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Game Over, Mr. CEO: Your Wife Is Done

Chris pushed himself up from the sofa. His expression was cold as he glanced at Winter curled up in the corner. He picked up his phone, swiped the screen, and answered the call.

“Focus on your recovery first. That’s the most important thing. As for anything else, have someone reach out to Gavin.”

Whatever the person on the other end said, his response was gentle and incredibly patient. Nothing like the man he had been with her.

After hanging up, Chris picked up the glasses he had tossed aside earlier. He did not look at Winter again. He stood, grabbed his suit jacket, and headed for the door.

“Are you going to see Skyla?” Winter asked, her eyes burning red.

Without turning back, he said, “That’s none of your business.”

Bracing her aching right leg, Winter struggled to her feet. She looked at the man standing there, immaculate and composed, a stark contrast to her own disheveled state. Her heart sank to the bottom of her chest.

“Chris Xander!”

She staggered forward and wrapped her arms around his waist from behind.

Afraid he would shake her off, she held on with all her strength. Every bone in her body screamed in pain.

The divorce papers in the drawer, Skyla’s return, and the fact that she could no longer hold on to Chris’s heart all crowded her mind.

It was time to put an end to everything.

Winter closed her eyes in pain, almost mocking herself for still hoping.

“When you married me back then, you didn’t have a choice,” she said quietly. “I just want to know the truth of how you really feel.”

Chris held his glasses between his long fingers. He looked down at her coldly.

“What game are you playing now?”

“Call it a game if you want.” Winter slowly loosened her grip.

She looked up at him. Her eyes were clear without a trace of confusion. She spoke each word carefully.

“If Grandma hadn’t used company shares as leverage, would you have agreed to marry me?”

Deep down, she knew there was no point in asking. But a part of her couldn’t let it go. This was her last chance to speak up. No matter what he said tonight, she would never ask him again.

Chris narrowed his eyes as he studied her. Then he smiled, though the smile never reached his eyes.

“Does it matter?”

He let out a soft scoff. His dark eyes fixed on her as he stepped closer.

“You were the one who insisted on marrying me back then. You didn’t care about anything else. So why bring this up now? What are you trying to do?”

Without his glasses, the sharpness in his gaze was fully unleashed.

The crushing pressure and biting cold made Winter instinctively take a step back.

Chris grabbed her waist and looked down at her. His eyes slid lower, to her lips, still faintly swollen from his kiss. He leaned in, his warm breath brushing her ear.

“You want to know my real answer?” he murmured. “I’m afraid you wouldn’t be able to handle it.”

The grip at her waist vanished abruptly.

Winter’s right leg gave out. She collapsed onto the floor.

She stared blankly in the direction he left, her body trembling uncontrollably.

A black sedan was parked outside the gates of the Xander estate.

Chris, radiating a cold intensity, got into the car. He yanked off his loosened tie and tossed it aside, stretching out his legs.

The heater was on, but the temperature inside the car seemed to drop the moment he sat down.

His assistant, Gavin Lincoln, glanced quickly at the rearview mirror, then looked away and started the car.

“Mr. Xander, Ms. Jasper called earlier. She said her younger brother got into some trouble. He incited an assault.”

“Who was the victim?” Chris asked.

“She said it was someone who meddled too much. The person isn’t seriously hurt and only has minor injuries. But the police have already traced it back to the Jasper family. Ms. Jasper is very worried.”

Chris lit a cigarette. The flare briefly outlined the sharp line of his brow.

“Go take care of it.”

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Word of Chris leaving the estate the previous night reached Mrs. Xander Sr. early the next morning.

At the breakfast table, Mrs. Xander Sr. was about to say something to comfort Winter, but Winter smiled and placed a croissant onto her plate.

“Grandma, let’s just enjoy our breakfast. We shouldn’t talk about things that ruin the appetite.”

After Chris had been summoned away by a phone call from Skyla, Winter did not sleep in their marital home. Instead, she returned to her old room, right next door to Chris’s.

In the past, she used to go looking for him whenever she had the chance. Even though Chris found her annoying, he had never changed rooms all those years.

After finishing breakfast with Mrs. Xander Sr., Winter prepared to leave. With her injured leg, she could not drive, so she asked Mr. White to arrange a car for her.

While waiting, she took a tube of anti-inflammatory ointment from her bag.

She had found it that morning on the table outside her bedroom. It was the same ointment Mrs. Young had used on her back at Blackwood Manor. She had no idea who had left it there.

She walked into the courtyard and stopped, lifting her gaze to the magnolia tree that stood two stories tall.

Magnolias in Liono City only bloomed in April. Now, in December, the branches were bare and lifeless.

She remembered when she first came to the Xander estate. It had been magnolia season.

She was seven. Chris was twelve.

That day, the sun had been bright. Chris had stood beneath the magnolia tree while the servants introduced her to him. He had glanced at her coolly and said only one thing: “Just don’t bother me.”

“What a relaxed mood you’re in,” a voice said coolly from behind her. “Everything’s falling apart in the house, and you still have the leisure to stand here staring at a boring tree.”

The mockery in his tone was unmistakable.

Winter did not need to turn around to know who it was. It was Steve Xander, Chris's cousin.

Steve had never gotten along with Chris. Winter had no interest in engaging with him and stepped forward, ready to leave.

“Hey—” Steve stretched out his arm and blocked her path, smiling faintly.

“Don’t you want to know where Chris arranged for Skyla to stay?”

Winter stopped.

Seeing her pause, Steve grinned. He strolled over to stand in front of her, looking down with a raised eyebrow.

“You’ve been married to him for three years, and yet Chris is so heartless...”

Winter slipped her hands into her pockets and cut him off.

“How things are between Chris and me is our business as a married couple. It has nothing to do with you. If you have so much time to meddle, you should spend it figuring out how to secure your footing within the Xander Corporation.”

The words struck a nerve.

Steve’s expression darkened. He grabbed her arm and sneered, “You and Chris, a married couple? That’s just wishful thinking on your part. Has Chris ever treated you like his wife?”

It felt like a public slap in the face. Winter felt a sharp pang in her chest. Everyone in the Xander family knew that Chris had never truly acknowledged her.

“Whether he treats me as his wife or not, I’m still your sister-in-law,” Winter said coldly as she shook his hand off. “Touch me again and see what happens. I won’t hesitate to call for help.”

True enough, Steve did not dare push things further in the Xander estate.

He stood beneath the bare branches, staring at her darkly.

“I can’t wait to see the look on your face when you finally find out the truth.”

Winter ignored him.

After getting into the car, she reached down and rubbed her aching leg.

“Ma’am, are we going to the station?” the driver asked respectfully. It was a workday, and he didn’t know she had been given time off.

“Yes,” she replied.

She still had an interview transcript that needed editing. Keeping herself busy would help distract her from her thoughts.

Winter was a senior reporter in the station’s news department. She specialized in investigative journalism, focusing on unethical corporations and illegal businesses. Through her work alone, she had already helped rescue many vulnerable youths from dangerous environments.

As soon as she arrived at the newsroom, Sam called her into his office.

He closed the door, motioned for her to sit, and hesitated, clearly struggling with what to say.

Meeting Winter's calm, questioning gaze, he finally sighed.

"Winter, there's something I need to tell you. The people who attacked you have been identified, but..."

"They have powerful backing?" Winter asked calmly. She was not surprised. Anyone who dared assault a reporter was either stupid or well protected.

Sam poured her a glass of water and placed it on the desk.

Then, his voice grew heavy. "I've asked around. The person who ordered the hit is the younger brother of Chris Xander's ex-girlfriend. Chris is protecting him. He even got the three men who actually beat you released. The Xander family has people at the police station..."

Winter barely heard whatever he said after that.