

Chapter 8

"What a coincidence!" Vance interjected hastily.

The underlying message was clear. He was urging her not to say anything more.

"Yes, he is also involved in business, though his operations aren't on the same grand scale as Mr. Bradford here," Rebecca said, taking a sip of her tea.

Through the steam rising from the cup, she could clearly see the relief washing over his face. 2

"What an incredible coincidence. Next time, be sure to bring him along, and we can all have tea together," Pascal said warmly, showing extra courtesy since she was Lauren's student.

Vance's expression shifted once more, and Rebecca found it amusing. In their entire five years of marriage, the range of emotions he had displayed didn't come close to the variety she had witnessed just this afternoon. 2

Given the circumstances, Vance couldn't linger much longer. After chatting for a short while, he mentioned having other matters to attend to and suggested they wrap up, but he was uneasy about leaving Rebecca there alone, worried she might say something indiscreet. 1

He signaled her with his eyes, urging her to leave as well.

Lauren received a phone call. From the context of the conversation, it seemed someone was seeking her out for something important. 1



Rebecca didn't want to hold up her instructor's business any longer, so it was indeed time for her to leave as well.

Vance offered politely, "Where are you guys staying? Let me give you a ride."

They were lodged at the hotel right next door, so there was no real need for a ride. Still concerned for Rebecca, Lauren asked, "Rebecca, where do you live?"

Rebecca glanced at Vance before replying with the name of her street and neighborhood.

"Honey, I'll just take a cab over on my own," Lauren said to Pascal. "You can escort Rebecca home."

Vance smoothly interjected, "Actually, we live in the neighborhood right next to hers. We can give her a ride."

Lauren hesitated, but Rebecca readily agreed, "That would be great. Thank you, Mr. Bradford." 2

Her mocking tone made Vance frown, but she didn't care.

With that decided, Vance, Rebecca, and Catherine took the elevator down to the underground parking lot. 3

Once they reached the place, however, Catherine didn't continue walking forward with them. Instead, she stopped at the entrance, smiling brightly with a coquettish tone. "Alright, you guys go ahead. I'll just take a cab. Rebecca, I'm handing your husband back to you now." 1

What did she mean by handing him back? When had Rebecca ever agreed to lend him out in the first place? 1

Catherine clung to Rebecca's arm, swaying it playfully in a saccharine manner. "Please don't be angry. Today's misunderstanding really wasn't intentional. Vance places so much importance on this collaboration, and Mr. and Mrs. Lemke have such a strong marital bond. Having the partnering couple appear harmonious adds positive points to the project, so we just went along with the mix-up without correcting it. After all, you..." 1

She subconsciously glanced down at Rebecca's leg, pressing closer. "You won't hold it against us, right?"

"Us?" Rebecca let out a cold laugh. "Who exactly are you referring to with 'us'?"

Catherine's expression changed immediately.

Rebecca strongly disliked having strangers cling to her like this, especially when that stranger was Catherine. 1

Having said her piece, she pulled her arm away, not with so much force. Yet somehow, Catherine stumbled and fell to the ground.

"Rebecca, what are you doing?" Vance reprimanded.

Catherine reacted dramatically, scrambling to her feet and positioning herself to block Vance. She used her entire body to do so, pressing tightly against him.

Then, in a pleading voice, she tried to calm him. "Take it easy, Vance. That little push was just her instinctive reaction, and I couldn't steady



myself. She didn't mean it. Please don't argue with her over me. It would make me so sad."

Her performance was so over-the-top that surely only Vance could believe it. Particularly as she blocked him, she made a point of deliberately exposing the scraped area on her wrist for him to see.

And on that wrist was the watch she had just purchased—the very same model which Rebecca owned ten. 1

When Vance saw the scrape, his brows knitted together. "Rebecca, what is the matter with you? You've always been so gentle and understanding. Why do you harbor such a strong prejudice against Catherine?" 2

"Prejudice?" Rebecca let out a light, incredulous laugh. "What prejudice could I have? After all, she's already being called Mrs. Bradford. What could I possibly hold against her?" 3

Vance was rendered speechless. Turning to Catherine, he asked with concern, "Are you all right?"

"I'm fine," Catherine whined, but she deliberately brought her wrist right up to the edge of his chin.