

Chapter 34 No.

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The phone call came at 8:00 PM. Eulalie was in her Seaport District loft, reviewing the forensic accounting of Caden's transfer to Grady Pennington.

It was Mrs. Holloway, Caden's mother.

"Eulalie, where are you?" The older woman's voice was a screech. "Isla is gone!"

Eulalie put the phone on speaker and kept typing. "Isla is twenty-two, Mother Holloway. She's allowed to be gone."

"She missed the rehearsal for the Foundation Gala!" Mrs. Holloway yelled. "She knows she is the guest of honor this year! And the tracker on her car shows she's at the Docks. That filthy industrial district. You need to go get her. Caden isn't answering."

Of course Caden wasn't answering. He was likely "toughening up" his lungs with Adalynn.

"I'm not her keeper," Eulalie said calmly.

"You are family!" Mrs. Holloway yelled. "Or you were. If you want any hope of reconciling you will fetch her."

Eulalie almost laughed. Reconciliation was not the goal. But Isla... Isla was innocent. Isla was the only one who had smiled at her across the dinnertable. And the Docks at night were dangerous for a girl who had likely stormed out wearing diamond earrings.

"Fine," Eulalie said. "Send the coordinates."

Twenty minutes later, the Porsche 911 slid through the gates of the abandoned shippingyard. The air was thick with the smell of burnt rubber and unburnt fuel. Floodlights cut through the darkness, illuminating a

makeshift track marked by orange cones.

It was an underground drift meet.

Eulalie parked in the shadows. She pulled her black cap low. She walked through the crowd of leather jackets and tattoos. The bass from massive speakers thumped against her chest, syncing with her heartbeat.

She found Isla near the starting line. Isla was standing on a crate, holding a neon sign that said GO CC!

"Isla!" Eulalie shouted over the noise.

Isla jumped, nearly falling off the crate. She turned, her eyes wide. "E? What are you doing here? Did Mom send the SWAT team?"

"Just me," Eulalie said, grabbing Isla's arm. "We're leaving. This place is a raid waiting to happen."

"No!" Isla pulled back. "You can't! CC is the main event! She's legendary! Nobody knows who she is, but she drives like a demon!"

Eulalie looked at the track. Two cars were lining up. A modified Supra and... a Nissan GTR.

The GTR was painted a matte black with pink neon underglow. It looked aggressive. Expensive.

Eulalie narrowed her eyes. She knew that car. Last week, while digitizing the Holloway asset portfolio using her voice-to-code interface, she had flagged a peculiar entry. A "transport asset" that Caden had listed as "Marketing Research Vehicle." It cost \$150,000 Plus another \$80,000 in modifications.

"Who is CC?" Eulalie asked, a cold dread pooling in her stomach.

Isla pointed. "Just watch!"

The flag dropped. The GTR launched. It didn't just accelerate; it tore the asphalt apart. The driver drifted the first corner with a precision that bordered on suicidal.

The car slid past them, tires screaming. Through the tinted window, Eulalie saw the silhouette of the driver. Long hair. A specific helmet.

design.

She looked up at the VIP scaffolding overlooking the track.

There, holding a bottle of champagne, stood Caden. He was leaning over the railing, screaming, his face contorted in a mask of pure unadulterated worship. He wasn't looking at the car. He was looking at the driver.

Eulalie felt the pieces click together. This wasn't just a betrayal of vows. This was theft. He was using company money—shareholder money—to build a shrine to his mistress's hobby. It was the final nail in the legal coffin.

CC wasn't just a racer. CC was Adalynn.

And Caden wasn't just funding a hobby. He was funding a shadow life. A life where he was the patron saint of adrenaline, and Adalynn was his goddess.

Isla cheered, oblivious. "Look at her go! She's my hero!"

Eulalie looked at Isla's shining face. The betrayal tasted like bile. Isla was cheering for the woman who was dismantling her brother's marriage and emptying the family coffers.

"You really like her?" Eulalie asked, her voice hollow.

"I love her!" Isla screamed. "She's everything I want to be! Free!"

Eulalie looked back at Caden. He was raising a toast to the car.

"Free," Eulalie repeated. "Expensive, actually."

She didn't drag Isla away. She stood there, in the smoke and the noise, and watched her husband love another woman with a passion he had never shown his wife.
