



### 137: Her Soul's Interrogation

"Next, I will be performing a poem recitation titled \*'Camellia Flowers Bloom'\*!" Phoebe announced, her voice filled with enthusiasm.

The moment she mentioned "Camellia," Sebastian's ears perked up. The word immediately caught his attention. Without thinking, he raised his head and looked toward the stage.

Phoebe, noticing his gaze, felt her heart race with excitement. This was the reaction she had been hoping for!

She began reciting the poem with great passion, each mention of "Camellia" dripping with emotion. To the audience, it was just a poem, but to Sebastian, each word brought back vivid memories of the three intense nights they shared five years ago—those nights filled with the gentle, tender charm of Camellia... the kind of woman he could never forget.

Had she moved on, married someone else, and disappeared to some distant land? The thought gnawed at his heart, and as his mind drifted, he couldn't even focus on Phoebe's words anymore.

The performances concluded, and the school ceremony neared its end as the leaders began their speeches.

Following the ceremony, there was a special reception for alumni who had made significant contributions to New York University. Invitations were sent out to selected students, while others, who weren't invited, were free to leave.

Caitlin, along with Simon and Wendy, left the venue, but Sebastian noticed them walking away with Dr. Evans, and a sense of frustration



stirred inside him. Was she already leaving with another man, enjoying herself after embarrassing him?

Not if he could help it!

Caitlin hadn't walked far when the school's dean hurried over to call her.

"Miss Caitlin, may I have a moment?"

"What's going on?" she asked, puzzled.

"On behalf of our university, I would like to invite you to the reception. Our president specifically requested your presence, as a token of appreciation for your contributions."

Caitlin glanced at Simon and Wendy, unsure what contributions she had made. She certainly hadn't done anything to earn such an honor.

"Go, Caitlin! The president himself invited you, this is a rare honor!" Wendy urged, completely believing in Caitlin's ability to contribute.

"Yeah, you go ahead. Wendy and I will head back," Simon added, mentioning he had work at the hospital.

"Alright, I'll go. We'll catch up later!" Caitlin agreed. Her main reason for attending was to meet Ximena and gather more information about the blue flower on her cheongsam.

The reception was being held in a multifunctional conference hall at the university. By the time Caitlin arrived, many people had already gathered. These were all high-achieving alumni, people who had made significant impacts in their respective fields and still remembered to donate to their alma mater.



The dean escorted Caitlin to the president, who immediately expressed his gratitude.

"Miss Caitlin, thank you so much for your donation of \$10 million to our university library. On behalf of New York University, I offer my deepest thanks!"

Caitlin responded with a modest smile, "There's no need for thanks. New York University is my alma mater; it's only natural for me to contribute."

The mention of the \$10 million made Caitlin think back to her divorce settlement with Sebastian, where he had given her a similar amount. Had he somehow arranged for this money to be placed under her name again?

When her gaze swept across the room, she saw Sebastian standing in the center of a group of important people, holding a glass of wine. He was looking at her from a distance, his lips curled in a faint, mocking smile.

"That's it, I'm going to have a word with him," Caitlin thought.

She picked up a glass of wine and walked toward Ximena. As soon as she arrived, several women turned their attention to her.

"This is Miss Caitlin, much younger than us, but really impressive!" someone commented.

Ximena also spoke, "You look so young, you could be our daughter!"

"Yes, not just young, but beautiful and intelligent," another woman added.

Caitlin smiled politely, "You're too kind, everyone. Your achievements are the ones I look up to. Especially Ximena, your work for women's welfare is truly admirable."



Ximena was pleased with the compliment and nodded, "I can't believe Kelly has such an outstanding daughter!"

"Ximena, do you know my mother?" Caitlin asked.

"Of course! Who doesn't know Kelly in New York? We were in the same graduating class!" Ximena replied.

"How wonderful! By the way, your cheongsam is stunning. I'd love to know which designer made it. Is it from Jinghong's in-house line?"

Caitlin had done some research on Ximena and knew she was the CEO of Jinghong Group, which ran luxury brands like jewelry and fashion.

Ximena didn't answer, but one of the women beside her spoke up, "Can't you tell? It's from Yun's Fragrance & Dye Studio in Departure City, V Country. It's not something you can just buy!"

Yun's Fragrance & Dye Studio? The name sounded familiar to Caitlin. She had heard of it—famous worldwide for its aromatic dyeing techniques.

"Indeed, it's beautiful. The design is elegant and refined," Caitlin praised.

At that moment, she caught a glimpse of a familiar figure approaching. It was Sebastian, and the attention of all the women shifted toward him. However, he ignored them and only lowered his gaze slightly when looking at Caitlin. Their eyes met, and neither seemed pleased to see the other.

"Come here!" he suddenly ordered, his voice low and commanding.

Caitlin gave a polite nod to the women and followed Sebastian out into the hallway.



"What is it? Did you arrange that \$10 million donation?" she asked, her tone sharp.

Sebastian smirked, his voice dripping with sarcasm. "Yes, I did. After all, who asked you to make me go on stage and do that ridiculous chest-crushing stone act? Don't I deserve some face?"

"Are you saying you set me up for that humiliating performance? What, are you bored?" Caitlin retorted.

"I just couldn't stand it! You love singing with Dr. Evans, huh? So why not sing publicly? Why sneak around in a private room with other men?"

"How childish," Caitlin muttered.

She turned to leave, but Sebastian suddenly pressed her against the wall, trapping her.

Last time, she had pushed him against a wall in the hotel bathroom; now, it was his turn to return the favor.

To her surprise, the lace fabric hidden in her sleeve was pulled out in the process.

Caitlin glanced at it coldly, scoffing. "I didn't know Mr. Vanderbilt had such a fetish—keeping women's lace fabrics hidden."

Sebastian's face flushed, but he remained expressionless as he shoved the fabric back into his sleeve and blocked her path again.

"It's your fault for wearing such revealing clothes. I bought those for you, and you just threw them away. You really don't know how to appreciate things!" he accused.

"Since you gave it to me, I have every right to do what I want with it! But tell me, why did you buy them for me? We don't have any relationship anymore," Caitlin shot back.

Sebastian was momentarily speechless, unable to respond.

Caitlin gave him a sly smile, her eyes narrowing as she asked, "Mr. Vanderbilt, I just have one question for you: What are you really doing? Why keep picking fights and causing trouble? Could it be that you've fallen in love with me?"

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