

Game Over, Mr. CEO: Your Wife Is Done

Winter's thoughts drifted to the divorce papers tucked away in the study at Blackwood Manor. A hollow ache spread through her chest.

Steve narrowed his eyes. "I honestly don't know what kind of spell Chris has on you.

Winter bit the inside of her cheek. Sometimes she wondered the same thing. For years her heart had never wavered. Even during three years of a marriage that felt like living with a stranger, she had never once considered giving up.

But now she could not hold on any longer. Chris had been the one to tear down her last line of defense.

She remembered why her parents had named her Winter. They said winter was the season when people held on to each other the tightest, the season that tested love and made it stronger. Her name was meant to symbolize two people enduring the cold together, not one person begging the other to stay.

Now that Chris held absolute power in the company and Skyla had returned, it didn't matter if Skyla was paralyzed. As long as Chris loved her, no one in the Xander family could stand in his way. It was only a matter of time before he welcomed her into the family as his new wife.

Winter was so lost in her own thoughts that she didn't notice Steve leaning in, closer and closer, until his breath brushed against her cheek.

"Winter," he murmured, "I'll be waiting for the day you finally regret choosing him.",

Winter snapped back to reality and was just about to stomp on Steve's foot when the side room door suddenly blasted open from the outside.

It was shoved open, not gently pushed.

The door slammed against the wall and bounced back with a loud crack, making Winter's heart jolt.

A rush of cold air shot into the room like a blade, sweeping away all the warmth.

Steve raised an eyebrow and glanced toward the doorway.

Chris stood there against the light, one hand in his pocket and a cigarette between the fingers of the other. Pale smoke curled around his knuckles, making his long fingers look as if they were carved from frost, sharp and impossibly cold.

“Chris,” Steve greeted him with a smirk.

The moment Winter saw him, her chest tightened again. She lowered her head and walked straight for the door. She barely made it past him before he caught her by the arm,

“Where are you going?”

“None of your-

Before she could spit out the rest of her angry retort, Chris grabbed her jaw. “Say that again.”

Winter refused to speak, stubborn to the bone. Chris pressed his thumb against her chin in a firm, unspoken warning. “Go to the dining hall and eat.”

“I’m not hungry ”

She tore herself out of his grasp and walked away in long, angry strides.

Steve watched her leave, the smirk still tugging at his mouth. A moment later he sensed someone behind him. A sudden, searing pain burst across the back of his hand. His smile went rigid.

He looked down to see a cigarette butt crushed against his skin. Slowly, he raised his eyes to Chris, meeting his cold, predatory stare. Steve did not pull back. He let the burn sear straight into his hand.

Chris twisted the cigarette harder, his gaze icy and unreadable. "Your hands wander too far."

"You don't bother cherishing her, so why get mad at me?" Steve drawled. "If you won't value her, someone else will. That's how it works, isn't it?"

Chris pressed down until the cigarette snapped clean in half. He flicked the broken pieces into a trash bin, a thin, dangerous smile on his lips. "Go ahead. Try."

When Chris walked off, Steve lowered his eyes to the charred spot on his skin. He picked up a cup of tea from the table and poured the cool liquid over the burn without a sound.

Chris made his way toward the dining hall. Gavin appeared from somewhere down the hall and leaned close to speak quietly.

"Mr. Xander, Mrs. Xander just left."

Chris slowly lifted his gaze and scanned the dining hall. The room was full and buzzing with family, yet Winter was nowhere to be found.

Winter had always loved being around people. Ever since she was little, she never skipped gatherings like this.

Chris removed his glasses with one hand. Gavin handed him the cleaning cloth, and Chris wiped the lenses with slow, deliberate movements. Out of the corner of his eye, he noticed Mrs. Xander Sr. walking toward him, with Mr. White following close behind.