

Game Over, Mr. CEO: Your Wife Is Done

Skyla, seated in her wheelchair, suddenly tightened her grip on the armrests. Her expression went rigid as she slowly looked up at Chris standing in front of her.

“Chris,” she said softly, “I didn’t know Jacob was the one who had Winter beaten.”

Chris did not look up. He simply lowered his gaze and adjusted the watch on his wrist.

At some point, the music at the party had stopped. Only a few colored lights still flickered. He stood at the intersection of several beams, his face obscured by shadow, his expression impossible to read.

Skyla took a steadying breath and gestured to the caregiver behind her.

The caregiver pushed her wheelchair toward Jacob and Winter. The closer they got, the stronger the stench became. Blood mixed with alcohol hung thick in the air, heavy and nauseating, like something rising out of a swamp.

Skyla instinctively lifted a hand to cover her nose and mouth. She glanced at Jacob, who was barely conscious, and frowned deeply.

“Get someone to take Jacob to the hospital immediately.”

Even as she spoke, Winter didn't let go of Jacob's collar. She clearly had no intention of handing him over.

“Winter,” Skyla's voice trembled. “It's me.”

Winter remained motionless and silent. The only movement was the slight tightening of her hand around Jacob's shirt.

“I'm sorry,” Skyla continued, her voice pleading. “I didn't know it was you Jacob hurt. If I had known, I would have disciplined him myself. But you've already punished him. If you keep going, he'll die.”

Die?

Winter slowly lifted her gaze from the floor.

“So how much is his life worth? A million dollars? Would that be enough?”

That single look made Skyla feel an inexplicable pressure, sharp and mocking.

She understood immediately. Winter was ridiculing the compensation Skyla's father had offered for the victim. It was exactly one million.

"I should have asked more carefully," Skyla said softly. "I'm sorry you were hurt. Please, for my sake, let Jacob go."

Winter gave a faint, crooked smile and looked at the gentle, composed woman seated in the wheelchair.

Three years had passed, yet Skyla had barely changed. If anything, the old gloom that used to hang over her had vanished, replaced by a natural, effortless grace.

It seemed she had come to terms with her paralyzed legs.

She had once been the pride of Liono City, the city's most admired socialite. Now she was confined to a wheelchair, bound to a life where she would never walk again.

She was pitiful but Winter had never believed she took Chris away from Skyla. Even without her, Skyla's disability meant she could never have married into the Xander family.

If Skyla could not be the one, then why couldn't it have been her?

But Skyla's legs had been ruined while saving Chris's life. For that, Winter had always felt gratitude and guilt toward Skyla.

She loved Chris, and Skyla had saved Chris. In a way, it felt as though Skyla had saved her life as well.

But gratitude and guilt did not mean she owed Skyla her life.

She owed Skyla nothing.

She owed no one anything.

"Why should I let him go?" Winter said coldly. "Did he care about my life when he sent men to beat me?"

If a passerby had not intervened that night, what would have happened to her?

Skyla looked down at Jacob, who was struggling to breathe, her heart aching with worry. But she knew Winter well enough to understand. Winter wasn't going to let him go.

“If you kill him,” Skyla said urgently, “you’ll only get a moment of satisfaction. Have you thought about the consequences? What about your job? I remember how much you loved it. Is this really worth it?”

At the mention of her work, Winter’s expression shifted ever so slightly.

Skyla knew exactly what mattered most to Winter.

She always had.

Once, they had been best friends.

But Winter’s fingers only twitched before she tightened her grip again, watching indifferently as Jacob’s blood pooled on the floor.

Skyla was growing desperate. “He’s already been punished,” she pressed. “You’ve had your revenge. Let this end here. Besides, you’re fine now, aren’t you?”

“Fine?” Winter laughed softly, her eyes filled with scorn. “I’m fine not because your precious brother showed mercy, but because a stranger stepped in and saved me. Otherwise, you can ask him yourself what he planned to do to me that night.”

Skyla glanced at the two men clutching their legs and wailing on the ground. They were the ones who had attacked Winter.

When they met her gaze, they looked away guiltily.

She didn't need to ask to know that Jacob's orders had gone far beyond a simple beating.

But as the blood continued to pour from Jacob's forehead, Skyla's expression tightened. She could not just sit there and do nothing.

Her hands clenched hard against the armrests. Gritting her teeth, she struggled to shift her body forward even a few inches.

"If kneeling down to beg you is what it takes..."

A sudden force pressed down on her shoulder. Skyla froze.

"That's enough."

The cold, low voice poured into Winter's ears. It felt like an explosion in her mind, leaving her thoughts as white and empty as an avalanche.

Skyla looked up at Chris, her eyes reddening with a glimmer of hope. She forced herself to look away and said, "If this is what it takes to calm her down," she said softly, "then it's fine."

She turned to Winter. "Winter, I apologize to you on Jacob's behalf."

Her hands were still trembling with effort. Chris glanced at the caretaker standing behind her.

The caretaker immediately understood and moved forward to support Skyla. "Ms. Jasper, your health is fragile. You can't kneel in this cold."

"But Jacob..." Skyla refused to give up. She looked at Jacob on the floor. "Winter, for the sake of our old friendship, let him go. I promise I'll bring him to apologize to you properly later."

Winter only responded with a sharp, cold laugh. "People like him are a menace to society as long as they're breathing."

Chris's gaze fell on the blood streaking down half of her face. His voice dropped. "Winter. That's enough."

Winter's legs had long since gone numb from kneeling. The numbness crept upward, straight into her heart, leaving her hollow.

And yet, with just a single sentence, Chris managed to pierce that numbness. A slow, aching pain rippled through her chest.

Winter clenched her teeth, then let out a quiet breath and curved her lips into a calm, empty smile.

It all felt meaningless.

The hand gripping Jacob's collar finally relaxed, and she let go.

Skyla finally let out a breath of relief and turned sharply to the bodyguards. "Take him to the hospital."

Jacob was infamous in Liono City for being a menace. After being humiliated and nearly beaten to death at his own birthday party, there was no way he would let this go. Whether it was pain jolting him awake or sheer desperation, he suddenly stirred.

Through blurred vision, he saw Winter moving away. Hatred surged inside him. The moment he opened his mouth, blood flooded in, staining his teeth red.

“Don’t... let her go... I’m going to kill her...”

Winter forced herself upright, swaying slightly. When she heard that the trash on the floor was still able to speak, she ground her high-heeled boot down on his fingers.

She looked down at him coldly, then glanced at the bottles scattered across the messy table.

In that split second, Chris grabbed her wrist. He gave a sharp look to the Jasper family bodyguards who were about to lunge at Winter.

In Liono City, no one dared cross the head of the powerful Xander family. That one silent look was enough to freeze them in their tracks.

After being stopped again and again, Winter found the whole thing meaningless.

“Let go!”

She wrenched her hand free. Under the flashing lights, her eyes brimmed with tears and hatred as she stared at him.

“Chris Xander, you’re truly heartless.”

A check fluttered through the air and landed by Jacob's feet.

It was the million-dollar check the Jasper family had given her.

Winter turned and walked out of the club.

Behind her, Gavin followed closely. "Mrs. Xander..."

Before he could finish, she got into her car. The door slammed shut. The engine roared to life, and the car sped away.

With the windows sealed, the stench of alcohol and blood clung to her, sickening and overwhelming. It made her want to vomit.

When she returned to Blackwood Manor, she stripped off her clothes and threw them straight into the trash. She then walked barefoot into the bathroom.

Hot water poured down over her, but it could not warm her frozen body.

Suddenly, the bathroom door was pushed open.

This was her private room, and she never bothered to lock the door while showering. No one ever dared to intrude.

Through the rising steam, she met Chris's ice-cold gaze.