A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 241

Alice immediately pointed at herself.

was the game.”

Of course it was.

At this point, I was beginning to suspect Alice had accidentally become a recruitment department.

The administrators were already discussing additional housing expansions.

More classrooms.

More teachers.

More security.

What had started as a school for our children was rapidly becoming one of the most prestigious educational institutions on the continent.

And somehow, everyone seemed perfectly comfortable with that.

I looked around the room.

At the children.

At Amber.

At my grandparents.

At Mr. Asher.

For the first time in years, the future didn’t look uncertain.

It looked busy.

Ridiculously busy.

But hopeful.

Outside the windows, I could see the castle in the distance.

Its towers gleaming beneath the afternoon sun.

The school sat proudly between our families.

A bridge between old wounds and new beginnings.

Maybe that was why everyone loved the idea so much.

Not because of the buildings.

Not because of the scholarships.

Not because of the prestige.

But because it represented something none of us had truly had before.

A safe place.

A place where children could simply be children.

Without fear.

Without manipulation.

Without people like the Vincents deciding their futures.

My phone vibrated in my pocket.

I ignored it.

It vibrated again.

And again.

That got my attention.

I pulled it out.

The caller ID made me frown.

Governor Henry.

That was unusual.

Especially since we had spoken just yesterday.

I answered immediately.

“Governor.”

His voice sounded serious.

Far more serious than usual.

“Mr. Sun.”

A pause.

“I apologize for interrupting.”

My instincts immediately activated.

“What happened?”

Silence lingered for a moment.

Then he spoke quietly.

“I need to meet with you.”

The laughter around me faded into the background.

The governor rarely sounded concerned.

Now he sounded worried.

Very worried.

“When?”

“Now.”

Every alarm bell in my head began ringing at once.

I looked up.

Across the room, Amber immediately noticed my expression change.

Her smile disappeared.

“What is it?”

I lowered the phone slowly.

The governor’s voice echoed through the line one final time.

“Please bring Amber.”

And suddenly, I knew whatever came next was not about the school.

Not about the castle.

And definitely not about business.

Something had happened.

NO

get it

The terrifyingly charming and intelligent child

Amber POV

The drive to the resort took less than thirty minutes.

That alone was impressive.

Three months ago, the area had been little more than undeveloped coastline and construction equipment.

Now it was becoming one of the most promising tourist destinations in Sum.

Jason drove.

I sat beside him.

Neither of us spoke much.

Governor Henry rarely asked for urgent meetings.

When he did, it usually meant one of two things.

Good news.

Or very bad news.

Judging by Jason’s expression, he was leaning toward the second option.

The café sat near the ocean.

Large glass walls overlooked white sand beaches and crystal blue water.

Tourists walked along the boardwalk.

Children played near the fountains.

Musicians performed nearby.

It looked peaceful.

Which was probably why Henry chose the location.

No one expected serious discussions in a place like this.

The governor was already waiting when we arrived.

He stood to greet us.

His expression was serious.

But not alarmed.

That immediately made me relax.

A little.

“Governor.”

“Amber.”

“Jason.”

After exchanging greetings, we sat down.

Coffee arrived moments later.

Henry remained quiet for a few moments.

As though deciding where to begin.

Then he sighed.

“You know, I’ve never actually told you the entire story.”

I frowned.

“The story?”

He nodded.

“The day I found you.”

Jason immediately looked interested.

I leaned forward slightly.

Henry smiled.

“I was younger then.”

A pause.

“And much more reckless.”

That sounded familiar.

“I heard stories about the mine.”

I smiled.

“The alexandrite?”

He laughed.

“Not specifically.”

A pause.

“The legends.”

Of course.

The legends surrounding the castle and the mountains.

“I decided to visit the castle.”

His expression softened.

“Pure curiosity.”

The top that

A pause.

wasn’t expecting to find a child.”

I had heard part of this story already.

But not from him.

“I found you sitting in one of the inner courtyards.”

His smile widened slightly.

“You looked completely unbothered.”

Jason chuckled beside me. 1

That sounded exactly like me.

“You were eating a peach.”

I laughed.

Again with the peach.

Henry pointed at me.

“To this day, I still don’t know where you found it.”

The three of us laughed.

Then his expression became more serious.

“The elderly couple who owned the property became very attached to your story.”

I nodded.

Grandfather had mentioned that.

“They believed the castle chose you.’

A pause.

“I know how ridiculous that sounds.”

“After everything we’ve learned?”

Jason said.

“It actually sounds fairly reasonable.”

Henry laughed.

“Fair point.”

His smile faded.

“Which brings us to why I called.”

There it was.

NK

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 242

The real reason.

son immediately straightened.

“What happened?”

Henry placed a folder on the table.

“The Vincent family.”

I smiled.

Of course.

Who else?

“They filed a petition.”

That got my attention.

“What kind of petition?”

Henry looked annoyed.

“They’re attempting to annul the sale.”

Jason’s expression darkened instantly.

“On what grounds?”

Henry opened the folder.

“They involved the Continental Historical Alliance.”

I blinked.

That was unexpected.

“The historians?”

Henry nodded.

“The Vincents claim the castle was improperly restored.”

A pause.

“They argue the historical integrity of the property was compromised.”

Jason cursed softly.

“If the Alliance agrees…”

“The contract could become void.”

Silence.

A long silence.

Henry looked frustrated.

+15 Bchus

at pot or a

Jason looked irritated.

And then I started laughing.

Both men stared at me.

“Amber?”

I couldn’t stop.

The look on Henry’s face made it worse.

“You’re laughing.”

“I know.”

Jason narrowed his eyes.

That expression meant he had figured something out.

“What did you do?”

I grinned.

“Nothing.”

A pause.

“Directly.”

Jason groaned.

“Oh no.”

Henry looked between us.

Clearly confused.

“Would someone like to explain?”

I happily accepted.

“You remember Alice?”

Henry blinked.

“The little one?”

“The one turning five next week.”

Henry immediately nodded.

“The terrifyingly charming and intelligent child.”

Jason nodded without hesitation.

“That’s accurate.”

I smiled proudly.

“A few weeks ago I asked Alice and Iris for help.”

Henry suddenly looked concerned.

“Amber.”

His voice carried genuine worry.

“Alice is four.”

“Almost five.”

“That does not make this conversation better.”

Jason sighed.

“I agree with the governor.”

I looked offended.

“They volunteered.”

“She’s four.”

“She’s very enthusiastic.”

Henry buried his face in his hands.

“I don’t think children should ever be helping you.”

“Normally, I’d agree.”

A pause.

“But this was important.”

Jason rubbed his forehead.

Already knowing exactly where this was going.

“I had a feeling someone would eventually challenge the restoration.”

Henry slowly nodded.

“Reasonable.”

“So I prepared.”

Another pause.

“Just in case.”

His eyes narrowed.

“What kind of preparation?”

I smiled.

“The girls uploaded photos.”

Tenterd

Silence.

Henry blinked.

“What?”

“Edited photos.”

Jason started laughing.

Now he understood.

“Oh.”

I nodded proudly.

“Oh.”

Henry still looked confused.

“What kind of photos?”

I leaned back.

“A futuristic castle.”

Silence.

Complete silence. 1

Then Jason burst out laughing.

The governor stared.

“The girls did what?”

“Alice edited them herself.”

A pause.

“Rose helped choose the designs.”

Henry looked horrified.

“What designs?”

I smiled sweetly.

“Glass towers.”

His eye twitched.

“Amber.”

“Floating walkways.”

Chapter 243

It fomfy ngy charming and varied

Jason was openly laughing now.

nd holograms.”

Henry dropped his face into his hands.

“Oh my God.”

I couldn’t help it.

I laughed.

“The images spread online.”

A pause.

“Exactly where I wanted them to.”

Understanding finally dawned on him.

Slowly.

Then all at once.

“The Vincents never inspected the property.”

I pointed at him.

“Correct.”

“They reacted to the fake images.”

“Correct.”

“They filed their complaint using fabricated evidence.”

“Correct.”

Henry stared.

Then suddenly started laughing.

Loudly.

The kind of laugh that comes from watching your enemies walk directly into a wall.

Jason shook his head.

“You used children as bait.”

I looked offended.

“I prefer strategic consultants.”

That made Henry laugh even harder.

The governor finally wiped tears from his eyes.

“You’re telling me…”

The to my ang charming redthagent chic

A pause.

The first major Vincent attack in Sum…”

A’pause.

“Was triggered by a four-year-old with editing software?”

I smiled.

“Technically a four-year-old, a teenager, and another child with excellent artistic vision.”

Jason groaned.

Henry stared at me.

Then at the ocean.

Then back at me.

“I cannot decide if that is impressive or deeply concerning.”

Henry leaned back in his chair.

Still laughing.

“You are all completely insane.”

I smiled pleasantly.

“Probably.”

Then my smile sharpened.

Because this wasn’t luck.

It wasn’t an accident.

And it definitely wasn’t the last trap.

“The Vincents just made a very important mistake.”

Jason’s amusement disappeared.

Henry immediately became serious again.

“What mistake?”

I looked toward the ocean.

Toward the castle waiting in the distance.

Then back at them.

“They moved first.”

A slow smile spread across my face.

“And this was only the first trap.

My money is on Mrs. Sun

Amber POV

Governor Henry’s laughter eventually died down, though the amused look never fully left his face.

I suspected it would return every time he remembered that the mighty Vincent family had launched a legal challenge based on evidence produced by a four-year-old with access to editing software.

“You should still take this seriously.”

His tone shifted enough that both Jason and I immediately paid attention.

I nodded.

“I do.”

Because despite the humor of the situation, the Vincents weren’t stupid.

Dangerous people could make mistakes.

That didn’t make them any less dangerous.

Henry opened the folder again.

“The Continental Historical Alliance has accepted the complaint.”

That got my attention.

“They have?”

The governor nodded.

“A team will arrive in Sum in three weeks.”

Jason leaned forward slightly.

“How large of a team?”

“Six specialists.”

A pause.

“Architects, historians, restoration experts and preservation consultants.”

I considered that for a moment.

Three weeks.

Enough time to prepare.

More importantly, enough time to identify who among them might already be compromised.

“I’ll cooperate.”

Henry looked relieved.

“Good.”

I smiled.

+15 8chus

“But only a selected team will be allowed access to the castle.”

Both men looked at me.

“For security reasons.”

Jason immediately nodded.

That answer made perfect sense.

The castle wasn’t simply a historical site anymore.

It was our home.

The children’s home.

The location of multiple security systems and protected passages.

No one was getting unrestricted access.

“No media.”

I continued.

“No additional guests.”

A pause.

“And absolutely no last-minute additions to the inspection team.”

The governor smiled.

“I was hoping you’d say that.”

Jason frowned.

“You think they’ll try something?”

Henry sighed.

“The Vincent family cannot legally enter Sum.”

That was one of the few advantages we currently possessed.

The historical banishment remained part of Sum law.

The Vincents could challenge us from abroad.

Influence people.

Pressure organizations. 1

But they couldn’t simply walk into the country.

At least not legally.

Henry’s expression darkened.

“That doesn’t mean they don’t have contacts.”

The mood immediately shifted.

Because all three of us knew exactly what he meant.

Grandfather.

The poison.

The hospital.

The attack hadn’t been carried out by a Vincent personally.

Someone local had done it.

Someone they reached.

Someone they paid.

Someone they controlled.

“Just because they’re outside the country doesn’t mean they’re powerless.”

I nodded slowly.

“We know.”

The governor remained silent for a moment before suddenly changing topics.

“Thankfully, that isn’t the only reason I wanted to meet.”

I blinked.

There was more?

Henry reached into his briefcase.

And pulled out two elegant black envelopes embossed in gold.

He placed them on the table.

Jason and I exchanged a look.

“What are those?”

The governor smiled.

“Invitations.”

I immediately became suspicious.

“To what?”

“The Annual Sum Charity Gala.”

Jason groaned.

I laughed.

Business galas were part of our lives.

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Chapter 244

hey’re important.”

Henry sounded offended.

“They always are.”

Jason muttered.

The governor ignored him.

“Open them.”

Curiosity won.

I opened mine.

Then blinked.

Twice.

Jason’s reaction mirrored my own.

“Wait.”

I looked at Henry.

“These aren’t invitations.”

His smile widened.

“Oh, they are.”

A pause.

“But that’s not the important part.”

I looked back at the card.

Nominee.

I stared.

Then stared some more.

Surely not.

Apparently yes.

I had been nominated.

For multiple awards.

Urban Development.

Historic Restoration.

Community Expansion.

+15 Bçnus

Economic Growth.

My eyes widened slightly.

The castle restoration.

The new residential developments.

The mining tourism project.

The infrastructure programs.

The projects we had started after arriving in Sum.

All of them.

Someone had actually noticed.

Jason looked equally surprised.

“What did they nominate me for?”

Henry laughed.

“Creating jobs.”

A pause.

“Providing security.”

Another pause.

“Expanding economic opportunities.”

That sounded exactly like Jason.

He looked mildly horrified.

Which only made me smile.

Then Henry casually added:

“You’re both losing anyway.”

Jason looked offended.

I narrowed my eyes.

“Excuse me?”

The governor grinned.

“My money is on Mrs. Sun.”

The answer was immediate.

Of course.

Of course it was.

15 8cnus

I grabbed the additional booklet included with the invitation. 1

Then burst out laughing.

Jason looked over my shoulder.

And immediately started laughing too.

Multiple nominations.

Best Educational Initiative.

Community Development.

Family Support Programs.

Youth Advancement.

Academic Excellence.

Scholarship Foundation of the Year.

The school hadn’t even opened.

Not yet.

Classes were still three weeks away.

And somehow Mrs. Sun was already receiving awards.

I could practically hear her accepting them.

Gracefully.

While pretending she had done nothing special.

Henry looked delighted.

“The scholarship program made international news.”

That surprised me.

Apparently I wasn’t the only one.

“The boarding school concept attracted attention too.”

A pause.

“Especially the university partnerships.”

I leaned back in my chair.

The more I thought about it, the less surprising it became.

Mrs. Sun hadn’t simply built a school.

She had built an entire pathway.

From kindergarten.

+15 8cnus

To high school.

university.

A complete educational ecosystem.

For children she hadn't even met yet.

Jason sighed dramatically.

"We're never going to hear the end of this."

"No."

I smiled.

"We're really not."

The governor laughed.

And for a few moments, the conversation shifted away from conspiracies, investigations and assassination attempts.

Toward schools.

Children.

The future.

Things worth protecting.

As we left the café nearly an hour later, invitation in hand, I glanced toward the ocean.

Three weeks.

Three weeks until the Historical Alliance arrived.

Three weeks until the inspection.

Three weeks until the next move in our battle with the Vincents.

I had a feeling they thought they were coming to inspect a castle.

The truth was far simpler.

They were walking directly into another trap.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 245

er POV

One week later, Jason and I found ourselves attending the most ridiculous event of the year.

The Sum Charity Gala.

Ironically, neither of us expected to win.

Not because our projects weren't successful.

But because our biggest competition was sitting three tables away from us, elegantly dressed in silver and looking entirely too pleased with herself.

Mrs. Sun.

The woman had built an entire school before the first student attended a single class.

A school with scholarships.

Boarding facilities.

University partnerships.

Horse stables.

Science laboratories.

And enough extracurricular activities to make grown adults tired just reading the brochure.

Naturally, everyone adored her.

"I still think she's going to win."

I whispered.

Jason followed my gaze.

“Of course she’s going to win.”

A pause.

“The school hasn’t even opened yet and somehow half the continent wants to send their children there.”

I laughed.

The ballroom itself was magnificent.

Crystal chandeliers illuminated hundreds of guests.

Government officials.

Business leaders.

Philanthropists.

Investors.

Media representatives.

The governor sat near the stage.

Henry gave us a small wave.

Jason nodded politely.

Across the room I noticed several cameras focused un our table.

The recent move to Sum had attracted considerable attention..

Phoenix Ashes.

Asher Corporation.

Sun Corporation.

The castle.

The mine.

The school.

Apparently we were interesting now.

I hated that.

The awards ceremony progressed quickly.

Community Development.

Tourism.

Environmental Initiatives.

Healthcare.

Then came the category everyone was waiting for.

Educational Excellence.

The presenter smiled dramatically.

“The winner is…”

A pause.

“Mrs. Victoria Sun.”

The ballroom erupted.

I immediately stood.

Jason stood beside me.

Our entire table applauded.

Mrs. Sun looked genuinely surprised.

Which was impressive considering she had probably already prepared a speech.

NK

Grandfather Sun laughed loudly.

The children were cheering from the family table near the front.

Alice appeared convinced she had personally won.

Mrs. Sun made her way toward the stage.

The applause continued.

She accepted the award gracefully.

Then approached the microphone.

“I never expected this.”

The audience immediately laughed.

Because nobody believed her.

Not even a little.

Mrs. Sun smiled.

“Thank you.”

A pause.

“But this award does not belong only to me.”

The large screens behind her lit up with images of the school.

Construction crews.

Students touring the campus.

Teachers.

Scholarship recipients.

Then Mrs. Sun looked toward the family tables.

“Alice, sweetheart, would you come up here?”

The entire ballroom turned.

Alice froze.

Then immediately looked delighted.

“Me?”

Mrs. Sun nodded.

“You.”

Alice jumped off her chair and hurried toward the stage.

Her tiny silver dress sparkled under the lights.

15 Benus

The audience smiled automatically.

was difficult not to.

Mrs. Sun took Alice’s hand and gently guided her beside the podium.

“Everyone keeps congratulating me for the school.”

She smiled warmly.

“But the truth is that this little princess is one of the reasons the school has been so successful before it even opened.”

I blinked.

Across the room, Jason looked just as surprised.

Mrs. Sun continued.

“When we began planning the school, we worried about attracting students.”

A pause.

“Then Alice solved the problem.”

The audience laughed.

Alice beamed proudly.

Mrs. Sun squeezed her shoulder.

“She created a game.”

The screens changed.

Colorful images appeared.

Puzzles.

Challenges.

Interactive lessons.

“The game was originally designed as a fun entrance activity.”

A pause.

“What we discovered was that children loved it.”

Another image appeared.

Participation numbers.

Then more.

Enrollment requests.

Messages from families.

Applications.

The audience began murmuring.

Mrs. Sun smiled.

“The game improved language skills.”

Another slide.

“Mathematics.”

Another.

“Science.”

Another.

“Literacy.”

The audience began applauding again.

“It connected children from different countries.”

A pause.

“It created friendships.”

Another pause.

“It created a community before anyone had ever set foot inside the school.”

The applause grew louder.

Mrs. Sun looked down at Alice.

“You recruited students.”

Alice nodded proudly.

“And parents.”

Another nod.

“And somehow convinced half the continent that our school was the place to be.”

The audience laughed.

Several cameras focused entirely on Alice now. 1

Mrs. Sun looked back toward the crowd.

“If an amazing four-year-old princess can take a chance on building something better…”

A pause.

Her smile widened.

“Why can’t the rest of us?”

The ballroom erupted into applause.

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Chapter 246

Alice looked completely delighted.

She waved at everyone.

The audience waved back.

For a brief moment, the atmosphere inside the ballroom felt warm.

Hopeful.

Optimistic.

Then the screens flickered.

The images changed.

My smile disappeared.

The ballroom went silent.

A young Jason appeared on the screen.

College age.

Drunk.

Very drunk.

My stomach dropped.

Someone was supporting him.

Dragging him down a hallway.

A woman.

Long dark hair.

Elegant dress.

I recognized her instantly.

Eleanor Vincent.

The Vincent princess.

The video continued.

The woman pulled Jason toward a hotel room.

The door opened.

The two disappeared inside.

The screen cut to black.

Then white letters appeared.

IS THIS REALLY WHO YOU WANT HERE?

+15 Benus

Silence.

Absolute silence.

The entire ballroom froze.

Every eye turned toward Jason.

Every single one.

And for the first time since arriving in Sum...

I saw genuine shock on his face.

+15 Benus

Kicked out

Amber POV

The ballroom remained cortipletely silent.

The screen still displayed the message.

IS THIS REALLY WHO YOU WANT HERE?

I slowly turned toward Jason.

He looked furious.

Not guilty.

Not nervous.

Furious.

Which immediately told me something important.

He recognized the footage.

“Amber.”

His voice was low.

Controlled.

Dangerously controlled.

“I can explain.”

I blinked.

Then another memory surfaced.

A business gala years ago.

A drunken Jason.

Marcus.

A business card.

My eyes widened.

“Wait.”

Jason looked at me.

I frowned.

“Was that the night I gave you Marcus’s card?”

His expression immediately changed.

Recognition.

+15 Bus

“Yes,”

The answer came instantly.

“That was that night.”

The governor along with several members of the organizing committee approached our table.

He looked between Jason and the frozen image on the screen.

Then, to everyone’s surprise, he asked:

“Mr. Sun.”

Jason looked up.

“Did Eleanor Vincent take advantage of you?”

Silence.

Complete silence.

I actually stopped typing.

Several reporters openly stared.

The committee members exchanged confused looks.

Everyone had expected the governor to be angry.

To accuse Jason.

To question him.

Instead...

He sounded concerned.

Genuinely concerned.

Jason looked just as surprised.

“What?”

Governor Henry frowned.

“You were barely standing.”

He pointed toward the image frozen on the screen.

“You were intoxicated.”

A pause.

“Extremely intoxicated.”

Another pause.

“And from what I can see, she was not.”

The governor crossed his arms.

So I will ask again.”

His voice hardened.

“Did Eleanor Vincent attempt to take advantage of you?”

Jason remained silent for a moment.

Then sighed.

“I think she intended to.”

The governor immediately cursed.

Loudly.

Passionately.

And very creatively.

Several reporters nearly dropped their phones.

“I knew it.”

He shook his head.

“The Vincents are shameless.”

Another curse followed.

Then another.

“Don’t worry.”

He pointed directly at Jason.

“Sum remembers what that family did.”

A pause.

“And if Eleanor Vincent thought she was going to embarrass you with this…”

His smile became dangerous.

“Then she just reminded us why we threw her ancestors out.”

Several people nodded.

The governor looked genuinely offended on Jason’s behalf.

“Do not waste a second feeling ashamed.”

His voice carried surprising convictio..”

The room fell silent.

Then the governor added:

“Sum will get its revenge from the Vincents soon enough.”

tared at the screen.

Then back at Jason.

Then I laughed.

Actually laughed.

The audience looked confused.

Jason looked confused.

The governor looked confused.

Mrs. Sun looked ready to murder someone.

I stood abruptly.

“Give me five minutes.”

Then I walked out of the ballroom.

The media immediately followed.

Of course they did.

Outside the main hall I pulled out my phone.

Jason appeared behind me moments later.

“You believe me?”

I looked offended.

“Jason.”

He immediately stopped talking.

Because he already knew the answer.

I sat down on one of the lobby couches and opened my laptop.

The footage had already spread online.

Thousands of shares.

Hundreds of comments.

Millions of views incoming.

Amateurs.

The Vincents really needed better people.

The footage itself gave me everything I needed.

Time stamp.

NA

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Chapter 247

Camera angle.

I smiled.

Found you.

Jason watched silently.

“What are you doing?”

My fingers moved rapidly across the keyboard.

“Finding the original recording.”

A pause.

“And the surrounding cameras.”

His eyes widened.

“Oh.”

Five minutes.

That was all it took.

The hotel’s archived security network appeared on my screen.

Several feeds loaded.

Hallways.

Elevators.

Lobby cameras.

Then I found it.

The hallway camera.

The one conveniently left out of the edited footage.

I burst out laughing.

The Vincents were getting lazy.

“What?”

I rotated the screen toward Jason.

His eyes widened.

Then he started laughing too.

The original footage played.

+15 Benus

Eleanor dragged him into the room.

door closed.

One second.

Two seconds.

The door exploded open again.

Literally exploded.

Eleanor stumbled backward into the hallway.

Jason appeared behind her.

Very drunk.

Very angry.

And very determined.

The younger version of Jason pointed toward the elevator.

Eleanor attempted to approach him again.

Jason physically turned her around.

And shoved her toward the elevator.

The door closed.

The entire interaction lasted less than ten seconds.

Ten.

I looked at Jason.

“You really kicked out a Vincent princess in under ten seconds.”

He looked offended.

“Probably faster.”

That made me laugh again.

Then I stood.

“Come on.”

Jason smiled.

“Where are we going?”

I grabbed the laptop.

“Back to the ballroom.”

The moment we entered, hundreds of eyes turned toward us.

+15 8cnus

The giant screen still displayed the edited footage.

Perfect.

I walked directly onto the stage.

Ignoring the shocked organizers.

Ignoring the reporters.

Ignoring the whispers.

Then I connected my laptop to the system.

The screen flickered.

And the original footage appeared.

The ballroom immediately fell silent.

“Since someone was kind enough to share a video,” I said into the microphone.

My voice echoed through the room.

“I thought everyone deserved to see the entire thing.”

The original recording began playing.

The audience watched.

Eleanor dragged Jason down the hallway.

The hotel room door opened.

The two entered.

One second passed.

Two seconds.

The door burst open again.

Eleanor stumbled backward.

Jason followed.

Clearly intoxicated.

Barely steady on his feet.

Yet still determined.

The younger Jason pointed toward the elevator.

Eleanor attempted to approach him again.

Jason physically turned her around and pushed her toward the elevator.

The ballroom remained completely silent.

I paused the video.

Then looked directly at the audience.

“If someone is so intoxicated that they cannot even stand properly…”

A pause.

“That is not consent.”

The silence became heavier.

Several people shifted uncomfortably.

I turned toward Jason.

For a brief moment he looked stunned.

Then I smiled.

“Thank you.”

His eyes widened.

I continued.

“I am proud of you.”

The room froze.

“Because despite how drunk you were…”

A pause.

“You still found the strength to throw her out.”

I looked back toward the audience.

“There is nothing for Jason Sun to be ashamed of.”

Another pause.

“Nothing.”

The room remained silent.

Listening.

“Because from what I just watched…”

I gestured toward the frozen image of Eleanor.

“Eleanor Vincent certainly tried to take advantage of a young and intoxicated man.”

My voice hardened.

“And she should be ashamed of herself.”

Not him.

+158gnus

Her.

The

silence lasted only a moment.

Then applause erupted throughout the ballroom.

Louder and louder.

Mrs. Sun stood first.

Then Grandfather Sun.

Then Mr. Asher.

Then the governor. 1

Soon the entire ballroom was standing.

Applauding.

And somewhere far away, I imagined Eleanor Vincent watching the broadcast.

Realizing that what was supposed to destroy Jason Sun had become one of the biggest humiliations of her life.

The Vincents had made their move. 1

And once again...

They had lost.

␣

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 248

5 8cnus

A peach

Amber POV

The gala ended far better than anyone had expected.

Which, considering it had included an attempted public humiliation, a conspiracy, and a four-year-old being credited for helping launch a school, was saying something.

The atmosphere had completely shifted after the video was exposed.

People weren’t whispering about Jason anymore.

They were whispering about Eleanor Vincent.

And not kindly.

Several guests approached us throughout the evening.

Business owners.

Government officials.

Investors.

Families.

Many of them wanted to shake Jason’s hand.

A few apologized.

One elderly businessman looked positively embarrassed.

“I owe you an apology, Mr. Sun.”

Jason blinked.

“For what?”

The man cleared his throat.

“I saw the first video.”

A pause.

“I assumed the worst.”

Another pause.

“I should have known better.”

Jason simply nodded.

The man looked relieved.

The interaction repeated itself several times throughout the night.

To my surprise, however, the most overwhelming support came from the families.

Parents.

Grandparents.

Children.

Many of them were planning to send their children to the school.

Others had invested in projects in Sum.

Several had relocated entirely.

One mother squeezed my hands enthusiastically.

“My daughter hasn’t stopped talking about Alice’s game.”

I laughed.

That game was becoming more powerful than some corporations.

Nearby, Mrs. Sun was accepting congratulations as though she hadn't just won enough awards to fill an entire display case.

She looked happier than I had seen her in years.

The school had become her dream.

And somehow that dream was already changing lives before opening its doors.

The evening was winding down when an elderly woman approached me.

At first glance, she looked ordinary.

Silver hair.

Elegant dark dress.

A cane she barely seemed to need.

Yet something about her felt familiar.

She stopped directly in front of me.

"Miss Asher."

I smiled politely.

"Yes?"

The woman studied me for a moment.

Then her expression softened.

"You look just like your mother."

My smile faltered.

That happened more often lately.

And somehow it never became easier.

The woman reached into her purse.

Then handed me a thick envelope.

Prowned.

“What is this?”

Her eyes became distant.

“A promise.”

That answer didn’t help at all.

Before I could ask another question, she continued.

“The former owners of Ember Castle left it for you.”

I froze.

The former owners?

The elderly couple?

The ones who had passed away?

The woman nodded as if she could read my thoughts.

“They asked that it be given to you personally.”

I looked down at the envelope.

It was old.

Very old.

The paper had yellowed slightly with age.

A wax seal rested on the back.

An unfamiliar crest had been stamped into it.

My pulse quickened.

“What’s inside?”

The woman smiled.

“I was told to tell you only one thing.’

I waited.

She glanced toward Jason.

Then back at me.

“Open it when you’re alone.”

A chill ran through me.

Before I could ask anything else, she turned and disappeared into the crowd.

Leaving me standing there with the envelope.

Jason appeared beside me moments later.

“What happened?”

I held up the envelope.

“Apparently we have a mystery.”

His expression immediately became interested.

That was never a good sign.

The drive back to the castle was quiet.

The children had remained home with their grandparents. 1

The roads were nearly empty.

The city lights gradually disappeared behind us.

I kept glancing at the envelope resting on my lap.

Jason noticed.

“You’re going to open it before we get home.”

I looked at him.

“Absolutely.”

He smiled.

“Good.”

Five minutes later, we were parked at a scenic overlook halfway between the city and the castle.

The ocean stretched endlessly before us.

Moonlight danced across the water.

For a brief moment, everything felt peaceful.

Then I broke the seal.

The envelope contained photographs.

Lots of photographs.

My breath caught.

“What…”

Jason leaned closer.

Then froze.

Neither of us spoke.

+158gnus

Because staring back at us from the first photograph were two children.

Alittle girl.

And a little boy.

Me.

And Jason.

My hands trembled.

The photograph couldn’t have been more than twenty years old.

I looked about three years old.

Jason looked around five.

Young.

Far younger than either of us remembered.

Yet there was no mistaking us.

My hair.

His eyes.

It was us.

Together.

At the castle.

I turned to the next photograph.

And the next.

And the next.

Every single one showed the same thing.

The castle.

The gardens.

The mountains.

And us.

Playing.

Laughing.

Running through the grounds.

One photograph showed Jason holding my hand as we crossed one of the old stone bridges.

Another showed him sitting on the castle steps while I proudly showed him a flower that looked almost as large as my face.

A third showed us eating peaches under a tree.

Naughed weakly.

“The peaches again.”

Jason stared at the photograph.

For a brief second, something crossed his face.

Recognition.

Then it disappeared.

“I think…”

His voice faltered.

“I think I remember that tree.”

I immediately looked up.

“What?”

Jason frowned.

“It’s not a memory.”

A pause.

“More like a feeling.”

Another pause.

“Like I’ve seen it before.”

Neither of us remembered the castle.

And yet the children in the photographs looked comfortable there.

Happy.

As if they belonged.

U

The Ember alliance

Astrange ache settled in my chest.

Because I remembered none of it.

Not a single second.

“What is this?”

Jason’s voice sounded almost hollow.

I didn’t answer.

Because I didn’t know.

Then I found the letter.

A single folded page hidden beneath the photographs.

My hands shook as I opened it.

The handwriting was elegant.

Careful.

Old-fashioned.

I began reading aloud.

“If you are reading this, then the castle has finally returned to where it belongs.”

Jason moved closer.

“The children in these photographs were brought to Ember Castle by the Ember Alliance.”

My pulse stopped.

The Ember Alliance.

Not the Ember family.

An alliance.

A group.

I continued reading.

“Both children were rescued.”

The words seemed to echo inside the car.

“Neither belonged at the places where they were found.”

I swallowed hard.

Jason had gone completely still.

“The girl remained with us for several months.”

–

+15 8chus

My hands tightened around the paper.

he boy vanished shortly after these photographs were taken.”

Jason cursed softly.

I continued.

“For many years we believed he had been taken again.”

A pause. 1

“Later we learned he was recovered by his grandparents after being discovered in another home beyond the Blue Flower Trail.”

Neither of us spoke.

Because we knew that story.

Mr. Sun had told us.

The trail.

The flowers.

The house.

Jason.

The letter continued.

“We kept these photographs because one day we hoped the two of you would learn the truth.”

My throat tightened.

The truth.

What truth?

The letter ended with a single sentence.

One sentence that made every hair on my body stand on end.

“You were never supposed to survive.”

The car fell silent.

Outside, waves crashed against the cliffs.

Inside, neither Jason nor I moved.

Because suddenly the photographs weren’t the most important thing in the envelope anymore.

The Ember Alliance was.

The car fell silent.

Outside, waves crashed against the cliffs.

Inside, neither Jason nor I moved.

Because suddenly the photographs weren’t the most important thing in the envelope anymore.

he letter was.

My hands trembled slightly as I turned the page.

There was more.

A lot more.

I began reading aloud.

“Amber stayed with us for two months.”

My breath caught.

“During that time, we searched for a way to contact her remaining family and return her home safely.”

I frowned.

Two months.

I had spent two entire months at the castle.

Two months that I couldn’t remember.

Jason remained silent beside me.

Listening carefully.

I continued.

“Amber was not found wandering.”

My heart stopped.

“She was rescued beyond the border.”

The words blurred for a moment.

“She was located inside one of the Vincent testing facilities.”

Jason’s entire body went rigid.

“What?”

I swallowed hard and continued reading.

“The Vincents were attempting to match her to their heir.”

The world seemed to tilt.

Gabriel.

They had been preparing me for Gabriel.

Even then.

At three years old.

+15 Benus

I continued.

Infortunately for them, Amber appeared to be more trouble than she was worth.”

Jason snorted.

Despite everything.

Despite the shock.

Despite the horror.

I couldn’t help rolling my eyes.

That sounded suspiciously accurate.

The letter continued.

“Even at her young age, Amber interfered with security systems.”

I blinked.

“What?”

Jason looked at me.

“What?”

I looked back down.

“She repeatedly tampered with security cameras.”

A pause. 1

“Eventually causing a system-wide malfunction that created the perfect opportunity for our operatives to extract her and two other girls.”

Silence.

Absolute silence.

Jason slowly looked at me.

“You hacked a facility at three years old.”

“I don’t think that’s the correct takeaway.”

“It absolutely is.”

I buried my face in one hand.

The letter continued.

“It became clear to the Alliance that the Vincents did not want intelligent children.”

The amusement disappeared instantly.

“They wanted obedient children.”

A pause. 1

“If a child proved intelligent, independent or difficult to control, they created trauma.”

My stomach twisted.

Iris.

Jason.

The Bloom girls.

Alice.

Alex.

Suddenly everything fit together.

Not accidents.

Not isolated incidents.

A method.

A system.

I forced myself to continue.

“Jason was not rescued by the Alliance.”

Jason froze.

His eyes locked onto the page.

“His location was reported by his stepmother.”

I looked up immediately.

“Rebecca.”

Jason nodded.

The woman his grandparents had searched years to find.

The woman who died during childbirth.

The woman who called and left clues.

I continued reading.

“She was being held by the Vincents against her will and forced to act as a mistress.”

Jason’s jaw tightened.

“She sent a letter requesting help.”

A pause. 1

“By the time we received her message, the Vincents were days away from creating an incident involving Jason.”

The words sent chills down my spine.

An incident.

X

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 249

One more week

Amber POV

The words sent chills down my spine.

An incident.

Something planned.

Something deliberate.

I continued.

“We brought Jason to the Alliance.”

A small flicker of hope appeared.

Then vanished immediately.

“Unfortunately, our castle had already been compromised.”

My hands tightened around the page.

No.

“Someone inside our organization betrayed us.”

Jason cursed softly.

“Jason was taken from the castle and returned to Vincent control.”

The words felt like a punch to the chest.

I turned toward Jason.

His face had gone completely expressionless.

That somehow worried me more.

He wasn’t angry.

He wasn’t shocked.

He looked tired.

As if a part of him had always known.

The letter continued.

“We searched tirelessly.”

“We failed repeatedly.”

“And it remains our greatest regret.”

I swallowed hard.

“Jason remained imprisoned for another year.”

Another year.

An entire year.

While everyone searched.

While his grandparents looked for him.

While Rebecca tried to leave clues.

While the Alliance tried to find him.

Another year.

My chest ached.

I continued.

“Eventually we uncovered enough information to direct his grandparents toward the Blue Flower Trail.”

The same trail.

The same flowers.

The same house.

The same rescue.

The story Mr. Sun had told us.

The letter ended with several final lines.

I could feel my heartbeat speeding up.

“Amber.”

“It is important that you remember something.”

I frowned.

Remember what?

“The Vincents are not a family.”

The words seemed to echo inside the car.

“They are a group.”

A pause.

“An organization.”

“An idea.”

“A network.”

I exchanged a look with Jason.

Because we already suspected that.

The next line surprised me.

But we have an Alliance.”

My breath caught.

“The Ember Alliance still exists.” 1

Jason sat upright.

I stared at the page.

Unable to move.

Unable to breathe.

Because for the first time since this nightmare started...

The letter wasn’t talking about enemies.

It was talking about allies.

The final sentence was written in darker ink.

As though the writer wanted to make absolutely certain we remembered it.

“You are not alone in this fight.”

Silence filled the car.

Neither Jason nor I spoke.

Because for years we had believed we were chasing ghosts.

Then we believed we were fighting a a family.

Then an organization.

And now...

For the first time...

We had proof that somewhere out there...

Someone else had been fighting the Vincents all along.

The letter rested on my lap.

Neither Jason nor I spoke for several minutes.

The ocean stretched endlessly before us, illuminated by the moonlight.

The photographs remained scattered across the dashboard.

Images of children we didn’t remember being.

Images of a place we didn’t remember knowing.

Images of a life neither of us could recall.

I picked up one of the photographs.

it, Jason was sitting on a stone wall.

I was beside him, holding what appeared to be a flower crown.

Both of us were smiling.

Happy.

Comfortable.

Safe.

I looked at Jason.

“Do you remember anything else?”

His gaze remained fixed on the ocean.

For a long moment, I thought he wouldn’t answer.

Then he sighed.

“No.”

The answer came quietly.

Almost reluctantly.

“I don’t remember the castle.”

A pause.

“I don’t remember you.”

Another pause.

“I don’t remember any of these pictures.”

My chest tightened.

Not because I blamed him.

Because I knew exactly how frustrating missing memories could be.

“What do you remember?”

Jason remained silent for several seconds.

When he finally spoke, his voice sounded distant.

As if he were describing someone else’s life.

“I remember working.”

The answer made my stomach twist.

“I remember cleaning.”

A pause.

following instructions.”

Another pause.

“Obeying.”

The sunrise hadn’t begun yet, but somehow the world felt darker.

Jason’s expression remained calm.

Too calm.

The kind of calm that only came from years of accepting something terrible.

“I didn’t have a name.”

My breath caught.

“What?” 1

He laughed softly.

A humorless sound.

“I wasn’t Jason.”

A pause.

“At least not there.”

Another pause.

“I was whatever they needed me to be.”

I stared at him.

He wasn’t looking at me anymore.

His eyes remained fixed on the horizon.

“I wasn’t treated like a child.”

A pause.

“Or a person.”

Another pause.

“I was an asset.”

The word felt wrong.

Cold.

Dehumanizing.

And yet I knew exactly what he meant.

+15 8chus

An investment.

Antool.

A future resource.

Not a little boy.

Not someone’s son.

Not someone’s grandson.

An asset.

I reached for his hand. 1

Without hesitation, he intertwined our fingers.

Neither of us spoke.

Because there wasn’t really anything to say.

What comfort existed for a child who had been treated like property?

None.

At least none that words could provide.

The first rays of sunlight slowly appeared on the horizon.

The ocean transformed from black to deep blue.

Then gold.

The sunrise over Sum was beautiful.

The kind of beauty that made everything seem possible.

For the first time since opening the letter, Jason smiled.

A small smile.

“We should probably go home.”

I looked toward the photographs.

Toward the letter.

Toward the words.

You are not alone in this fight.

For years we had believed we were uncovering a conspiracy.

Now we knew something far more important.

Others had fought before us.

Others had survived.

Others were still out there.

aiting.

Watching.

Helping.

The thought was strangely comforting.

I carefully placed the photographs back into the envelope.

Jason started the car.

Together we began the drive home.

To the castle.

To our children.

To our family.

The road wound through the mountains.

Morning light illuminated the forests surrounding the property.

When the castle finally appeared in the distance, I smiled.

The restored towers gleamed beneath the rising sun.

A week ago, it had simply been a castle.

Now it felt different.

Alive.

Connected.

As though it had been waiting for us all along.

Jason parked near the main entrance.

Several lights were already on.

Alice was probably awake.

Which meant everyone would be awake soon.

The thought made me laugh.

Jason looked amused.

“What?” 1

I shook my head.

“Nothing.”

A pause.

“I just realized we haven’t had a normal day in months.”

at made him laugh.

“A normal day?”

He looked toward the castle.

“The children turned a school into an international phenomenon.”

A pause.

“My grandmother built an educational empire.”

Another pause.

“You bought a castle.”

I nodded.

Fair point.

Normal was probably no longer an option.

As we walked toward the entrance, my mind shifted back to the problem waiting for us.

The historians.

One week.

Only one week remained before the Historical Alliance arrived.

The Vincents had challenged our ownership.

The inspection would determine whether their attempt succeeded or failed.

And somehow I doubted the castle was all they were interested in.

I glanced at the envelope tucked securely beneath my arm.

The Ember Alliance.

The photographs.

The truth hidden inside these walls.

The historians were coming to inspect a castle.

I had a feeling they were about to uncover something far more valuable.

And if the Vincents knew that...

The next week was going to be very interesting. :::

No longer aband

No longer abandoned

Amber POV

The day of the castle inspection arrived with the kind of tension that made even the morning light feel suspicious.

There were eight approved historians.

Only eight.

Originally, the Continental Historical Alliance had proposed fifteen. 1

Jason and I rejected seven.

Not politely.

Not vaguely.

We sent full evidence packets.

Bank transfers.

Emails.

Old photographs.

Consulting agreements.

Private invitations.

Proof that every rejected historian had some connection to the Vincent family.

Some were direct.

Others were buried beneath layers of foundations, advisory boards, academic grants, or “private cultural sponsorships.”

But they were there.

And I exposed every single one.

The Historical Alliance reacted within hours.

By the next morning, all seven had been removed from the inspection team.

By the next afternoon, they had lost their positions entirely.

Apparently academic institutions did not appreciate their historians being tied to a family legally banned from entering Sum.

Who knew?

Jason had been very amused.

Governor Henry had sent me a fruit basket.

Iris called it “professional violence.”

I considered that a compliment.

Every room included hidden cameras, audio capture, and security lockdown points.

The children were at the school under Mrs. Sun’s supervision, which honestly was probably safer than any military bunker.

Grandfather remained at the castle but under strict medical supervision, because apparently almost dying had not improved his ability to follow instructions.

Jason and I would handle the historians directly.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 250

Our battlefield.

Governor Henry arrived shortly before noon.

He looked cheerful, which meant he was either confident or pretending extremely well.

“Ready?” he asked.

“No,” I replied honestly.

Jason smiled faintly.

Henry laughed.

“Good. Nervous people pay attention.”

The airport was small but better maintained than the first time we had arrived. Improvements had already begun after the latest investment announcements. Fresh paint. New signage. Better security lanes.

Progress, apparently, happened quickly when several billionaires and an irritated governor were watching.

The historians arrived in two groups.

Four men.

Four women.

All carrying cases, tablets, cameras, and the solemn expressions of people who believed old stones deserved more respect than living politicians.

I liked them immediately.

Mostly.

The first six greeted us professionally.

The seventh looked tired but polite.

The eighth stepped off the plane like he already hated us.

Dr. Edmund Vale.

Restoration ethics specialist.

Aggressive reputation.

Aubundnod

Still, neither Jason nor I relaxed.

Because the Vincents would not let this inspection happen cleanly.

They would plant something.

Send someone.

Twist something.

The question was not if. 1

The question was how.

That morning, Jason and I reviewed every approved historian again while waiting near the castle’s main entrance.

Eight profiles were displayed across the wall screen.

Eight faces.

Eight academic histories.

Eight verified identities.

We had matched their travel documents.

Their university credentials.

Their published papers.

Their professional associations.

Their medical records.

Their public appearances.

Their family connections.

Everything.

And still, I felt uneasy.

Jason stood beside me, arms crossed, expression unreadable.

“You feel it too,” I said.

He nodded once.

“Yes.”

Something was coming.

We just did not know what shape it would take.

That was why we were prepared for all of them.

The castle had been swept three times.

The staff had been reduced to essential personnel only.

Excellent credentials.

confirmed Vincent connection.

But I did not like him.

Not one bit.

His eyes swept over me first, then Jason, then the governor.

He did not bow his head.

Did not offer a polite smile.

He simply said, “I hope the castle has not been damaged beyond recognition.”

Jason’s expression did not change.

Mine did.

I smiled.

The governor coughed suspiciously into his hand.

“We are happy to show you the property,” I said sweetly.

Dr. Vale’s mouth tightened.

Good.

The drive to the castle began smoothly.

The historians filled two SUVs. Jason, Henry, and I rode in the lead vehicle with Dr. Vale and a woman named Professor Alina Marek, who specialized in old noble estates and seemed far more interested in the landscape than the politics.

As we left the city behind, the terrain changed quickly.

Modern buildings gave way to winding roads, green hills, and glimpses of the distant mountain range.

The first structure visible from the road was the school.

Of course it was.

Mrs. Sun’s masterpiece stood proudly in the distance, its towers gleaming beneath the afternoon sun.

A miniature version of the castle.

Elegant.

Bright.

A little ridiculous.

Completely beautiful.

Professor Marek leaned toward the window with delight.

“Oh, that is charming.”

Dr. Vale’s head snapped toward the view.

Then he went rigid.

“What,” he said coldly, “is that?”

I blinked.

“The school.”

He turned toward me slowly.

“The school?”

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 251

“That is the castle.”

Jason closed his eyes for one second.

Only one.

But I saw it.

I knew he was praying for patience.

“No,” I said carefully. “That is a school.”

Dr. Vale’s voice rose.

“You moved children into the castle?”

Professor Marek frowned.

“Edmund-”

“You brought us here under false pretenses,” he snapped. “If children are housed inside the inspected structure, that changes access restrictions, safety protocols, and legal classifications.”

I stared at him.

Then at the school.

Then back at him.

“Dr. Vale,” I said slowly, “that is not the inspected structure.”

He pointed furiously toward the towers.

“It is identical.”

“No,” Jason said calmly. “It is inspired.”

“There are children inside!”

“It is a school,” I repeated.

His expression sharpened.

“You expect us to believe that?”

miled.

“Considering the sign in front says Sun-Asher Academy, yes.”

Professor Marek covered her mouth.

Possibly to hide a smile.

+158gnus

The governor looked delighted.

Dr. Vale did not.

He leaned forward, eyes blazing.

“This is highly irregular.”

“No,” Jason said. “It is architecture.”

I almost laughed.

Almost.

Dr. Vale glared at him.

“This could constitute obstruction.”

I finally lost patience.

“Dr. Vale, if you are accusing us of kidnapping because you cannot tell the difference between a restored castle and a newly built school with functioning glass windows, modern roofing, a parking lot, and children wearing uniforms, we are going to have a very long day.”

Silence filled the vehicle.

The governor made a small choking sound.

Professor Marek turned fully toward the window.

Her shoulders were shaking.

Jason looked straight ahead.

Too composed.

Far too composed.

He was laughing internally.

I knew it.

Dr. Vale sat back, face flushed.

“I will reserve judgment until we see the actual structure.”

“That would be wise,” I replied.

The car continued past the school.

Within minutes, the real castle appeared.

he mood shifted instantly.

Even Dr. Vale went quiet.

Because there it was.

Ember Castle.

Massive.

Ancient.

Restored but not erased.

Stone towers rising from the mountainside.

Ivy preserved across the outer wall.

Old windows repaired with historically accurate glass.

The structure looked as if it had woken from a long sleep, not been remade.

Professor Marek whispered, “Oh.”

That single sound carried reverence.

The kind of reverence I had hoped the castle would inspire.

Dr. Vale said nothing. 1

But I saw his expression.

For the first time since arriving, he looked uncertain.

Good.

The convoy stopped at the main gate.

Security surrounded the vehicles instantly.

The historians stepped out one by one, looking upward.

Even the aggressive ones.

Even the skeptical ones.

Even Dr. Vale.

The castle had that effect.

It demanded silence.

Jason came to stand beside me.

His hand brushed lightly against mine.

“You ready?” he asked softly.

No drget abondoned

ᵓY|

I looked at the eight historians.

the governor.

At the castle.

At the cameras hidden in every stone arch and restored window frame.

Then I smiled.

“Yes.”

Because if the Vincents had planted something inside this inspection, they were about to discover something very important.

The castle was no longer abandoned.

And neither were we.

+15 8cnus

A benchmark

Amber POV

The moment the historians stepped out of their vehicles, the inspection truly began.

And it became immediately obvious that Dr. Edmund Vale was determined to find something wrong.

Anything.

His eyes traveled over the outer walls.

The towers.

The restored battlements.

The stonework.

Then he turned sharply toward me.

“What materials were used for the exterior restoration?”

No greeting.

No pleasantries.

Straight to the interrogation.

I smiled politely.

“Good afternoon to you as well, Dr. Vale.”

His jaw tightened.

The governor suddenly found the sky fascinating.

Jason looked away.

Which meant he was hiding amusement.

Dr. Vale ignored my comment.

“The stone appears original.”

“It is.”

“The mortar?”

“Restored.”

“The roofing?”

“Restored.”

“The windows?”

“Restored.”

His eye twitched slightly.

A bemention

Clearly that wasn’t the detailed answer he wanted.

Meanwhile, Professor Alina Marek was having a completely different experience.

Unlike Dr. Vale, she wasn’t looking for flaws.

She was looking at history.

Her eyes moved across every archway.

Every tower.

Every decorative carving.

She approached one of the outer walls.

Then simply stood there.

Staring.

Finally she whispered:

“Oh, this is beautiful.”

A nearby historian immediately nodded.

“The stone matches perfectly.”

Another adjusted his glasses.

“The weathering patterns were preserved.”

A third appeared genuinely impressed.

The second vehicle finally arrived carrying the remaining historians.

The moment they saw the castle, the conversation exploded.

Questions came from every direction.

“What type of mortar?”

“Where did you source the replacement stone?”

“Was laser mapping used?”

“Did you preserve the drainage channels?”

“What about structural reinforcement?”

“Original foundation?”

Everyone was speaking at once.

The governor looked overwhelmed.

Jason looked entertained.

I looked toward the castle entrance.

+158cnus

Then smiled.

Would everyone like to meet the architect responsible for the project?”

Silence.

Instant silence.

Several heads turned immediately.

“You have the lead architect here?”

I nodded.

“Of course.”

Dr. Vale folded his arms.

“I would.”

The way he said it made it sound less like interest and more like a challenge.

Which was unfortunate.

Because Stacy Archer loved challenges.

Two minutes later, she emerged from the castle.

And immediately looked offended.

Stacy Archer was twenty-eight years old.

Brilliant.

Terrifying.

The youngest restoration specialist ever awarded the Continental Preservation Medal.

She was also fiercely protective of her work.

The moment she heard the Historical Alliance was questioning the restoration, she had demanded to attend personally.

She stopped beside me.

Crossed her arms.

And looked directly at Dr. Vale.

“You’re the one who questioned my restoration?”

Oh dear.

Jason slowly stepped backward.

The governor did the same.

Smart men.

Dr. Vale blinked.

“You are Stacy Archer?”

She looked offended.

“Yes.”

A pause.

“Disappointed?”

Professor Marek nearly laughed.

One of the historians immediately recognized her.

His eyes widened.

“Wait.”

He pointed.

“You’re that Stacy Archer.”

Stacy sighed dramatically.

“Unfortunately.”

Several historians immediately became excited.

One even pulled out a notebook.

Dr. Vale’s confidence visibly weakened.

Dr.

Only slightly.

But enough for me to notice.

Stacy looked around the group.

“Before we begin.”

A pause.

“I would like to clarify something.”

Everyone listened.

“The restoration process followed historical preservation standards at ninety-eight percent accuracy.”

Silence.

Ninety-eight percent.

That was absurdly high.

“The remaining two percent was required for safety regulations.”

Another pause.

“Because unlike some people, I prefer not having visitors fall through medieval flooring.”

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 252

Professor Marek laughed openly.

Vale did not.

The tour began.

Room by room.

Hall by hall.

Tower by tower.

And the historians slowly stopped looking skeptical.

The entrance hall.

The ballroom.

The libraries.

The guest suites.

The council chambers.

Every space preserved.

Every detail restored.

Original woodwork repaired.

Ancient stone reinforced.

Historical artwork protected.

The historians examined everything.

And found nothing.

Absolutely nothing.

One historian ran his fingers along an ancient banister.

“Incredible.”

Another inspected a restored fireplace.

“This should be a teaching site.”

A third spent nearly twenty minutes studying a single ceiling mural.

Professor Marek looked increasingly emotional.

By the time we reached the western tower, she had completely abandoned professionalism.

“This is extraordinary.”

She turned toward Stacy.

“You preserved everything.”

+15 @cnus

Stacy looked pleased.

much as possible.”

Professor Marek shook her head.

“No.”

A pause.

“You improved access while preserving authenticity.”

The distinction mattered.

A lot.

Dr. Vale remained silent.

Which was suspicious. 1

Because people like him usually had opinions.

Many opinions.

Yet as the inspection continued, he spoke less and less.

Not because he wanted to.

Because there was nothing to criticize.

The castle wasn’t merely restored.

It was exemplary.

ļ

The kind of project historians dreamed about.

The kind of project future students would study.

By the time we reached the grand library, even the most skeptical experts looked impressed.

One elderly historian removed his glasses.

Then simply stared around the room.

“I’ve spent forty years evaluating historical sites.”

The room fell silent.

“I have never seen anything preserved this carefully.”

Several others nodded immediately.

Even Professor Marek.

Especially Professor Marek.

She looked around the library with shining eyes.

“This should become a preservation benchmark.”

The compliment landed heavily.

Because everyone in the room knew exactly what that meant.

A benchmark.

A standard.

An example.

Stacy Archer practically glowed.

Dr. Vale remained quiet.

Far too quiet.

That bothered me.

Because while everyone else was admiring the castle...

He kept watching people.

The staff.

The guards.

The historians.

Jason noticed it too.

Our eyes met briefly.

A silent understanding passing between us.

The inspection was going too well.

Far too well.

The Vincents hadn’t sent people across continents just to lose.

Which meant the real attack hadn’t happened yet.

And as Dr. Vale’s gaze briefly lingered on a locked corridor leading deeper into the castle, a cold feeling settled in my stomach.

Because suddenly I knew.

The inspection had never been about the restoration.

The castle itself wasn’t the target.

Something hidden inside it was.

Undercover

Amber POV

The inspection had barely reached the halfway point when my phone started vibrating.

Once.

Twice.

Then continuously.

I frowned.

That was never a good sign.

Jason noticed immediately.

“What happened?”

I checked the caller ID.

Pamela.

Definitely not a good sign.

I answered immediately.

“Pamela?”

Her voice exploded through the speaker.

“Amber, we have a problem.”

Of course we did.

I stepped away from the historians.

“What kind of problem?”

Silence.

Then:

“The castle.”

My stomach dropped.

“What about it?”

Pamela sighed.

“Someone posted images online.”

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 253

The futuristic ones.”

My stomach dropped even further. 1

The images Alice, Rose, and Iris had created.

The bait.

The trap.

The fake version of Ember Castle.

Glass towers.

Neon lighting.

Futuristic bridges.

Holographic displays.

The trap we had prepared for the Vincents.

“What happened?”

Pamela sounded exhausted.

“The images are everywhere.”

A pause.

“They’re claiming that’s what you actually did to the castle.”

I closed my eyes.

Of course they were.

“The public?”

“Outraged.”

Wonderful.

Absolutely wonderful.

“They’re demanding the Ashers leave Sum.”

Another pause.

“They want the castle returned.”

I rubbed my forehead.

Around me, the historians continued examining the library.

None of them noticed my expression changing.

Except Jason.

He immediately walked over.

What happened?”

I handed him the phone.

His face darkened within seconds.

“Interesting.”

That was Jason’s version of furious.

I took my laptop from my bag.

If someone wanted a public relations war, they had chosen the wrong battlefield.

Ten minutes later, I had the answer.

Actually…

Nine minutes.

The culprit wasn’t particularly careful.

Which surprised me.

The account had been hidden behind layers of false identities.

VPNs.

Private servers.

Proxy networks.

Professional.

But not professional enough.

I followed the trail.

Then stopped.

No.

That couldn’t be right.

I checked again.

Then a third time.

The answer remained the same.

I slowly looked up.

Toward Professor Alina Marek.

Who was currently admiring a centuries-old bookshelf.

My stomach twisted.

“It was her.”

Jason looked up.

“Who?”

I pointed discreetly.

“Professor Marek.”

His expression became unreadable.

“You’re certain?”

I rotated the screen.

“One hundred percent.”

Jason cursed softly.

That was unexpected.

Very unexpected.

Because Marek had seemed genuinely impressed.

Then again…

Appearances could be deceiving.

A voice interrupted us.

“You figured it out quickly.”

Jason and I spun around.

Dr. Vale stood behind us.

Completely calm.

For the first time all day, he wasn’t pretending to be angry.

His entire demeanor had changed.

Gone was the aggressive historian.

Gone was the skeptic.

Gone was the critic.

The man standing before us looked older.

Sharper.

Dangerous.

Jason immediately stepped in front of me.

Dr. Vale laughed.

“Relax.”

Apause.

“If I wanted to hurt you, I wouldn’t have spent six hours defending Stacy Archer’s restoration methods.”

Fair point.

Still.

Neither of us relaxed.

Dr. Vale looked around briefly.

Then reached inside his coat.

Jason tensed instantly.

The governor’s security team noticed.

Everyone noticed.

Then Dr. Vale pulled out…

A map.

A very old map.

Yellowed parchment.

Folded carefully.

Handled countless times.

He handed it directly to me.

I stared at it.

“What is this?”

His expression softened.

“A family heirloom.” 2

That answer raised more questions than it answered.

Then he quietly said:

“I am part of the Ember Alliance.”

The world stopped.

Jason froze.

I froze.

Everything froze.

“What?”

Dr. Vale smiled faintly.

The real reason I’m here.”

My pulse quickened.

“You know about the Alliance?”

He laughed.

“My family has served it for five generations.”

Five generations.

Long before any of us were born.

Long before the Vincents targeted our families.

Long before the castle was abandoned.

Everything suddenly made sense.

“The act.”

I looked at him.

“The hostility.”

He nodded.

“Necessary.”

A pause.

“Professor Marek travels with me regularly.”

Another pause.

“We suspected someone within the Historical Association was compromised.”

My stomach dropped.

“Marek.”

Dr. Vale nodded.

“We needed her to believe I was not with you.”

The pieces clicked together.

Every argument.

Every criticism.

Every complaint.

All deliberate.

A cover.

Dr. Vale pointed toward the map.

More importantly.”

Tunfolded it.

And immediately felt my breath catch.

The castle.

Not the public version.

Not the architectural version.

A hidden version.

Passages.

Chambers.

Rooms.

Tunnels.

And near the center...

A symbol.

A treasury.

My eyes widened.

“The hidden treasury.”

Dr. Vale nodded.

“The Vincents have been searching for it for generations.”

Jason stared at the map.

“Why?”

Dr. Vale smiled. 1

“Because whatever is inside terrifies them.”

Silence.

Absolute silence.

Then my phone rang again.

Pamela.

The outrage online was spreading.

Good.

Very good.

N

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 254

Because suddenly I knew exactly what to do.

We need a press conference.”

Jason looked at me.

I smiled.

“A big one.”

An hour later, cameras lined the castle entrance.

News crews arrived from across Sum.

Government officials gathered.

Tourists stopped.

The entire country watched.

Professor Marek stood among the historians.

Completely unaware that we knew.

Good.

Let the mole feel comfortable.

For now.

I stepped onto the platform constructed before the main gates.

Jason beside me.

Governor Henry nearby.

Stacy Archer looking ready to challenge anyone who questioned her work.

Then Dr. Vale approached the microphone.

The crowd fell silent.

“The Continental Historical Association has completed its preliminary review.”

A pause.

“We have reached a conclusion.”

Thousands waited.

Dr. Vale smiled. 1

“Ember Castle represents the finest restoration project I have seen in my lifetime.”

The crowd erupted.

The cameras flashed.

Reporters shouted questions.

Dr. Vale continued.

The Association formally recognizes Ember Castle as…”

A dramatic pause.

“The Restoration of the Century.”

The applause echoed across the mountains.

And somewhere in the crowd, I saw Professor Marek’s face lose all color.

Good.

Because the game had just changed.

And for the first time…

The Ember Alliance had finally stepped onto the board.

Never been tested

Amber POV

The press conference was declared a complete success.

The Historical Association publicly supported the castle.

The restoration had been recognized as the Restoration of the Century.

The public outrage disappeared almost immediately.

The fake images were exposed.

The castle remained ours.

And for the first time in weeks, it felt like we had won.

Or at least that’s what I thought.

As the reporters continued asking questions, I noticed Jason’s phone vibrate.

Once.

Twice.

Then three times in quick succession.

His expression changed.

Only slightly.

Most people wouldn’t have noticed.

I did.

Jason looked down at the screen.

And went completely still.

The change lasted less than a second.

Then he smiled.

A perfectly polite smile.

A dignified smile.

A professional smile.

A fake smile.

My stomach tightened.

I knew Jason.

He wasn’t the kind of person who panicked.

He wasn’t dramatic.

N

He wasn’t impulsive.

Which meant whatever was on that screen mattered.

A lot. Alot.

I didn’t ask.

Not there.

Not in front of cameras.

Not in front of reporters.

If Jason wanted to tell me, he would.

The conference ended an hour later.

The historians departed.

The reporters left.

The governor returned to the city.

The castle slowly became quiet again.

For the first time in what felt like months.

No emergency meetings.

No investigations.

No attacks.

No conspiracies.

Just silence.

Jason and I found ourselves sitting in the gardens behind the castle.

The night sky stretched endlessly above us.

Stars covered the mountains.

The air felt cool.

Peaceful.

For several minutes neither of us spoke.

We simply sat together.

Enjoying the quiet.

Eventually Jason exhaled.

A long breath.

The kind someone takes before saying something difficult.

-YI

Without a word, he handed me his tablet.

rowned.

“What is it?”

His expression tightened.

“Just read it.”

That immediately worried me.

I took the device.

The page loading on the screen looked familiar.

A gossip site.

One of the larger ones.

I almost rolled my eyes.

Then I started reading.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 255

The headline was impossible to miss.

SUN HEIR HIDING SECRET MEDICAL CONDITION?

My stomach dropped.

Below it were screenshots.

Hospital records.

Medical notes.

Claims.

Speculation.

The article claimed Jason could not have children.

I blinked.

Then read it again.

And again.

The article was absurd.

Yet somehow detailed enough to feel dangerous.

I looked up.

Jason wasn’t looking at me.

His eyes remained fixed on the stars.

For the first time all day....

the first time all week...

For the first time in months....

He looked nervous.

Actually nervous.

Not angry.

Not irritated.

Nervous.

It startled me.

Because Jason faced billion-dollar negotiations without blinking.

He faced assassination attempts with less concern than he currently had.

“Jason.”

My voice softened.

“Is it true?”

He remained quiet for several seconds.

Then slowly shook his head.

“I don’t know.”

I blinked.

“What?”

A humorless laugh escaped him.

“I honestly don’t know.”

He finally looked at me.

And for the first time I could see how much this had affected him.

“I’ve never been tested.”

That surprised me.

The article was presenting everything as established fact.

As certainty.

And yet…

He had never even been evaluated.

“Then how would they know?”

Jason’s expression darkened.

That’s exactly the problem.”

A’pause.

“They shouldn’t.”

My mind immediately started working through possibilities.

Hospital records.

Medical databases.

Insurance systems.

Someone had fabricated information.

Or someone wanted him to believe it.

Neither possibility made me happy.

I set the tablet aside.

Then moved closer.

Close enough that our shoulders touched.

Jason looked surprised.

I took his hand.

“Listen to me.”

His eyes met mine.

Carefully.

Like he was bracing himself.

“As far as I’m concerned…”

I squeezed his fingers.

“It doesn’t matter.”

His expression softened slightly.

I continued.

“If it’s true.”

A pause.

“If it isn’t true.”

Another pause.

“If you have children.”

“If you don’t.”

emiled.

“You’re still Jason.”

The tension in his shoulders eased slightly.

Not completely.

But enough.

“Nothing changes that.”

For a moment he didn’t respond.

Then his hand tightened around mine.

A small gesture.

But an important one.

I tilted my head.

“Although.”

Jason narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

That made me smile.

“If you’d like…”

A pause.

“We could make an appointment.”

His eyebrows rose.

“With a doctor?”

“With a doctor.”

Another pause.

“Preferably one that isn’t secretly employed by the Vincents.”

That finally made him laugh.

A real laugh.

Not a fake one.

Not a polite one.

A genuine laugh.

“I’d appreciate that.”

“Good.”

I leaned back slightly.

Because another thought had just occurred to me.

A’very troubling thought.

“Jason.”

“Hmm?”

I picked up the tablet again.

Staring at the supposed medical records.

Then looked back at him.

“You’ve never been tested.”

“No.”

“These records shouldn’t exist.”

“No.”

I felt a cold chill run through me.

Because suddenly the article wasn’t the important part.

The records were.

Someone had access to information they shouldn’t have.

Or worse.

Someone was creating information that never existed.

And considering who our enemies were…

Neither possibility felt reassuring.

I glanced toward the castle towering above us.

Toward the hidden passages.

Toward the map.

Toward the Ember Alliance.

Then back at the tablet.

The Vincents had just lost a battle.

Which meant they were trying something new.

And somehow...

I had a feeling this wasn't really about Jason's ability to have children at all.

It was about making him doubt himself.

And that made me far angrier than the article ever could.

both or none

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 256

Amber POV

The weeks following the inspection passed in a blur.

For once, it wasn't because someone was trying to kill us.

It was because Mrs. Sun had discovered what every powerful family in the world eventually learns.

Children were terrifying.

Particularly when given a project.

The school was opening.

Finally.

And Mrs. Sun was in her element.

I'd seen billion-dollar mergers create less chaos than this school.

Teachers were arriving.

Students were arriving.

Parents were arriving.

Dorm assignments were being finalized.

Uniforms were being distributed.

Schedules were being updated hourly.

And somehow, Mrs. Sun loved every second of it.

The school grounds buzzed with excitement.

Children from dozens of influential families had already begun moving into the dormitories.

Some came with entire entourages.

Others arrived with nervous parents.

A few arrived looking more terrified than their children.

The boarding houses were ready.

The classrooms were ready.

The laboratories were ready.

The athletic fields were ready.

The students?

The students were ecstatic.

Particularly Alice.

+15 8chus

And Alex.

Because Mrs. Sun had made a decision.

A decision that shocked absolutely nobody.

She had selected them to give the opening speech.

“They’re children.”

I had pointed out.

“Exactly.”

Mrs. Sun had replied.

Apparently that was sufficient explanation.

Jason had wisely chosen not to get involved.

The inauguration was only three days away.

The entire continent seemed to be talking about the school.

Unfortunately…

They were also talking about something else.

Jason.

The rumors hadn’t disappeared.

If anything, they had become worse.

Every gossip column.

Every entertainment site.

Every social media account.

All discussing the same thing.

Jason’s supposed infertility.

The speculation became increasingly ridiculous.

One article claimed that was why Jason adopted Alice and Alex.

Another suggested the Sun family line would end with him.

A third argued I should divorce him immediately to preserve the Asher bloodline.

That one nearly got my laptop thrown into a wall.

Millions of comments.

Millions of opinions.

Millions of strangers discussing my marriage.

As though they had a vote.

e rumors affected everyone.

Jason.

The children.

Me.

Alice had innocently asked why people wanted us to stop being a family.

That conversation nearly broke my heart.

Alex had responded by threatening to hack three news websites.

Which was somehow both concerning and adorable.

Jason pretended the rumors didn’t bother him.

Pretended.

Because I knew him.

I noticed the way he paused when conversations shifted toward family.

Toward children.

Toward the future.

I noticed the way he avoided certain articles.

The way he grew quieter.

The way his smile occasionally slipped.

And I hated it.

Not because of the rumors.

Because he was facing them alone.

At least that’s what he thought.

Three days before the school inauguration, I finally made a decision.

I picked up my phone.

And called an old friend.

Doctor Michael Reed.

One of the best fertility specialists in the country.

Someone I trusted.

Someone who had known me for years.

The conversation lasted less than five minutes.

+15 8çnus

both bone

By the end of it, we had appointments.

he following morning, Jason and I boarded a private flight.

Back to our home country.

Neither of us informed the media.

Naturally, they found out anyway.

The clinic occupied the upper floors of a private medical center overlooking the city.

Elegant.

Discreet.

Expensive.

Exactly the kind of place wealthy people used when they didn’t want questions.

Unfortunately for us, questions followed us everywhere.

Jason looked confused as we entered.

Then suspicious.

Then surprised.

“Wait.”

I smiled.

“What?”

His eyes narrowed.

“You’re checking in too.”

“Yes.”

The surprise on his face almost made me laugh.

“What?”

I shrugged.

“Seems fair.”

Jason stared.

“Amber.”

I crossed my arms.

“What?”

A long silence followed.

Then he sighed.

both of

“You don’t have to do that.”

e answer came immediately.

“Yes, I do.”

His expression softened.

I continued before he could argue.

“You don’t know.”

A pause.

“I don’t know.”

Another pause.

“We’re either both getting tested or neither of us is.”

Jason looked away.

For a brief moment, emotion crossed his face.

Raw.

Unfiltered.

The kind he rarely showed anyone.

“You really mean that.”

I reached for his hand.

“Of course I do.”

His fingers tightened around mine.

Neither of us spoke.

Because some things didn’t need words.

The receptionist called our names.

We began walking toward the elevators.

And that’s when the camera flashes started.

I froze.

Jason cursed softly.

Outside the glass entrance, reporters had gathered.

Photographers.

News crews.

Social media influencers.

The entire circus.

Someone had tipped them off. 1

Of course they had.

Cameras flashed repeatedly.

The images spread online before we even reached the examination floor.

Headlines appeared within minutes.

JASON SUN VISITS FERTILITY CLINIC

AMBER ASHER ACCOMPANIES HUSBAND

POWER COUPLE SEEKING ANSWERS?

The speculation exploded.

Millions of views.

Millions of comments.

Millions of assumptions.

I looked at my phone.

Then laughed.

Jason blinked.

“What?”

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 257

I showed him one headline.

His eyes widened.

Then he groaned.

The article claimed I was already pregnant.

Another claimed we were separating.

A third claimed we were secretly adopting triplets.

I shook my head.

“The internet is exhausting.”

Jason actually smiled.

For the first time in days.

A genuine smile.

And as the elevator doors opened, carrying us toward whatever answers awaited us, I squeezed his hand.

No matter what the results said.

No matter what the rumors claimed.

matter what the world thought.

We would face it together.

And for the first time since the story broke...

I think Jason finally believed that too.

get t

+15 8çnus

Unexpected

Amber POV

If someone had told me a year ago that I would one day be sitting inside a fertility clinic with Jason Sun, I would have laughed in their face.

If they had told me that Jason would somehow be more embarrassed than Iwas?

I would have laughed even harder.

And yet there we were.

The nurse smiled politely.

“Mr. Sun, we’ll begin with a few standard tests.”

Jason nodded.

The nurse looked toward me.

“Mrs. Sun, you can wait in the consultation room if you’d like.”

“No.”

The answer came instantly.

Everyone looked at Jason.

Including me.

The nurse blinked.

“I’m sorry?”

Jason cleared his throat.

“She stays.”

The nurse looked confused.

I looked delighted.

Jason looked mortified. 1

My friend Michael looked like he was trying not to laugh.

“Jason.”

I raised an eyebrow.

“You know I’ve seen you bleeding, injured, half-conscious and covered in dirt.”

A pause.

“You draw the line at a fertility clinic?”

His expression became even redder.

“Amber.”

aspored

That only made me laugh.

Unfortunately for him, things became progressively worse.

The nurses asked questions.

Personal questions.

Very personal questions.

Questions that apparently existed solely to make Jason regret every decision that had led him here/

By the time they finished, his ears were bright red.

Mine probably weren’t much better.

Then came the sperm sample discussion.

I watched Jason freeze.

Completely.

Absolutely.

Frozen.

The nurse smiled professionally.

“We’ll need a sample.”

Silence.

Jason looked at her.

Then at me.

Then at Michael.

Then back at me.

His expression suggested he would rather fight another assassination attempt.

“I see.”

His voice sounded strangled.

The nurse nodded.

“And Mrs. Sun can wait outside while–”

“No.”

Again.

Instantly.

The poor nurse looked completely confused now.

Jason took my hand.

unpacked

Firmly.

She’s staying

I laughed so hard I nearly fell out of my chair.

“Jason!”

He looked genuinely offended.

“I’m already here.”

A pause.

“You are not abandoning me.”

Michael actually walked out of the room.

Apparently to preserve what remained of his professionalism.

By the time the sample situation was resolved, both of us were bright red.

The nurses were trying very hard not to smile.

And I was never letting Jason live this down.

Ever.

Then it was my turn.

Ultrasound.

Bloodwork.

Hormone testing.

Medical history.

Jason accompanied me through every single step.

Which was oddly comforting.

The entire reason we had come was because of him.

Yet somehow he never once made it about himself.

When the ultrasound technician entered, Jason immediately moved beside me.

Holding my hand.

Watching the screen.

Listening carefully.

The technician smiled.

“You two are adorable.”

That made both of us blush.

Onexpected

Again.

By the time everything was completed, we were exhausted.

Michael finally entered the consultation room carrying several files.

“Good news.”

Jason sat up immediately.

“Which is?”

Michael smiled.

“Everything looks normal.”

Relief crossed Jason’s face.

Actual relief.

The kind he rarely allowed himself.

“But.”

I groaned.

“There is always a but.”

Michael laughed.

“There is.”

He sat down across from us.

“The remaining results normally take up to two weeks.”

Jason frowned.

“Two weeks?”

Michael shook his head.

“Normally.”

A pause.

“But I already have everything here.”

Another pause.

“And I’m running them personally.”

I blinked.

“You’re expediting them?”

He smiled.

“For you two?”

C

A shrug.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 258

The next few hours passed slowly.

Jason worked from his tablet.

I answered emails.

Neither of us talked much.

The possibility that something was wrong had weighed more heavily on us than either wanted to admit.

When Michael finally returned, his expression was strange.

Very strange.

Not concerned.

Not worried.

Confused.

Almost amused.

Jason immediately noticed.

“So?”

Michael sat down.

Placed a folder on the table.

And looked directly at us.

“The rumors are false.”

I exhaled.

Jason closed his eyes briefly.

The tension in the room instantly lessened.

Michael continued.

“Jason.”

A pause.

“There is absolutely nothing wrong with you.”

Jason looked stunned. 1

“What?”

“You’re perfectly healthy.”

I smiled.

The relief on his face made everything worth it.

Then Michael looked at me.

And suddenly I knew.

Something was coming

Because that was the exact expression doctors used before delivering unexpected news.

“Amber.”

My stomach dropped.

“What?”

Michael looked between us.

Then laughed.

Actually laughed.

“Honestly?”

He shook his head.

“You two are unbelievable.”

Jason frowned.

“What does that mean?”

Michael slid another report across the desk.

Then pointed at a line near the top.

I looked down.

Read it once.

Then twice.

Then a third time.

My brain refused to process the words.

Impossible.

Completely impossible.

Beside me, Jason grabbed the report.

Read it.

Then froze.

The room became silent.

Very silent.

Finally Michael leaned back in his chair.

And smiled.

“Congratulations.”

Neither of us spoke.

Because we were still staring at the report.

The report that explained everything.

The report that changed everything.

The report that clearly stated:

Positive Pregnancy Test.

My hands began shaking.

“No.”

Michael laughed.

“Yes.”

Jason looked at me.

I looked at Jason.

Neither of us knew what to say.

Because after all the rumors.

After all the articles.

After all the gossip.

After all the speculation.

The truth was somehow even more ridiculous.

There had never been a problem.

And apparently...

Without either of us realizing it...

We were already expecting a baby.

U

A mix

Amber POV

The drive from the clinic should have been simple.

It wasn’t.

Neither Jason nor I spoke as we walked through the private medical center.

The folder containing our results rested inside my bag.

It felt strangely heavy.

Not because of the paper.

Because of what it meant.

A baby.

The thought still didn’t feel real.

My mind kept circling the same words.

Pregnant.

Baby.

Family.

Our baby.

Every time I thought about it, my brain seemed to freeze.

Jason wasn't doing much better.

He walked beside me in complete silence.

One hand resting protectively against my back.

The elevator doors opened.

We stepped into the lobby.

And immediately regretted it.

Flashes exploded.

Reporters.

Photographers.

Cameras.

Apparently the media had multiplied while we were upstairs.

Wonderful.

Questions came from every direction.

"Mrs. Sun!"

Mr. Sun!"

"Are

"Are the rumors true?"

"Did the tests confirm anything?"

"Are you pursuing fertility treatment?"

"Do you plan to adopt more children?"

"Are you separating?"

I honestly had no idea how those questions were connected.

Neither of us answered.

Jason simply took my hand.

And guided me toward the exit.

The flashes intensified.

Then everything happened at once.

Someone pushed forward.

A woman.

A reporter.

Or maybe just an overly enthusiastic photographer.

I never found out.

She collided directly into me.

Hard.

Before I could react, Jason moved.

Fast.

Very fast.

One moment he was beside me.

The next he was standing between us.

Blocking her completely.

His arm wrapped around my shoulders.

Pulling me backward.

Instinctively.

My hands moved to my stomach.

+15 8ch

8gnus

Protecting.

Shielding.

The motion happened without thought.

Without planning.

Without hesitation.

The flashes intensified immediately.

Of course they did.

The photographers practically lost their minds.

More cameras.

More shouting.

More pictures.

Jason’s expression darkened.

“Move.”

The single word carried enough authority to part a crowd.

Security finally intervened.

Within seconds we were inside the waiting vehicle.

The doors slammed shut.

Silence.

Blessed silence.

The car pulled away.

Only then did I realize my hands were still resting over my stomach.

I slowly lowered them.

Jason noticed. 1

Neither of us spoke about it.

Because we both understood why.

The city passed outside the windows.

Minutes stretched by.

Then finally Jason broke the silence.

“So.”

I looked at him.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 259

Hopeful.

Almost disbelieving.

“A baby.”

The words sounded unreal coming from him.

He smiled.

A genuine smile.

“We’re having a baby.”

His voice softened further.

“A little mix of both of us.”

I stared at him.

Then looked out the window again.

Taking my time.

Thinking.

Because while Jason looked happy…

I felt something else.

Fear.

Not because I didn’t want the baby.

Because I already did.

Far too much.

And that terrified me.

“Jason.”

My voice sounded smaller than I intended.

“Hmm?”

I looked down at my hands.

“It’s dangerous.”

The smile faded slightly.

“What is?” 1

“This.”

AITHE

A pause.

The baby.”

Silence.1

I forced myself to continue.

“What if something happens?”

The words felt ridiculous.

But they wouldn’t leave my head.

The Vincents.

The attacks.

The conspiracies.

The kidnappings.

The poisonings.

Our lives weren’t exactly calm.

“What if they become a target?”

Jason’s expression softened.

Immediately.

The way it always did when I was worried.

“Amber.”

He took my hand.

“Everything will be okay.’

I laughed.

Not because it was funny.

Because it sounded impossible.

“We’re not exactly normal people.”

“No.”

“People keep trying to kill us.”

“Also true.”

I looked at him.

“We already have children.”

Jason nodded.

Ama

“Exactly.”

Nointed at him.

“That’s not helping.”

He laughed.

“We know how to be parents.”

“Babies are different.”

The answer came instantly.

Alex and Alice could communicate with watches.

Rose had helped create a misinformation campaign.

Iris had emergency code systems.

They were all brilliant.

Terrifyingly brilliant.

And now...

Now there was going to be another one.

I buried my face in my hands.

Jason immediately became concerned.

“What?”

I pointed dramatically.

“You.”

Then at myself.

“Me.”

Then at my stomach.

“Baby.”

Jason blinked.

I continued.

“Do you understand the problem?”

“No.”

“The baby will be a combination of both of us.”

He still looked confused.

I stared at him.

+15 8çnus

“Jason.”

Apause.

“It’s like combining Alex and Alice.”

The realization hit him.

Immediately.

“Oh.”

“Exactly.”

We sat there.

Thinking about that.

Then Jason groaned.

“We’ll need nannies.”

I nodded.

“Several.”

“A team.”

“A small army.”

Jason looked horrified.

I laughed.

For the first time since leaving the clinic.

Then I sighed.

“At least the school is set for life.”

That made Jason laugh too.

My phone rang.

Pamela.

Of course.

I answered immediately.

“Please tell me the world isn’t ending.”

Pamela snorted.

“Depends.”

That wasn’t reassuring.

“What happened?”

+15 8chus

“The news.”

course.

“The news is plastering your picture everywhere.”

I frowned.

“What picture?”

“The one outside the clinic.”

A pause.

“The one where you’re holding your stomach.”

My eyes widened.

Oh.

Pamela continued.

“They’re speculating you’re pregnant.”

I rolled my eyes.

“That’s ridiculous.”

Jason started laughing.

Which wasn’t helping.

Pamela sighed dramatically.

“Exactly what I said.”

I opened my mouth.

Then paused.

Then looked at Jason.

Then at my stomach.

Then back at Jason.

Suddenly the situation felt very different.

Pamela was still talking.

Something about headlines.

Something about gossip sites.

Something about public relations.

I interrupted.

“Pamela.”

“What?”

tared out the window.

Completely serious.

“What exactly am I supposed to do with a baby?”

Silence. 1

Complete silence.

Then Pamela screamed.

Loud enough that Jason heard it from across the car.

P

X

get it

A little lie

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 260

The flight back to Sum should have been peaceful.

Should have.

Instead, I spent most of it staring at my phone.

Specifically at a video interview that had gone viral while we were still in the air.

Victoria.

Jason’s former fiancée.

I had almost forgotten she existed.

Almost.

Apparently the media hadn’t.

She sat in a tasteful living room.

Perfect makeup.

Perfect posture.

Perfect expression.

The image of concern.

The image of grace.

The image of a saint.

“I don’t think it’s my place to comment on Jason’s private life.”

That sentence alone told me she was absolutely going to comment on Jason’s private life.

The interviewer nodded sympathetically.

Victoria sighed.

“I will only say that yes, Jason has faced some difficulties concerning having children.”

My grip tightened around the phone.

She continued.

“But I hope everyone gives him privacy while he faces this particular battle.”

I nearly laughed.

Not because it was funny.

Because it was infuriating.

It was the perfect statement.

+15 Bgrad

Compassionate.

concerned.

Supportive.

And completely darnaging.

The interviewer looked moved.

Victoria lowered her eyes.

“I think Amber must really love him.”

I groaned.

There it was.

The killing blow.

The part she actually wanted people to remember.

“To place her entire family line at risk of disappearing…”

A pause.

“That is true devotion.”

I closed the video.

Slowly.

Carefully.

Because if I watched one more second, I might throw my phone through the aircraft window.

Jason glanced over.

“Bad?”

I handed him the phone.

His expression became increasingly blank the longer he watched.

That was somehow worse than anger.

When the video ended, he handed the phone back.

“I see.”

I stared at him.

“That’s all?”

Jason shrugged.

“What would you like me to say?”

A pause.

15 8ghus

“She’s manipulating public opinion.”

Exactly.

I stood up. 1

Jason immediately became suspicious.

“What are you doing?”

I grabbed my tablet.

“Ending this.”

Twenty minutes later I was sitting in one of the private sections of the aircraft.

Camera positioned.

Lighting adjusted.

Hair acceptable.

Jason sat across from me watching quietly.

I pressed record.

And spoke.

“Hello everyone.”

No script.

No public relations team.

No prepared statement.

Just me.

“I’ve seen a lot of discussions lately regarding fertility, family lines, and personal worth.”

I paused.

Then continued.

“And honestly?”

A small smile.

“I think we’ve lost perspective.”

I leaned forward slightly.

“A person’s value does not depend on whether they can have children.”

The words came easily.

Because I meant every one of them.

“It depends on their character.”

+15 Benus

“Their morals.”

Their kindness.”

“Their integrity.”

“The support they give their loved ones.”

“The person they choose to be.”

I thought about Jason.

About the man who sat with me through hospital stays.

The man who protected children who weren't biologically his.

The man who spent years helping people who would never know his name.

"A person is not worth less because they cannot have children."

A pause.

"Nor are they worth less if they simply choose not to."

I sat back slightly.

"Jason and I recently underwent medical testing."

That part was technically true.

"We had never done so before."

Also true.

"And we will receive official results in approximately two weeks."

A little lie.

One very necessary lie.

"Until then, I would ask everyone to stop treating fertility as a measure of someone's worth."

I smiled softly.

"Thank you."

Then I ended the recording.

Uploaded it.

And immediately turned my phone off.

Because I didn't want to see the comments.

Jason was staring at me.

“What?”

He looked amused.

“I thought you were going to announce the pregnancy.”

Every ounce of color left my face.

Immediately.

“No.”

Jason laughed.

“Amber.”

“No.”

“You’re going to have to tell people eventually.”

I pointed at him.

“Eventually.”

A pause.

“Not now.”

Another pause.

“As far as the public is concerned, I am not pregnant.”

Jason raised an eyebrow.

“You are.”

I glared.

“Not publicly.”

That made him laugh harder.

I crossed my arms.

“Do you have any idea what happens once people know?”

His smile slowly faded.

Because unfortunately...

He did.

Security concerns.

Media attention.

The Vincents.

Speculation.

Pressure.

Everything would become more complicated.

+15 Bcnus

Jason sighed.

air.'

“Thank you.”

“I still think people will figure it out.”

“They won’t.”

Jason looked unconvinced.

I was unconvinced too.

But denial was a perfectly valid strategy.

For now.

The plane landed in Sum shortly afterward.

And life immediately resumed its usual chaos.

School preparations.

Castle matters.

Company meetings.

Historian reports. 1

Security briefings.

Days passed quickly.

Far too quickly.

Before I knew it, the morning finally arrived.

The first official day of classes.

The school grounds were alive before sunrise.

Children.

Parents.

Teachers.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 261

Alice and Alex were already dressed.

Rose looked thrilled.

Iris pretended she wasn’t excited.

Nobody believed her.

NO

The grand opening banners hung across the entrance.

he academy gleamed beneath the morning sun.

And as I stood beside Jason watching hundreds of students arrive... 1

I couldn’t help smiling.

Because despite the conspiracies.

Despite the Vincents.

Despite the chaos.

Despite the secrets.

Something wonderful was finally beginning.

Neither of us noticed the black SUV parked several blocks away.

Or the camera focused on the school entrance.

Or the photograph quietly being taken.

Because somewhere in the city...

Someone had already started planning their next move.

Like a game

Amber POV

The first official day of classes began with absolute chaos.

Not bad chaos.

Excited chaos.

Hundreds of children filled the academy grounds.

Parents stood in clusters.

Teachers directed students.

Staff members rushed from one building to another.

And somehow, despite the crowd, everything seemed to work.

Mrs. Sun stood near the stage looking happier than I had ever seen her.

This wasn’t just a school.

It was her dream.

Years of planning.

Years of preparation.

Years of waiting.

Finally becoming real.

The academy’s central courtyard had been transformed into an outdoor auditorium.

Families filled the seats.

Children sat together in designated sections.

Teachers occupied the front rows.

Cameras flashed continuously.

The opening ceremony was being streamed live across multiple countries.

Naturally.

I sat beside Jason.

Alice and Alex stood backstage.

Both looked entirely too confident.

“Should we be worried?”

I asked.

Jason looked toward the stage.

+15 Benus

“Always.”

The announcer stepped forward.

“Welcome to the Sun-Asher Academy.”

Applause erupted.

Then the announcer smiled.

“And now, our student representatives.”

The crowd grew quieter.

Alex walked onto the stage first.

Calm.

Confident.

Professional.

Exactly like Jason.

The resemblance was honestly becoming concerning.

He approached the microphone.

Looked at the crowd.

And immediately began.

“Good morning.”

His voice carried clearly across the courtyard.

“Welcome to the first day of school.”

A pause.

“We have a few rules.”

Several students immediately sat straighter.

Alex nodded approvingly.

Good.

“They’re important.”

Another pause.

“Rule number one.”

He raised one finger.

“No bullying.”

Several parents applauded.

Alex looked pleased.

“Rule number two.”

A second finger.

“No fighting.”

A pause.

“Outside approved areas.”

The entire audience froze.

Then burst out laughing.

Jason buried his face in one hand.

I laughed so hard my stomach hurt.

Alex remained completely serious.

“If you feel the need to fight.”

A pause.

“The academy offers supervised martial arts programs.”

More laughter.

The teachers looked alarmed.

Mrs. Sun looked proud.

Which somehow worried me more.

Alex continued.

“Rule number three.”

Another pause.

“Listen to your teachers.”

Finally.

A normal rule.

“Rule number four.”

He smiled.

“Do your best.”

The courtyard grew quieter.

Because suddenly the joke had disappeared.

And everyone realized he was serious.

That’s all anyone here expects from you.”

A’pause.

“Just do your best.”

The applause was immediate.

Alex nodded once.

Then stepped aside.

Alice practically skipped onto the stage.

The audience melted instantly.

Four years old.

Tiny.

Confident.

Completely fearless.

The cameras loved her.

She waved enthusiastically.

Several students waved back.

Then she grabbed the microphone.

“Hello everyone!”

The response nearly shook the courtyard.

Children immediately cheered.

Alice smiled proudly.

Then pointed dramatically at the crowd.

“Thank you for playing my game.”

The children erupted again.

I watched several parents exchange confused looks.

Apparently they had not realized who created it.

Alice continued proudly.

“The game was fun.”

A pause.

“But it was also practice.”

+15 8cnus

The crowd quieted.

pointed toward the academy behind her.

“School works the same way.”

Another pause.

“If you want to move to the next level.”

She grinned.

“You have to pass.”

The students laughed.

Several younger children nodded seriously.

Alice continued.

“The minimum time to complete a level is one year.”

A pause.

“But that’s only the minimum.”

Now the parents were paying close attention.

“If you learn faster.”

Another pause.

“If you work harder.”

Another pause.

“If you’re ready.”

She smiled.

“You can ask your homeroom teacher for an advancement test.”

Murmurs spread through the crowd.

Alice nodded confidently.

“If you pass.”

A pause.

“You advance.”

The courtyard exploded with conversation.

Parents.

Students.

Teachers.

Everyone talking at once.

concept was revolutionary.

Not limited by age.

Not limited by arbitrary timelines.

Limited only by ability.

Alice finished with a cheerful wave.

“Good luck everybody!”

Thunderous applause followed.

Mrs. Sun stepped onto the stage next.

The applause somehow grew louder.

The cameras flashed continuously.

Parents stood.

Teachers stood.

Many students stood too.

Mrs. Sun waited patiently.

Then smiled.

“Thank you.”

The courtyard immediately quieted.

“I want to thank every family here.”

A pause.

“For believing in this school.”

Another pause.

“For believing in your children.”

The crowd listened carefully.

Mrs. Sun gestured toward the academy.

“The purpose of this school is simple.”

A pause.

“We want every child to reach their true potential.”

The applause returned.

Then she surprised everyone.

“We’ll now open the floor for questions.”

Jason sighed.

“Oh no.”

I immediately agreed.

“Oh no.”

Questions from the public were dangerous.

Especially on live television.

Sure enough.

The first problem appeared almost immediately.

A man stood.

Without being called.

Without waiting.

Without permission.

Interesting.

Very interesting.

My instincts immediately activated.

The man looked around dramatically.

Then pointed toward the academy.

“Are you saying the government’s education system is a joke?”

The courtyard fell silent.

There it was.

The disruption.

The planted question.

I would have bet money on it.

Several reporters immediately focused their cameras on Mrs. Sun.

Waiting.

Watching.

Hoping.

Mrs. Sun didn’t even blink.

Instead, she smiled.

+15 Bchus

A genuine smile.

The idea for this school came from watching the children around me.”

The crowd listened.

She gestured toward Alice.

Alex.

Rose.

Iris.

And dozens of students.

“I noticed something.”

A pause.

“The more a child wanted to advance.”

Another pause.

“The more expensive those opportunities became.”

The crowd grew thoughtful.

Because everyone understood.

Private tutors.

Specialized programs.

Advanced education.

Money.

Always money.

Mrs. Sun continued.

“The government’s system is not wrong.”

A pause.

“It serves millions of children.”

Several people nodded.

“But this academy has resources few schools can provide.”

Another pause.

“We have laboratories.”

“Research programs.”

“Industry partnerships.”

“University agreements.”

Scholarships.”

Her smile widened.

“And we intend to use every one of those resources to help children discover what they’re capable of.”

The applause was immediate.

Loud.

Sincere.

The man sat down.

Defeated.

Mrs. Sun had answered perfectly.

But as I watched him disappear into the crowd...

I noticed something.

He wasn’t disappointed.

He wasn’t frustrated.

He was smiling.

And suddenly I had a very bad feeling.

Because I didn’t think he had come to disrupt the event.

I think he had come to see something.

Or someone.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 262

Amber POV

The applause continued long after the opening ceremony ended.

Parents approached the stage.

Teachers congratulated the children.

Reporters tried to get interviews.

And through all the chaos, Alice looked incredibly proud of herself.

As she should.

Alex looked less impressed.

Mostly because several younger students had already started asking him questions about the “approved fighting areas.”

Jason looked horrified.

I thought it was hilarious.

The moment we reached them, Alice launched herself at me.

“Did you see?”

“I did.”

“Was I good?”

I laughed.

“You were amazing.”

Alice beamed.

Alex attempted to look indifferent.

Unfortunately, I knew him too well.

I pulled him into a hug.

“You too.”

His ears turned red.

“Thanks.”

Mrs. Sun approached at that moment.

Looking entirely too pleased with herself.

Which was never a good sign.

Jason immediately noticed.

“Oh no.”

Mrs. Sun smiled.

yes.”

That smile was terrifying.

I exchanged a look with Jason.

We were doomed.

“I have an announcement.”

There it was.

The announcement.

The thing she had decided without consulting us.

Again.

“You two will be teaching.”

Silence.

Jason blinked.

I blinked.

“What?”

Mrs. Sun looked delighted.

“Computer sciences.”

A pause.

“Twice a week.”

Another pause.

“You’ll teach coding, development, cybersecurity and digital literacy.”

Jason looked toward the heavens.

Possibly praying.

I wasn’t sure.

“Mother.”

“No.”

That answer came immediately.

The discussion was apparently already over.

Mrs. Sun crossed her arms.

“You taught Alice.”

A pause.

You taught Alex.”

Another pause.

“Now teach everyone else.”

I opened my mouth.

Then Rose beat me to it.

“Wait.”

Everyone looked at her.

Rose frowned.

“Isn’t Aunt Amber already teaching us?”

Beside her, Iris looked confused.

“Yeah.”

A pause.

“That’s how we learned.”

Mrs. Sun slowly turned toward me.

Jason did the same.

Oh.

No.

I laughed nervously.

The worst possible response.

Unfortunately it was all I had.

“Well…”

Another nervous laugh.

“I’ve been teaching them some things.”

Mrs. Sun narrowed her eyes.

“What things?”

I smiled.

“A little coding.”

A pause.

“Game design.”

Honore A

Another pause.

Programming.”

Jason folded his arms.

I knew that look.

He didn’t believe me.

Which was fair. 1

Alice immediately raised her hand.

Everyone ignored the fact that we weren’t in a classroom.

“Aunt Amber also teaches security cameras.”

Silence.

Complete silence.

I closed my eyes.

Alice continued cheerfully.

“She taught us how to block them.”

A pause.

“And unblock them.”

Another pause.

“It’s like a game.”

Jason stared at me.

Mrs. Sun stared at me.

The judgment was palpable.

I shrugged.

“What?”

“Amber.”

Jason sounded offended.

“They’re children.”

“Exactly.”

I pointed at Alice.

“She thinks it’s a game.”

Alice nodded enthusiastically.

+15 8cnus

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 263

s. Sun rubbed her forehead.

“I don’t even know where to begin.”

I considered helping.

Then wisely decided against it.

Eventually the children left for their classes.

The courtyard slowly emptied.

Teachers guided students toward classrooms.

Parents began leaving.

The academy finally started functioning as an actual school.

Mrs. Sun watched the students disappear.

Then looked at Jason and me.

Her expression changed.

Immediately.

Serious.

Businesslike.

Interesting.

“There will be a family dinner tonight.’

Jason frowned.

“Why?”

Mrs. Sun smiled.

“Because the adults need to talk.”

That answer worried me.

A lot.

Before either of us could ask more questions, she walked away.

Leaving us alone.

Jason sighed.

“That can’t be good.”

“No.”

“It never is.”

His arm settled naturally around my waist.

Protective.

Comforting.

Familiar.

Together we walked toward the parking area.

Halfway there, something caught my attention.

The man from earlier.

The one who had interrupted the question panel.

He was still there.

And he was taking pictures.

of us.

Of the school.

Of the children.

The moment he noticed me looking, he turned away.

Interesting.

Very interesting.

Jason followed my gaze.

His expression hardened immediately.

“I see him.”

Of course he did.

Nothing escaped Jason.

The man disappeared into the crowd before security could reach him.

We drove back to the castle.

And for approximately fifteen minutes, everything was peaceful.

Then Pamela called.

Which ended the peace.

Immediately.

“Tell me something good.”

Pamela laughed.

“No.”

preved

Wonderful.

What now?”

“The internet.”

Of course.

Always the internet.

Pamela sounded exhausted.

“There are new articles.”

I put the call on speaker.

Jason groaned.

“What kind of articles?”

Pamela hesitated.

“The funny kind.”

That was concerning.

“The first one says Alice and Alex are Jason’s biological children.”

I blinked.

“What?”

Pamela continued.

“Apparently they’re claiming he had them with a mistress.”

Jason nearly drove off the road.

“The what?”

“The article says that’s why you adopted them.”

A pause.

“And that claiming they were your cousin’s children was a cover story.”

I looked at Jason.

Then at Alex’s latest school photograph.

Then back at Jason.

Okay.

That one was at least understandable.

Alex really did look like him.

Unfairly so.

!

Pamela wasn’t finished.

The second article is better.”

That statement terrified me.

“The second one claims Alice and Alex are actually both of your biological children.”

Silence.

Jason blinked.

I blinked.

Pamela continued.

“Apparently you had them during college.”

A pause.

“And Amber only married Jason to stay close to her children.”

I stared out the windshield.

Speechless.

“The article says she’s being emotionally blackmailed.”

Jason laughed first.

A full laugh.

I followed seconds later.

Neither of us could stop.

The articles were ridiculous.

Absurd.

Desperate.

Which meant someone wanted us upset.

Good luck with that.

I took out my phone.

“Pamela.”

“Yes?”

“Take Alice and Alex’s opening speech.”

A pause.

“Promote it.”

Pamela immediately understood.

+15 8çnus

“Every company account?”

very company account.”

I smiled.

“And add a statement.”

“What statement?”

I looked toward the academy visible in the distance.

Then smiled.

“That we’ve seen the rumors.”

A pause.

“And that I would be honored to be their mother.”

Pamela went quiet.

Then softly said:

“Okay.”

The call ended.

Jason immediately opened his own phone.

“Sun Corporation too.”

I smiled.

Good.

Let the world talk.

We would answer.

Together.

The castle appeared ahead of us.

For several minutes neither of us spoke.

Then a thought occurred to me.

A serious one.

I looked at Jason.

“What would you think…”

A pause.

“…about officially adopting Alex and Alice?”

Jason froze.

I continued.

And maybe Iris.”

Another pause.

“Rose too.”

For a moment, Jason simply stared at me.

Then something softened in his eyes.

Something warm.

Something hopeful.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 264

family dinner

Amber POV

The night of the family dinner arrived far too quickly.

Honestly, I should have known it would become a disaster.

Every family dinner somehow did.

Lunch had been surprisingly pleasant.

The children had spent most of it talking about their first day of school.

Alice had apparently made six new friends.

Alex had somehow ended up helping one of the computer teachers.

Rose had joined three clubs.

And Iris had already corrected a history textbook.

The teacher had apparently thanked her.

I wasn’t entirely sure if that was impressive or concerning.

The mood changed the moment Alice realized the children were not invited to dinner.

“Excuse me?”

She placed her little hands on her hips.

“Not invited?”

Mrs. Sun looked completely unrepentant.

“No.”

Alice gasped.

Theatrically.

“You can’t do that.”

“We just did.”

Alice looked betrayed.

Alex looked equally offended.

“We live here.”

Mr. Sun nodded.

“You do.”

“Then how are we not invited?”

No one had an answer for that.

+15 8chus

Rose looked genuinely upset.

s narrowed her eyes suspiciously.

The four of them spent the next ten minutes attempting to negotiate their way into the dinner.

They failed.

Spectacularly.

Which was why, several hours later, I found myself asking Iris to babysit.

The teenager looked deeply offended.

“I’m not a babysitter.”

“You are tonight.”

Iris sighed dramatically.

“Fine.”

A pause.

“But I’m charging emotional damages.”

Alex immediately agreed.

“Reasonable.”

Alice nodded.

“Very reasonable.”

I was raising tiny lawyers.

That realization terrified me.

By evening everyone had gathered in the castle’s formal dining room.

Grandfather.

Jason’s grandparents.

Jason.

Me.

For once there were no children.

The silence felt strange.

Almost unnatural.

Dinner began peacefully.

Which should have been my first warning sign.

The moment dessert arrived, Mrs. Sun put down her fork.

And looked directly at Jason.

Oh no.

Jason noticed too.

His shoulders visibly tensed.

“Jason.”

There it was.

The serious voice.

The one mothers used before asking dangerous questions.

Mrs. Sun folded her hands together.

“Is the infertility issue true?”

Silence filled the room.

Mr. Sun immediately joined in.

“And if it was, why would you hide something like that from us?”

Jason opened his mouth.

Then closed it.

Then looked at me.

Apparently hoping I would save him.

Fair enough.

I had started this disaster.

I set down my glass.

“It’s false.”

Every head turned toward me.

I continued.

“Jason and I were tested.”

A pause.

“The results came back the same day.”

Another pause.

“Everything is perfectly fine.”

The tension in the room evaporated instantly.

Mr. Sun visibly relaxed.

Mrs. Sun looked relieved.

And Grandfather…

Grandfather laughed.

Actually laughed.

A loud, genuine laugh.

The entire table stared at him.

He wiped at his eyes.

“Thank God.”

I blinked.

“What?”

Grandfather pointed his fork at me.

“You have no idea how awkward this has been.”

I stared.

He continued.

“I kept telling myself it didn’t matter.”

A pause.

“And it doesn’t.”

Another pause.

“But I really wanted the Asher family line to continue.”

The room burst into laughter.

Even Jason.

Grandfather shrugged unapologetically.

“What?”

A pause.

“I admit it.”

Another pause.

“Though honestly.”

His expression softened.

“I would be perfectly happy if any of the children became an Asher.”

The laughter slowly faded.

Because suddenly the conversation wasn’t funny anymore.

was important.

Very important.

I exchanged a look with Jason.

Then took a breath.

This was my chance.

“Actually.”

The room quieted.

“I wanted to talk about that.”

Jason immediately turned toward me.

Surprised.

I smiled softly.

“Jason already adopted Alice and Alex.”

A pause.

“They’re legally his children.”

Everyone nodded.

That much was public knowledge.

I looked down at my hands briefly.

Then continued.

“But I’m not.”

Silence.

“I’m their stepmother.”

A pause.

“Legally.”

Mrs. Sun sat forward.

Mr. Sun froze.

Jason simply watched me.

I swallowed.

Then said it.

“I want to adopt them.”

The room went completely silent.

continued before I lost my nerve.

“All of them.”

A pause.

“Alice.”

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“Alex.”

Another pause.

“Rose.”

“And Iris.”

Jason’s eyes widened.

For the first time since I had met him.

He looked genuinely speechless.

I smiled nervously.

“I know it’s complicated.”

A pause.

“But they’re already my children.”

My voice softened.

“They just don’t have the paperwork yet.”

The silence that followed felt enormous.

Mrs. Sun was crying.

Mr. Sun looked emotional.

Grandfather looked proud.

Jason looked like he had forgotten how words worked.

Then-

CRASH.

A tremendous crash echoed from upstairs.

Everyone jumped.

The sound was immediately followed by silence.

Complete silence.

The kind of silence that only happened when children realized they had been caught.

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Jason slowly closed his eyes.

tared at the ceffing.

Mrs. Sun stared at the ceiling.

Mr. Sun stared at the ceiling.

Grandfather stared at the ceiling.

No one moved.

Then, from directly above us, a very familiar voice whispered:

“I told you the floor would creak.”

Iris.

Another whisper followed.

“It wasn’t me.”

Alex.

A third voice.

“It was definitely you.”

Rose.

And finally Alice.

Loud enough for the entire dining room to hear.

“Do you think this means Amber wants to be our mommy forever?”

The silence that followed was absolute.

Then Jason buried his face in his hands.

And I realized the children had absolutely been spying on the family dinner.

␣

Forever

Amber POV

The crash above us was followed by complete silence.

The kind of silence that only existed when children were trying very hard not to be discovered.

I exchanged a look with Jason.

Jason exchanged a look with Mrs. Sun.

Mrs. Sun exchanged a look with Grandfather.

Nobody said anything.

We all silently agreed to pretend nothing had happened.

The children wanted to spy?

Fine.

We would let them.

For now.

I took a sip of water.

Jason resumed eating dessert.

Grandfather cleared his throat.

“Well.”

A pause.

“I don’t think your uncle will put up much of a fight if you want to adopt Rose.”

My eyebrows rose.

Grandfather looked entirely unimpressed.

“After all.”

Another pause.

“He hasn’t exactly been Father of the Year.”

Mrs. Sun snorted.

Mr. Sun nodded.

Grandfather continued.

“The bastard.”

No one disagreed.

Not even me.

Rose deserved better.

e always liad.

Grandfather leaned back in his chair.

“The more complicated issue is Iris.”

The mood shifted immediately.

Because we all knew he was right.

Iris already had family.

Complicated family.

But family nonetheless.

“Mr. Stevens might object.” 2

A pause.

“She’s his only heir.”

I frowned.

That part worried me.

I didn’t want Iris to feel abandoned.

Or stolen.

Or pressured.

I simply wanted her to know she had a home.

Mrs. Sun suddenly reached for her phone.

I blinked.

“What are you doing?”

She looked at me as if the answer were obvious.

“Calling him.”

Of course she was.

Why wait until tomorrow when you could create chaos immediately?

The call connected after only a few rings.

Mr. Stevens sounded surprised.

But happy.

Mrs. Sun spent several minutes updating him on the school.

The new castle.

The first day of classes.

Mostly Iris.

His relief was obvious.

Even through the speaker.

Eventually Mrs. Sun smiled.

Then handed me the phone.

“Your turn.”

I immediately regretted every life decision that had led me here.

“Hello?”

Mr. Stevens laughed softly.

“Amber.”

A pause.

“To what do I owe this honor?”

I took a deep breath.

Then decided honesty was probably best.

“I wanted to ask you something.”

His voice immediately became serious.

“Of course.”

I tightened my grip on the phone.

“Iris and Rose already have papers placing them under the Asher family.”

A pause.

“But not really.”

Another pause.

“They’re protected.”

“They’re family.”

“But legally…”

I swallowed.

“They aren’t my daughters.”

The room became very quiet.

Everyone listening.

Even the children upstairs.

Especially the children upstairs.

I continued.

“I want to change that.”

Silence.

“I wanted to ask if you would be okay with me adopting Iris.”

No one spoke.

No one moved.

For a moment I worried I had overstepped.

Then I heard it.

A long breath.

A relieved breath.

Mr. Stevens laughed.

The sound was emotional.

Unexpectedly emotional.

“Amber.”

His voice cracked slightly.

“I was worried.”

That wasn’t the response I expected.

“What?”

He laughed again.

“I’m getting older.”

The words landed heavily.

“I know it.”

A pause.

“And Iris pretends not to need anyone.”

Another pause.

“But she does.”

I smiled softly.

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ry true.

Mr. Stevens continued.

“I wanted to ask you.”

Silence.

“I wanted to ask you to take care of her.”

My chest tightened.

“But I didn’t know how.”

Another breath.

“I didn’t know if it was my place.” 1

I looked down.

Suddenly struggling to speak.

“You don’t mind?”

His answer came instantly.

“Mind?”

He laughed.

“Amber.”

A pause.

“I would be grateful.”

The room fell silent again.

This time for a different reason.

Because everyone understood what he was really saying.

He trusted me.

With Iris.

With his family.

With his future.

My eyes stung.

“I promise.”

My voice softened.

“I’ll take care of her.”

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+15 Bchus

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Mr. Stevens sighed.

know you will.”

The call ended a few moments later.

I slowly lowered the phone.

No one spoke.

Mrs. Sun was openly crying.

Mr. Sun looked suspiciously emotional.

Grandfather looked pleased.

Jason looked at me as though I had hung the moon.

And then-

THUMP.

THUMP.

THUMP.

THUMP.

Running footsteps.

Fast footsteps.

Very familiar footsteps.

Everyone looked toward the ceiling.

I sighed.

“They heard everything.”

Jason laughed.

“Every word.”

The footsteps became louder.

Then louder.

Then-

A blur of children exploded into the dining room.

Alice reached me first.

Naturally.

She launched herself directly at me.

“Mom!”

I barely had time to react.

Alex arrived second.

Followed by Rose.

Followed by Iris.

The four of them crashed into me simultaneously.

Sending my chair backward.

Creating what could only be described as a child avalanche.

Or a puppy pile.

Definitely a puppy pile.

Arms.

Legs.

Hair.

Laughter.

Children everywhere.

“Careful!”

Jason immediately moved forward.

His hands hovering protectively.

Particularly near my stomach.

Alice wrapped her arms around my neck.

Rose hugged my waist.

Alex somehow attached himself to my shoulder.

And Iris-

Iris.

The girl who pretended not to need anyone.

The girl who never cried.

The girl who always acted older than she was.

Had buried her face against my shoulder.

Holding on tightly.

Very tightly.

As though she was afraid I might disappear.

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My heart shattered.

Men rebuilt itself.

Stronger.

Alice looked up first.

Her eyes shining.

“Forever?”

I blinked.

“What?”

Alice smiled.

“You want to be our mommy forever?”

Silence filled the room.

The adults watched.

Waiting.

I looked at all four children.

My children.

Then smiled.

“Forever sounds pretty good to me.”

The four of them cheered so loudly that half the castle probably heard them.

Everything felt exactly as it should.

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Chapter 267

Amber POV

It was decided. Officially, legally, and irrevocably, the children would become ours. Not just emotionally, not just in every way that truly mattered, but on paper as well. Alice, Alex, Rose, and Iris would become our children in every sense of the word.

The reaction was not what I expected.

I thought there would be tears. Maybe a heartfelt speech. Instead, Jason looked personally offended

“No one is excited about me,” he complained while the children practically hung off my arms after hearing about the adoption plans.

The entire table stared at him.

“You already adopted two of them,” I pointed out.

“Exactly!” Jason replied. “And yet they’re acting like this is all your doing.”

The adults burst out laughing. Even I couldn’t hold it in. Before Jason could continue defending himself, Rose slid into the chair beside him and took his hand.

“Don’t worry,” she said seriously. “I’ll keep you entertained.”

That only made everyone laugh harder.

The following weeks passed in a whirlwind of paperwork, meetings, legal reviews, and endless signatures. Apparently adopting four children required enough documentation to buy a small country. Fortunately, most of the process went smoothly.

Most of it.

Then we reached Rose’s paperwork.

Because Rose had been born into both the Vinny and Asher families, we needed her biological mother’s signature before the adoption could proceed.

Which meant a trip to prison.

The visit was uncomfortable from the moment I arrived. Rose’s mother looked older than I remembered, worn down by years behind bars. For a few moments neither of us spoke. Then I placed the adoption papers on the table between us.

“What do you want?” she asked.

“Rose,” I answered honestly.

Something painful crossed her face.

“Is she happy?” she asked quietly.

The question surprised me. It wasn’t hostile. It wasn’t manipulative. It sounded genuine.

“Very happy,” I told her. “She’s doing well in school. She has friends. She laughs. She has a family.”

For several seconds she stared at the papers.

They have shock

Then she looked up at me.

You already adopted her,” she said softly.

The words hit harder than I expected.

I offered her a deal. In exchange for her cooperation, she would receive expanded reading privileges, educational opportunities, and an individual room.

She didn’t negotiate.

She simply picked up the pen and signed.

Relief flooded through me.

Rose would never have to worry about this again.

Alice and Alex’s paperwork was updated to reflect the new family structure.

Finally, after weeks of work, it was done.

All four children stood together in the courthouse, dressed in their best clothes. Alice couldn’t stop smiling. Alex was trying very hard to look mature and failing miserably. Rose cried openly. Iris pretended she wasn’t emotional while holding onto Rose’s hand so tightly her knuckles turned white.

The judge smiled warmly as the final documents were signed.

Just like that, it became official.

Alice Sun-Asher.

Alex Sun-Asher.

Rose Sun-Asher.

Iris Sun-Asher.

Our children.

Legally.

Permanently.

Forever.

The children celebrated as though they had won the lottery. Alice immediately declared it a family holiday. Alex suggested they should get cake. Rose agreed. Iris quietly thanked me before pretending she hadn't said anything at

all.

Even Jason looked emotional.

The next day the Vincents struck.

Apparently they had been waiting.

News articles appeared across dozens of websites and social media accounts. The headlines were dramatic and increasingly ridiculous.

"Asher Heiress Keeping Two Girls From Their Real Families."

They have shacks

"Questions Raised About Rose and Iris' Living Situation."

Were The Girls Pressured Into Joining The Asher Family?"

Some articles even implied the girls were being held against their will.

The Vincents were clearly hoping to create outrage.

Instead, the public reaction was completely different.

One user commented:

“If being kidnapped means getting a castle, a private school, and billionaire parents, where do I apply?”

Another replied:

“Can Amber kidnap my student loans too?”

A third added:

“This is the nicest kidnapping I’ve ever seen.”

The comments only became more absurd from there.

Jason spent ten minutes laughing while reading them aloud.

Unfortunately, I couldn’t allow the conversation to continue spiraling.

The rumors weren’t just about me anymore.

They involved my children.

So I recorded a short statement from my office.

I sat behind my desk and looked directly into the camera.

“I’ve seen the recent articles and speculation regarding my family.”

I paused briefly.

“First, kidnapping is not a joke and should never be treated as one.”

The comments slowed immediately.

I continued calmly.

“Second, I would like to clarify a very important fact.”

I lifted a folder from my desk.

“All four children were legally adopted through the appropriate courts and legal channels.”

I opened the folder briefly, showing the official seals without revealing any private information.

“Alice, Alex, Rose, and Iris are legally my children and Jason’s children.”

I smiled.

“They were not forced. They were not pressured. They were not taken from anyone.”

Bonus

They hay snacks

A pause.

They chose us just as much as we chose them.”

The statement was simple.

Direct.

Impossible to misinterpret.

Within hours, lawyers, journalists, and public records confirmed the adoption had been completed legally.

The Vincents’ story collapsed almost immediately.

By evening, most news outlets had shifted from questioning the adoption to congratulating the family.

The funniest part came when a reporter asked Alice for a comment while she was leaving school.

My daughter looked directly at the camera and said:

“Why would I leave? They have snacks.”

Then she walked away.

The clip gained more views than my official statement.

And somewhere far away, I imagined the Vincents realizing that once again, their attack had backfired spectacularly.

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 268

Monster mom

Amber POV

Pregnancy was a scam.

A complete scam.

Nobody had warned me.

Not properly.

Apparently, creating a human being came with a long list of side effects nobody talked about enough.

For example, I could no longer stand garlic.

Garlic.

One of my favorite ingredients.

Now, the mere smell made me gag.

The castle’s kitchen had become enemy territory.

Three times this week, I had walked in confidently only to turn around and run away seconds later.

The staff was deeply concerned.

The children were confused.

And Alice was watching me.

Constantly.

Everywhere.

Like a tiny detective.

I should have known that was a problem.

Alice POV

Something was wrong with Mom. 1

Very wrong.

At first, I thought she was sick.

Then I started paying attention.

And when I pay attention, I notice things.

A lot of things.

For example, Mom used to like garlic.

I know because she put garlic on almost everything.

Then one day she walked into the kitchen, smelled garlic bread, made a weird face, and ran away.

+15 Bghus

Ran away.

From bread.

That was suspicious.

Very suspicious.

Then I noticed she stopped drinking coffee.

Now, I don't know a lot about grown-ups, but I know Mom likes coffee.

She drinks coffee when she works.

She drinks coffee when she's tired.

She drinks coffee when she's happy.

She drinks coffee when she's angry.

She drinks coffee all the time.

Then suddenly she stopped.

That was even more suspicious.

Then there was Dad.

Dad kept covering her whenever they went outside.

Jackets.

Hats.

Umbrellas.

Sunglasses.

Scarves.

One time I thought she was preparing to rob a bank.

Another time I thought she was disguising herself.

Then I heard her say she was eating for two.

For two.

Not for one.

For two.

I immediately stopped walking.

Because there was only one Mom.

At least I thought there was only one Mom.

Unless...

There were two.

eyes widened.

Everything suddenly made sense.

The real Mom had been replaced.

Obviously.

I called an emergency meeting.

Alex came first because he always comes first.

Rose came second because she likes chaos.

Iris wasn't there because she was busy doing boring teenager things.

"I have terrible news," I told them.

Alex looked concerned.

"Did someone hack the school?"

"No."

"Worse."

Rose gasped.

"What?"

I lowered my voice.

"Mom is a monster."

Silence.

Alex stared at me.

Rose stared at me.

I nodded seriously.

"I have evidence."

I explained everything.

The garlic.

The coffee.

The sunlight.

The eating for two.

The mood swings.

The weird naps.

The random gagging.

The suspicious behavior.

By the end, Rose looked convinced.

Alex looked concerned.

Mostly concerned about me.

Which was rude.

We began our investigation.

The first test was mirrors.

Everybody knows vampires don’t show up in mirrors.

I carried a mirror around all day.

Then I jumped in front of Mom.

She nearly dropped her tablet.

“Alice!”

I held up the mirror.

Mom was there.

Clearly.

I sighed.

Maybe not a vampire.

The second test was silver.

I poked her with a silver fork during lunch.

She yelped.

Everybody stared at me.

Mom stared at me.

Dad stared at me.

I smiled innocently.

Nobody believed me.

The test was inconclusive.

Then something incredible happened.

Mom vanished.

Actually vanished.

One moment she was walking down the hallway.

The next she disappeared into a wall.

A wall.

I screamed.

Rose screamed.

Alex dropped his tablet.

Mom was gone.

Gone.

I pointed dramatically.

“I KNEW IT!”

Fifteen minutes later she came back out.

Like nothing had happened.

Definitely monster behavior.

I added it to my evidence list.

A few days later Iris caught us spying.

Again.

“What are you doing?” she asked.

“Monster hunting,” I answered.

Iris blinked.

Then she blinked again.

Then she looked at Alex.

Then Rose.

Then me.

The explanation took a while. 1

Mostly because Alex kept saying he wasn’t convinced while continuing to participate.

Traitor.

When I finished, Iris looked horrified.

Not because Mom was a monster.

Because she thought we were ridiculous.

Then she looked at Mom.

Mom was staring sadly at a plate of garlic bread.

Then she looked at Dad.

Then at Mom again.

Suddenly her eyes widened.

Really widened.

Like cartoon widened.

“Oh.”

She ran.

Fast.

Straight toward Mom.

Then hugged her.

Hard.

“Congratulations!”

Everybody froze.

Mom froze.

Dad froze.

Grandma Sun froze.

I froze.

“What?” I asked.

Iris looked at me.

“She’s not a monster.”

I waited.

Then waited some more.

“She’s pregnant.”

Silence.

I pointed at Mom’s stomach.

“There’s a baby in there?”

Mom nodded.

I thought about it.

A baby.

A real baby.

Not a monster.

Not a vampire.

Not a secret creature hiding in the castle.

Just a baby.

I sighed.

“Aww.”

Dad looked confused.

“Aww?”

I nodded.

“Monster Mom would have been more fun.”

Everybody started laughing.

Even Mom.

Honestly, I still think my theory was pretty good.

But a baby was okay too.

Especially if it was half Mom and half Dad.

That baby was going to be terrifying.

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A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 269

Twenty years too early

Amber POV

The pregnancy reveal somehow created more chaos than the adoption.

Which was saying something.

One moment everyone was congratulating us, the next the children had questions.

Many questions.

Far too many questions.

The first one came from Alex.

Naturally.

We were gathered in one of the castle's living rooms when he suddenly looked at Jason and me suspiciously.

"Wait."

The room became quiet.

Alex narrowed his eyes.

"You lied."

Jason blinked.

"What?"

"You said the baby plan was in two years."

Silence.

I immediately remembered the conversation.

Unfortunately, so did Jason.

Alex crossed his arms.

“You specifically said two years.”

A pause.

“You had charts.”

Jason looked horrified.

“Why do you remember that?”

Alex looked offended.

“Because I helped make the charts.”

Mrs. Sun burst out laughing.

Grandfather Asher nearly choked on his tea.

Rose buried her face in a pillow.

Ms looked like she wanted to disappear.

Alex pointed accusingly at us.

“It has not been two years.”

“No.”

“It has barely been months.”

“Also true.”

“So what happened?”

The room exploded with laughter.

Even Jason couldn’t keep a straight face.

Mrs. Sun was wiping tears from her eyes.

“Oh, sweetheart.”

Alex looked confused. 1

“What?”

Mrs. Sun patted his shoulder.

“Sometimes life ignores plans.”

Alex didn’t look convinced.

Grandfather laughed loudly.

“Trust me, boy. If life followed plans, none of us would be here.”

That somehow made Alex even more suspicious.

Fortunately, Alice solved the problem.

“So we’re getting a baby?”

Everyone turned toward her.

Alice grinned.

“A real baby?”

“Yes.”

Alice looked delighted.

Then she pointed dramatically at Mrs. Sun.

“You already built the school.”

Mrs. Sun looked proud.

Alice pointed toward the nursery wing.

ou already built the baby section.”

Mrs. Sun looked even prouder.

Alice turned toward us.

“So Grandma was preparing.”

Mrs. Sun laughed.

“I absolutely was.”

The entire room laughed again.

Grandfather stood and walked toward me.

For a moment I thought he was going to make a joke.

Instead, his eyes became suspiciously shiny.

Then he hugged me.

Tightly.

“I’m proud of you, darling.”

My throat tightened.

“Grandpa…”

He kissed my forehead.

“You have no idea how happy this makes me.”

For a brief moment, I saw not the terrifying head of Asher Corporation.

Not the businessman.

Not the strategist.

Just a grandfather.

A grandfather who loved his family.

Mr. Sun cleared his throat.

“Do we know if it’s a boy or a girl?”

The question immediately caught everyone’s attention.

Even Alice.

Especially Alice.

I laughed.

“We haven’t even had an ultrasound.”

Silence.

Everyone stared.

“What?”

Mrs. Sun looked horrified.

“Amber.”

“We only found out recently.”

“You need an appointment.”

“I know.”

“Immediately.”

“I know.”

Jason looked amused.

Mrs. Sun looked ready to personally drag us to a hospital.

I sighed.

“We don’t know how far along I am.”

That somehow made everyone even more concerned.

At least one thing was now certain.

The rumors about Jason had been completely false.

That alone was worth celebrating.

The next morning I was in my office when my phone rang.

Mrs. Sun.

That was never a good sign.

I answered immediately.

“What happened?”

She sounded annoyed.

Very annoyed.

“The Vincents.”

I sat up straighter.

“What did they do now?”

“They tried to enroll their children at the academy.”

I blinked.

Then blinked again.

They what?”

Mrs. Sun laughed humorlessly.

“They submitted applications.”

The sheer audacity almost impressed me.

Almost.

“What did you tell them?”

“I rejected them.”

Immediately.

Of course she had.

Mrs. Sun continued.

“I informed them that they are not permitted to enter Sum.”

Fair.

Very fair. 1

I assumed that would be the end of it.

I was wrong.

“But.”

I sighed.

“There is a but.”

“There is.”

Mrs. Sun sounded disgusted.

“They asked me to have Jason call them.”

That couldn’t be good.

Not remotely.

Jason made the call an hour later.

I was working beside him when he connected.

The conversation started politely.

Far too politely.

Which immediately made me suspicious.

Mr. Vincent sounded cheerful.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 270

arm.

Every instinct I possessed screamed danger.

Then he got to the point.

And I understood why.

“I would like our families to move forward.”

Jason became very still.

Mr. Vincent continued.

“I believe we should unite.”

A pause.

“Through marriage.”

The room went silent.

Jason blinked.

Once.

Twice.

I slowly lowered my tablet.

Mr. Vincent kept talking.

Apparently unaware that he was making everything worse.

“We have several children.”

Another pause.

“You have several children.”

My stomach dropped.

Oh no.

Absolutely not.

Jason’s face turned red.

Not embarrassed red.

Angry red.

Dangerously angry red.

Mr. Vincent continued speaking about alliances, goodwill, family connections, and future cooperation.

Jason looked ready to commit a felony.

I reached over and gently took the phone.

Jason immediately surrendered it.

Probably because he no longer trusted himself to speak.

“Mr. Vincent.”

The man sounded delighted.

“Mrs. Sun-Asher.”

I smiled pleasantly.

A smile that had terrified board members.

“Thank you for your kind offer.”

A pause.

“Unfortunately, our children are not currently available for marriage alliances.”

Silence.

Complete silence.

Then:

“I’m sorry?”

I kept smiling.

“Perhaps we can revisit the discussion once they’re adults.”

Another pause.

“Adults?”

“Yes.”

I glanced toward one of the family photos sitting on my desk.

Alice upside down.

Alex looking annoyed.

Rose laughing.

Iris rolling her eyes.

Children.

Just children.

“My children are currently busy being children.”

The silence stretched.

Then Mr. Vincent laughed.

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But there was no humor in it.

“Wonderful.”

I ended the call.

Immediately.

Before he could continue.

The office became silent.

Jason stared at me.

I stared back.

Then he laughed.

A real laugh.

The first one all day.

“I think you offended him.”

I leaned back in my chair.

“Good.”

Because if the Vincents thought they were arranging marriages for my children-

They were about twenty years too early.

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There were two.

Amber POV

For the first time in weeks, life became almost... normal.

Almost.

The school was running smoothly. The children had settled into their routines. The adoption paperwork was finalized. The Vincents were strangely quiet.

Which meant they were probably planning something.

Still, I wasn’t going to complain.

For once, Jason and I had enough time to focus on something that had been bothering us ever since Professor Vale handed us the map.

The hidden treasury.

Or whatever was hidden beneath Ember Castle.

One evening, after the children had gone to bed and the castle had become quiet, Jason and I spread the map across a table in the library.

The old parchment showed passages that weren’t included in any modern blueprints.

Passages hidden inside walls.

Beneath floors.

Behind fireplaces.

And, for some reason, connected to the kitchen.

Naturally.

Every mystery in this castle seemed to start in the kitchen.

Armed with flashlights, our phones, and far more confidence than common sense, we followed the map.

The hidden mechanism was concealed behind an old wooden cabinet.

One press. 1

A click.

Then part of the wall slid aside.

Jason stared.

“Of course it’s in the kitchen.”

I laughed.

“Maybe the Ember family liked snacks.” 2

The passage beyond was narrow.

Ancient.

And completely dark.

Jason activated the flashlight on his phone.

I did the same.

Then we stepped inside.

The staircase immediately descended.

And descended.

And descended some more.

The deeper we went, the older everything looked.

Stone walls.

Ancient carvings.

Dust that had probably not been disturbed in centuries.

Jason frowned.

“This is terrifying.”

I looked around excitedly.

“This is amazing.”

He pointed toward the darkness.

“That is the definition of terrifying.”

I pointed toward the darkness.

“That is the definition of adventure.”

Jason sighed.

“You’re impossible.”

The staircase continued for what felt like forever.

At one point I was convinced we had reached the center of the earth.

Finally, the passage opened into a circular stone chamber.

The room itself was empty.

Mostly.

Except for one thing.

A massive metal door.

Ancient.

Beautiful.

And very, very locked.

approached carefully.

The locking mechanism wasn’t a normal lock.

It looked mechanical.

Complicated.

Several rotating sections covered in symbols.

The kind of puzzle that would take hours to understand.

Maybe days.

I touched one of the metal rings.

Nothing happened.

Jason immediately stepped backward.

I noticed.

“You think it’s trapped.”

“I absolutely think it’s trapped.”

I couldn’t even argue.

The Ember family apparently liked secrets.

And traps felt like something they would enjoy.

I studied the mechanism for another few minutes.

Then sighed.

“This is going to take a while.”

Jason looked relieved.

“Good.”

I frowned.

“Good?”

“Good.”

A pause.

“We leave.”

I laughed.

“We just got here.”

“We discovered the creepy underground chamber.”

Another pause.

We survived.”

He pointed toward the door.

“I would like to continue surviving.”

Unfortunately, he had a point.

Reluctantly, I agreed.

We returned upstairs.

Neither of us mentioned the discovery.

Not to the children.

Not to the grandparents.

Not even to Emory.

For now, it would remain our secret.

At least until we figured out how to open that ridiculous door.

The next two weeks passed surprisingly quickly.

The school continued thriving.

The children settled into classes.

Mrs. Sun became increasingly involved with school activities.

Grandfather spent most of his time alternating between business meetings and spoiling the children.

Everything felt peaceful.

Too peaceful.

Meanwhile, my pregnancy became impossible to ignore.

I was tired.

Constantly.

The smell of garlic remained my mortal enemy.

Coffee no longer appealed to me.

Which according to Alice was still evidence I was secretly a vampire.

I tried to ignore her theories.

Mostly because she had recruited Rose and Alex into her investigations.

Eventually, even I had to admit I couldn't postpone things anymore.

The ultrasound was overdue.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 271

I needed answers.

Even if I was terrified to get them.

Because every time I thought about the baby, fear crept into my mind.

What if something was wrong?

What if the stress had affected the pregnancy?

What if-

Jason squeezed my hand.

“You’ve been quiet.”

I looked at him.

“I’m scared.”

The admission surprised both of us.

Jason’s expression softened immediately.

“Everything will be okay.”

I wanted to believe him.

I really did.

The clinic was exactly as busy as I expected.

Which was to say chaotic.

The moment our car arrived, cameras appeared.

Reporters.

Photographers.

News crews.

All waiting.

Because weeks earlier I had publicly stated that we would eventually release the official results.

Apparently nobody had forgotten.

Wonderful.

Jason practically escorted me through the entrance.

The nurses immediately took us upstairs.

This time I was too nervous to notice anything else.

The examination room felt cold.

Bright.

Clinical,

ultrasound machine stood beside the bed.

My heart was racing.

Jason held my hand.

The doctor smiled reassuringly.

Then the scan began.

A few moments passed.

The doctor stared at the monitor.

Then blinked.

Then smiled.

A very big smile.

My stomach immediately dropped.

“Oh no.”

The doctor laughed.

“No.”

Jason looked concerned.

“What?”

The doctor pointed toward the screen.

“There.”

I stared.

Confused.

Then confused again.

Then-

Wait.

There were two.

Two.

I looked at Jason.

Jason looked at me.

Then both of us looked back at the screen.

The doctor was openly amused now.

Thank

+158gnus

“Congratulations.”

ointed.

“There are two.”

“Yes.”

“There are definitely two.”

“Also yes.”

Silence.

The doctor grinned.

“Twins.”

Jason stopped breathing.

I was pretty sure I did too.

The doctor continued.

“You’re approximately eight weeks pregnant.”

A pause.

“Still in the first trimester.”

Another pause.

“And everything looks healthy.”

The relief hit me so hard I almost cried.

Jason kissed my forehead.

Neither of us could stop smiling.

Twins.

We were having twins.

Dear God.

Alice was going to love this.

That afternoon, after discussing it with Jason, we released the ultrasound photos through Phoenix Ashes’ official

accounts.

Along with a simple statement.

“Our family is growing.”

The internet exploded.

Again.

Millions of comments appeared within hours.

twa

One particular trend immediately took over every social media platform.

People posting screenshots of the old articles questioning Jason’s fertility.

Beside the ultrasound.

Beside the words:

“Well, that aged poorly.”

Another popular comment read:

“Mr. Sun apparently doesn’t have any issues.”

And another:

“Not only was the rumor false, he doubled the results.”

Jason refused to read the comments.

Which only made me read them out loud.

The children found them hilarious.

And somewhere in the middle of all the congratulations, excitement, and chaos, I realized something.

For the first time in a very long time...

I was genuinely happy.

Even if we were apparently about to become parents of six children.

To clarify

Amber POV

The good mood lasted exactly three days.

Three.

Apparently that was the maximum amount of happiness the universe was willing to grant me before someone decided to create another crisis.

This time, the target was me.

I woke up to seventeen missed calls.

Twelve messages from Pamela.

Five from Clara.

Three from Jason’s assistant.

And one from Grandfather, which honestly worried me the most.

The moment I opened my phone, I regretted it.

Pictures.

Hundreds of pictures.

Pictures of Oscar and me from when we were engaged.

Pictures of me attending events with Marcus.

Pictures of Adrian and me together.

Which would have been less ridiculous if Adrian wasn't my cousin.

The internet had apparently decided facts were optional.

The headlines only got worse.

"WHO IS THE REAL FATHER OF AMBER ASHER'S TWINS?"

"SUN HEIR SHOULD DEMAND DNA TEST."

"MULTIPLE MEN LINKED TO ASHER HEIRESS."

"MARCUS HESS SECRET SPERM DONOR?"

That one actually made me laugh.

Then came another.

"BABIES MAY BELONG TO SUN COUSIN."

I stared at it.

Then stared some more.

Then handed the tablet to Jason.

"Please explain."

Jason read it.

His expression darkened.

Then darkened further.

Then somehow darkened even more.

“How exactly,” he asked slowly, “did they arrive at this conclusion?”

“I have no idea.”

I truly didn’t.

The article was essentially accusing me of carrying babies fathered by half the men I knew.

The entire thing was ridiculous.

Utterly ridiculous.

Which was why I couldn’t stop laughing.

Jason wasn’t laughing.

Not even a little.

The more articles he read, the quieter he became.

That worried me.

Because angry Jason was predictable.

Silent Jason was terrifying.

A few minutes later Pamela called.

The second I answered she didn’t even say hello.

“Don’t panic.”

I immediately panicked.

“What happened now?”

Pamela sighed.

“The employees are taking bets.”

I blinked.

“What?”

“The Phoenix Ashes headquarters.”

A pause.

“They have a betting pool.”

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 272

I stared at the phone.

betting pool?

“Yes.”

Another pause.

“They’re betting on how long it takes Jason to explode.”

I nearly choked.

“How much?”

Pamela sounded offended.

“Amber.”

“What?”

“The current jackpot is over fifty thousand dollars.”

I couldn’t even be angry.

That was honestly impressive.

When I looked toward Jason, he was standing near the castle windows overlooking the mountains.

Silent.

Thinking.

Dangerously thinking.

“Oh no.”

Pamela immediately understood.

“Oh no?”

“Oh no.”

We both knew that look.

The last time Jason looked like that, three companies disappeared.

I expected a press release.

A lawsuit.

Possibly a declaration of war.

Instead, Jason did something none of us expected.

He recorded a video.

No production team.

No lawyers.

No public relations consultants.

Just him.

The main garden of Ember Castle stretched behind him.

The mountains rose in the distance.

The afternoon sun illuminated the stone walls.

The setting was beautiful.

Jason looked calm.

Completely calm.

Which somehow made the video even more powerful.

The recording began.

Jason looked directly into the camera.

“Good afternoon.”

His voice was steady.

Measured.

Professional.

“I would like to start by thanking everyone who has expressed concern for me recently.”

I immediately knew where this was going.

And I loved it.

Jason continued.

“I’ve received many messages regarding my family.”

A pause.

“Particularly regarding my wife’s pregnancy.”

The internet practically stopped breathing.

Everyone knew this video was coming.

Nobody knew what he was going to say.

Jason smiled faintly.

“Let me save everyone some time.”

I laughed.

Already.

The video had only been running for thirty seconds.

“My wife is pregnant.”

Apause.

“With my children.”

Another pause.

“The twins are mine.”

The comments exploded immediately.

Jason ignored them.

“As for the gentlemen currently being discussed online…”

He looked almost amused.

Almost.

“Oscar White.”

A pause.

“My wife’s former fiancé.”

Another pause.

“He is not the father.”

I nearly fell off the couch.

Jason continued mercilessly.

“Marcus Hess.”

A pause.

“My best friend.”

Another pause.

“Also not the father.”

I could practically hear Marcus laughing from another continent.

Then Jason delivered the final blow.

“Adrian Asher.”

He paused dramatically.

“My wife’s cousin.”

Another pause.

“Definitely not the father.”

I laughed so hard I started crying.

The comments section exploded.

son wasn’t finished.

Not even close.

He folded his hands calmly.

“To clarify.”

A pause.

“My wife has absolutely nothing to do with the men being described in these articles.”

His expression hardened slightly.

“Nor do they have anything to do with her pregnancy.”

The mountains behind him made him look almost regal.

Dangerous.

Untouchable.

Then he smiled.

A real smile.

The kind he only used around family.

“I understand some people find it difficult to believe.”

Another pause.

“But despite internet rumors, I am perfectly capable of fathering my own children.”

I covered my mouth.

The comments exploded again.

Thousands.

Tens of thousands.

Millions.

Within minutes.

Then Jason delivered the finishing strike.

“The medical rumors regarding me were false.”

A pause.

“The twins prove that rather effectively.”

I had to pause the video because I couldn’t breathe from laughing.

Even Grandfather was laughing.

+15 Borus

Mrs. Sun was crying.

Sun looked proud.

The children had gathered around my tablet.

Alice raised her hand.

“Can Dad always solve problems like this?”

I looked at Jason’s increasingly viral video.

Then at my husband.

Then back at the screen.

“Apparently.”

The video ended with one final statement.

A simple one.

The most devastating one of all.

Jason looked directly into the camera.

“My wife is carrying my children.”

A pause.

“And if anyone remains confused, I suggest taking a biology class at our school.”

The internet never recovered.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 273

Amber POV

Jason’s video accomplished exactly what neither of us expected.

Mrs. Sun declared it a masterpiece.

Not because it had defended our family.

Not because it had silenced the rumors.

But because of his last sentence.

“If anyone remains confused, I suggest taking a biology class at our school.”

She replayed that part at least five times.

Then she looked at Jason with a smile that honestly frightened me.

“Do you have any idea what you’ve done?”

Jason frowned.

“I defended my wife.”

Mrs. Sun shook her head.

“No.”

She pointed at her tablet.

“You advertised my school.”

Jason blinked.

“What?”

She turned the screen around.

The academy’s website had crashed.

Applications were pouring in faster than the servers could process them.

Parents from all over the continent wanted to enroll their children.

Even adults were joking online that they should attend the biology classes.

The waiting list had doubled overnight.

Mrs. Sun laughed happily.

“I should let you handle all of our marketing.”

Jason looked horrified.

“I don’t think that’s a good idea.”

“I think it’s an excellent idea.”

PYI

15 Bon

5 Bonus

Grandfather chuckled.

ve never seen a school become famous because of a paternity scandal.”

Mrs. Sun looked incredibly pleased.

“There’s a first time for everything.”

I couldn’t help laughing.

Fortunately, the internet eventually calmed down.

The jokes remained, but the accusations slowly disappeared.

Jason quietly handled the rest.

False articles vanished.

Defamatory posts disappeared.

Fake accounts mysteriously stopped existing.

I didn’t ask how.

I already knew.

My husband had decided that if people insisted on spreading lies, they simply wouldn’t have a platform to do it

anymore.

The internet became remarkably peaceful afterward.

Unfortunately…

Alexander Vincent wasn’t finished.

Not even close.

It began subtly.

One investor.

Then another.

Then another.

Long-time investors from Asher Corporation began requesting meetings with Grandfather.

Each conversation ended the same way.

They thanked him for decades of friendship.

Explained they were getting older.

Wanted to simplify their estates.

And intended to sell their shares.

Individually, none of it sounded suspicious.

Together…

It was impossible to ignore.

Round Grandfather calmly drinking tea in his office while reviewing the latest reports.

“Aren’t you worried?”

He smiled.

“Not particularly.”

I frowned.

“We’re losing investors.”

He waved a dismissive hand.

“I own more than sixty percent of Asher Corporation.”

He began counting on his fingers.

“You own fifteen.”

I nodded.

“Adrian owns another five.”

Another nod.

He smiled.

“That means eighty percent of the company is safely within the family.”

I relaxed slightly.

Grandfather continued.

“The remaining twenty percent is divided among dozens of investors.”

A shrug.

“If necessary…”

“I’ll buy every last share.”

He sounded so confident that for a moment I actually believed nothing was wrong.

But something still bothered me.

Too many investors.

Too quickly.

Coincidences rarely happened around the Vincents.

That evening I sat in my office with Jason.

Or rather…

I complained while Jason patiently listened.

C

“I don’t understand.”

crolled through financial reports.

“No unusual transfers.”

Another report.

“No suspicious payments.”

Another.

“No unexplained meetings.”

Jason leaned against the desk.

“What are you looking for?”

“A reason.”

“There has to be one.”

I accessed company emails.

Internal messages.

Archived communications.

Board discussions.

Meeting requests.

Nothing.

Absolutely nothing.

Everything looked normal.

Too normal.

Which made it suspicious.

Hours passed.

The castle grew quiet.

Jason eventually placed a cup of tea beside me.

“You’ve been staring at the screen for three hours.”

“I know.”

“Take a break.”

“I can’t.”

He sighed.

“I’ll look.”

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 274

I smiled.

ou'll find the same nothing I found."

Jason began reviewing another section of the company database while I continued checking older correspondence.

Minutes later...

Something appeared.

Not in financial records.

Not in contracts.

An email.

Buried beneath dozens of routine messages.

Sent privately.

Not through official channels.

Addressed to one of the investors.

I frowned.

"That's odd."

Jason immediately looked over.

"What?"

I opened the message.

At first, it looked harmless.

A polite conversation.

Business.

Family.

Future opportunities.

Then I reached the attachment.

My blood ran cold.

It wasn’t a business proposal.

It was a marriage proposal.

Not for me.

Not for Jason.

For Rose.

I stared at the screen.

Unable to process what I was reading.

email proposed an alliance between the Brown family and ours.

In exchange...

The Brown family would convince the investors to remain loyal to Asher Corporation.

I reread the sentence.

Then read it again.

Surely I had misunderstood.

No.

There it was.

Clear as day.

Rose would marry into the Brown family once she came of age.

In return...

The investor crisis would disappear.

My hands began shaking.

Jason slowly took the tablet from me.

Read the proposal.

His expression hardened with every line.

By the end...

He quietly placed the tablet on the desk.

Neither of us spoke for several seconds.

Then Jason looked at me.

“They’re bargaining with our daughter.”

Not Rose.

Not a political asset.

Not an heiress.

Our daughter.

I felt something inside me snap.

Very calmly, I closed the laptop.

Then looked directly at Jason.

“I think...”

My voice was perfectly steady.

the Brown family just made the biggest mistake of their lives.”

After school

Jason POV

The moment I finished reading the email, one thing became painfully clear.

The Browns were never the real problem.

Alexander Vincent was.

The wording.

The tone.

The careful promises hidden behind polite business language.

I had seen it before.

Far too many times.

Alexander Vincent never made demands.

He planted ideas.

He let other people believe they had come up with them themselves.

The email Amber found had been sent from a burner address.

An account created solely for that conversation.

Someone else would have dismissed it as impossible to trace.

I didn’t.

Because the sender’s identity wasn’t hidden in the address.

It was hidden in the writing.

Every sentence screamed Alexander Vincent.

He wanted Rose.

Not because he cared about her.

Because she was useful.

My jaw tightened.

Rose and Iris had already lost too much.

Rose had survived the Vincents.

Iris had survived years of neglect.

Neither of them would ever become bargaining chips again.

Not while I was alive.

I looked toward Amber.

C

She was still reading through financial reports, trying to understand why the investors were suddenly selling their shares.

She looked exhausted.

Pregnancy wasn't making anything easier.

I walked over and kissed the top of her head.

"I'm going to check something."

She looked up.

"You okay?"

I smiled.

"I'm fine."

It wasn't entirely true.

But she had enough worries already.

She didn't need another one.

Once I stepped out of her office, my smile disappeared.

I entered my study and locked the door behind me.

The room came alive the moment I sat down.

Four monitors.

Three encrypted servers.

Half a dozen independent networks.

Cronos was awake.

I wasn't interested in the Brown family.

I wanted Alexander Vincent.

If he had approached one investor...

He might have approached all of them.

And if Rose had received a marriage proposal...

What about the others?

Alice.

Alex.

Iris.

Even the twins hadn’t been born yet.

The thought alone made my stomach twist.

Y

I quickly accessed the Asher and Sun corporate servers.

Using administrator privileges, I searched archived communications belonging to every major investor from both

corporations.

Thousands of emails.

Millions of messages.

Too much for a person.

Perfect for a machine.

I began writing filters.

Keywords.

Marriage.

Alliance.

Heir.

Rose.

Alice.

Alex.

Iris.

Children.

Engagement.

Future union.

Inheritance.

The search spread across multiple servers simultaneously.

Estimated completion time:

Three hours.

I leaned back in my chair.

Now...

We waited.

The hours passed quietly.

Outside my office, life continued normally.

Employees came and went.

Security reports arrived.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 275

Hospital reports.

Ordinary life.

Eventually the first notifications appeared.

Dozens of flagged conversations.

Most were harmless.

Family discussions.

School invitations.

Charity events.

Nothing useful.

I continued reviewing them.

Time slipped away.

Before I realized it, the academy day had ended.

I heard children's voices echoing through the castle.

Doors opening.

Running footsteps.

Laughter.

Home.

The castle finally felt like home.

I closed the last report and stretched.

Maybe Amber was right.

Maybe I had been looking too hard.

Maybe –

A voice interrupted my thoughts.

'...if you ever encounter someone you are not one hundred percent sure you can beat..."

Amber.

“...remember that running away is always better than risking your life.”

I froze.

What?

I slowly walked out of my office.

The voices grew louder.

curious.

Excited.

Children.

Lots of children.

I rounded the corner toward the main sitting room.

Then stopped.

Completely.

There weren’t four children.

There weren’t eight.

There had to be twenty.

At least.

Children of every age sat cross-legged across the enormous sitting room.

Some wore school uniforms.

Others still had backpacks beside them.

A few parents waited quietly near the entrance.

No one interrupted.

Every single child was listening to Amber.

She sat comfortably on one of the large sofas, one hand resting absentmindedly on her stomach while speaking with complete calm.

“...because surviving is never cowardly.”

The children watched her with complete attention.

“If you can escape safely...”

She smiled.

“Escape.”

A little boy raised his hand.

“What if someone calls us cowards?”

Amber smiled again.

“They’re alive enough to insult you.”

The room laughed.

“So I would call that a successful escape.”

Even more laughter.

Areenage girl asked the next question.

“But what if someone is bullying my little brother?”

Amber nodded.

“Different situation.”

She stood, walking toward the center of the room.

“You protect people.”

A pause.

“But protecting someone doesn’t always mean fighting.”

She looked around the room.

“Sometimes protecting someone means getting help.”

Another pause.

“Sometimes it means distracting the bully.’

She smiled.

“And sometimes…”

She looked toward Alice.

“…it means having a four-year-old publicly embarrass them.”

Alice grinned proudly.

The children burst into laughter.

I stood there.

Completely confused.

How…

Why…

When…

Where had twenty children come from?

I finally caught Rose’s attention.

She smiled brightly.

“Dad!”

Every child turned toward me.

Twenty pairs of eyes.

Then twenty-one.

Amber turned around.

“Oh.”

She smiled warmly.

“You’re done working.”

I nodded slowly.

“…Apparently.”

I looked around again.

“What exactly…”

I gestured toward the room.

“…is happening?”

Amber blinked.

“The after-school club.”

I stared.

“The what?”

She looked genuinely surprised.

“I thought Mrs. Sun told you.”

I slowly turned toward my mother. 1

Who had somehow appeared in the doorway carrying a tray of cookies.

She smiled innocently.

“I may have forgotten.”

I closed my eyes.

Of course she had.

Mrs. Sun entered the room.

“Oh, Jason.”

She sounded delighted.

“Isn’t this wonderful?”

I looked around once more.

Twenty children.

Listening to my wife as though she were their favorite teacher.

Mto

My mother serving snacks.

My daughters helping younger students.

Alex explaining something about firewalls to three teenagers.

Iris helping another group with homework.

Rose reading a story.

Alice was somehow wearing a paper crown.

I looked back at Amber.

She shrugged.

“They asked if I could give life lessons after school.”

A pause.

“So I said yes.”

I blinked.

Then blinked again.

Somehow…

Without me noticing…

Our castle had turned into the neighborhood’s after-school center.

And judging by the children’s smiling faces…

It was becoming their favorite place in all of Sum.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 276

Amber POV

I needed a distraction.

Between the pregnancy, the Vincents, the Vinny family, the secret door beneath the castle, and the constant attacks against our family, I felt like my brain never truly rested.

Mrs. Sun noticed before I did.

“You need something that reminds you why we’re doing all of this,” she told me one afternoon over tea.

I looked at her, exhausted.

“And what exactly do you suggest?”

She smiled.

“I want you to teach.”

I blinked.

“I already do.”

“No.”

She shook her head.

“I want you to teach life.”

I frowned, waiting for her to elaborate.

Mrs. Sun leaned forward, her eyes sparkling with excitement.

i

“The school counselors have identified children who struggle making friends, understanding social situations, building relationships, or simply feel… different.”

She smiled toward the academy visible through the castle windows.

“Children like Alice.”

“And Alex.”

“Iris.”

“Rose.”

A pause.

“And, if we’re being honest…”

She smiled knowingly.

“You and Jason.”

I couldn’t even argue.

Jason and I had spent most of our lives solving problems that didn’t involve people.

+15 8çnus

Business.

Technology.

Strategy.

Socializing had always come second.

Mrs. Sun continued.

“I want them to learn from someone who understands what it’s like to think differently.”

The idea stayed with me the rest of the day.

By dinner…

I had accepted.

Jason escaped almost immediately after hearing about the project.

Not literally.

But close enough.

“I have work.”

He kissed my forehead.

“I’ll be in my office.”

I smiled.

He wasn’t fooling anyone.

I knew exactly what he was doing.

The email regarding Rose had affected him deeply.

He was probably searching through every investor’s records, trying to discover whether Alexander Vincent had made similar offers involving Alice, Alex, Iris...

Or even our unborn twins.

He loved quietly.

| Protectively.

Methodically.

While Jason searched for enemies...

I decided to search for something else.

If the Ember treasure truly existed...

If someone was trying to reach it...

Opening the castle to selected guests might reveal who was looking for it.

People searching for treasure couldn’t resist looking.

Especially if they believed no one was watching.

e classes suddenly became useful in more ways than one.

The first afternoon arrived quickly.

Children poured through the castle gates after school.

Some came alone.

Others arrived holding their parents’ hands.

A few older brothers and sisters accompanied the younger children.

I didn’t mind.

The castle had more than enough space.

I greeted everyone personally.

“Welcome.”

The younger children immediately looked around in amazement.

One little girl whispered loudly enough for everyone to hear,

“It really is a castle.”

I laughed.

“Yes.”

“It squeaks too.”

The children giggled.

Before beginning, I offered everyone a short tour.

“The public areas only,” I explained.

“The family quarters are still private.”

Everyone agreed immediately.

We visited the grand entrance hall.

The library.

The music room.

The gardens.

The dining hall.

The restored ballroom.

Everywhere we went, children asked questions.

Parents took photographs.

Older siblings admired the architecture.

answered happily.

Eventually we gathered in the main sitting room.

Comfortable sofas surrounded the enormous fireplace.

Children settled on cushions spread across the floor.

Parents remained quietly near the back.

Some older siblings joined the discussion as well.

I didn’t mind.

Life lessons weren’t only for children.

I smiled.

“Today’s topic is simple.”

A pause.

“How do you deal with problems you can’t control?”

The room became quiet.

Hands slowly began rising.

The first belonged to a boy around twelve years old.

I recognized him immediately.

The heir to the Stone family.

One of Sum’s oldest noble families.

He looked hesitant.

“What if…”

He hesitated again.

“…someone is after you?”

The room fell silent.

Even the adults looked toward me.

I considered the question carefully.

“That depends.”

The boy nodded.

“What if they’re stronger?”

I smiled gently.

“Then don’t fight.”

Several children Tooked surprised.

The Stone heir frowned.

“But…”

“My father says I should never back down.”

I nodded.

“Your father wants you to be brave.”

A pause.

“I’m asking you to be smart.”

The room remained completely silent.

“If someone is stronger than you…”

I continued,

“…running away isn’t weakness.”

“It’s strategy.”

Alex nodded immediately.

Of course he did.

“You only fight battles you have a chance of winning.”

I looked around the room.

“If escaping keeps you alive…”

“Escape.”

“If asking for help keeps everyone safe…”

“Ask.”

“If calling the police solves the problem…”

“Call them.”

A little girl raised her hand.

“So…. heroes run away?”

I smiled.

“Heroes survive.”

Another pause.

“Movies usually end after the hero wins.”

I pointed toward the children.

Real life continues afterward.”

“So make decisions that let you keep living.”

Several parents quietly nodded.

One older brother lowered his head thoughtfully.

The Stone heir looked relieved.

“But…”

He asked one more question.

“What if they never stop chasing me?”

That question felt…

Different.

Heavier.

Almost personal.

I answered honestly.

“Then don’t face them alone.”

The room became quiet once more.

“The strongest people I know…”

I smiled as I thought about Jason.

“…aren’t strong because they fight alone.”

“They’re strong because they build families.”

“They build friendships.”

“They build teams.”

“They build communities.”

I gestured around the room.

“That’s why you’re all here.”

“One person can be defeated.”

“A family is much harder.”

The children looked around at one another.

The Stone heir slowly smiled.

“I think…”

He looked at the other children.

I’d rather have friends than bodyguards.”

I laughed.

“That’s a very good place to start.”

Just then, movement in the hallway caught my attention...

Jason had returned.

He stood quietly near the entrance, watching the discussion.

His expression was impossible to read.

He looked at the children.

Then at me.

Then slowly lifted the tablet in his hand.

On the screen...

Dozens of emails were highlighted in red.

Alexander Vincent hadn’t targeted only Rose.

He had approached investors about every one of our children.

A Woman Worth Billions, Dated the Wrong Brother

Chapter 277

My heart was pounding.

Jason stood quietly near the entrance, the tablet still in his hand. From where I was sitting, I could see the highlighted emails on the screen before he locked it.

He had found something.

Probably something terrible.

The urge to walk over and ask him immediately was almost overwhelming.

Not now.

Not in front of the children.

Whatever Alexander Vincent was planning could wait another hour.

The children couldn't. 1

I forced myself to smile as if nothing had happened.

It took every ounce of self-control I possessed.

"Actually," I said, looking toward the back of the room, "I think someone just arrived who might have a better answer than I do."

Every child turned around.

Jason looked up, slightly surprised that everyone was suddenly staring at him.

I smiled and waved him over.

"Come here."

He hesitated for only a second before slipping the tablet into the inside pocket of his jacket and walking toward us.

The children immediately made room for him.

Some of the younger ones whispered excitedly.

Mr.Sun.

The owner of Sun Corporation.

The man from the news.

The father of Alice and Alex.

To them, he was almost legendary.

I reached for his hand as he sat beside me.

"We've been talking about asking for help."

I looked at him.

"Do you have an example?"

Jason looked at me.

Then blinked.

Then looked almost offended.

“An example?”

He pointed at me.

“Well…”

“You.”

I laughed softly.

“Me?”

He nodded as though it was the most obvious thing in the world.

“You helped me.”

The room became completely silent.

Jason looked toward the children.

“You know…”

He smiled faintly.

“Being an heir isn’t always as glamorous as people think.”

Several children nodded.

Especially the older ones.

“Heirs.”

He paused.

“And boys especially…”

‘…are often taught that we have to solve everything alone.”

He rested his forearms on his knees.

“We’re told that asking for help means we’re weak.”

“That if someone rescues us…”

“…we weren’t good enough.”

His smile faded.

“I believed that.”

“For a very long time.”

I could hear a pin drop.

son wasn’t the type to talk about himself.

The children noticed too.

“When my parents passed away…”

He continued quietly.

“…everything they built started disappearing.”

“The companies.”

“The properties.”

“The things they left behind.”

“I was trying.”

He laughed softly.

“I really was.”

“I worked harder than I had ever worked.”

“I slept very little.”

“I thought if I just tried a little harder…”

“…everything would somehow be okay.”

He looked down at his hands.

“It wasn’t enough.”

The honesty in his voice made my chest tighten.

“I didn’t know how to ask anyone for help.”

“I didn’t even know I needed help.”

His eyes found mine.

Then he smiled.

“One evening…”

“Miss Amber walked up to me.”

Several children immediately looked at me.

Jason chuckled.

“She handed me a business card.”

“A lawyer.”

“She told me…”

find a w

He imitated my voice surprisingly well.

Call him.””

The children laughed.

“Then…”

Jason spread his hands.

“She left.”

He looked back at me.

“She didn’t stay to convince me.”

“She didn’t lecture me.”

“She didn’t tell me asking for help was okay.”

“She simply gave me the opportunity.”

“And trusted me to make the decision.”

I smiled.

I had almost forgotten that evening.

Jason looked toward the children again.

“So…”

“The first thing you should do…”

“…isn’t learn how to ask for help.”

Several children frowned.

He continued.

“The first thing you need…”

“…is real friends.”

The room remained perfectly quiet.

“Friends who value you.”

“Friends who understand you.”

“Friends who won’t disappear the moment life becomes difficult.”

He looked around the room.

“Because sometimes…”

“…you won’t know how to ask.”

“You’ll be embarrassed.”

bind a whe

“You’ll think you’re bothering people.”

ou’ll convince yourself you’re supposed to figure everything out alone.” 1

His voice softened.

“A real friend notices.”

“They help anyway.”

I felt my eyes sting.

Jason wasn’t talking only about me.

He was talking about us.

Our family.

Marcus.

Pamela.

Adrian.

Emory.

Everyone who had stood beside us.

A little girl raised her hand.

“What if I don’t have any friends?”

Jason smiled gently.

“Then start with one.”

She tilted her head.

“How?”

He thought for a moment.

“Be curious.”

“Be kind.”

“And don’t try to become someone else just so people like you.”

Another child spoke.

“But what if people think I’m weird?”

Jason laughed.

“They probably will.”

The room erupted into giggles.

“I’ve been called strange.”

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“So has Alice.”

Alex raised his own hand.

“And me.”

Rose lifted hers too.

“Me too.”

Iris sighed dramatically before raising hers as well.

The rest of the room laughed.

Jason smiled.

“See?”

“The interesting people usually find each other.”

The children looked around the room.

Several smiled shyly at one another.

The Stone heir slowly raised his hand again.

Jason nodded toward him.

“Yes?”

The boy looked genuinely thoughtful.

“So…”

He hesitated.

“Do you mean we should find a wife?”

The room fell silent for a second.

Then I burst out laughing.

Jason looked at the boy, then at me, clearly trying very hard not to laugh himself.

The Stone heir frowned.

“What?”

I wiped a tear from my eye.

“Well…”

I smiled warmly at him.

“That works too.”

The children giggled.

But,” I continued, “it’s much better to start as friends.”

The boy tilted his head.

“Why?”

“Because friendship lets you discover who à person really is.”

I reached for Jason’s hand, intertwining our fingers.

“When Jason and I first met, we weren’t thinking about marriage.’

I smiled at my husband.

“We became partners because we first learned we could trust each other.”

Jason nodded.

“A good partner is usually a very good friend first.”

I looked back at the children.

“So don’t rush.”

“Make friends.”

“Learn from each other.”

“Help each other.”

“And if one day one of those friendships becomes something more…”

I shrugged with a smile.

“That’s wonderful.”

“But friendship is the best foundation you can build.”

The Stone heir nodded seriously, as though committing every word to memory.

“So…”

He smiled sheepishly.

“I should probably learn to make friends before looking for a wife.”

The room erupted into laughter.

Jason chuckled.

“I think that’s an excellent plan.”

Several of the older children laughed and nodded in agreement.

One little girl whispered loudly enough for everyone to hear,

“My brother skipped the friendship part.”

Her older brother immediately turned bright red.

The entire room Taughed even harder.

One boy moved closer to another student who had been sitting alone.

Without saying a word.

Jason noticed.

So did I.

For a brief moment, I forgot about the emails hidden inside his jacket.

Forgot about Alexander Vincent.

Forgot about the treasure beneath the castle.

Watching those children connect...

Reminded me why we were fighting so hard to protect this place.

Then Jason gently squeezed my hand.

Just once.

A silent message.

We need to talk.

The warmth disappeared from my chest.

The emails were still there.

Waiting.

And somehow...

I knew whatever Jason had found was far worse than a few marriage proposals.

I choose...

Amber POV

The castle became wonderfully quiet once the last family left.

Parents thanked us for the afternoon.

Children promised to return the next day.

Mrs. Sun looked delighted with how successful the first session had been.

By nine o’clock, only our family remained.

One by one, the children drifted upstairs.

Alice insisted on hugging everyone before bed.

Alex reminded me that tomorrow’s lesson should include “how to recognize internet scams.”

Rose asked if she could help bake cookies for the next class.

Iris simply wished us goodnight before disappearing toward her room.

The castle slowly settled into silence.

Jason and I remained in the library.

Neither of us spoke.

I already knew why.

Once he was sure the children were asleep, Jason reached inside his jacket and pulled out his tablet.

His expression had completely changed.

The warmth from earlier had disappeared.

“I found more.”

I took the tablet without saying a word.

The first email made my stomach turn.

The second made me angry.

By the fifth...

I wanted to throw the tablet through the nearest window.

They weren’t discussing companies.

Or investments.

Or business strategies.

They were discussing our children.

Like assets.

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Like chess pieces.

ke future investments.

One investor preferred Alice because she was naturally charismatic.

Another wanted Alex because he believed he would inherit Sun Corporation one day.

Someone else argued that Iris was the most intelligent choice because she had adapted quickly and would become an influential businesswoman.

Another favored Rose because she carried blood ties to multiple powerful families.

I kept scrolling.

Every email somehow became worse than the last.

One message stopped me cold.

I read it twice.

Then a third time.

It was written by Alexander Vincent.

Not directly.

Never directly.

But I recognized the wording immediately.

“Mr. Sun-Asher’s wife is carrying twins.”

“If fortune smiles upon them, one child will undoubtedly inherit the Sun family while the other secures the Asher legacy.”

“That leaves excellent opportunities to unite the remaining heirs through advantageous marriages.”

Another investor had replied only minutes later.

“Exactly.”

“If we secure engagements early enough, the children will grow together.”

“By adulthood they won’t even question it.”

My hands started shaking.

Another message followed.

“Children are easier to shape than adults.”

I stopped reading.

I couldn’t.

I physically couldn’t.

I slowly lowered the tablet onto the desk.

For several moments neither Jason nor I spoke.

The silence felt suffocating.

Finally, I whispered,

“They’re talking about babies.”

Jason nodded once.

“They’re talking about children.”

“Our children.”

“They aren’t even born yet.”

He closed his eyes briefly.

“I know.”

I looked toward the ceiling.

Above us, four children were sleeping peacefully.

Alice.

Alex.

Rose.

Iris.

Completely unaware that grown adults were discussing who they should marry decades before they would even understand what marriage meant.

It made me sick.

“They’re trying to steal their futures.”

Jason looked at me.

“No.”

His voice was calm.

“They’re trying to write them.”

That sentence somehow hurt even more.

I leaned back in my chair, pressing a hand against my stomach.

“They’re not people to them.”

“They’re bloodlines.”

“They’re companies.”

“They’re alliances.”

Jason nodded.

“Exactly.”

The room fell silent again.

Then I looked at him.

“They made a mistake.”

He already knew what I meant.

“They involved our children.”

I smiled.

It wasn’t a pleasant smile.

“They could have attacked me.”

“They could have attacked you.”

“They could have attacked our companies.”

“I would have played defense.”

I leaned forward.

“But this…”

I tapped the tablet.

“This is different.”

Jason slowly smiled.

The same dangerous smile I had seen only a handful of times.

“I already started.”

I raised an eyebrow.

“You did?”

He turned the tablet back toward himself.

“I’ve been tracking every investor involved.”

One screen filled with names.

Another with companies.

A third with financial transactions.

“They all have something.”

He enlarged another window.

“Tax fraud.”

Another.

“Market manipulation.”

Another.

“Insider trading.”

Another.

“Undisclosed offshore accounts.”

I looked at him.

“You already investigated them?”

“I started the moment I found the first email.”

Of course he had.

I reached for my own laptop.

“If we’re doing this…”

Jason looked at me.

“…we’re doing it together.”

Within minutes, both our computers covered the table.

We divided the list.

He followed the money.

I followed the people.

Companies.

Properties.

Family connections.

Political influence.

Every hidden asset.

Every shell corporation.

Every fake foundation.

Every secret account.

Hours passed without either of us noticing.

Occasionally one of us would quietly say,

“Found something.”

The list kept growing.

By two in the morning, every investor who had participated in those conversations had their own digital folder.

Each one filled with enough evidence to ruin their careers.

Nooked across the table at Jason.

“So…”

He closed his laptop.

“So.”

“What do we do now?”

He stood and walked toward the window overlooking the castle grounds.

Moonlight illuminated the gardens.

Somewhere beyond them, our children slept peacefully.

Jason spoke without turning around.

“One by one.”

I joined him beside the window.

“One by one,” I agreed.

“We’re going to destroy every single person who thought they had the right to decide our children’s futures.”

This wasn’t about revenge anymore.

It wasn’t even about business.

It was about making sure no one would ever look at our children as bargaining chips again.

And for the first time since Alexander Vincent entered our lives...

We weren’t waiting for him to make the next move.

We were coming for everyone who stood beside him.

forgot whose table they’re eating from Amber POV

Jason and I didn’t strike imtnediately.

That was one of the first lessons Grandfather had ever taught me.

“If you attack while you’re angry, you make mistakes.”

So we investigated.

Every investor.

Every company.

Every subsidiary.

Every foundation.

Every shell corporation.

The deeper we looked, the clearer the pattern became.

It wasn’t just greed.

It was dependence.

Over the years, Asher Corporation had become the backbone of dozens of businesses.

Whenever one of those companies faced financial trouble, Asher Corporation stepped in.

A strategic investment.

A favorable loan.

A joint venture.

Shared infrastructure.

Business consulting.

At first glance, it looked like Grandfather had simply been helping old friends.

Looking deeper...

It became obvious.

Most of those companies were no longer truly independent.

They survived because Asher Corporation wanted them to survive.

I leaned back in my chair.

“They’re feeding from us.”

Jason nodded.

“And they forgot whose table they’re eating from.”

PAR

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forgot whose tobe they is obg from

That sentence stayed with me.

Because it was true.

These men had accepted Grandfather’s help for decades.

Then they sat around discussing which of our children should marry into their families.

As though our gratitude should last forever.

I gathered every email Jason and I had uncovered.

Every proposal.

Every discussion.

Every mention of our children.

Then I walked into Grandfather’s office.

He looked up from a report.

“You found something.”

I silently handed him the tablet.

He began reading.

At first his expression remained calm.

Professional.

Then he reached the emails about Rose.

His jaw tightened.

He continued reading.

Alice.

Alex.

Iris.

The unborn twins.

Not once did he interrupt.

Not once did he ask a question.

He simply read.

When he reached the final email, he slowly placed the tablet on his desk.

Then removed his glasses.

“I see.”

His voice was calm.

too way hom

Too calm.

new that tone.

It meant someone was about to lose everything.

“I’m sorry.”

I hadn’t meant to apologize.

The words escaped on their own.

Grandfather looked at me with genuine surprise.

“What are you apologizing for?”

“I brought this to the company.”

He shook his head immediately.

“No.”

His voice was firm.

“They brought this to our family.”

The distinction mattered.

He stood and walked toward the large windows overlooking the city.

“For decades…”

He spoke quietly.

“…I’ve believed that helping good people creates a stronger business community.”

He smiled bitterly.

“It appears I helped raise wolves.”

Silence settled between us.

Finally he turned back toward me.

“What do you want to do?”

I answered without hesitation.

“Cut off the money.” 1

Grandfather smiled.

“Good.”

“So do I.”

Three days later, the Asher Corporation Board held an emergency meeting.

Every major investor attended.

Some in person.

Others through secure video conference.

Jason sat beside me.

Adrian sat across the table.

Grandfather presided over the meeting as though nothing unusual had happened.

No one suspected a thing.

Grandfather adjusted his microphone.

“Ladies and gentlemen.”

“I appreciate your attendance.”

“Asher Corporation has completed an extensive review of our investment strategy.”

Several investors nodded politely.

One even smiled.

Grandfather continued.

“Effective immediately…”

“…all external investment programs directed toward investor-owned companies will be suspended.”

Silence. 1

The room became noticeably quieter.

One investor frowned.

“I’m sorry…”

“…suspended?”

Grandfather nodded.

“Asher Corporation will now prioritize direct expansion.

Another investor raised his hand.

“What about existing support agreements?”

“They will be honored until their expiration.”

He answered calmly.

“No renewals will be issued.”

Someone else spoke.

“Surely there are exceptions?”

Grandfather smiled.