

## Chapter 29 No.

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After leaving Elara at the penthouse the previous night, Eulalie refused to answer any of Caden's follow-up calls.

Tuesday morning. The storm had passed, leaving the city scrubbed clean and bright.

Later that day, Eulalie received a notification from the school app. She had blocked the school's phone number to force them to call Caden, but she hadn't disabled the emergency app notifications.

Incident Report: Dress Code Violation.

She frowned and opened the attachment. It was a photo of Elara.

Eulalie dropped her coffee mug. It shattered on the floor.

Elara was wearing... a costume. It was a miniature version of something Adalynn would wear to a club. A faux-leather skirt that was far too short for a kindergartner, a tight top with cutouts, and heavy, clunky platform boots that looked impossible to walk in. Her face had been made up—lipstick, glitter on her cheeks.

Eulalie zoomed in on the photo. Elara's legs were blotchy. The skirt was clearly made of cheap, synthetic PVC, not real leather. Adalynn hadn't even bothered to buy quality materials. The contact dermatitis was already starting to flare up where the plastic touched her skin.

Eulalie dialed Caden immediately.

"What is she wearing?" Eulalie hissed the moment he picked up.

"Oh, relax," Caden sounded dismissive. "Adalynn took her shopping. It's high fashion. Very European."

"She is five, Caden! She looks like a showgirl! The school sent her home!

And look at her legs! That skirt is plastic! She's allergic!"

"They're just old-fashioned," Caden said. "Adalynn says it's about expression. Elara loves it. She feels grown up. And stop obsessing about allergies. It's just a little rash. Adalynn put some cream on it."

"She isn't grown up! She is a child! You are letting your mistress dress our daughter like an accessory! And you are physically hurting her!"

"Watch your mouth," Caden warned. "Adalynn has impeccable taste. Elara is happy. That's all that matters."

"Happy? She's being sent home! She's being ostracized!"

"I'll handle the school," Caden said. "I pay enough tuition. I'll tell them to back off. Now, I have a meeting."

He hung up.

Eulalie stared at the phone. He didn't care. He literally didn't see the problem. As long as Elara was "happy" and Adalynn was validated, he didn't care about the child's welfare or dignity.

She opened her email. She began to type.

To: FamilyLawyer@BradfordLegal.com

Subject: Emergency Custody Motion - Evidence Attached

She attached the photo. She attached the incident report from the school. She attached the log of Caden abandoning Elara in the storm.

She wasn't sending anonymous tips. She was building a war chest.

She looked at the photo of Elara one last time. The child was smiling in the picture, posing with a hand on her hip, mimicking a woman twenty years her senior, even as she scratched at her thigh.

It wasn't cute. It was tragic.

"Hold on, baby girl," Eulalie whispered. "I'm coming for you. But first, I have to take down the people holding the strings."

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