

HOW A DYING WOMAN REWROTE HER EPILOGUE

Chapter 10

When Jarrod returned, his strikingly handsome face was cold as marble. Sylvie immediately guessed things hadn't gone well with Elodie he didn't bother hiding his impatience toward her.

Octavia, however, seemed distracted. "Did she say anything to you, big brother? Like... badmouthing me or something?"

Jarrod looked up at her. "What did you do to make her upset?"

"Nothing!" Octavia muttered, clutching her juice like a child. "I'm not that bored, you know."

Joseph strolled in, glancing at Jarrod. He chose not to mention what he'd just witnessed outside-no need to make Sylvie uncomfortable. After all, what woman would enjoy seeing another throw herself at her man? That sort of thing was never easy to comment on.

Maurice snorted. "Why are you grilling your sister? If you ask me, Elodie's the one out of line. Chasing Jarrod all the way here-making a scene when she has no chance at all."

Joseph lit a cigarette. "Looking at how things are, even if you filed for divorce, she'd still cling to you. Jarrod, you'd better brace yourself."

Jarrood said nothing, his expression unreadable as he poured Sylvie a cup of tea.

Sylvie just smiled politely, offering neither comment nor opinion. It was clear she considered this little incident beneath her notice.

Octavia watched the scene unfold, a flicker of guilt crossing her mind.

But then again, even if she hadn't been involved, Elodie's desperate behavior made it entirely likely she'd show up anyway.

So why bother explaining herself?

Elodie was always the sort of woman who didn't know her own worth.

Did it really matter if the others misunderstood her?

With that thought, Octavia relaxed, and soon she was chattering away to Sylvie about life at Verdant University, her admiration plain as day.

Elodie scheduled a meeting with her specialist for next Monday to discuss conservative treatment options.

Early Friday morning, Esmeralda sent her a text: Alexander would be attending the invitational drone competition that afternoon. Normally, Esmeralda—as a major shareholder—would attend as well, but she handed her invitation to Elodie instead, hoping it would give her a chance to break the ice with Alexander.

Elodie felt both moved and guilty. She'd placed her trust in the wrong people and wasted so much time, letting down everyone who'd hoped for her. The guilt gnawed at her.

At ten that morning, Elodie submitted her resignation. There were still handovers to make, but she already knew who in PR was best suited to replace her, so she passed on her work with nothing held back.

"Ms. Thorne, are you really leaving?" The assistant manager looked at her regretfully.

"Yes, I am."

The assistant manager had always liked Elodie; beneath her cool exterior, she was genuinely good-hearted. "You've been looking unwell lately-did you get checked out? Did your husband go with you?"

Elodie hesitated. "I did. Nothing serious."

She didn't clarify whether her husband had accompanied her. Even if she were dying, Jarrod probably wouldn't bother.

Relieved, the assistant manager changed the subject. "Aren't you usually bringing your husband lunch at noon? Not going today?"

Elodie was the picture of the perfect wife-everyone in PR knew it. She'd mentioned her husband had a sensitive stomach and was picky about food, so she always cooked every meal herself, bringing lunch for him during her break without fail.

It was a running joke that no one had ever actually seen Elodie's mysterious husband.

He must have saved a kingdom in a past life to land a wife like her.

Elodie's eyes flickered as she looked down. "No, not today."

Not ever again, she thought.

The assistant manager didn't dwell on it and quickly shifted gears, sighing with envy. "Having a good husband must be such a comfort. People's lives can be so different-take Sylvie, for example. Look at this."

She handed her phone to Elodie.

In the photo, Jarrod was helping Sylvie up the stairs; in the next shot, he was carrying her in his arms, paying no mind to the stares of those around them.

"Sylvie's heels didn't fit, so Mr. Silverstein just scooped her up and carried her inside. He treats her like a princess-everyone wants to be her."

"Who in this company isn't jealous of Sylvie? Gorgeous, top of her class, headhunted by all the Fortune 500s, and Mr. Silverstein clearing the way for her. Mark my words, she'll be the next Mrs. Silverstein in no time. Too bad you're leaving, Ms. Thorne-we could've used you to help us get in her good graces." By now, in the halls of The Silverstein Group, Sylvie was already regarded as the boss's future wife. After all, Jarrod's favoritism couldn't have been more obvious.

Elodie lowered her gaze, slipping away to the restroom to freshen up and hide the pallor in her cheeks.

She didn't want to drag things out.

Her resignation hadn't been approved yet, but she decided to head up to the executive floor.

She ran into Keith by the elevator.

"Looking for Jarrod again?" he asked, frowning. "Here to bring him lunch? It's not even noon. Ms. Thorne, how many times do we have to tell you unless it's urgent, please don't disturb Mr. Silverstein."

Elodie quickly realized why Keith's patience with her had worn so thin.