



229: Caitlin's First Encounter with Her Brother

"I have two conditions!"

"Mm!"

Caitlin listened attentively.

"First, I want you to join XEG under the identity of Kayla and design three major international fashion shows to take XEG and its brand global."

"How do you know about my identity?" Caitlin asked, surprised.

"Well, it's not that difficult to find out, especially with everything that happened between you and LIG," Ximena replied, her eyes gleaming with the calculations of a businesswoman and the weighing of benefits like a seasoned capitalist.

Caitlin nodded. "Alright, I accept this condition. What's the second one?"

"Second, I want you to hand over the complete version of the Yun's Fragrance & Dye Studio secret manuscript, 'Yun's Aromatic Codex.' This is my second—and final—condition. What do you think?"

Ximena looked at Caitlin expectantly. Caitlin was stunned, but she kept her expression neutral. "What exactly is 'Yun's Aromatic Codex'? I don't know what you're referring to."

"You're no fool. You must know that after Xavian passed away, he entrusted 'Yun's Aromatic Codex' to you. And I believe you've discovered the secrets of your mother and grandmother's past, haven't you?"

This statement left Caitlin deeply puzzled. The mystery behind her grandmother's origins was something only a few knew about. How could Ximena be aware of it?



Caitlin narrowed her eyes. "Are you the one who has been secretly watching me, Ximena? Are you the one pulling the strings behind Black Hawk?"

"Of course not! I don't know Black Hawk. But you must remember, your mother and I were close friends, and I know her background very well. I suspect that after her accident, she hid the most important things and might have transferred them to you in another way. So, when Blake came to you later, it was probably to give you the manuscript. It must be in your hands now! You're also a descendant of The Yuncey Family, after all!"

"Ximena is indeed a master strategist!" Caitlin sneered coldly.

"You're too kind." Ximena smiled lightly, her lips curling.

Caitlin stared at Ximena with complicated eyes. After all these twists and turns, now the true reason for all this was finally clear: Ximena wanted the secret manuscript of The Yuncey Family.

Thinking it over, Caitlin realized that Ximena wasn't the one behind Black Hawk. It seemed more like she was part of a different faction, one solely after the manuscript.

"I still don't understand, Ximena. Why do you want the manuscript?" Caitlin asked, suspicion growing.

"Anyone in the fashion design industry would want to create one-of-a-kind Fragrance Garments, wouldn't they? I'm no different. I want to obtain the 'Yun's Aromatic Codex' to craft world-famous Fragrance Garments. It's my lifelong dream. I hope you can help me fulfill it!"

Ximena had laid down her conditions, but Caitlin was lost in thought.

Seeing Caitlin silent, Ximena continued, "You can take your time to think



about it. Didn't you just say that you would do anything to get your daughter back? Now, if you have to choose between your daughter and the manuscript, are you really going to hold back?"

At this moment, Caitlin fully realized that Ximena had been plotting for a long time. She had known about Caitlin's mother and grandmother's identities long before. She had started planning five years ago and was now reaping the rewards.

Using Caitlin's daughter as leverage to get the manuscript was a masterful strategy!

Her daughter was Caitlin's own flesh and blood. There was no way Caitlin could just give her up.

But handing over the manuscript was a tough choice too, considering that it was a legacy from her grandmother. If she lost it, how would she ever restore Yun's Fragrance & Dye Studio in Departure City?

After a long pause, Caitlin finally spoke, "Ximena, it's not that I don't want to give it to you. But this manuscript was passed down by my grandmother. If I give it away, it would be a great betrayal."

"So, you're saying you won't use the manuscript to exchange for Patricia? You're really going to give up your daughter?" Ximena pressed again, her words striking at Caitlin's heart.

Caitlin tried to hold back her pain, explaining, "I definitely want my daughter back! But if you want the manuscript to create Fragrance Garments, then I have another suggestion."

"What suggestion?"

"Once I find the second half of the manuscript, I'll start working on



Fragrance Garments. If I succeed, I'll give XEG the rights to release them under your name. How does that sound?"

"You're really clever," Ximena said with a faint smile. "But what I want is the manuscript. So, what now?"

Ximena, who had repeatedly claimed she wanted to create Fragrance Garments, finally revealed that what she truly sought was the manuscript.

Caitlin realized that this manuscript was far more important than she had imagined. It was more than just a tool to create Fragrance Garments—it was a priceless artifact.

Caitlin couldn't just hand it over without understanding its true value.

She resolved firmly, "I can only transfer the rights to Fragrance Garments, but the manuscript will never be given away. As for my daughter, I will get her back!"

The two women locked eyes, the tension in the air palpable. The atmosphere in the office was ice-cold.

"Then there's nothing more to discuss," Ximena said, reclining on the sofa, her once-warm gaze now turning frosty. "I feel the same way about Patricia. I won't let her go. You should think carefully about whether you'll ever see your daughter again. I can give you time to reconsider."

Ximena stood up and called for her secretary. "Please show her out."

The conversation ended abruptly, and Caitlin felt a coldness creeping up her palm as she left XEG.

She faced the most difficult dilemma of her life. 1

Images of Patricia's innocent face and the child's attachment to her filled



Caitlin's mind, and it broke her heart.

Patricia, Mommy will never give up on you!

But what about her grandmother's will and the unresolved mysteries?
How could she hand the manuscript over to Ximena?

What should she do?

How could she get her daughter back while keeping the manuscript?

Lost in thought, Caitlin walked aimlessly, eventually finding herself on the road.

Suddenly, the screech of tires filled the air. Caitlin didn't move, and when she turned, she saw a car stop just inches in front of her.

The tire marks on the ground were long and dark, and the driver, who had his head down on the steering wheel, slowly raised it.

James, having reacted quickly, slammed on the brakes just in time. He looked at the stunning woman in front of him, confused.

He thought the woman might be suicidal.

Getting out of the car, James approached her politely. "Are you okay?"

Caitlin snapped back to reality and looked at the man before her.

He was a handsome young man with striking features, dressed casually, yet his aura was anything but ordinary.

It was strange—Caitlin couldn't quite explain it, but she felt an inexplicable sense of familiarity.

Was it his warm smile that made her feel this way?

Realizing her own earlier recklessness, Caitlin hurriedly apologized, "I'm fine. Sorry, I wasn't paying attention..."

"It's okay. Just be more careful next time!"

Caitlin stepped aside to the curb, and James got back in his car and drove off.

She couldn't help but watch the car as it drove away, lost in thought.

Soon after, Quincy's car emerged from the underground garage and stopped in front of her.

As they drove back, Quincy asked, "How did it go? Did you make a deal?"

"No! Getting Patricia back won't be that easy," Caitlin sighed.

Quincy offered encouragement. "Don't lose heart. She's your daughter, and you share a blood connection. Even if you have to take legal action, you've got a good chance!" 1

"I won't go that route unless it's absolutely necessary. If Ximena hides Patricia from me, it'll be nearly impossible to find her again."

Caitlin still had time to think. She needed to come up with a solution that would allow her to have both her daughter and the manuscript.

Just then, Sebastian's call came through. "Caitlin, is now a good time to meet? I need to talk to you about something."

"I need to talk to you too!"

Commented [Ma1]: