

256: Making Sebastian Jealous for Once

From the corner of her eye, Caitlin noticed a tall figure stepping into the room. Turning to look, she was momentarily surprised when she saw Sebastian.

"Sebastian? What are you doing here?"

"I was... passing by. Thought I'd stop in and say hello."

Sebastian strode over, his gaze naturally landing on James.

"So, this is your 'friend'?"

"Yeah, this is James."

Caitlin immediately saw through him. He had followed her.

Was he worried about her having dinner with another man?

"Pleasure to meet you," Sebastian extended his hand first.

James stood up and shook it. "Mr. Vanderbilt, I've heard a lot about you."

Anyone who knew Caitlin would naturally know about Sebastian.

And James wasn't the type to miss an opportunity to befriend someone powerful.

However, Sebastian's grip tightened noticeably, pressing down with force.

If James hadn't been trained, his hand would have been crushed.

Both men smiled politely, but beneath the surface, they were testing each other.

Sebastian wanted to see if James was just another smooth talker—or someone with real strength.

"Just a handshake will do," Caitlin cut in.

Sebastian let go, but his suspicion only deepened.

He had already looked into James—and found nothing.

People without a traceable past were the ones you had to be most careful with.

"You drink?" Sebastian asked casually.

"I do, but not often."

"That's funny," Sebastian smirked. "I don't usually drink either. But meeting you today? Feels like a special occasion. We should have a drink."

Then, without waiting for a reply, he waved at the server.

"Bring out your most expensive bottle."

Caitlin shot him a look and leaned in. "What are you trying to do?"

"What? Just being a gracious host. Your friend is my friend."

His expression was mockingly pleasant, but Caitlin knew better.

James observed their husband-and-wife-like interaction but didn't comment.

Instead, he used it as an opportunity.

"Excuse me," James said, rising from his seat. "I'll be back in a moment."
"

The moment James left, Sebastian turned serious.

"I don't trust this guy."

Caitlin raised an eyebrow. "Why?"

"He says he's from here, but there's no record of him anywhere. He's lying about something."

Caitlin sighed. "We haven't even known each other long. He has no reason to tell me everything—just like I wouldn't tell him everything about myself."

Truthfully, she agreed with Sebastian. Something about James felt off.

She wasn't planning to get close to him—tonight was just dinner as a thank-you.

"You just don't like him because he's younger than you," Caitlin teased.

Sebastian scoffed. "I don't like him because he's trying to impress you."

She laughed. "Do I look like a teenager? You think I'd fall for a guy just because he's young and good-looking?"

"I think you might," Sebastian said dramatically, resting his chin on his hand.

Caitlin smacked his arm. "Idiot."

They exchanged a look—and suddenly, it felt like they were the ones on a date.

"Stay here," Sebastian said, standing up. "I'll go see what he's up to."

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James exited the restroom, wiping his hands.

In the mirror, he saw Sebastian walk in behind him.

Sebastian's eyes immediately landed on his pants.

His tone was pure jealousy. "Nice pants."

James turned, glancing at them.

He grinned knowingly. "Yeah. Caitlin bought them for me. Feels different when a woman picks your clothes, doesn't it?"

Sebastian grabbed him by the collar, voice dropping dangerously.

"Talk. How do you really know her?"

James didn't flinch.

"I told you. It was fate. She just appeared in my life, out of nowhere."

Sebastian shoved him against the wall.

"Cut the crap. What's your real motive?"

James sighed dramatically, raising his hands. "What motive could I possibly have?"

"I ran a check on you. You don't exist."

Sebastian stepped back, crossing his arms.

"Guys like you—who conveniently appear without a trace? You don't 'just' meet people like Caitlin. You planned this."

James adjusted his shirt with a smirk.

"Maybe you're right. Maybe I do have a motive."

He grinned devilishly.

"Maybe I think Caitlin is an amazing woman."

Then, just to poke the bear, he added—

"Maybe I'm planning to pursue her."

Sebastian's temper snapped.

"What?!"

James leaned against the wall. "What? She's single. Anyone can pursue her."

Sebastian punched the wall next to his face.

"She's my woman."

James chuckled. "Funny. I thought you two were divorced."

Sebastian clenched his fists.

"You wanna get punched?"

James tilted his head mockingly.

"Go ahead. Hit me. Maybe Caitlin will feel bad for me. Maybe she'll think you're too aggressive."

Sebastian gritted his teeth.

He wanted to beat the guy up.

But if Caitlin saw him do it, she might actually feel bad for James.

Sebastian yanked his hands off him, furious.

This damn guy.

He owed him a beating.

—

Both men returned to the dining room at the same time.

The expensive bottle of wine had arrived.

Caitlin glanced up. "Took you two long enough. What were you doing?"

James flashed a grin. "Just chatting with Mr. Vanderbilt. We had a great conversation, didn't we?"

Sebastian glared at him.

That little sht.

Caitlin narrowed her eyes but decided not to ask.

"Let's eat," she said instead.

Sebastian, still annoyed, poured a full glass for James.

"Drink," he ordered.

James hesitated. "I'm driving."

"Who cares? Don't be a coward. Drink."

James sighed. "Fine."

He picked up the glass and downed it in one go.

Sebastian smirked, refilling it.

"Again."

James realized what was happening.

Sebastian was trying to get him drunk.

"Are we competing?" James asked, amused.

"You only get to chase Caitlin if you can out-drink me," Sebastian said smugly.

Caitlin groaned. "Seriously?"

James chuckled. "Alright, Mr. Vanderbilt. Let's see who goes down first."

And with that—the drinking battle began.