

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

c 171-176

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But proud.

I looked back at the route on the screen.

At the ferry.

At the place where the signal vanished.

Then I looked at Jason.

+15 Benus

“We’re starting now.”

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6 years old

Amber POV

John Stait was still studying Alex with visible interest when he asked the next question.

“How old are you, son?”

Alex sat up straighter in his chair, clearly pleased to be taken seriously.

“I’m turning six in a week.” 1

The answer landed harder than expected.

John Stait's expression shifted immediately.

Not amusement.

Alarm.

He slowly turned toward Jason.

"Son..."

A pause.

"Just how did you decide to train the children?"

His brows rose higher.

"I know this is not all Ms. Asher's doing."

Before Jason could answer, Alex made an offended sound.

He had clearly decided someone needed to defend me.

He looked at John with tiny righteous fury.

Then pointed proudly in my direction.

"Oh, Mom Amber was teaching us robotics too."

I froze.

Again.

That title was becoming increasingly dangerous to my composure.

Alex kept going.

"She said Alice was good at it because she likes solving puzzles."

Alice, who had apparently inherited both chaos and engineering potential.

Of course.

"And she was going to teach us about options," he added sadly, "but we haven't had time yet."

Silence.

+15 Bohu

1

Then every adult in the room turned to look at me.

grandfather tooked horrified.

As if I had personally declared war on childhood itself.

Mrs. Sun looked fascinated.

Mr. Sun looked deeply entertained.

John Stait looked like he had discovered an illegal academy hidden inside a fairy tale house.

Jason-

Jason looked interested.

Far too interested.

I sank slightly lower in my chair.

Again.

“Am...”

I cleared my throat.

“Potions,” I mumbled.

No one blinked.

“As in teas. And mixtures. For healing only, okay?”

I lifted one finger.

“Nothing too extreme.”

The room remained silent.

Jason was still looking at me.

Now with unmistakable amusement.

John Stait leaned back slowly.

“I came to recruit one consultant,” he said.

He gestured toward the house.

“I appear to have discovered a secret institution.”

Alex beamed.

I covered my face with one hand.

“This is being exaggerated.”

I lowered my hand and looked around the room.

Enough.

+15 Bonus

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+15 Bonus

We were drifting.

Again.

“There are children missing,” I said firmly.

The words cut through the atmosphere instantly.

Every trace of amusement disappeared.

I turned to Alex and held out my hand.

“May I borrow the computer?”

He nodded at once and carefully slid the laptop toward me.

I pulled it closer and adjusted the screen so he could still see.

If he was going to learn, then he would learn properly.

“Watch,” I told him.

His eyes lit up immediately.

Jason moved closer behind me.

John Stait stood at my other side.

The rest of the room gathered in silence.

“You already found the last known location,” I said to Alex. “That means you did the hardest part first.”

He looked proud.

He should have.

“Now we verify.”

I opened the ferry terminal’s external network map, scanning for connected devices, blind systems, archived feeds, and unsecured maintenance channels.

As I worked, I explained each step.

“Public places usually have more cameras than people realize.”

I highlighted a service grid.

“But not all of them are equally protected.”

I bypassed an outdated authentication layer and entered a maintenance server.

“So we don’t attack the strongest door.”

I selected an overlooked subnetwork.

“We use the forgotten one.”

Alex nodded solemnly, committing every word to memory.

A list of camera feeds appeared.

I chose one facing the ferry entrance.

Then rewound the footage to the timestamp of Alison’s last signal.

The room went completely still.

A bus entered the frame.

Unmarked.

Plain.

Too clean.

The doors opened.

Men stepped out first.

Then the children.

Or rather-

They were moved.

My jaw tightened.

They were walking, but wrong.

Slow.

Unsteady.

Unresponsive.

Drugged.

One by one, teenagers were taken from the bus and escorted onto a waiting boat.

No resistance.

No awareness.

No sound.

I began counting aloud.

“Three.”

“Seven.”

“Twelve.”

“Fifteen.”

No one in the room moved.

No one breathed loudly enough to hear.

“Nineteen.”

+15 Bonus

“Twenty.”

wenty-one.”

Then the footage ended.

Silence.

Heavy.

Immediate.

I replayed it.

Counted again.

Same result.

Twenty-one teenagers transferred.

I looked at John Stait.

Then at the file.

Then back to the screen.

“There were twenty-two taken,” I said quietly.

My pulse slowed.

Focused.

Cold.

“They’re missing one.”

The silence lasted only a second after my words.

Then John Stait moved.

Fast.

Efficient.

Decisive.

He pulled out his phone and began making calls immediately.

His voice turned sharp, clipped, all warmth gone.

“Activate transport.”

A pause.

“I want the ferry footage verified and expanded.”

Another pause.

“Reopen all maritime routes within the last seventy-two hours.”

+15 Bonus

+159

He turned and paced once as someone answered on the other end.

Yo delays. Move.”

By the time he ended the third call, the room no longer felt like a family home.

It felt like a command center.

Then he looked directly at us.

At Jason.

At me.

And finally at Alex.

“I need all three of you to come with me to the base.”

Alex gasped softly.

Not in fear.

In excitement.

“I get to go to a military base?”

“Yes,” John said dryly. “Try not to hack anything on arrival.”

“I make no promises,” Alex replied.

He agreed instantly.

Of course he did.

Mrs. Sun rose from her chair at once.

“Absolutely not.”

Her tone left no room for debate.

“Alex is a child.”

The room tightened.

Before I could speak, Jason did.

He stood beside Alex, one hand resting lightly on the back of the boy’s chair.

“It is Alex’s decision.”

Mrs. Sun turned sharply toward him.

“Jason-”

Jason did not raise his voice.

He did not need to.

“If he is old enough to track a missing girl...”

+15 Bonus

He glanced at Alex.

Then back at the room.

“He is old enough to receive credit for helping find her.”

Alex sat even straighter.

Proud.

Trying very hard to look professional.

Mrs. Sun looked torn between outrage and reluctant admiration.

My grandfather muttered something under his breath about this family having lost all sense.

Mr. Sun, traitor that he was, looked impressed.

I crouched beside Alex so we were eye level.

“You only go if you understand this is serious,” I said softly.

His excitement steadied immediately.

He nodded once.

“I know.”

I believed him.

I looked up at Jason.

Then at John Stait.

“Then we go together.”

Because if Alex had found the first thread-

He deserved to see where it led. 1

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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

Jason POV With complete trust.

Jason POV

I watched Amber kneel beside Alex and speak to him as if the rest of the room had disappeared.

Calm.

Focused.

Certain.

And Alex responded to her the same way he always did when something truly mattered—with complete trust.

It should not have surprised me.

But it did.

I was amazed by the connection between them.

Not because it existed.

Because I had failed to fully see it before now.

Somewhere between survival, marriage, business wars, kidnappings, and everything else, something important had been growing in front of me.

Quietly.

Naturally.

And I had underestimated its depth.

Alex did not just like Amber.

He relied on her.

Looked for her first.

Listened to her instinctively.

Claimed her without hesitation.

Mom Amber.

The words still echoed in my head.

I had always known Alex was intelligent.

Curious.

Quick. 1

But not to this extent.

Not enough to trace a missing girl, preserve location data, and bring it directly to the person most likely to solve it.

And if Alex was right—

If Alice was on the same level in her own way-

Then I had been underestimating both children.

at realization Sat uncomfortably inside me.

I crossed the room and took Alex's hand.

He squeezed back immediately.

Then I leaned down and pressed a light kiss to Amber's forehead.

"After this," I whispered against her skin, "we need to talk."

She looked up at me.

And the instant flash of alarm in her eyes was so honest it almost made me laugh.

Almost.

I straightened and turned to John Stait.

"Do not forget our deal."

He arched a brow.

"The military announces Amber was already working with you."

No room for ambiguity.

No room for Martin Vinny to claim her publicly.

John nodded once.

“We’re already pushing it through social media channels.”

Good.

Fast enough to matter.

Then another thought hit me.

I looked toward the windows.

Toward the grounds outside.

Toward the house Alex had named and everyone now used without question.

“Call transport away from here,” I said.

John’s expression sharpened.

He understood immediately.

“Amber went to great lengths to keep it hidden that she owns this place.”

No military convoy was parking outside her gates.

No official vehicles were drawing maps for our enemies.

John made another call without argument.

+15 agnus

+15 Bonus

Minutes later, we moved

fanfare.

No visible escort.

No attention.

We took my car.

Amber beside me.

Alex in the back.

And followed John Stait's vehicle at a controlled distance through the city.

Toward the base.

Toward the next fight.

This time-

As a family.

We reached the military base just after sunset.

Layers of fencing.

Controlled checkpoints.

Armed guards.

Multiple camera grids.

The kind of place designed to make certainty feel permanent.

Our progress stopped almost immediately at the entrance.

Not because of Amber.

Not because of me.

Because of Alex.

He sat in the back seat looking mildly offended while two guards and one administrator tried to process the fact that a six-year-old had been invited onto an active base with no identification.

Which, to be fair, sounded absurd when said out loud.

John Stait handled most of it with visible impatience.

Calls were made.

Names confirmed.

Temporary clearance issued.

Additional signatures demanded.

Then waived.

Eventually, the gate opened.

We were waved through.

The moment we entered the inner perimeter, Amber turned slightly in her seat to look at Alex.

“What was wrong with the security entrance?”

No hesitation. 1

No confusion.

Alex answered instantly.

“There’s a blind spot to the right of the car lane.”

He pointed casually through the window.

“The camera overlap misses it for about three seconds when vehicles stop too close together.”

Silence filled the car.

I had noticed it too.

Of course I had.

The delayed angle shift.

The dead zone created by overlapping hardware.

The hesitation window at vehicle stop points.

That was expected.

I was an adult.

Trained.

Experienced.

Built for noticing vulnerabilities.

Alex was a child.

My child-

but a child all the same.

And he had seen it just as quickly.

Maybe faster.

I looked at him in the rearview mirror.

He looked completely normal.

As if every child casually audited military security systems on arrival.

Then the second realization landed.

+15 Bonus

He had not merely noticed it.

He had been looking for it.

Automatically.

Instinctively.

As if trained.

I turned my head slightly toward Amber.

She was pretending to study the road ahead with far too much innocence.

Of course.

Amber had taught him to scan for blind spots.

To assess systems.

To look for weaknesses the moment he entered a new environment.

The thought should have concerned me more than it did.

Instead, it made me wonder.

What else had she taught them?

What would she continue teaching them?

Robotics.

Tracking.

Pattern recognition.

Operational awareness.

Problem solving under pressure.

And to what end?

Not harm.

I knew that much.

Amber never built without purpose.

Never taught without intention.

Still-

The scope of her vision with the children was only beginning to reveal itself.

And I was no longer sure whether I was watching the start of an education...

Or the founding of something far greater.

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Jason POV

We were escorted through the base faster than expected once we cleared the gate.

Badge scans.

Restricted corridors.

Armed doors.

Silent personnel stepping aside the moment they recognized John Stait.

When we entered the operations wing, the atmosphere changed completely.

Rows of screens.

Live feeds.

Maps.

Data streams.

Dozens of people moving with the focused urgency of a place under pressure.

John Stait was waiting just inside.

He did not waste a second.

No greeting.

No explanation.

No introduction.

He spotted Amber and Alex immediately and motioned sharply toward the central workstation.

“Over there.”

Then, as if I had ceased to exist entirely, he began directing them forward with increasingly aggressive hand signals.

“Move. Sit. Start there.”

Amber looked amused.

Alex looked delighted.

I looked at John.

He ignored me completely.

Interesting.

I followed anyway.

Because forgetting I was in the room had never worked out well for anyone.

The main computer station was surrounded by analysts, technicians, and support staff running on caffeine and

+15 Bonus

7

nerves.

Some moved aside the moment Amber approached.

Others stared openly at Alex.

A child in a secure operations room was apparently not standard protocol.

Then one voice cut through the room.

Young.

Confident.

And painfully stupid.

A technician leaned back in his chair, temporary access badge hanging from his neck like it meant more than it did.

He looked Amber over once and smirked.

“So,” he said, loud enough for others to hear, “are you here to take our coffee orders?”

The room froze.

Instantly.

Several people stopped typing.

One woman closed her eyes briefly, as if mourning him in advance.

Another tech physically turned away.

Alex frowned.

Amber went very still.

And I smiled.

Slowly.

Because some men were born with a gift.

The gift of creating their own downfall in a single sentence and he was one of the unlucky ones with the gift.

Amber POV

I was teaching Alex how to bypass the base protections.

Not recklessly.

Properly.

How to read the structure first, identify the layered permissions, locate the weakest authentication chain, and enter without damaging the system.

He was following beautifully.

Focused.

Quick.

+15 Bonus

Already anticipating steps ahead.

Then a voice sounded behind us.

“Are you here to take our coffee orders?”

I did not turn around.

I continued speaking to Alex, pointing at the permissions map on the screen.

There was no possible way that question had been directed at me.

Not when I was clearly working.

Not when half the room was watching.

Not when I was actively inside their system.

So I ignored it.

The voice came again.

Louder.

More irritating.

“Hey, Ms. New Girl, I’m talking to you!”

Still, I did not bother turning around.

From the corner of my eye, I could see John Stait’s face.

He was turning purple.

Whether from rage or blood pressure, I was not yet certain.

Beside me, Alex was frowning.

Deeply offended on my behalf.

So I kept my tone calm and instructional, never taking my eyes off the screen.

“Alex,” I said, “what do you think would be the proper response to someone using a space he has no right to while interrupting everyone else’s work?”

He thought for a second.

Seriously.

Carefully. 1

Then answered with quiet confidence.

“We block his access?”

I turned to him with genuine approval.

I was impressed.

“Yes,” I said warmly. “Correct.”

+15 Bonus

Then I tapped two keys, opened the access panel, and smiled at the screen.

We block his access...”

Another command.

“And remove his credentials.”

Alex looked delighted.

The kind of delighted only children and engineers ever truly achieved.

“Can you show me the last step again?” he asked. “I missed it.”

I moved the keyboard slightly so he could see better.

“Of course.”

I reopened the credential panel and walked him through it slowly this time.

Line by line.

Field by field.

What to touch.

What never to touch.

How to remove access cleanly without damaging anything else.

“See here?” I said, highlighting the user token. “This is what gives him permission to pretend he belongs in the room.”

Alex nodded gravely.

“So we take it away.”

“Exactly.”

I executed the change again in simulation mode so he could watch the sequence.

Then I looked at him.

“Remember, Alex, the most important step is not removing access.

He blinked.

“It’s not?”

“No.”

I lowered my voice conspiratorially.

“It has to look natural.”

His eyes widened with immediate understanding.

Ah.

He was absolutely my student.

+15 Bonus

“So,” I continued, “we make it look like he did it to himself.”

opened the login response settings and began editing the trigger message.

“When he tries to sign in again, a message will appear on his screen.”

I typed while reading aloud.

User access temporarily blocked after multiple incorrect password attempts. Please contact administration.

Alex gasped softly.

“He’ll think he forgot it.”

“Precisely.”

I gave him a small smile.

“Never waste energy creating enemies when people can embarrass themselves for free.”

There was too much noise.

Phones ringing.

Keys clacking.

People moving.

And above it all-

That same man’s voice.

He was still talking.

Still loud.

Still convinced he was the smartest person present.

“She’s obviously someone’s babysitter,” he said.

Then, unbelievably, he addressed John Stait directly.

“Are you the father of one of the missing teens?”

I paused only long enough to appreciate the level of self-destruction on display.

He kept going.

“This is a restricted section,” he said with a dismissive wave. “Please leave.”

A young woman no older than twenty stood beside him, visibly mortified.

She tugged at his sleeve and whispered for him to stop.

To look around. 1

To think.

He ignored her completely.

I sighed softly.

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Men turned back to Alex.

“Excellent timing,” I said.

And pressed Enter.

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Why

Amber POV

I saved the changes.

Cleanly.

Quietly.

Then I returned my attention to the real problem.

Still without looking at him, I addressed John Stait.

“Was anyone already following the ferry route?”

John’s expression sharpened immediately.

He knew the tone I was using now.

Not irritated.

Working.

I continued, eyes on the footage.

“It is highly suspicious that we were able to find a clear video of the transfer.”

I replayed the frame showing the teenagers being moved from the bus to the boat.

“They were careful in every other stage.”

False routes.

Minimal digital traces.

Layered concealment.

No obvious exposure.

“So why leave visible transport footage at the dock?”

The room quieted around the question.

Even people who had ignored me before were listening now.

I zoomed out on the surrounding map.

Road access.

Water access.

Storage facilities.

Transfer zones.

“It is possible the teenagers are being held close to the docks.”

I tapped a warehouse district.

+15 Bonus

Then an industrial strip

they were transferred inland after boarding.”

John took one step closer to the screen.

He was about to respond.

Then that voice sounded again.

Laughing this time.

I closed my eyes briefly.

“You’re welcome,” the man said loudly. “I already followed the path.”

He sounded delighted with himself.

“They were definitely taken by ferry.”

He puffed himself up further.

“And it’s thanks to me that we found the footage in the first place.”

Now I turned.

Slowly.

For the first time.

He looked deeply pleased that he had finally earned my attention.

Unfortunate for him.

I tilted my head.

“Really?”

He grinned.

“Yes.”

☞

+15 8cnus

I folded my arms.

“Then show me the proof it was you.

His confidence flickered.

Only slightly.

“Because,” I continued, calm and clear enough for the whole room to hear, “it was actually Alex who found the lead.”

I rested a hand lightly on Alex’s shoulder.

“And I was the one who accessed the footage showing the teenagers being taken off land.”

The young woman beside him visibly winced.

She had tried to save him.

He had refused rescue.

He scoffed and moved to his terminal.

“I’ll show you right now.”

He dropped into his chair, typed quickly, and hit enter.

Then froze.

Again.

He typed faster.

Harder.

More aggressively.

Nothing.

A message appeared on his screen.

User access temporarily blocked after multiple incorrect password attempts. Please contact administration.

Silence.

Perfect silence.

Alex gasped beside me.

Then whispered with awe-

“It worked.”

I smiled faintly.

“Yes,” I said.

“It did.”

He was frantic now.

Leaning over the keyboard.

Typing too fast.

Trying the same password.

Then another.

Then the first one again as if panic might improve memory.

I glanced at him once.

“Need any help?”

He did not look at me.

“Ah-no. No, I’ve got this.”

+15 Bonus

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+15 8chus

Of course he did.

Sence stretched after that.

Not true silence.

The kind made of restrained amusement, clicking keys, muted calls, and one man quietly unraveling in front of his coworkers.

Five minutes passed.

Then ten.

Eventually, everyone did what professionals always do.

They moved on.

We began working again.

Ignoring him completely.

The young woman beside him had stopped trying to help and now looked like she regretted every decision that had led her there.

John Stait ended one of his calls and finally took a seat beside the main station.

He had the expression of a man collecting information faster than anyone else in the room.

I turned my head slightly and looked toward the entrance.

Jason was still standing there.

Watching everything.

Arms crossed.

Calm.

Far too entertained.

I motioned for him to come sit nearby.

He did.

Without a word.

Just took the chair at my side like he had always belonged there.

John had barely set down his phone when Jason's began to ring.

He glanced at the screen.

Then answered with visible amusement.

"Oh?"

A pause.

Then his smile deepened.

"So you do need my help then?"

The room quieted again.

Not because of volume.

Because of tone.

Jason leaned back in his chair.

Relaxed.

Dangerous.

"I'm not sure that's true, Mr. Robins."

A longer pause.

"I'm actually at the base right now. With Mr. Stait."

John lifted one brow but said nothing.

“And my help has not been required yet.”

The young technician at the locked terminal went visibly pale.

Apparently everyone knew who Mr. Robins was.

Interesting.

Jason crossed one ankle over his knee.

Still smiling.

“But of course...”

His gaze flicked briefly to me.

+15 Bonus

Then to the screen.

Then back ahead.

“I can certainly look into why they would want the teenagers in the first place.”

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Chaos

Amber POV

Jason took control of the base so naturally it was almost unsettling.

There was no announcement.

No formal transfer of authority.

No one asked him to lead.

He simply began giving instructions-
and everyone listened.

Everyone except the man still locked out of his account.

He remained trapped in his own personal tragedy, stabbing at his keyboard while the world moved on without him.

Jason stood near the central screens and started dividing the room into tasks.

“You two, maritime logs.”

“Cross-reference all private vessel departures in the last seventy-two hours.”

“Pull customs manifests.”

“Check fuel purchases near the docks.”

“Review warehouse ownership within a five-kilometer radius.”

People moved immediately.

No hesitation.

No confusion.

Even John Stait said nothing.

Which told me everything.

Within minutes, the room transformed.

Multiple teams followed separate leads.

Phones rang.

Maps updated.

Names surfaced.

Routes narrowed.

The chaos became direction.

Jason sat at a secure terminal connected to an isolated network.

His posture shifted the moment he began working there.

¶

+15 Bonus

Sharper.

Quieter.

More dangerous.

Cronos.

Even under his own name, that part of him had entered the room.

He was pulling information no one else could access, chasing patterns buried behind layers of classification and false walls.

Beside me, Alex and I stayed with the footage.

Again.

And again.

And again.

We replayed every angle.

Every timestamp.

Every reflection.

Every movement at the docks.

By the thirtieth viewing, my eyes burned.

Alex was still completely focused.

Children and obsession had more in common than people realized.

Then I saw it.

A flash.

Not in the main frame.

In the reflection of a recently polished car parked near the ferry lane.

“Stop.”

Alex froze the video instantly.

Good reflexes.

I leaned closer.

There.

In the mirrored surface.

Distorted but clear enough.

The teenagers were not being taken onto the ferry.

They were being unloaded. 1

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Moved from the ferry.

en carried across the dock toward a large metal container.

No markings.

Industrial grade.

Placed directly on-site.

My pulse steadied.

Focused.

Cold.

“They used the ferry as misdirection,” I said quietly.

Alex looked from the screen to me, eyes wide.

“So they never left?”

“Not by water.”

I stood immediately.

Across the room, Jason looked up before I even called his name.

He read my face and was already moving.

“We have something,” I said.

I pointed at the reflection.

At the container.

At the truth hidden in plain sight.

Our first real clue.

“Jason.”

He was already beside me before I said anything else.

John Stait followed a second later, several analysts close behind.

Alex remained in his chair, looking deeply satisfied with himself.

As he should.

I pointed at the frozen frame on the screen.

The polished car.

The warped reflection.

The movement no one had noticed until now.

“My theory was correct,” I said.

+15 Bonus

I replayed the sequence slowly.

Prame by frame.

“They were not taken onto the ferry.”

I highlighted the reflected shapes.

“They were placed into a container on the dock.”

The room leaned in.

People who had dismissed the footage earlier were now staring at it like scripture.

John Stait’s expression hardened.

“So the ferry was theater.”

“Yes,” I said.

“A visible route to make everyone search the water while they stayed on land.”

Jason’s eyes narrowed as he studied the container.

Then he looked back at his terminal.

Something on his screen had changed.

He moved quickly, fingers flying across the keys.

One secure file after another opened under layers of restricted access.

Then he went still.

I knew that stillness.

It meant he had found something bad.

“What is it?” I asked.

Jason looked up.

His expression was colder than before.

“I found the motive.”

The room went silent again.

He turned the monitor so John Stait could see.

Encrypted communications.

Transfers.

Flags.

Foreign intermediaries.

“Someone offered an enormous amount of money,” Jason said, “to kidnap the teenagers.”

+15 Bonus

John’s jaw tightened.

For ransoni?”

Jason shook his head once.

“No.”

A pause.

“To start an international war.”

The words hit the room like an explosion.

No one spoke.

No one moved.

Twenty-two gifted teenagers.

Relatives of allied nations.

The President’s grandchildren.

Children valuable enough to destabilize governments if blamed on the wrong enemy.

It was never just a kidnapping.

It was leverage.

Chaos.

Manufactured conflict.

I looked back at the container on the screen.

Then at Jason.

“They need to be found before anyone uses them.”

Jason met my gaze.

Already there.

Already planning.

“Yes,” he said quietly.

“And now we know where to start.”

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+15 Bonus

15 Bonus

Memes

Amber POV

John Stait left for the docks within minutes.

He took a rapid response team, two intelligence officers, and enough authority to move entire sectors of the city if

necessary.

Before leaving, he did only one thing that mattered.

He handed command of the operation to Jason.

No one objected.

No one hesitated.

The room simply accepted it.

Jason did not acknowledge the weight of it.

He only stepped closer to the central station and kept working.

Digging deeper.

Following encrypted trails.

Peeling back shell accounts, false identities, and dead-end corporations to find who had funded all of this.

Who wanted war badly enough to buy children.

I turned back to our side of the board.

The container.

The docks.

The transfer route.

The timeline.

But another question pressed harder than logistics.

How had they been taken in the first place?

These were not ordinary teenagers.

They were selected.

Trained.

Exceptional.

Some likely taught surveillance awareness, resistance, escape protocols, emergency signaling, controlled deception.

Children like Alex, only older.

Sharper.

Cedella

. Cedella's storytelling style is immersive and addictive—perfect for fans of heated romances and heart-pounding twists.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

why had twenty-two of them gone quietly?

Why no warning?

No struggle?

No signal before disappearing?

Unless-

They had not gone quietly at all.

I turned to Alex.

He was still seated beside me, feet not fully touching the floor, watching everything with unsettling attention.

“Alex.”

He looked up immediately.

“If you were trained to survive, escape, and gather information...”

I chose my words carefully.

“And someone tried to kidnap you...”

I leaned closer.

“How would you escape?”

He blinked once.

Then his whole face changed.

Not confusion.

Understanding.

“I wouldn’t.”

The room around us seemed to fade.

“I would want to learn what they want.”

Silence.

Several adults nearby stopped what they were doing.

Jason looked over instantly.

Alex shrugged as if it were obvious.

“If I escape too fast, I don’t learn anything.”

My breath caught.

Because in that moment, everything aligned.

That was exactly what I had done when my granduncle took me from the party.

read played.

Observed.

Delayed.

Used every resouce i had to learn what was going on and used it to My advantage.

Learned the structure before striking.

And these teenagers-

These brilliant, trained teenagers-

may have done the same.

We had all been treating them as victims moved like cargo.

Regular children overpowered and hidden.

But they were not regular children.

They were intelligent operatives in training.

Strategic minds.

Young agents.

Maybe they had not failed to resist.

Maybe they had chosen infiltration.

Maybe the kidnapping had become their mission the moment it began.

I stood so quickly my chair rolled back.

“Jason.”

He was already walking toward us.

“We’ve been looking at this wrong,” I said.

I glanced at Alex, pride and awe mixing painfully in my chest.

“They may not need rescuing.”

A pause.

“They may already be working from the inside.”

Jason reached us just as the thought fully formed.

The pieces were moving too cleanly now to ignore.

Then another possibility struck me so hard I spoke before I had fully finished thinking.

“Or they may have already sent something to let us know what happened.”

N

+15 Bes

Jason’s eyes sharpened instantly.

signal.”

“Yes.”

I turned back to the screens.

My pulse had changed.

Faster.

Focused.

“Check their social media.”

Several analysts looked up.

I pointed directly at them.

“All platforms.”

Then I narrowed it further.

“TikTok first.”

That got reactions.

Confusion from some.

Recognition from others.

Alex looked impressed.

I continued quickly.

“If they were trained, they would know monitored channels are risky.”

I pulled up the missing teens profiles list.

“But they would also know the fastest way to hide a message...”

I tapped the screen.

“Is inside normal behavior.”

Dance videos.

Memes.

Short clips.

Comments.

Live streams.

Captions no adult would question.

Patterns hidden in trends.

+15 Bonus

Coordinates in edits.

Numbers in hashtags.

Signals buried in noise.

Jason turned to the room.

Command voice.

Immediate.

“You heard her.”

People moved.

Fast.

“Cross-reference all known accounts.”

“Search posts after disappearance windows.”

“Look for deleted uploads, drafts, mirrors, reposts.

“Track comments from burner accounts.”

The operations floor erupted into motion again.

Alex tugged my sleeve.

“What would I use?”

I looked at him.

“What would you use?”

He thought for one second.

“A meme nobody old understands.”

I smiled.

“Exactly.”

Jason glanced between us and shook his head once.

Half disbelief.

Half admiration.

Minutes later, dozens of profiles filled the main screens.

Faces.

Videos.

Username.

Teenage chaos.

15 agnus

Possible intelligence gold.

Netepped forward.

“Let’s see which one of them was trying to be found.”

BIG SALE: 3500 bonus free fou you

Support

Share

+15 Benus

вения

ge it

Prove it

Amber POV

The room moved at full speed.

Screens filled with profiles, reposts, archived clips, private handles, tagged accounts, comment chains, and enough teenage chaos to drown an ordinary investigation.

Analysts scanned captions.

Teams reviewed upload times.

Others searched deleted media caches.

And still-

Nothing certain.

Too much noise.

Too many jokes.

Too many trends.

Too many ways for adults to miss what mattered.

Then Alex made a small sound beside me.

Not loud.

Just sharp enough to cut through everything.

“I found it.”

No one reacted at first.

Then every head turned.

Alex was already pointing at one of the screens.

A single meme post.

Simple.

| Fast.

Easy to ignore.

Exactly the kind of thing most adults would scroll past without thought.

It was a two-panel format.

How it started / How it's going.

Several analysts frowned.

One looked offended that this was what had stopped the room.

I stepped closer.

+15 8chus

Then my breath caught.

The first image showed the full teen team on a ferry.

Smiling.

Standing close together.

Apparently harmless.

The second image showed the same group-

inside an underground fighting ring.

Bruised lights.

Metal fencing.

Crowds blurred in the background.

No daylight.

No accident.

The room froze.

John Stait's deputy swore under his breath.

Jason was beside me in seconds.

"Who posted it?" he asked.

I looked at the account name.

Then at the face in the image.

“Veronica Mills.”

Sixteen years old.

The President’s granddaughter. 1

The room changed again.

Because this was no theory now.

No guess.

No reflection in a car door.

No abstract trail.

One of the missing teenagers had sent a message.

And she had done it in plain sight.

Alex looked up at me, eyes bright with triumph.

“I told you memes work.”

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