

Heiress 961

Chapter 961

With his back facing Yvonne and Taylor, Christopher curled his slender finger.

Pursing her lips, Yvonne handed the letter to Taylor, who in turn passed the paper to Christopher.

Before, Yvonne was the only woman with access to Christopher apart from Bella. She could sit on his lap like a lover and make harmless

jokes, Christopher would never be mad at her.

The people around Christopher assumed that he loved and adored

Yvonne.

Only Yvonne knew that she could not hold a candle to Bella.

Christopher only saw her as a substitute. He would enjoy her company and fulfill his needs with her during the good times. When

he was displeased, he would torment her. With just a snap of his fingers, he could end her life.

So, Yvonne refrained from getting close to him. Fear overcame he

when her eyes met his.

Taylor presented the letter to Christopher with both hands.

The man put down his wine glass, took the letter, and opened it.

Suddenly, Christopher jolted to his feet from the sofa, the chilling tension around him pushing Taylor and Yvonne to back away in shivers.

Then came a loud thud.

With bloodshot eyes, Christopher bellowed angrily and kicked the
coffee table.

The million-dollar wine and collectible wine glass shattered on the
ground.

“Damn it! Bastard!”

Christopher hurled the photographs in his hand onto the floor, his eyes ferocious like a provoked beast.

Taylor and Yvonne picked up the photographs, and they were shocked.

Even in disguise, they recognized the embracing couple to be Justin
and Bella.

“How could this be? How?”

Christopher held his chest shakily, feeling like his heart had been ripped right out of his chest.

“Why? Bella hated him so much. She didn’t even hide her resentment in front of me. Why would she go to him? Why?”

“Take it easy, M-Mr. Iverson.”

Taylor tried his best to console Christopher. “It could just be the angle from where the picture was taken. Maybe our people were mistaken. They didn’t-”

“I know Bella.”

Christopher felt his burning head and fell back down on the sofa. “She

won’t look, much less have physical contact, with someone she hates.

“Even if they didn’t kiss, Justin held her, and they went shopping

together.”

The man gasped for air. Despite gritting his teeth, he could not stop

the tears from rolling down his cheeks.

Taylor and Yvonne were stunned.

They had worked for Christopher for a long time, bearing witness to his stoicism through the years. This was the very first time a woman brought tears to his eyes.

Bella was the love of Christopher's life. He could not do without her.

Yet, Bella would rather be with the man who dumped and hurt her than spare another glance at Christopher.

Taylor winked at Yvonne.

Nevertheless, Yvonne kept her head down, refusing to take another step toward Christopher.

In the past, she could please Christopher and carry out her due diligence as a replacement.

At this point, she knew where she stood.

A substitute had no more use for Christopher because his feelings for Bella ran too deep. No one could replace Bella, even for a moment's comfort.

Christopher sent Taylor to retrieve an injection. Only the shot could calm him down.

Chapter 962

Otherwise, Christopher might just lose control of himself and fire

away at Justin in front of Bella.

“M-Mr. Iverson, if I may.”

Taylor put away the injection and wiped his sweat. “You should stay

away from this stuff. It can give you a momentary kick and take the

pain away, but it’s a prohibited substance. The drug hasn’t been

through clinical trials in Meridan, so the side effects are still

unknown.”

“I know. This is the last time.

Christopher closed his eyes and breathed out. “The drug dealer

shouldn’t be controlled by drugs.”

His obsession was not the drugs, but Bella.

“Send these photos to Wyatt anonymously.”

Christopher let out a smile, wicked and unhinged. “Wyatt loves

daughter too much to let history repeat itself.”

“Of course, Mr. Iverson.”

As Taylor excused himself, Christopher said, “What’s the date today?”

“March 6, sir.”

Christopher narrowed his eyes, a glint flickering in the dark.

“March 6, Grant...”

The phone in his pocket rang.

That night, Bella was so understanding as not to bother Justin after

dinner together. She retreated to her room for a rest.

Justin stared at the black suit on the sofa that Ian had delivered for

tomorrow’s funeral while making calls to Ryan and his men about the

trip to Terranova.

“Did Asher send anybody?”

“No update as of yet, but Asher would’ve known what I knew. He

hasn’t made any arrangements.

With downcast eyes, Justin nodded. "Okay. I'll catch Winston before him."

"It doesn't matter who makes the arrest. You don't always have to win, Justin." Ryan wanted to roll his eyes. Justin could not stand defeat.

Justin's competitiveness extended to the point where he even tried to outdo Bella. He must regret it now, considering he nearly lost his w

"Bella has everything. I have nothing to give to her."

Justin looked down in dejection, the air thick with a feeling of worthlessness. "The only thing she wants now is revenge, so I'm going to make that happen no matter the cost."

"Sigh. Fine. Don't worry, Justin. Once you arrive at Terranova, my people will ensure your safety," Ryan promised.

"Don't worry about me. I was in the army. Just protect yourself."

Justin paused and murmured, "Carrie will be sad if anything happens to you. She has never been loved before. Nothing was ever truly hers."

“You should know how much you mean to her.”

Ryan gasped before exclaiming with thrill, “Justin! Are you

acknowledging me as your brother-in-law?”

Justin pulled the phone away from his ear and frowned. “Can you pipe down?”

“We’re a family, my dear brother-in-law,” Ryan shouted excitedly.

Justin had goosebumps. “Drop that mushiness.”

“I’m going to ask your father for her hand-in-marriage when I get back

from Terranova. You better help me.” Ryan’s voice trembled with

emotion.

“You’re the heir of the Hoffman family. Gregory has no reason to

refuse the marriage. Shannon should...”

Justin sneered, “It doesn’t matter what she thinks. She only cares

about power and wealth. Who needs her approval for the marriage?

“Hmph! You have a point.”

“That reminds me. Get me a gun.”

Chapter 963

Ryan gasped sharply. Justin asked for a gun a little too casually.

“Terranova is known as a no man’s land. Winston must have friends there to help him.

“We can’t afford to let our guards down, or it will not bode well for us.”

Ryan and Justin looked solemn.

Another phone call came in, and it was Gregory.

Justin ended Ryan’s call with furrowed brows and took Gregory’s call.

“Justin, we’re having a virtual conference with the chairman of

Journey Ventures in Meridan. It’s about a potential partnership with/ them and our future development in Meridan. You and I must be in

attendance,” Gregory ordered Justin indifferently.

Justin replied without hesitation, “I can’t attend tomorrow. I have something important to do.”

“What did you say? What could be more important than this?

Whatever else you’re working on can wait.” Gregory pounded the table exasperatedly.

“Either way, I won’t be there tomorrow,” Justin said with a blank face.

His world revolved around Bella. Nothing mattered more to him than anything related to Bella,

Gregory shouted angrily, “You’re the president of Salvador

Corporation. How could you be so irresponsible? Why are you even

the president?”

“Yeah. Why am I even?”

Justin smiled pretentiously, his voice radiating an air of command

even through the phone. “I don’t get why I’m the president when all I

did was make you the richest man in Savrow ten years ahead of your

planning.”

“You!” Gregory was stumped for words.

It was true that Nigel had a keen eye for talent and picked the right

man for the job. Otherwise, Salvador Corporation would still be

struggling to get a foothold over the Hoffman Group.

“Is there anything else? If there isn’t, I’ll hang up now.”

“Justin, it isn’t right to slack off. One day, you will pay for your decision.”

Gregory then terminated the call.

Justin let out an undaunted smile at the blackened mobile screen.

He did care about the company.

Justin toiled day and night, building an empire at the expense of time and health.

However, Bella would always be his priority, and he would not hesitate to make the same choice again.

Nothing was more important than his wife.

The next day, Justin and Bella woke up early, washed up, and had breakfast.

Dressed in formal attire, they made their way out.

Outside the villa, they stood alongside each other and locked eyes.

Justin's gaze lingered on Bella while Bella stared intently back at him.

Bella, with her lips painted a striking crimson red, wore a black suit of

her own design, accented by a white flower brooch.

She looked beautiful and dignified. Despite her stoic face, Justin could sense the sadness around her

Justin pursed his lips. There was something on his mind-something he had been meaning to tell her.

He had seen Bella for the first time after the divorce at an auction

Sporting a suit and red lips, she had stolen his breath away.

"Morning, Mr. Salvador," Bella cried.

"Good morning, Bella," Justin responded tenderly.

"Come on."

The invitation's words stirred a whirlwind of emotions in Justin.

Chapter 964

Since Steven was still in the hospital recovering from his injuries, Ian came to pick Justin and Bella up.

Sitting in the back seat; Justin took a deep breath and took Bella's chilly hand.

Instead of pulling her hand away, she let him entwine their fingers, reveling in his warmth.

“Ryan insisted on coming along, but I didn’t let him,” Justin said

huskily.

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understand where you’re coming from. Ryan spends all his time

with Carrie now. Carrie will be upset if she finds out.”

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Bella sighed. “Linny had taken care of Carrie for a while. They are

more than just an employer and an employee. They are friends.”

She choked with sobs.

“Don’t cry, Bella.”

With his heart breaking, Justin raised his muscular arm and hoo

around the woman’s shuddering shoulders. He pulled her into his

arms. “If Linny could see us now, she wouldn’t want us to be sad.

would want to see the beautiful, amazing, and strong heiress of

KS Group. Don't let her down. Don't let the wicked see our weakness

Bella rested her head against his chest and nodded solemnly, her strength renewed.

The Thompsons spared no expense on Linny's funeral, offering the

very best in everything as a final act of respect.

A multitude of wreaths were laid for Linny, tributes from industry

heavyweight's like the Thompsons, Salvadors, and Hoffmans, whose

influence extended beyond Savrow to the entire nation.

Christopher's wreath arrived before his person and was placed in a rather conspicuous position.

"Iverson sure is cunning."

Standing at the door, Axel looked at the wreath from the Iversons and

taunted, "The wreath is hard to miss. People might think it's a funeral

for the Iversons.

"Get someone to move the wreath to the back. It's blocking ours."

Asher patted his shoulder and shook his head. "Just leave it. Even if

the oversized wreath is intentional, at least they mean well. Don't make us look petty."

Today, Asher, Axel, Ralph, and Drew were present at the funeral. Eve

Steven was in attendance, wheeled in by Amelia.

When Amelia found out about Steven's injuries, she rushed to the hospital and cried all over him.

She took a leave of absence from school and stayed by Steven's side, caring for him, feeding him, cleaning him, and taking him to the

bathroom. She acted like a devoted wife.

Thanks to Amelia's care, Steven was on the mend. He still needed to

rely on a cane or a wheelchair to move around, though.

"Why are you here, Steve?"

Asher drew close to him. "You need rest. Bella will get angry if she

catches you running around."

Steven's eyes filled with sadness. "Linny is Ms. Bella's savior, and

that speaks a lot to me. I should attend her funeral even if I have to

crawl my way here.”

Axel approached and looked at Amelia with a pout. “Honestly, Amelia.

Why aren’t you doing anything about your man?”

Her man?

Steve and Amelia blushed.

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Red in the face, Amelia said shyly, “It’s out of my hands.”

“Oh, that won’t do.”

Drew came over, shaking his head, and joined the teasing. “The Thompson girls should be able to handle any man or situation wi

ease and confidence.

“Don’t you think so, Mr. Lovett?”

Steven cleared his throat embarrassedly and replied, “You’re right, Mr.

Drew.”

There was an announcement near the entrance.

“Ms. Bella Thompson has arrived.”

“Mr. Justin Salvador, president of Salvador Corporation, has arrived.”

Chapter 965

All members of the Thompson family were present today.

Justin walked alongside Bella, his gaze looking straight ahead with unwavering steadiness. He kept his cool despite being the only outsider.

His head could not be any clearer.

Justin wanted to be the shoulder for Bella to lean on and the presence she could let down her guard with.

Jan stayed behind Justin. The sight of the Thompson brothers made his hair stand on end and his palms clammy.

Learning from Justin’s experience, Ian envisioned a future wife with a lot fewer brothers.

“Bella!”

The family surrounded Bella.

The Thompsons were not too pleased to see Justin.

Before, the Thompsons would have closed the door and released the

hounds on Justin.

“I appreciate all you have done.”

Bella watched tenderly as Amelia wheeled Steven over, not blaming Steven for attending the funeral instead of resting. “Thank you for your hard work, Amelia. You helped me a lot by keeping Steve company and doing so much for him.

“We’re a family, Bella. Don’t say that.” The compliment made Amelia

feel warm and cozy inside.

“Steve, get better soon and take good care of Amelia.”

Bella reached Steven and Amelia, taking their hands in each of hers

and gently clasping them together. “I hope you will be a guardian

angel to Amelia.”

Steven's eyes welled up as he looked at the imposing figure behind

Bella.

It was time for him to move on from Bella.

Bella already had someone who would do anything for her, and the

man was stronger and more reliable than Steven.

Justin looked at the woman's back in silence, his emotions stirring.

He was tempted to hug her and tell the world that all she needed was

him.

The send-off ceremony began several minutes later.

Drew, who was on standby outside, approached Bella in a hurry with

grim look.

"We have a situation, Bella. Word somehow got out, and the press is

out there."

"What?" Bella was shocked. "Ash is thorough and never leaves room for error. Given that the guests are on our side, how did word get out?"

"I was advised that the hired protection belongs to Salvador Corporation."

Drew gave Justin an intimidating look.

Justin furrowed his brows. "It wasn't me."

"I know."

Bella raised her arm, looking every inch like a boss. "I wouldn't have let you come if I suspected you."

The man was touched.

"I believe Shannon and Bethany are likely behind it. They know more than anyone else how Linny died. They are just waiting for her funeral."

Bella chuckled gruesomely, her eyes bloodshot. "They enjoy being in the spotlight and being seen in a positive light."

"Well, they've come to the wrong place to seek attention."

She carried herself with such aggression that even Justin and Drew

got goosebumps.

“Ms. Thompson...”

Chapter 966

Linny’s grandmother’s shaky voice came from the back. “Did something happen?”

Bella looked back and met the old lady’s worried gaze. With a lump in

her throat, she went over to help her up.

“Everything is okay. Just focus on sending Linny off. No matter what

happens, we are here for you.”

A throng of press swarmed the area outside the funeral hall, their

cameras fixated on the unfolding ceremony.

The funeral would make headlines because the attendees were key

players in the Salvador and Thompson families. Linny was the only

victim in a shooting incident.

The press had to assume Linny’s death was linked to these families

The news would be a nationwide expose.

The life of an innocent working-class girl was cut short by the crue
of the wealthy.

Who was responsible for the innocent girl's life? That was the
mystery that captivated the press.

Bella knew that would happen.

Shannon and Brenda lured the blood-sucking press to the venue.

The Salvadors' fleet of fancy cars stacked outside the gate, and the bodyguards exited the vehicle to form a human barrier to push the reporters back. The wife and daughter of Salvador Corporation's chairman had to keep up with appearances.

In the car, Shannon took out her compact and powdered her lips, trying to make her well-maintained skin look haggard.

"Mom, do we have to attend the funeral?"

Bethany looked out the tinted window. Bella and her resourceful brothers' presence in the funeral hall sent shivers down her spine. " We didn't get anywhere during the last few times we tried to outdo her. In fact, she humiliated us.

"Linny, the traitor, just died. Shouldn't we fly under the radar for now?"

"Fly under the radar? Hmph! Do you think it's necessary at this point?"

Shannon slammed the compact powder shut. Her pale face, paired with her menacing expression and grim eyes, made her look like a ghost. "If Bella has proof, why didn't she come knocking on our door days ago? We heard nothing from her because she had no leads

proof to charge us with."

Bethany nodded pensively.

That was true. Knowing Bella, she would have gone after Salvador Corporation if she had proof. She would not wait until now.

"The press is also aware that Linny is a maid of the Salvador family. As the lady of the house, I should make an appearance and demonstrate my friendly side. I can't let the media think we are a heartless family."

Shannon was manipulative. "I need to show my face at the funeral to

rebuild my reputation.

"Do you have the money for Linny's family?"

"I got it, but why should we give away so much, Mom?" Bethany was

reluctant.

"I won't hesitate to give the money away to keep the old lady's mouth

shut."

Hiding the horrifying truth was paramount.

Shannon and Bethany stepped out of the car, composing themselves for a public appearance. As seasoned actresses, they knew how to

turn on the waterworks for the cameras.

"Mrs. Salvador, rumor has it that the victim was your personal maid. Is that true?" A journalist shoved a microphone up Shannon's face.

Shannon wiped her tears with a handkerchief. "Yes. Linny was my maid. She was a kind soul and diligent in her service. My whole fam

was fond of her."

"Although Linny was primarily responsible for caring for my sist had a sisterly relationship with Linny. We had been nothing but n to her." Bethany wailed exaggeratedly.

Bethany would not pass up a chance to take a dig at Carrie.

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The press nodded with approving looks. "Though born into money,

Ms. Bethany remains beautiful on the inside and out."

"As Linny's former employer, I should attend Linny's funeral."

Shannon wailed in front of the cameras.

The press asked, "What are your plans for Linny?"

“Linny died unexpectedly, but we could have done a better job at monitoring every employee’s well-being. We are partly to blame for this. The least we can do is offer Linny’s family compensation. We can’t bring Linny back to life, but she can rest well, knowing that her family will be well taken care of.”

The press sighed at Shannon’s generosity, their opinion of Shannon changing for the better.

Shannon and Bethany, with bodyguards in tow, entered the funeral hall.

The press followed suit, poking their cameras into the venue.

Suddenly, Shannon and Bethany froze.

The Thompsons stood before them.

Their chilling presence casts dread over Shannon and Bethany.

Bella and Justin stood side by side, their expressions equally furious. They wanted nothing more than to get rid of these vile women.

Shannon managed to hold it together, but the intensity of Bella’s gaze

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Shannon managed to hold it together, but the intensity of Bella's gaze sucked the life out of Bethany.

"Today is about the deceased, Ms. Thompson."

Shannon looked at Bella with tearful eyes. "Regardless of our history, I came today to pay my last respects to Linny."

Bella took a step forward.

The other members of the Thompson family and security detail did the same. Shannon and Bethany turned pale and recoiled in fright.

Even the press backed away.

Bella and Justin came off as pretty intimidating.

The Thompson brothers stood behind Bella, a source of protection and assurance for her.

Due to the nature of his work, Drew could not be seen on camera. He hid in a corner and sullenly watched everything unfold.

However, Drew was ready to destroy anybody who would so much as touch Bella.

"Everybody is welcome to the funeral, but you," Bella said, her eyes burning with resentment.

"Why? Why can't we enter?" Bethany asked a silly question.

"You have the nerve to ask. You don't deserve to be here."

The crowd was shocked.

Bella sure said the darndest things.

"You're a bully, Bella! Don't take it there!" Bethany turned ashen.

Out of habit, Bethany tried to put her finger up Bella's face, but Shannon was quick to grab her hand.

"We only mean well, Ms. Thompson. All we want is to pay our last respects.

"This is not time for our personal feud. It's embarrassing to fight here and now. It's disrespectful to the deceased."

Shannon spoke with such conviction that Bella seemed like an unreasonable brat.

Bella curled her lips, her eyes narrowing on the woman's pretentious face. "You're disrespecting the deceased. Your presence here is an insult to the deceased.

"Shannon, Bethany, what goes around comes around. You know what you did to Linny. You better watch out for karma."

A wave of shock and horror swept through the crowd.

Chapter 968

What was Bella saying? She seemed to hint that Linny's death was closely related to Shannon and Bethany.

Justin stared at Bella's discolored, seething face, his hand slipping around her waist.

Feeling her shudder, Justin pressed his palm against her skin, his warmth offering assurance and encouragement.

He stood down, not because he did not want to risk his reputation.

Justin understood that Bella needed to stand up to Shannon and

Bethany to overcome her resentment and trauma.

Shannon's and Bethany's faces contorted with horror.

They tried to control the narrative by bringing the press into it. Yet now, they might be shooting themselves in the foot.

"What are you saying, Ms. Thompson? Don't tell me you think we killed Linny," Shannon pressed with bulging eyes.

“Did I say you killed her? I said nothing of that sort.”

Bella shrugged, her expression taunting. “I said nothing. Why were you in a hurry to deny everything? Did you have something to do with Linny’s death?”.

The journalists exchanged glances before putting Shannon and Bethany in the spotlight.

Shannon glared at Bella, wishing she could bite her head off.

Goddamnit! The bitch set her up again.

“Just because you are members of the Salvador family, you boss around, yell, and torture the domestic help. Don’t try to play the good guys now. Your presence is a nuisance to the living and the dead. I don’t see a problem telling you karma would get to you one day.” A storm of emotions was brewing in Bella’s eyes.

Justin looked at Bella in awe.

His woman sure was intelligent and witty.

Despite knowing that Shannon and Bethany were responsible for Linny’s death, they had no proof. Accusing Shannon directly of murder could backfire, leaving Bella vulnerable to a slander lawsuit

For this reason, Bella chose to keep her speech vague.

Bella’s words were sure to hit a nerve with Shannon and spark a media firestorm. With a well-placed strike, Bella got even with

Shannon and Bethany and threw a wrench in their plans.

Shannon hated Bella's guts, but more so herself, for getting caught Bella's wordplay.

"That's a big accusation to make, Bella!"

Bethany freaked out, knowing the image she worked so hard to build was gone. She lashed out, "I know you don't see eye-to-eye with me and my mother, but that doesn't give you the right to make false claims about us. That's slander. I can sue you."

Her voice trailed off.

Justin's steely gaze sent chills down Bethany's spine. She felt like an invisible knife was held against her throat.

"I'm only giving you facts. I have insights because I lived with you at your family home for three years." Bella grimaced sternly.

The crowd was shocked.

What was that supposed to mean?

It made no sense that the heiress of the Thompsons lived in the

Salvadors' residence for three years.

The press, Shannon, Bethany, Justin, and the Thompson brothers behind Bella were stunned.

"Bella, you-"

Bella's statement stopped Justin from saying anything further. "I know better than anyone the shitty things you did throughout the years because I'm Justin's ex-wife. I was once a member of the Salvador family."

Chapter 969

It was pin-drop silent as everybody reeled in shock.

“Bella...” The Thompson brothers did not see that coming.

Bella, who once refused to talk about her marriage, admitted to the media that she and Justin were husband and wife.

She was brave and frank.

Her failed marriage had been a source of shame, a past she could never talk about.

Now, she was ready to let go of the past and move on.

Bella and Justin simply met at the wrong time.

However, they were the right person for each other.

The flashing, blinding camera lights flooded Bella and Justin.

Justin furrowed his brows and stood in front of the love of his shielding her from any harm.

“Is that true, Ms. Thompson? Were you married to Mr. Salvador?”

“Was it a marriage away from the public? When did you get a divorce? Do you have children?”

“Why did you divorce? Is it because of Rosalind? Was another woman the result of a divorce?”

The press grilled Bella.

“Bella wasn’t the reason for our divorce. It was me

With his wound ripped right open, Justin tried to take all the blame for the failed marriage when Bella held his hand tight.

The man met her gaze.

“No need to tell them anything. It’s all in the past. I don’t need your explanation, and I don’t want to hear that name ever again.” Bella drew close to his ear, her voice raspy.

Justin’s breath hitched as a tidal wave of emotions swept over him.

Her understanding stung him worse than her resentment.

“The reason for our divorce is a private matter. We have nothing to say.”

Bella remained composed as her piercing gaze fell on Shannon and Bethany. “I am coming forward with this information to set the record

straight and to show that my accusations are not baseless. I’ve seen what Mrs. Salvador and Ms. Bethany are capable of. I urge y journalists, not to be fooled by them and to give a voice to those have been silenced.”

Bella said, her eyes clear, “I believe you started a career in the media to seek the truth and answers to tragedies. It is the duty of the news media to hold those in power accountable and to give a voice to the voiceless.”

Touched by the powerful speech, nearly all the reporters put down the cameras.

It was true. These journalists had dreams of using this powerful platform to effect change.

However, the media in Savrow was controlled by a few powerful interests. The quality of journalism was on the decline as news outlets focused on celebrity gossip and trivia that attracted clicks and

eyeballs.

They had to look for the next viral thing to gain traction.

Chapter 970

It was ironic that stories of fallen heroes became a cloud of dust in the wind, a stark contrast to the ever-present buzz of celebrity gossip

A brave journalist held a microphone up Shannon's face and asked solemnly, "Is it true that you abuse the domestic help as claimed by Ms. Thompson? Was Linny subjected to your unfair treatment?"

Shannon was taken aback.

It never crossed her mind that the press she brought would turn the tables on her.

Justin clutched Bella's hand.

"You're amazing, Bella. Truly. You are so much stronger. I am the absolute worst."

Justin looked deep into her eyes and smiled wryly. "I don't feel go enough for you. I can't measure up.

His lips leaned into her ear tenderly. "You've been chasing after m for the last 13 years. Let me run after you for the rest of our lives."

Bella's heart melted, and her fingers curled.

The other reporters surrounded Shannon and Bethany with sharp questions.

Breaking out in a cold sweat, Shannon and Bethany refuted, "No!

That's not true. Don't listen to Bella."

"Is there anything you can say for yourself, ma'am?"

A familiar, indignant voice rang out from the crowd.

Bella and Justin looked up in shock.

Wilma approached with a vengeance.

"Wilma!"

"Young Madam, Young Master Justin."

Wilma walked toward Justin and Bella and nodded. "I'm sorry for showing up against your advice.

"I know you didn't tell me to save me from the heartache, but I practically raised Linny. She's like a daughter to me."

Wilma choked with sobs as tears filled her eyes. "Can I see her off for the last time?"

"I'm sorry, Wilma." Justin sighed with downcast eyes. He felt bad for keeping the matter from Wilma.

Bella went up to hug Wilma, patting her back with an air of unspoken sadness.

Pulling herself together, Wilma looked Shannon dead in the eye.

Bitterness overtook every inch of her being. "Ms. Thompson is right.

The Salvadors have not been kind to all the domestic help, Linny included, throughout the years. I've worked for the Salvadors for nearly 3 decades. I know what Ms. Thompson knows and more. I swear to God that Ms. Thompson made no false accusation. She spoke the truth."

"Have you lost it, Wilma? Did Bella bribe you to frame us?"

Shannon pointed at Wilma angrily. "You are like family to us. We have been nothing but nice to you. I bet no one can top us in giving you better pay and benefits in the whole of Savrow. Yet, you are so

greedy. I can't believe you turned against us over money. Have you lost all sense of decency?"

"My decency is what led me to be here today."