

77: This Guess Is Too Shocking

"I simply like Howard, that's all. There's no other reason. Don't overthink it," Caitlin explained briefly.

How could it just be a simple liking for his son?

Which woman would casually accept someone else's child? Unless...

As Sebastian began to entertain this thought, he was startled by his own conclusion. Could it be that Caitlin is Howard's biological mother?

After all, since she came to The Vanderbilt Family, she had repeatedly gone to great lengths to protect Howard. She even offended The Gray Family for his sake. If he needed a rational explanation, then the only one that made sense would be that she was his mother. Who else would act so selflessly?

Sebastian's mind began to race with the possibility. If Caitlin were Howard's biological mother, then what would that mean?

Could she be the Camellia he had been searching for all these years?

The shock of this possibility made his heart race. Was Caitlin Camellia? Could it be that she was the woman he had been desperately searching for?

Unable to contain his excitement, Sebastian blurted out, "Caitlin, tell me the truth. Are you Howard's biological mother? Are you Camellia?"

As soon as the words left his mouth, he felt as if his heart had stopped. He was desperate to hear her confirmation.

Caitlin, not expecting him to make such a leap, didn't want to tell him

the truth. She shook her head, "What Camellia? I don't know what you're talking about. I told you, I just simply like Howard, and you're overthinking things."

She didn't know Camellia?

She didn't admit to being Camellia?

Could it be that he was mistaken after all? Was his guess wrong?

The disappointment hit him like a wave. How could he have failed to find Camellia all these years? He never knew where she was. Every time he found a trace, it would be ruled out, and the cycle of disappointment had pierced his heart like a needle.

"Forget it, let's pretend I said nothing," he muttered. "Regardless, thank you for taking care of my son. When we get divorced, I'll give you a generous reward."

Caitlin didn't respond to his offer.

Later, in the middle of the night, Bruce woke up. The little guy, upon seeing his mother leaning over him, realized his father was sitting in a wheelchair. Sebastian was already asleep, and the room was quiet. Bruce had just finished his IV, and now he needed to go to the bathroom.

Not wanting to wake his mom, Bruce climbed down from the bed and ran off to the bathroom.

Caitlin suddenly seemed to sense something and woke up. She quickly sat up, noticing the bed was empty. In panic, she shouted, "Where's Bruce? Where did Bruce go?"

Sebastian, also startled awake, heard her and asked, "What do you mean

he's gone? Who is Bruce?"

He thought she might be looking for something like her charger.

Caitlin came to her senses and realized her slip-up. She quickly corrected herself, "I mean, where's Howard? Where's Howard?"

"Howard's gone?" Sebastian asked, his voice tinged with concern.

Caitlin was already up and rushing to search. Sebastian, unable to move, tried to help by calling out, "Howard? Howard?"

Caitlin ran out of the room to the nurse's station and asked the attending nurse, "Have you seen the child from bed 102? Did a little boy run off?"

The nurses all shook their heads, signaling they hadn't seen anything. They started searching as well.

Had Bruce woken up and wandered off on his own, or was he taken by someone?

Caitlin couldn't bring herself to think too deeply. She immediately asked the nurses to check the security footage.

As she ran back to the room to grab her bag and phone to contact Quincy for help, she was shocked to find that Bruce was already sitting on the bed.

"Caitlin? It's you? Howard's back!" Sebastian said with relief.

Caitlin rushed to the bed, her heart racing as she checked her son's face, asking, "Where did you go? I couldn't find you anywhere!"

Bruce pointed toward the bathroom, and Caitlin realized that he had

simply gone to use the restroom. She had feared he was taken.

Relieved, she hugged Bruce tightly before the head nurse and several other nurses rushed in to check on the situation.

"Did you find the child from bed 102?" the head nurse asked.

"Yes, we found him already. Thanks for your help earlier," Caitlin replied.

The nurses, now reassured, left the room.

The rest of the night passed quietly. Caitlin stayed awake, keeping watch over Bruce. By the next morning, a doctor confirmed that Bruce had no serious injuries, and Caitlin finally relaxed.

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The next morning, two major pieces of news shook New York.

One was about LIG's Vice President, Joshua, causing a scene and smashing things at a hotel, while the other was about LIG's CEO, Scott, who had been severely injured in a humiliating incident involving a bottle.

Both stories were negative, and online reactions were harsh. LIG's stock took a noticeable dive.

Jonathan, feeling the pressure, couldn't come up with a better solution. He tried calling Caitlin, but her phone was off.

Around 10 AM, three elite members from The Obsidian Order arrived at the New York hospital—Bai Long, Xiu Yi, and Qing Yu. All three were skilled experts and loyal subordinates of Sebastian. Upon seeing him,

they all saluted in unison.

"Master! We apologize for our tardiness!"

Sebastian nodded, "From now on, you'll address me as Mr. Vanderbilt, just like Xavi. Stay in New York. I have a mission for you."

"Understood!"

Sebastian quickly gave them the rundown of the recent events and assigned them to investigate the situation.

Afterward, they went back to the hospital room. Caitlin noticed the new faces and, recognizing them as Sebastian's people, didn't ask questions.

They helped Bruce with his discharge paperwork, and soon they all left for The Vanderbilt Family.

Once back at The Vanderbilt Family, they learned from Marcus that the fire had been extinguished. Fortunately, no one was hurt, though some furniture had been damaged. However, the small dog, GiGi, had gone missing from the backyard.

"Did the police come? What did they say?" Sebastian asked.

"They came, took statements, and investigated the scene. They believe the fire was caused by an old electrical line," Marcus replied.

An electrical line malfunctioning? It seemed like a convenient explanation, but Sebastian's suspicions grew.

In the main hall, Grace and Megan were discussing the fire. Upon seeing Sebastian, Grace pretended to care and asked, "Sebastian, is Howard okay? How is he?"

"Fortunately, he wasn't harmed," Sebastian replied curtly.

"I'm so glad! It really scared all of us," Grace said with a false smile.

Megan didn't respond but thought to herself that it would have been better if that little brat had been burned to a crisp. Too bad he was fine!

Sebastian turned to Marcus and ordered, "Gather everyone who was in charge of taking care of my grandmother."

"Understood!"

Marcus quickly assembled six servants in the hall, including a male servant and several maids.

"Who was in charge of my grandmother's care last night?" Sebastian asked.

"That was May," Marcus replied.

"Where was May when the fire broke out?" Sebastian questioned.

May, the maid, nervously explained, "Mr. Vanderbilt, I had stomach pains and was in the restroom. When I came back, I found out about the fire."

"How convenient," Sebastian muttered. "You were in the restroom just when the fire happened? Can anyone confirm that?"

Old Wang, who was on duty, stepped forward. "Yes, Mr. Vanderbilt. I saw May a couple of times last night when she was running to the restroom because of stomach issues."

"And GiGi? The dog my grandmother keeps? Why didn't it bark?"

"GiGi is missing, and we're looking for her," Marcus added.

Sebastian listened carefully, but he couldn't see their faces to tell if they were lying. However, Caitlin, who had been observing, could tell that neither May nor Old Wang seemed to be fabricating their stories.

If the fire had been deliberately set, it was likely someone had used the opportunity to get May out of the way and steal GiGi, setting the stage for the fire. But what was the motive? Was this attack directed at Howard?

The pieces weren't adding up, and Caitlin couldn't help but wonder if the same person responsible for the snake incident was behind the fire.



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