

171: The Truth About Mr. Vanderbilt

Sigh...

The elderly woman, Beatrice, let out a deep sigh, clearly reluctant to bring up old memories. But under Sebastian's persistent questioning, she finally told him the truth. "Your father did indeed have an identical twin brother, but unfortunately, that child passed away shortly after birth. * Sigh...*"

This was likely one of the greatest pains of Beatrice's life. She hadn't wanted to share it with anyone, not even with members of The Vanderbilt Family.

"So, my father really had an identical twin brother?" Sebastian asked, confirming the details.

"Yes, he was born 10 minutes after your father," Beatrice confirmed.

Sebastian nodded, feeling like he was starting to piece things together. It seemed that the "father" he currently knew was impossible to differentiate from his real father, and the fact that a paternity test would yield results that were almost identical could only mean one thing: This person was his father's identical twin brother.

However, if this person was truly a Vanderbilt, why didn't he simply return to The Vanderbilt Family and claim his identity? Why go to such lengths to cause harm to Sebastian's parents and come back into the family in this manner?

Could it be that he wanted to inherit the position of the legitimate heir to The Vanderbilt Family?

After leaving his grandmother's room, Sebastian ordered Tyler to

continue investigating Raymond's background. He also planned to gather more evidence to prove his theory and force Raymond to reveal his true identity.

The Next Day, Gray Skies

Xavian's memorial service was held as scheduled. Sebastian arrived early, accompanied by his men, partly to help with the arrangements but also to wait for Caitlin.

By 9 AM, Caitlin arrived, fashionably late. She stepped out of her car in a black dress, a small black veil hat resting on her head, her pale skin glowing against the somber colors. Her presence radiated an air of cold dignity.

As soon as Sebastian saw her, he rushed forward to greet her. "Caitlin."

Caitlin glanced at him with indifferent eyes but didn't say a word.

Seizing the opportunity, Sebastian tried to explain. "Caitlin, please let me explain. The gift you saw yesterday wasn't what it seemed..."

"I already know. No need to explain," Caitlin replied, her voice calm but distant.

"No! You have to listen to me. It's about my reputation!" Sebastian insisted, gripping her wrist and pulling her back toward him. "I swear, I was going to give you a teddy bear, not... those things. I swear on my life, if I were that kind of person, let heaven strike me down!"

"I said, I know you wanted to give me teddy bears and roses. No need to swear an oath," Caitlin interrupted.

Sebastian was a bit surprised and relieved. "So you know the gift was swapped. Do you know who did it?"

"Forget about it," Caitlin said, waving him off. "Don't send gifts like that again. I'm not a teenager anymore. I don't like that kind of thing, so don't waste your time."

"Caitlin!" Just then, Blake called out, seeing her approach.

Caitlin ignored Sebastian and walked toward Blake, leaving Sebastian fuming inside. *Blake, you idiot. Can't you see I'm talking to her?*

After greeting Blake, Caitlin entered the memorial hall.

The memorial hall was solemn and quiet, filled with people who had come to pay their respects. Most of Xavian's family and friends had gathered. Caitlin approached Xavian's portrait and silently vowed to herself: she would uncover the truth and find out who was responsible for this.

"Guests are here to pay their respects!"

The voice of an attendant calling out caught everyone's attention.

When Caitlin turned her gaze toward the entrance, her heart skipped a beat.

It was Ximena!

What was she doing here?

Ximena, dressed in black, walked into the memorial hall, accompanied by her bodyguards and assistants. She went directly to Xavian's portrait, where she paused, staring at him for a long moment.

Inside, Ximena's heart was stirred with a mixture of emotions as she reflected on her tangled past with Xavian and Kelly. It all seemed so vivid now.

But Ximena hid her emotions well. Her expression was calm and unreadable, not something that could be easily deciphered by others.

It seemed like everything was over now, because Xavian was dead.

Xavian, oh Xavian, you're finally dead!

Did you get what you wanted with your stubborn principles?

In the end, not only did you fail to win Kelly's heart, but you also lost your life in the process.

This was the price you paid for betraying me all those years ago!

After completing her three bows in front of the portrait, Ximena placed a white chrysanthemum on the altar as her tribute.

Turning around, her gaze shifted to Xavian's son, Blake, who was also dressed in mourning. Blake bent slightly in return, acknowledging her gesture.

Ximena's eyes then moved toward Caitlin and Sebastian, her expression neutral. "I didn't expect to see Mr. Vanderbilt and Caitlin here."

Ximena greeted them both casually.

"Ximena, it's good to see you again," Caitlin said, nodding in acknowledgment.

"You two are close to Professor Xavian, I assume?" Ximena asked, her tone polite.

"Somewhat. Professor Xavian and my mother were old friends. You should know that," Caitlin replied.

"Indeed, I do. Let's talk outside."

Ximena led the way, and Caitlin followed. It was a rare opportunity to speak with Ximena, and she wasn't going to miss it.

The two women walked out of the memorial hall into the courtyard, where they began discussing Xavian and Kelly.

"Back then, my mother and I were close friends with your mother. It's hard to believe how quickly the years have passed," Ximena said, a nostalgic look in her eyes.

"Yeah, time really does fly. Unfortunately, my mother is no longer with us," Caitlin said, her gaze turning toward the distant horizon, a sense of melancholy welling up inside her.

"She's still alive, isn't she?" Ximena blurted out without thinking.

Caitlin spun around, surprised. "Ximena, how do you know my mother is still alive?"

Ximena immediately realized her slip-up and gave a small laugh. "Oh, I don't know for sure. I just heard Xavian mention it once, but I'm not sure if it was true."

Caitlin took a deep breath. "I hope it's true. But I don't know who's responsible for my mother's suffering."

"You should ask your Aunt Megan. She caused your mother a lot of trouble when she was still alive. She was so obsessed with marrying Jonathan, how could she stand your mother?" Ximena said with a knowing tone. "And you probably want to know about your brother's

whereabouts too? You should ask Megan about that."

Ximena seemed to know more than she was letting on. After saying that, she excused herself, claiming to have something to attend to.

Before leaving, Ximena smiled politely and said, "Caitlin, you should come by my house for tea sometime. I'll be happy to have you."

"Sure, I'll keep that in mind. Thank you, Ximena," Caitlin replied.

No doubt, Caitlin dreamed of visiting Thompson Residence to search for the little girl, but the timing wasn't right just yet.

As Ximena left, she gave Caitlin one last smile, but as soon as she turned away, her smile quickly faded, replaced by a cold, sinister smirk. Even her eyes seemed to shimmer with a hidden malice, as if everything was within her control.

After Ximena's departure, Caitlin stood there, deep in thought. *Her brother's disappearance... could Megan know where he is?*