

Chapter 40 Are You Officially Declaring A Relationship With.....

Vivian's brow knitted as she read through the document; then she checked a few online sites before letting out a light laugh.

"It's nothing to worry about," she said, resuming her search through the rack of dresses. "They're just trying to see how I'll respond."

Her caregiver looked at her, completely lost.

Normally, Vivian kept her thoughts to herself, but this time she explained a bit further. "If they were really serious about suing me, they would have made the legal notice public instead of sending it privately."

"I still don't understand," the caregiver admitted, shaking her head.

Vivian's tone was patient. "They're fishing for my reaction. If I start panicking like you do, they'll pounce and demand a sky-high settlement."

The caregiver's confusion did not fade. "So what are you going to do?"

Vivian just shrugged and pulled a dress from the closet, still smiling. "Nothing. I'm going to ignore them for now."

"Charles won't dare to push me. It's not just because of my connection to Brandon, but also because everyone sees me as a poor, doomed soul." Vivian arranged her face into a sorrowful look.

Vivian tossed the dress toward her caregiver and said, "Iron this before you head to bed." She turned away, her voice calm but firm. "If Charles has any sense, he'll keep his mouth shut. The last thing he needs is to get his brothers riled up and ready to rip him apart."

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Time slipped away quickly.

Before anyone knew it, night had returned.

Early that morning, Charles had already arrived to collect Millie.

Alexia frowned, insisting Millie needed more time to recover.

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In the end, it was Giffard who talked her into letting Millie go.

Once Millie and Charles had left, Alexia turned to her brother in disbelief. "Giffard, you're really just letting Charles take her?"

Giffard nodded without hesitation. "Yes."

"But she..."

"Alexia, let's drop it for now. Pushing too hard could sometimes only make things worse," he retorted.

Although Alexia still had more on her mind, she just gave a reluctant nod.

She could not deny that, all these years, Millie's heart had always belonged to Brandon, never seeing Giffard as anything more than a friend.

Not wanting to linger on the subject, Giffard quickly changed the topic. "Did you manage to get the video yesterday?"

"Yeah, I did. But there's a bit of a complication," Alexia admitted.

Tia managed to sneak her phone out. She swapped out the phone for a new one she bought and left the original case on before any confidentiality contract could be signed.

That way, even if everyone signed the agreement later, any leak would have technically happened beforehand.

At first, Alexia wondered how Tia had pulled it off, since all the phones had been confiscated. But it turned out those devices were simply stored in a drawer in the office, and people were coming and going all the time.

Later on, she realized no one seemed too worried about theft because the phones had all been wiped clean.

With so many IT experts able to recover data these days, it really came down to how thorough the company was about erasing it—and whether the specialist Alexia would find could restore anything useful.

Alexia went ahead and asked Tia for the device.

Tia handed it over without hesitation, thinking that in a crowd that size during the live show, sneaking out a phone was not exactly impossible.

Besides, nobody had signed any nondisclosure agreements before the swap.

If questioned, Tia could just say she was unaware of any problem.

"Oh, and Giffard, do you happen to know a good IT expert? I could use a recommendation," Alexia asked her brother after explaining everything.

"I actually do. I'll reach out and see who's available," Giffard answered.

Alexia gave a grateful nod.

Lately, a sense of guilt seemed to follow her everywhere.

Though it happened by accident, Millie's miscarriage was the result of her altercation with Vivian.

Never once did Millie hold her responsible. She never expressed a desire to keep the child, and she even went out of her way to reassure Alexia, insisting it was fate and not her doing.

Still, Alexia saw through it, knowing Millie was just trying to ease her burden. ☹️

It reminded her of how, years ago, Millie had suggested they get matching tattoos to celebrate their survival after the motorbike accident that left her ugly scars.

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Night settled across the city.

Outside a grand villa perched on Crobert's hillside, streams of high-end cars glided up the road.

People arrived in waves.

Clusters of reporters and photographers staked out positions at the foot of the hill, their cameras ready.

Very few journalists were officially allowed in, but tonight's affair had drawn Crobert's most influential people, turning the event into a prime target for the paparazzi.

Any juicy scoop from the evening could be worth a small fortune.

So, from the winding road up to the sprawling villa parking lot, the area teemed with onlookers and flashing cameras.

Luxury vehicles rolled in one after another, and for a moment, the night sky lit up with the bursts of camera lights.

In one of the Ferraris, Millie and Charles made their way up the hill.

This evening's charity gala, held to raise funds for children in need, called for more understated style.

Millie had chosen a simple yet graceful silver satin dress that hugged her figure with quiet elegance.

A mask still hid her face—not the same as the one she wore during the last live show, but a silver-and-white half-mask that matched her dress and left her lips free for tasting wine.

Sitting quietly in the passenger seat, Millie glanced at Charles while the car climbed higher, the moonlight shimmering over her and giving her an almost otherworldly appearance.

Since the Evans Group was hosting the event, when Charles' Ferrari pulled up in front of the villa, all eyes went straight to him and the mysterious, masked woman at his side.

"Serena?"

"Isn't that Serena? The woman behind the mask!"

"Mr. Evans, what's going on between you and Serena?"

"Mr. Evans, are you officially declaring a relationship with Serena tonight?"

Reporters and paparazzi crowded in, microphones pushed as close as possible.

Thankfully, the event's security staff acted quickly, stepping in to bring the situation under control once the crowd grew rowdy.

Charles chose not to answer right away. He stepped out first, and then moved around to open Millie's door and offer his hand, a move that sent camera flashes exploding across the scene.

The questions continued to fly as Charles helped Millie to her feet.

She gave him a small, reassuring nod.

Turning to face the press, Charles remarked, "Yes, this lady with me is Miss Serena Ellsworth, an artist represented by Evans Entertainment. She's simply accompanying me at the charity gala. That's all there is to it. Please avoid reading too much into it."

Given Serena's contract to Evans Entertainment and with the ongoing



promotion for Heavenly Melody, it made sense for her to be visible at major events.

With online voting for the show's contestants just around the corner, raising her profile was important.

Still, the reporters were hungry for a headline—something more dramatic, something like an official announcement that Serena was now Charles' girlfriend.

They pushed in even closer.

Charles had just begun to show signs of irritation when someone's voice rang out sharp and loud, cutting through the moment. "Oh my God, is that really happening? Isn't that Brandon's car pulling in? Brandon, the one who has only shown up to three social functions in the last seven years, is actually here tonight?!"