

His kiss 251

Chapter 251

Gabriela froze in place, while Tessa gave a playful laugh. “What’s wrong? So thrilled Mr. Moss is back that you can’t even speak? Go on now, don’t make him wait too long.”

Gathering herself, Gabriela walked slowly toward the CEO’s office. Inside, Wesley sat at his desk, immersed in paperwork. When he caught sight of her, he closed the file and lifted his gaze.

“Gabriela,” he called out evenly.

She offered him a bright smile and replied, “Didn’t you mention you’d be away for a whole week, Mr. Moss? How come you’re back already?”

His expression remained unreadable, giving nothing away. “What’s the matter—are you disappointed to see me return?”

“Of course not,” Gabriela blurted, shaking her head quickly. “I’m just... surprised, that’s all.”

Wesley’s lips curled into a cold smirk. “The real surprise was you moving out of the estate. Did you find it so unbearable living there?”

Caught off guard, Gabriela opened her mouth, but her voice faltered. For once, her usually sharp tongue failed her.

His gaze stayed locked on her, sharp and unyielding. “Do you remember what I told you before I left?”

She gave a small nod. “I remember.”

“Then tell me—what’s your answer?”

The question hit her like a blow. Her answer? What answer could she possibly give now, with her secret weighing heavy inside her? She was pregnant. That wasn’t something she could confess on the spot. She had counted on a few more days to think it over, but Wesley’s sudden return had shattered that fragile sense of time, leaving her flustered and cornered.

Wesley’s tone sharpened, almost biting. “Is it really that difficult to give me an answer? Am I making this too hard for you?”

Gabriela’s mind spun in circles, and out of nowhere, she remembered Aubrey’s pointed remarks from dinner the night before.

The words tumbled out before she could stop herself. “Mr. Moss, I want to transfer back to the sales department.”

When she finished, silence swept through the room. Wesley’s face darkened, his expression hardening like storm clouds gathering. A dangerous glint flickered in his eyes as he straightened his tie, his gaze cutting straight through her.

“So, that’s the decision you’ve made?”

She forced herself to meet his stare. “Yes.”

His voice dropped, low and strained. “Do you really feel nothing for me at all?”

She had not only abandoned the estate overnight, but now, upon his return, she wanted to sever ties at work as well. Was she so determined to cut him out of her life?

Gabriela’s throat tightened. “I’m sorry, Mr. Moss.”

“There’s no need.” Wesley turned his chair sharply, presenting his back to her. “Go to HR for the transfer paperwork. Tessa will handle your handover.”

“Thank you, Mr. Moss.”

She glanced at him once more, but the high back of the chair hid most of his figure. Only his left hand was visible, resting on the armrest, a simple bracelet looped around his wrist, matching hers in style and design. Her fingers brushed the bracelet on her right wrist, a small ache tightening in her chest as she slipped out the door.

If she weren't carrying another man's child, she might have dared to try—no matter how fiercely the Moss family opposed her. But with this secret weighing inside her, how could she possibly accept his feelings?

Chapter 252

News of Gabriela's transfer back to the sales department spread through the company in no time. Speculation swirled about her supposed fall from grace.

"Perhaps Mr. Moss met some dazzling beauty during his business trip, and poor Gabriela's been tossed aside."

"Or maybe his family stepped in. Didn't the daughter of the Dewitt family show up recently? Word is she came here just to put Gabriela in her place."

"In all of Okburg, only a handful of families can rival the Mosses, and the Dewitts are definitely one of them."

With gossip piling up, Aubrey was nearly pulling her hair out in exasperation. Gabriela, on the other hand, remained unbothered. Her mind was fixed on her new role back in the sales department—probation completed, commissions within reach. She set her sights on signing as many contracts as she could this year. Yet looming in the back of her mind was the regret that she might lose out on that one-billion-dollar deal.

Gabriela switched on her computer and began reviewing client details, preparing for her rounds later that day. Before she could dive in, a heavy stack of documents thudded onto her desk. Jaylene Ryan, her colleague, loomed over her, lips curled in disdain.

“These need to be prepped for tomorrow’s meeting. Make sure everything’s ready on time.”

Gabriela skimmed through the pile, frowning. “But these aren’t part of my responsibilities.”

“You just transferred back to sales!” Jaylene shot back with a roll of her eyes. “You barely know how things work here. What else are you good for?”

Her voice sharpened into a sneer. “Did you think you could slack off here the way you did in the executive office? I don’t care how you manage it—just have the materials finished before the end of the day.”

Without giving her a chance to reply, Jaylene spun on her heel, her stilettos clicking sharply across the floor.

Gabriela drew in a steady breath, forced her pulse to calm, and began sorting through the stack with quiet determination.

Aubrey leaned close and murmured, “Jaylene is the top salesperson in our department. Even our manager tiptoes around her. Just do what she says.”

Gabriela gave a faint nod. When someone reached that level, a little arrogance came with the territory. Besides, she could use this as a chance to reacquaint herself with the department’s workflow while sorting through the files.

As soon as she finished one stack of documents, Jaylene strolled over, cup in hand, and ordered curtly, "The water cooler is empty. Get it refilled."

Before Gabriela could even answer, Aubrey finally snapped, "That's the cleaner's job, Jaylene. Why on earth should Gabriela be the one to do it?"

"The cleaner's got a bad back and can't lift it!" Jaylene fired back with a dismissive curl of her lip. "What's the problem? Is Gabriela somehow above the cleaner?"

"She's not being paid a cleaner's wage!" Aubrey countered, her voice rising in indignation.

But Gabriela touched her arm, stopping her from saying more, and replied with steady calm, "It's alright. I'll handle it."

For her, swapping out a water jug was nothing unusual—she'd tackled far heavier burdens before.

When Aubrey tried to step in anyway, Jaylene intercepted her with a pointed order. "There are documents that need copying right now. Go take care of them."

When Jaylene was back in the office, her assistant leaned close and murmured, "Jaylene, Gabriela doesn't dare fight back. I really think Mr. Moss has already dumped her."

Chapter 253

A sly curve tugged at Jaylene's lips. "Wasn't it inevitable? Aside from her looks, what does Gabriela really have?"

Jaylene's stellar sales record had long secured her position as one of the company's prized employees. If Wesley truly wanted a girlfriend from the common scraps, why take Gabriela instead of her? The envy she had bottled up for months flared like a sudden blaze.

The assistant, hoping to stay in good graces, offered tentatively, "Want me to try her again?"

Jaylene tilted her chin with smug satisfaction. "Do it."

Obediently, the assistant slipped away, coffee cup in hand, ready for the next ploy.

The moment Gabriela tightened the new jug on the dispenser, the assistant leaned in with a teasing smile. "Gabriela, you brew coffee for Mr. Moss every day. You must be an expert by now. Jaylene would like to taste it herself."

Lifting her gaze, Gabriela met the assistant's eyes, then quietly decided it wasn't worth starting a conflict. She carried the cup to the machine and went about the task without complaint. Petty errands like this weren't worth a fight. The entire day, Jaylene piled on one demand after another, leaving Gabriela running back and forth until her legs ached.

By the time she finally dropped into her chair, the clock was already creeping toward the end of the day—and half her own assignments still lay untouched on her desk.

Just before heading out, Jaylene dropped another stack of papers with a sharp tone. “These are for tomorrow’s meeting. Have them ready before you leave tonight.”

Aubrey, who detested Jaylene’s bullying, clenched her fists but said nothing. She had only just converted from intern to full-time staff and couldn’t afford to provoke the department star. Instead, she stayed behind with Gabriela, determined to share the burden.

It was close to eight o’clock when Aubrey’s phone lit up with a call. Her boyfriend had just stepped off the train and was already on his way over to see her. Gabriela, aware of how precious Aubrey’s time with her boyfriend was, urged her to go and meet him instead of lingering at the office.

Left on her own, Gabriela worked through the stack of documents with practiced efficiency, yet the clock crept past nine before she finished most of them.

Outside the sales department, Wesley lingered at the glass door, his sharp gaze fixed on her lone silhouette bent over the desk. Billy leaned closer and whispered, “Mr. Moss, would you like me to ask Ms. Hayes to step out?”

“There’s no need.” Wesley’s features, softened a moment ago, hardened into a mask of ice. His tone dropped to a frigid calm as he turned away and strode down the hall.

Billy blinked in confusion, startled by the sudden chill in Wesley's demeanor. What had happened during Wesley's absence that made Gabriela end up in sales—and why had his attitude toward Gabriela shifted so abruptly?

Could it be...

A wild thought seized him. Had Gabriela fallen for someone else? The possibility made his chest tighten. If Gabriela really had given her heart to someone else, then that man had to be remarkable—not only winning her affection but eclipsing Wesley entirely.

Chapter 254

For several days straight, Gabriela's workload was relentless, her every hour consumed by an endless stream of chores. Yet no matter how deliberately Jaylene piled on trouble, Gabriela handled each task with effortless precision, leaving not a single flaw for her to seize upon. Jaylene fumed in silence, her anger simmering as she bided her time, waiting for the perfect chance to strike.

One afternoon, Gabriela went to her department manager, Bryn Mitch, with a sudden request for half a day's leave. The strain of the week weighed on her, and a dull discomfort in her stomach urged her to get a checkup at the hospital. The moment Jaylene overheard the request, she swept briskly into Bryn's office. Once she learned why Gabriela was leaving, her mind quickly twisted the news into a scheme—tomorrow, she would turn the situation into a spectacle, dragging Gabriela down in front of everyone and forcing her out of the company.

Later in the day, Gabriela followed through on her plan and went to the hospital for her appointment. Since learning of her pregnancy, she hadn't undergone a full examination, so she decided it was time for a thorough check. By the end of the visit, the results reassured her—everything was perfectly normal. The doctor prescribed folic acid along with a few other supplements to support her pregnancy, reminding her to take things easy.

“Your condition looks good, but don’t forget to rest. A well-rested mother means a stronger, healthier baby,” the doctor advised gently.

Gabriela thanked him and headed out to collect her medication when her phone lit up with Jaylene’s name. The timing struck her as peculiar. Jaylene knew perfectly well she’d taken leave for a hospital visit. What reason did Jaylene have for calling at this time?

She toyed with the phone for a moment before answering. “Jaylene, did you need something?”

“Nothing major,” Jaylene replied, her voice dripping with false concern. “Did you see the doctor? What did they say?”

“I already saw the doctor and picked up my prescription,” Gabriela answered lightly. “Was there something urgent at work?”

“Not at all,” Jaylene replied with practiced sweetness. “I just thought, as colleagues, it’s only right to check in on you.”

Jaylene kept up the act for another moment or two, offering a few more empty words of concern before finally hanging up. Gabriela slipped the phone back into her bag, dismissing Jaylene’s strange tone without a second thought.

Just then, a voice called out, warm and surprised, “Gabriela? Is that really you?”

She spun around and froze—it was Mason, the very same Mason linked to Alphacom Electronics. She hadn't crossed paths with him in a long time.

Mason had come to the hospital with his wife for her checkup and was waiting for her when he spotted Gabriela. "Gabriela, what are you doing here? Are you feeling sick?"

Heat rushed to her cheeks. In a fluster, she shoved the medication deeper into her bag and forced a quick excuse. "Oh, nothing serious. I'm having menstrual cramps, so I came to the hospital to get something for the pain."

Mason nodded in understanding. After a short pause, he asked tentatively, "Has Mr. Moss been tied up lately? I've tried setting up lunches and golf games with him, but he keeps turning me down."

Chapter 255

Gabriela gave a polite smile. "Yes, he's been extremely busy. He just came back from a business trip, and now he's buried in projects that require his personal oversight."

Mason dipped his head, a weary sigh slipping out as his features tightened in dismay. Gabriela, unsure how to continue the exchange with someone of his stature—especially now that her relationship with Wesley had soured—silently assumed the billion-dollar deal was slipping out of her reach. She started to excuse herself, only for Mason to stop her.

"Gabriela, would you be free to share a meal with me sometime?" he inquired suddenly.

Her brow arched in curiosity as she queried, “Is there something particular you’d like to discuss, Mr. Garner?”

“It’s about the restructuring at my factory,” Mason admitted after a brief hesitation. “I’ve always hoped to partner with Mr. Moss, but he doesn’t seem interested in pursuing this deal.”

Gabriela’s breath caught in her throat. A billion-dollar contract—one most companies would claw and scrape for—yet Wesley had brushed it aside without a second thought? Her faith in his instincts ran deep, and suspicion stirred immediately. If he wasn’t interested, then Mason’s company must have hidden cracks beneath its polished surface.

With a trace of regret, she answered carefully, “Mr. Garner, I’m no longer Mr. Moss’s secretary. I may not be in a position to pass along your proposal.”

“That’s quite alright,” Mason replied warmly, his tone carrying genuine sincerity. “Let’s just have a meal as friends, nothing more.”

Before Gabriela could respond, Mason’s wife stepped out from a nearby office. He instantly turned to her, his face softening as he asked after her health with obvious concern. She gave him a reassuring smile, insisting it was nothing serious. The easy affection between them was unmistakable, their bond radiating in the simplest exchange.

Gabriela reasoned that any man who treated his wife so tenderly had to be someone of good character. After weighing it over, she agreed softly, “Whenever you have time, Mr. Garner, just let me know. I’ll be there for the meal.”

Mason's expression brightened, and he leaned forward with genuine warmth. "Thank you, Gabriela," he said with heartfelt sincerity.

Once she got home, Gabriela took the doctor's guidance to heart and went to sleep ahead of time. By morning, she had steeled herself, determined not to accept any of Jaylene's unreasonable orders.

The moment she stepped into the office, a stack of files flew toward her and crashed at her feet.

"Gabriela, where exactly were you yesterday?" Jaylene demanded, her tone biting like frost.

Startled, Gabriela glanced at the papers scattered across the floor. "What's going on?" she asked, confused.

Jaylene's frosty stare cut into her, and with a small tilt of her chin, she signaled for her assistant to lay it out.

The assistant's voice dripped with disdain. "Scott from Alphacom Electronics dropped in yesterday afternoon. He wanted to go over the billion-dollar deal, but every key document was locked on your computer. Since it was password-protected, we couldn't get in, and in the end, Scott stormed out."

Chapter 256

Her agitation only mounted as she went on. "Do you have any idea what that cost us? The department may have just lost a billion-dollar contract. Everyone worked themselves to the bone for nearly two months, and now the whole thing might be ruined—because of you."

Gabriela stared at her, utterly bewildered. “I was on medical leave yesterday. Bryn was aware of it.”

Bryn stood in silence, his face set in a hard, unyielding look.

Jaylene barked out, her tone cutting, “Even if you were at the doctor’s, that’s no excuse for neglecting your duties. Are you seriously unaware that in this business, we’re on duty every damn hour? Even in the middle of the night, if a client calls, we answer right then and there!”

Gabriela’s voice remained steady as she reminded her, “Jaylene, when I was at the hospital, you called and only asked about my doctor’s visit. You never mentioned work.”

Jaylene gave a derisive laugh. “Come on, you and I don’t exactly get along—why would I care about your health? I was asking for your computer password. You brushed me off, said you had private files, then hung up. After that, I tried calling more than ten times, but you ignored me.”

She rattled off her version so quickly it sounded rehearsed.

By then, Gabriela understood perfectly. Jaylene had orchestrated the whole setup.

Straightening her posture, Gabriela leveled a frosty glare at Jaylene. “Do you have any actual proof I refused your calls?”

Jaylene instantly thrust her phone toward Bryn, the screen displaying thirteen calls to Gabriela. She explained, "The first one connected for more than a minute. The rest? Twelve straight rejections."

Once he glanced over the call history, Bryn's eyes hardened, dripping with contempt for Gabriela. "How do you explain this, Gabriela?"

Gabriela composedly pulled out her own phone and held it up. "My records only show a single call from Jaylene."

Jaylene curled her lips in a mocking sneer. "Deleting logs isn't hard."

Her accusation lit a spark among the onlookers, and whispers quickly turned into open condemnation.

"Gabriela, whatever's going on between you and Jaylene, you can't drag it into work. Because of your personal grudges, the entire deal's collapsed."

"Do you realize the blood, sweat, and sleepless nights we poured into this deal?"

"Gabriela, you weren't always like this. What happened to the hardworking, kind woman I knew?"

"So you think being Wesley's secretary for a bit makes you better than everyone else? You've already fallen out of favor and been dumped back into sales. So quit acting high and mighty and learn some humility."

Their frustration snowballed, resentment sharpening into rage. Jaylene had promised to split the commissions if the contract went through, but now, with the deal collapsing, everyone stood to lose. Eyes turned on Gabriela with the heat of sworn enemies.

Amid the sea of hostile glares, Gabriela's lips curved into a cool, knowing smile. She had felt something was wrong the moment Jaylene called her. Fortunately, she had come prepared for exactly this moment.

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Gabriela fixed her gaze on Jaylene and demanded firmly, "Are you honestly claiming it was you who called me yesterday insisting on my password?"

Jaylene gave a sharp, mocking laugh. "Now I see. Speaking to you is a complete waste of breath."

Bryn came forward, his tone deceptively calm. "Gabriela, just admit your mistake in front of everyone, and we can let this drop. But I have to tell you, there's no place for you in this department anymore."

He pretended to arbitrate, but the judgment in his voice made it clear he had already condemned her.

Gabriela's eyes narrowed as she pressed, "What exactly are you implying?"

Bryn's lips curved in a cool smile. "It's pretty simple. You can either return to the executive office, or go beg around the other sales teams to accept you."

Her eyes flared with disbelief as Gabriela snapped back, "I've done nothing wrong. Why should I be the one to leave?"

Bryn's voice grew sharp with irritation. "Enough, Gabriela. Do you still imagine you're somebody important? Just own up to your actions and apologize to Jaylene."

One colleague piled on, sneering, "You've already fallen out of Mr. Moss's favor, Gabriela. Quit strutting around like you're still above the rest of us."

Cali stood on the sidelines with her head down and her lips pressed tightly together. Memories pricked at her—how she had gossiped about Gabriela in the restroom. Yet when Gabriela had the power to crush her, she never retaliated.

After a hesitant pause, she spoke softly. "Gabriela went to the hospital yesterday—maybe she truly wasn't feeling well."

The words caught Gabriela off guard. She hadn't expected Cali, of all people, to defend her.

Jaylene's assistant let out a sharp, derisive snort. "Cali, don't say I didn't warn you. If you insist on buttering someone up, at least choose wisely. What kind of support do you think Gabriela has left? Watch yourself, or you'll get dragged down with her."

By then, the entire office was convinced that Gabriela had lost Wesley's backing, so they felt safe taking shots at her. Cali's face drained of color, and she immediately bit her tongue, unwilling to speak another word.

Gabriela scanned the hostile room, realizing Cali was the only one who had even tried to stand on her side.

With deliberate calm, she slipped her phone from her bag. "If you're so eager for me to walk out, fine," she said evenly. "But first—listen to this."

She tapped play, and the office filled with the clear recording of yesterday's call—Jaylene's own voice, never once mentioning a password. The moment the recording stopped, Gabriela held out her phone for Bryn and the others to check. "Look at the timestamp—it was yesterday afternoon."

The sudden reversal left the entire office stunned, and not a single person dared to speak.

Jaylene's complexion shifted in an instant. Rage flared in her eyes as she snapped, "Why would you record our conversation?"

Gabriela's tone stayed measured. "It's nothing more than habit. I learned to record anything that felt suspicious."

Her gaze locked on Jaylene like a blade. "From the moment I rejoined this team, you've singled me out. It seemed strange that you suddenly cared about my health. I don't know why you're so hostile toward

me, but sabotaging me at the expense of everyone's hard work is going too far. Shouldn't you be the one apologizing?"

Cali lowered her gaze, hiding the sly curve of a smile.

Jaylene bit down hard, her words snapping like a whip. "Maybe I got it wrong. I forgot to ask you for your password during the first call. But later I definitely called you, and you just ignored me."

Chapter 258

"Why should it matter if I missed your calls?" Gabriela's tone was detached. "I'd already organized every detail on Alphacom Electronics and sent the file straight to your inbox."

The blood drained from Jaylene's face as she stammered, "When did you send it?"

"Yesterday, while I was on leave. I told you I would." Gabriela's reply was calm, almost dismissive.

After mulling over Jaylene's call yesterday, Gabriela had quietly sent the email—never imagining it would prove so useful now.

Her lips curved with a faint, knowing smile. "I said I'd send it once I'd finished at the doctor's office. And I did."

Jaylene's eyes blazed with uncontrolled wrath as she fired back, "Stop making things up! Who could possibly prove it?"

Gabriela's tone stayed calm, almost detached. "Well, no one can prove I didn't say it either. What I can prove is that the file was delivered—to your inbox."

Bryn immediately pulled up Jaylene's email. Sure enough, the file sat right there, untouched. His gaze shifted, sharp with doubt, and the rest of the room froze, realizing Jaylene had deliberately ignored the email to set Gabriela up.

A hushed voice broke the silence. "Jaylene... that's crossing a line. You've got plenty of sales yourself, so maybe you don't care about the commission. But the Alphacom Electronics deal was something all of us worked on."

Panic flickered across Jaylene's face as she scrambled to open her inbox. "Scott from Alphacom Electronics came in at the time. I didn't even have a chance to check my emails!" she explained immediately.

Gabriela's lips curved in a thin smile. "First, you forget what you told me. Now, you claim you were too busy to read your emails. If that's the case, you might consider buying a few boxes of memory supplements. Age catches up with everyone—when your memory falters, it's best to nourish the brain."

Gabriela's subtle jab landed like a slap, and fury surged through Jaylene until her cheeks flushed crimson. By now, employees from other divisions had trickled over, eager to witness the drama. Jaylene, usually so composed, had never been put on the spot like this.

“You dare humiliate me in front of everyone? Who the hell do you think you are?” she bellowed, her voice sharp with fuming intensity.

She swung her hand upward, ready to strike. Before Gabriela could react, a figure darted between them.

Aubrey had left her date and rushed to the company after a colleague informed her about the office conflict. Without hesitation, she stepped in front of Gabriela like a human shield.

“Jaylene!” Aubrey’s voice rang out, firm and cutting. “You’ve strutted around this office long enough, throwing your weight around just because you’re the sales champion. Piling paperwork onto Gabriela was already stepping over the line—but today you tried to smear her name on top of it? That’s too far. Maybe I should haul you straight to the executive office and ask the higher-ups if being top salesperson really gives you the right to act like a tyrant.”

Jaylene’s face stiffened as the weight of it sank in.

If this ever reached the executive office, Gabriela’s fate might be uncertain, but her own would be nothing short of ruin.

Bryn’s expression darkened, and he quickly cut in to break the tension. “That’s enough. We’re stopping this here. Get back to work, all of you.”

The moment those words left him, Jaylene realized where his allegiance lay. He was shielding her. Of course he would—she was the star of all four sales teams, the prize he couldn’t afford to antagonize. Her panic melted away as quickly as it had come. Her composure snapped into place, and the smug confidence returned to her eyes.

Chapter 259

Aubrey's eyes brimmed with ferocity. "You weren't so generous earlier, Mr. Mitchell, when all of you ganged up on Gabriela and demanded an apology. Because Jaylene racks up sales, she's free to slander whoever she wants? If that's the case, then I quit your team!"

Deep down, Aubrey cursed herself for not returning sooner, for leaving Gabriela to face the mob alone. Now that she was here, she wasn't about to retreat.

Bryn's face flushed with embarrassment at her sharp rebuke, and his voice snapped back like a whip. "If you can't stand being on my team, then by all means—go try your luck in another sales team. Let's see if anyone will take you."

The weight of his words struck Gabriela hard. Aubrey had just secured a full-time position; losing it so soon would be a crushing setback. Gabriela tugged urgently at Aubrey's arm, about to urge her to swallow her pride and apologize. However unfair it seemed, no job was worth throwing away on impulse.

Before either could speak again, a calm voice drifted in from the doorway. "Pardon me—I happened to pass by and overheard your little debate."

Bryn's expression hardened when he caught sight of the newcomer. Standing in the doorway was Nina Gibson from another sales team. Her eyes warmed as she looked at Gabriela and Aubrey, a gentle smile curving her lips. "My team happens to be short on people—would you two like to come work with me?"

Jaylene let out a sharp laugh, her voice dripping with contempt. “Miss Gibson, your team has been scraping the bottom for years. What on earth could you be busy with? Planning to drag in two more deadweights to keep you company?”

Unfazed, Nina didn’t even acknowledge Jaylene’s jab. Instead, she kept her calm gaze on Gabriela, her voice steady and kind. “So, what do you think? Would you join me?”

There was a quiet elegance in her bearing—graceful, composed, and wholly unshaken. Gabriela’s instincts told her Nina was someone she could trust. She dipped her head slightly. “I would. Thank you, Miss Gibson.”

Even without Nina offering a hand, Gabriela understood she couldn’t stay in her current sales team any longer. The moment Gabriela agreed to join Nina’s team, Aubrey instantly did the same.

Jaylene’s assistant sneered, unable to resist a jab. “Neither of you ever accomplished anything here. Now that you’re heading to Miss Gibson’s group, you’ll probably just drag each other down even worse.”

Gabriela didn’t bother to reply, and neither did Aubrey. They fell in step with Nina, following her briskly to her division to complete the transfer.

Inside the CEO’s office, Billy informed Wesley, “Ms. Hayes has already moved to Nina’s team, Mr. Moss.”

Wesley gave a curt nod, his expression still shadowed with displeasure.

Billy ventured, “Should I try to arrange for Ms. Hayes to return to your office?”

“There’s no need,” Wesley said flatly, his voice carrying a heavy weight. “Fire Jaylene today.”

Billy froze, caught off guard. “Jaylene is one of the strongest performers in the sales department. If we let her go without justification, it’ll cause an uproar.”

Wesley’s gaze darkened, his jaw tightening. One measly employee had the nerve to target someone under his wing, and he couldn’t do a damn thing? The thought soured his mood further.

Sensing the shift, Billy rushed to explain, “If we dismiss Jaylene right after her conflict with Ms. Hayes, other employees will say it’s favoritism. That would only bring more trouble down on Ms. Hayes. Don’t worry, Mr. Moss—I’ll dig up a proper excuse and see to it she’s gone soon.”

Chapter 260

Unbeknownst to Gabriela, Nina had been sent by Wesley.

Gabriela and Aubrey trailed Nina to her team. The new office was marginally smaller than Gabriela’s previous workspace, hushed, and with only a single sales representative present.

Aubrey inquired, “Miss Gibson, are the rest of the team out chasing leads?”

Nina grinned and replied, "My team's results have been lackluster, so most requested transfers to other sections."

Only one unmotivated young woman remained, working under Nina's leadership. Aubrey felt a fleeting pang of discomfort. Unfamiliar with Nina, she wasn't sure how to react.

Gabriela piped up, "Miss Gibson, let's join forces and show everyone we can be the best."

Nina chuckled, giving Gabriela a light pat on the shoulder. "Relax, my team doesn't fire people for underperforming." With a playful wink, she added, "As Jaylene said, there's nothing to keep you busy here."

Clad in polished, elegant attire, Nina's teasing somehow came off as charmingly endearing. The initial awkwardness between them swiftly dissolved. Nina invited them to pick a desk before retreating to her own office.

Moments after settling in, Gabriela's phone rang with a call from Mason. "Gabriela, are you free this afternoon? I would love to take you out for lunch," he offered.

A rush of thoughts flooded Gabriela's mind. Initially, Wesley had connected her with Mason, clearly aiming to clinch a deal. Yet Wesley's later disinterest in the contract hinted at underlying issues. Still, based on Jaylene and others' behavior, it seemed no official directive to abandon the deal had been issued. This led to one conclusion: Wesley wanted Gabriela excluded from the deal, but was fine with someone else taking it on.

After piecing it together, Gabriela responded warmly, “I’m free.”

Mason, thrilled, said, “Great, let’s meet at Grace Robuchon.”

“Sounds good,” she replied. After a brief pause, she added, “May I ask if Scott Barrett from your company is close with Jaylene from our sales team?”

Mason replied, “He has already submitted his resignation and will leave next month.”

So, Scott didn’t actually have the authority to choose a partner for the billion-dollar deal. With this clarity, Gabriela nodded. “Got it, thanks, Mr. Garner.”

That afternoon, Gabriela notified Nina and headed to Grace Robuchon. Upon entering, she was startled to see a massive digital display looping a video—the one where Vivian had wrongly accused her of stealing a necklace. She hadn’t anticipated the footage still being shown.

Vivian suddenly appeared beside Gabriela, her tone and demeanor icy. “Gabriela, does watching this ridiculous video of mine bring you joy?”

After Vivian had her influencer friend smear Gabriela, her brother had cut off her funds and mandated daily visits to Grace Robuchon. He had been blunt. “You need to face your foolish mistake every day to make sure you never repeat it. And don’t ever cross anyone under Wesley’s protection again!”

By now, the scandal had spread throughout their entire social circle, leaving Vivian utterly humiliated and ostracized.

Vivian glared at Gabriela. "I can't even show my face at friends' gatherings anymore. Can't you let this go?"

Gabriela sneered, "What has this got to do with me? You falsely accused me, and the restaurant's playing the video. Take it up with the owner."

"I know Mr. Moss arranged this," Vivian said, her eyes welling up, her voice softening. "Gabriela, please ask him to stop the video."

Gabriela harbored no deep vendetta against Vivian, and it was wiser to avoid making enemies with someone like her. She nodded. "I'll try, but he may not listen to me."

Vivian, expecting sarcasm or resistance, was relieved by Gabriela's quick agreement and said, "I owe you for this."

She also regretted misjudging Gabriela, wrongly believing she had stolen from Phyllis.

Yet her pride prevented her from offering an apology. Gabriela gave a curt nod, brushed past her, and headed to the reserved room.

Mason was warm and clearly eager to collaborate. “I know Mr. Moss isn’t keen on this deal, but if you’re free tomorrow, visit our old factory. It will change your perspective.”

Gabriela agreed and asked, “Would it be okay to bring my colleagues?”