

Becomes 116

Chapter 0116

Serena's POV

"Let me get this straight," Calvin says, furrowing his eyebrows. "This TikTok creator posted a bad review on your jewelry and that's why people stop coming to your shop?"

I nod, feeling a lump form in my throat. "Not just a bad review. He called my jewelry trash."
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Calvin frowns sympathetically. Before he can respond, he picks up a piece of sushi with his chopsticks. We're sitting at the small table near the display cases, surrounded by takeout containers. The smell of fresh sushi and warm dumplings fills the shop.

Since no one is showing up, we just catch up as we eat. Calvin tells me about his business trip to Belgium while I tell him about everything that's been happening with the shop after the fashion show.

Calvin mutters, "Some people just love to tear others down. Do you have any idea why Eden Jonas is going after you?"

I shrug. "Eden says he's friends with Max, but I have a feeling Max paid him a lot to do this. Eden has a big following, after all."

Calvin stops and thinks for a moment, chewing thoughtfully on a piece of sushi. He dips another piece into soy sauce, carefully balancing a slice of ginger on top before popping it into his mouth. He swallows and looks at me. "So, what are you planning to do now?"

I sigh and lean back in my chair. "Well, Stevie and I are planning to launch a summer collection. You know, to build hype for our brand. But the thing is," I gesture to a pile of crumpled paper on the counter, "I'm stuck. Every design I come up with just doesn't feel good enough."

I pick up a few of the crumpled sketches and flatten them out in front of Calvin. "See? Nothing seems right."

Calvin carefully smooths out the papers and examines each design. He takes his time, tracing the lines with his fingers and studying the details. "Serena," he says, finally looking up, "I think you're just overthinking right now. These designs look amazing."

I shake my head. "You don't understand, Calvin. These designs have been around for quite a while. I want a new, unique idea. Something that will really stand out and bring people back."

He sets down the papers and looks at me seriously. "Serena, it doesn't need to be completely unique. What matters is that it's true to you."

Calvin meets my eyes with a steady, reassuring gaze "Just trust your instincts. Your designs are amazing because they reflect your creativity and passion," he continues.

I take a deep breath, trying to let his words sink in. "You really think so?"

He smiles warmly, his eyes never leaving mine. "I know so."

Calvin takes my hand gently, his touch sending a comforting warmth through me. He slowly intertwines his fingers with mine.

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I feel the tension in my shoulders ease as my heart starts to flutter. "Okay, I'll just follow what my gut tells me then."

"And your heart," he adds, smiling. His thumb softly traces circles on the back of my hand.

Calvin's right. I just need to believe in myself more, to make people see the value in my work again.

I just hope there are no more nasty surprises from Eden. But knowing him, I'm not so sure.

After lunch, Calvin looks at his watch and sighs. "I have to go. I have a meeting to get to," he says, standing up.

He gives my hand a final squeeze before letting go. "You'll be okay."

I nod, forcing a smile. "Thanks for everything, Calvin."

He smiles back and heads out the door, the bell chiming softly as he leaves. The shop already feels emptier without him.

I sit down at the counter, pulling out my sketchbook. I start sketching and scribbling ideas, the lines rough and unrefined, but it's a start.

My mind races with different concepts, some old and some new, as I try to find a direction for the summer collection.

While I'm working, my phone dings with a text from Stevie. "Girl, are you still at the shop?"

I quickly type back, "Yeah, I'm here. What's up?"

A few moments later, Stevie texts back, "I have to show you a video. It was posted just 10 minutes ago, but it's already trending on Twitter."

Oh boy. I bet it's Eden again with his smug face and nasty comments. "What did Eden post this time?"

"No, it wasn't Eden. Max posted it."

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