to flatter me, recruit me, and buy me in a single statement.”

Mrs. Sun nodded.

“With excellent media response,” she said bitterly.

Of course there was media response.

Men like Martin always made sure applause arrived on schedule.

I looked at my grandfather.

“What price did he offer?”

My grandfather’s mouth tightened.

“Insulting.”

That almost amused me more than the statement itself.

I turned to Jason.

“Well.”

A small smile formed.

Cold.

Interested.

“It seems Mr. Vinny would like to play.”

Everyone at the table knew that look on my face now.

The one that appeared when I stopped reacting-

and started planning.

I turned to Jason.

“Call Mr. Stait.”

His brows lifted slightly.

Not in confusion.

In interest.

“Oh?”

I nodded once.

“Yes,”

I folded my hands on the table and smiled faintly.

“I’ll accept the job he offered me last night.”

That changed the room immediately.

Mrs. Sun sat straighter.

Mr. Sun looked intrigued.

My grandfather narrowed his eyes in approval.

Jason, however, studied me for one long second.

He knew me too well to believe this was about employment.

Still, he reached for his phone.

“You already have a plan.”

It wasn't a question.

“Several,” I replied.

He called.

The line rang only once.

NA

+15 Bçnus

Then connected.

ason,” came John Stait’s voice, alert despite the early hour. “This better be interesting.”

Jason glanced at me and handed over the phone.

“It is,” he said.

I took it.

“Mr. Stait.”

There was a pause.

Then warmth entered his tone immediately.

“Amber. Have you reconsidered my offer already?”

“I have,” I said calmly. “I’ll accept.”

The table watched me in complete silence.

John Stait did not answer immediately.

When he did, the amusement was gone.

He sounded focused.

Professional.

“Then I need your location.”

I blinked.

“My location?”

,” he said. “What I need to discuss with you is sensitive information.”

“Yes,”

A pause.

“It cannot be shared electronically.”

The room shifted again.

Even Jason's expression sharpened.

Interesting.

I looked around the fairy house.

Then back at the table.

He was serious.

Which meant whatever came next mattered.

I lifted the phone again.

"I'll send a driver to the gate," I said. "You know where to find me."

+15 Bonus

A brief silence.

“I do.”

The call ended.

I handed the phone back to Jason.

Mrs. Sun spoke first.

“Well.”

My grandfather leaned forward slightly.

“What did you just agree to?”

I smiled.

Slowly.

“I suppose,” I said, “we’re about to find out.”

Support

Share

+15 Bonus

+15 Bonus

Twenty two

Amber POV

John Stait arrived less than an hour later.

He came with only one vehicle and minimal security, which told me either he trusted the location-or trusted himself.

Possibly both.

The gates opened, and the moment his car rolled onto the property, he slowed.

By the time he stepped out, he was openly staring at the house.

The towers.

The stone bridges.

The little moat.

The gardens.

The impossible fairytale silhouette against the daylight.

For once, the Secretary of Defense looked genuinely surprised.

“So this,” he said slowly, “is the fairy house.”

The name had stuck after Alex said it.

No one had questioned it since.

“It is,” I replied.

He looked around once more and shook his head with amused disbelief.

“I have seen government compounds less impressive than this.”

Jason opened the door for him.

“Try not to offer to buy it,” he said dryly.

John laughed and followed us inside.

We led him to the office.

A quieter room lined with books, screens, maps, and the kind of intentional order that helped me think clearly.

Jason closed the door behind us.

The three of us took our seats.

John did not waste time.

“What caused the sudden change?” he asked, looking directly at me. “Last night you wanted sleep. Today you accepted.”

Fair question.

“I was able to rest,” I said.

en I told him about Martin Vinny’s statement.

The praise.

The public gratitude.

The military invitation.

The offer to buy my company.

Every polished insult hidden inside polished words.

John listened without interrupting.

When I finished, he leaned back slowly.

“So this is retaliation.”

“It is strategy,” I corrected.

That earned the smallest smile.

“Good,” he said.

Then his expression turned serious.

“In that case, let me explain the position.”

The room seemed to sharpen with him.

Even Jason went still beside me.

“We have been trying to locate a group of teenagers who were taken several weeks ago.”

My posture changed instantly.

“Taken by who?” 2

“We don’t know the full structure yet,” he said. “An organization. Layered. Careful. Well-funded.”

He slid a thin file across the desk.

“What we do know is their methods.”

I opened it.

Photos.

Transit records.

Maps.

Fragments.

And then I saw it.

Hidden surveillance.

+15 8chus

+15 8cnus

False invitations.

Controlled environments.

Psychological games.

Digital traps.

My eyes lifted slowly to his.

“This is Emilian.”

“Not him,” John said. “But the same operational pattern.”

The same obsession with control.

The same need to break victims before using them.

The same performance of choice where there was none.

“They study their targets,” I said quietly.

John nodded.

“Exactly.”

He leaned forward.

“We need someone who can think like them, move faster than them, and break into systems they believe are untouchable.”

A pause. 1

“We need someone capable enough.”

Silence filled the office.

I looked at the file again.

At the missing teenagers.

At the patterns.

At the challenge.

Then I closed it.

“And if I say yes?”

John’s gaze did not move.

Then he spoke with complete seriousness.

“If you say yes, the military will be in your debt.”

The words were not theatrical.

Not exaggerated.

Just factual.

I said nothing, so he continued.

The teenagers who were taken were not random targets.”

He tapped the file between us.

“They were part of a special program.”

My eyes narrowed slightly.

“What kind of program?”

“One designed to identify exceptional young minds early and train them to serve the country in the future.”

I looked back down at the documents.

Brilliant students.

Advanced placements.

Multiple disciplines.

Cybersecurity.

Engineering.

Linguistics.

Systems design.

Mathematics.

“They were geniuses,” I said quietly. 1

John nodded once.

“In their respective fields.”

The weight of the room changed again.

This was bigger than a kidnapping.

This was an attack on the future.

He continued.

“There are twenty-two missing teenagers in total.”

I looked up sharply.

“Twenty-two?”

“Yes.”

He slid another page toward me.

“They are not only ours.”

I read the list.

Cedella

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Borrowed textbooks 169

Dual citizenships.

Family connections.

Protected identities.

My jaw tightened.

“They are direct relatives of three different allied countries,” John said.

That changed everything.

This was no longer a domestic crisis.

It was international.

Diplomatic. 1

Potentially destabilizing.

He was still not finished.

“Two of the missing teenagers are the President’s grandchildren.”

Silence.

Even Jason’s expression hardened further.

So that was the pressure beneath all of this.

Not only lives.

National stakes.

International stakes.

Political stakes.

Time-sensitive stakes.

“It is a race against the clock,” John said.

“We already have the best minds in the country working the case.”

He let that settle before adding the part meant for me.

“But you could very well be the missing piece.’

I did not react outwardly.

Inside, my mind was already moving.

Patterns.

Structures.

Entry points.

✂

+15 8gnus

+15 Bonus

Motives.

Weaknesses.

John leaned back slightly.

“And of course,” he added, voice turning almost casual, “the military would publicly respond to Mr. Vinny.”

I looked up.

“Oh?”

He smiled faintly.

“We would thank him for recognizing the prowess of one of our military contacts.”

The implication was elegant.

Immediate.

Public.

Martin Vinny would try to claim me.

The military would claim me first.

And do it with gratitude.

I glanced at Jason.

He was watching me carefully.

Not pushing.

Not speaking.

Letting me choose.

I placed one hand over the file.

“When do we start?”

BIG SALE: 3500 bonus free fou you

Support

Share

get it

+15 Bohus

You did well

John Stait nodded once, already shifting into action.

Then he paused.

His gaze moved past me.

“We?”

I did not need to turn to know Jason’s expression had changed.

I heard it in the small sound he made first.

A short, disbelieving scoff.

“Do you honestly think,” Jason said, “that I’m going to let my gorgeous wife walk alone into a room full of angry men?”

He leaned back slightly.

“The majority of whom will probably already resent her.”

A beat.

“Of course I’m going.”

John arched both brows.

Slowly.

Amused.

“Jason, son...”

He folded his hands.

“I did not take you for the controlling, jealous type.”

I turned then.

Jason met his gaze without blinking.

Completely unbothered.

“It’s mostly for the men’s protection,” he said evenly.

Silence.

John stared at him.

Scott would have laughed if he had been in the room.

Jason continued as though he had said something perfectly reasonable.

“I cannot guarantee Amber won’t break them if they insult her.”

I looked at him.

He was serious.

Or at least serious enough to be dangerous.

John’s mouth twitched.

“And of course,” Jason added, finally glancing at me, “I also want to help.”

That softened something in the room.

Not the tension.

Something warmer.

I tilted my head.

“You think I need supervision?”

“No,” Jason said immediately.

“I think you deserve backup.”

That was a better answer.

Much better.

John leaned back in his chair and laughed under his breath.

“Well,” he said, “this operation just became more interesting.”

He looked between us once.

Assessing.

Recalculating.

Then he nodded.

“Fine. We move both of you in.”

I closed the file.

Good.

Because whatever waited next-

We would face it together.

John Stait’s amusement faded as quickly as it had appeared.

When he spoke again, his tone was official.

Measured.

“There is one condition.”

Jason’s expression did not change, but I felt his attention sharpen beside me.

John folded his hands on the desk.

“For your own protection-and Amber’s as well-you will go in under your real name.”

+15 Bonus

A pause.

Not under your Cronos credentials.” 1

The room stilled.

Even I understood the weight of that immediately.

Cronos opened doors.

Created fear.

Triggered reactions.

Jason's reputation could compromise the operation before it began.

Or paint a target on both of us.

Jason said nothing for a moment.

Then he nodded once.

"Understood."

John seemed satisfied.

He reached for the file again, ready to continue.

Then the office door opened.

Not dramatically.

Just enough for a small figure to squeeze through.

Alex stepped inside carrying a laptop almost as big as his torso.

He held it carefully with both hands, face serious with the importance of his mission.

Every adult in the room turned.

Alex ignored all of them.

He walked straight to me.

Then he leaned close and whispered in my ear with complete secrecy.

"Can you help me with something?"

The contrast was so sharp I nearly laughed.

International crisis.

Missing geniuses.

Military operations.

And now-

Whatever Alex needed.

+15 8gnus

I looked down at him.

Men at the laptop.

Then back at John Stait.

“Give me one moment,” I said calmly.

Because no matter how serious the world became-

Children never waited for perfect timing.

I pulled a chair closer and helped Alex climb into it beside me. 1

He set the laptop on the desk with intense concentration, then looked up at me with complete trust.

“How can I help?” I asked softly.

He leaned in immediately, lowering his voice as if this were classified information.

“One of my online friends hasn’t answered me in three days.”

The seriousness in his face erased any temptation to smile.

This mattered to him.

So it mattered.

“I’m worried about her,” he continued.

I nodded once.

“Okay.”

He opened the laptop and turned the screen toward me.

Maps.

Windows.

Search tabs.

Logs.

“I tracked her last location.”

That made John Stait straighten.

Jason went still beside me.

Alex pointed at the screen.

“She was at a ferry not far from here.”

He zoomed in with practiced fingers.

A route.

Time stamps.

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Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Location markers.

But I couldn’t track her farther than that.”

The room fell silent.

Not because of the missing friend.

Because of the sentence before it.

I tracked her last location.

I glanced around the office.

John Stait looked stunned.

Brows raised high.

My grandfather had forgotten to hide his surprise entirely. 1

Mr. and Mrs. Sun were staring openly. 2

Even Jason looked impressed, though he tried not to show it.

I was the only one unsurprised.

Of course Alex had tracked her.

He was curious, determined, and had grown up around systems, devices, and people who underestimated children.

That combination was dangerous.

And brilliant.

I turned back to him calmly.

“You did well,” I said.

His shoulders relaxed instantly.

“Now let’s find out where she went next.”

Support

Share

Mom Amber

Amber POV

Jason stared at the laptop.

Then at Alex.

Then slowly back at me.

But he asked Alex first.

“When exactly did you learn to track people with a computer?”

Alex looked at him with complete seriousness, as if the answer were obvious.

Then he said, in the clear voice only children use when exposing adults-

“Mom Amber taught me.”

The words hit me harder than they should have.

Mom Amber.

So simple.

So natural.

As if it had always belonged to me.

For one brief second, everything inside my chest tightened at once.

Warmth.

Wonder.

Something dangerously close to tears.

I had become many things in the last few months.

Wife.

Founder.

Target.

Protector.

But hearing that-

Hearing him claim me so easily-

felt different.

Deeper.

Silence filled the room.

Absolute silence.

+15 Bonus

Alex kept going.

She said it was time to use my skills.”

Every eye in the room turned to me at once.

John Stait.

My grandfather.

Mr. and Mrs. Sun.

Jason.

All of them.

I sank a little lower in my chair.

Not enough to be dramatic.

Just enough to acknowledge the situation had become inconvenient.

“Am...”

I cleared my throat.

“Well, you see...”

No one helped me.

Not one person.

“He was already good with a computer,” I said carefully.

Still silence.

“I figured it was best he learned properly.”

John Stait looked fascinated.

My grandfather looked offended on behalf of every traditional educational system in existence.

Mrs. Sun looked delighted.

Mr. Sun appeared to be reconsidering several life assumptions.

Jason folded his arms.

But I noticed the shift in his expression before he spoke.

It was not annoyance.

It was something quieter.

Something that had caught him off guard.

Because Alex had walked past every adult in the house.

Past his grandfather figures.

+15 Bonus

Past military officials.

Past Jason himself.

And come straight to me.

Not for comfort.

Not for permission.

For help.

For answers.

As if trusting me with his problems was the most natural thing in the world.

Jason's gaze moved from Alex to me and lingered there for a second too long.

Warm.

Thoughtful.

Almost proud.

"You taught my son digital surveillance."

I lifted one shoulder.

"I taught him responsible research methods."

Alex nodded enthusiastically.

"And how to hide my IP."

The room somehow became even quieter.

I closed my eyes briefly.

“That was one lesson.”

Jason’s mouth twitched despite himself.

He was trying very hard not to laugh.

John Stait leaned back slowly.

“I came here to recruit one genius,” he said.

He glanced at Alex.

“It appears there are two.”

Alex beamed.

I pointed at the screen immediately.

“We are changing the subject.”

Then I looked at Alex.

+15 Bonus

C

+15 Bonus

Still feeling the echo of that one word in my chest.

Show me the ferry route.”

I turned the laptop slightly toward me and studied the map.

The ferry route.

The last known signal.

The abrupt disappearance after that point.

Something about it fit too neatly with the file still sitting on the desk.

Too neatly to ignore.

A suspicion formed instantly.

Sharp.

Unwelcome.

Possible.

I looked at Alex.

He was watching me expectantly, trusting that I would solve this the way children believe impossible things can simply be fixed if the right adult tries hard enough.

“What is your friend’s name?” I asked gently.

He lowered his voice, as if protecting a secret.

“Alison Michaels.”

The room changed.

Not loudly.

Not visibly to anyone who did not know what to look for.

But it changed.

I lifted my eyes to John Stait.

He was already looking at me.

No surprise.

Only confirmation.

Then he gave the smallest nod.

Yes.

Alison Michaels was one of the missing teenagers.

My stomach tightened.

Alex had not come to me with a child's small worry.

He had just handed us a live thread in an international kidnapping case.

Jason went still beside me.

My grandfather straightened.

Mrs. Sun's expression sharpened instantly.

Even Mr. Sun lost every trace of casual ease.

Alex looked between us, sensing the shift immediately.

"What?" he asked. "What happened?"

I turned back to him and softened my voice.

“Your friend is important,” I said carefully.

“And you may have just helped us find her.”

His eyes widened. 1

“She’s in trouble?”

I reached for his hand.

“We don’t know everything yet.”

That was not enough for him.

Children always heard what adults tried to hide.

“But we know this matters.”

John Stait stood slowly.

The file in front of him was no longer theory.

No longer distant intelligence.

Now it had a name sitting in our office.

He looked at Alex with something close to respect.

“You did very well, son.”

Alex sat a little straighter.

Still worried.

But proud.

Prev

Cedella

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