

His kiss 80

Chapter 80

Gabriela had barely stepped out of the car when Wesley's face hardened into something grim and unyielding, the air around him turning frigid with menace.

Billy sat rigid, not daring to move an inch.

He had never seen Wesley like this before. Even when Brenden had pushed his limits, Wesley's temper had been measured—at most, a cutting glare or a clipped reprimand. But now, the cold fury radiating off him was almost suffocating.

With a slow breath, Wesley shut his eyes, forcing the storm inside him to settle. His hand went to his tie, loosening it with a sharp tug. "Look into that guy," he said, his voice low but edged like a blade.

"Got it, sir," Billy answered at once.

"And make sure he never gets close to Gabriela again," Wesley added through clenched teeth.

The image of what could have happened if he'd arrived seconds later clawed at Wesley's mind.

The idea of her being dragged away—harmed, vulnerable—made his blood run hot and his muscles coil with a savage, near-uncontrollable urge to destroy.

Meanwhile, Gabriela stayed frozen in place, watching Wesley's car melt into the twilight until its taillights bled away in the distance. She drew in a steadying breath, squared her shoulders, and stepped inside. Today, she was damn well going to make Phyllis pay.

But the moment she crossed the living room threshold, Phyllis pounced, her voice sharp with accusation. "Rhys brought you flowers today to make you happy. In the middle of winter, he stood shivering outside your office for quite a while, waiting for you. And what did you do? You had someone rough him up and snap his wrist! I heard it won't heal for months!"

A slow, icy smile tugged at Gabriela's lips. "He got exactly what he had coming."

Phyllis's tone rose, brimming with indignation. "How can you be so heartless? Rhys was willing to look past your shortcomings and give you another chance—all because of me! You should be grateful and try to get along with him. Instead, you humiliated him in public and tossed his bouquet straight in the trash. How could you be so cruel?"

Phyllis's agitation mounted, as if Gabriela had committed some grave, irredeemable sin.

Josh's gaze hardened with quiet reproach. "You crossed a line, Gabriela. If your mother were still here, she would never stand for you disgracing the family like this."

For a beat, Gabriela stood motionless, her features unreadable, though a flicker of something dark stirred in her eyes.

“That’s right,” Phyllis chimed in, her voice laced with indignation. “Rhys is livid. I’ve been going out of my way to smooth things over, but nothing works. All because of you, I upset him and threw away a valuable friendship.”

“If my mother were still here...” Gabriela’s voice came soft at first, almost a whisper. Then she lifted her head, her eyes locking sharply on Phyllis and Josh. “If she were still here, she’d never let you—some conniving bitch—steal my room, kick me awake in the dead of night, or ban me from my own bed. And she sure as hell wouldn’t stand by while you snatched my clothes and shoes, or forced me to grind through high school just to scrape up tuition.”

Phyllis’s expression twisted in shock as she retorted, “You’re lying! This house is in my mother’s name—”

“If my mother were still here, she’d never force me into a blind date with some greasy creep. No way would she let that asshole come to my workplace, spewing crap about me, and try to drag me into a car for all to see.” Gabriela’s voice cut like a blade, each word sharp with unshakable conviction, her eyes blazing with unrestrained fury.

Phyllis instinctively backed away, step after stumbling step, until she collapsed onto the sofa, her face drained of color.

Gabriela closed in, looming over her, eyes blazing like a predator locking onto prey. “I don’t know how much Rhys paid you off, but get this through your head—if he so much as shows his face near me again, I’ll make sure you pay the price right alongside him.”

The meek, long-suffering Gabriela who once swallowed every insult was gone, replaced by a woman fierce enough to make the air between them feel dangerous.

A glacial sharpness burned in Gabriela's gaze, freezing Phyllis mid-breath.

Josh stood rooted to the spot, his thoughts in disarray.

Gabriela's sharp retort clashed starkly with everything his wife had told him. He knew Phyllis could be a little spoiled, but he'd always brushed it off as harmless.

The bickering between the girls had never crossed his mind as something more than typical rivalry. Never had he imagined that Gabriela carried such deep, simmering resentment.

His complexion drained of color, and for a moment, he didn't know which side to take.

Then Phyllis jolted back from her stunned silence, fury snapping her out of it. "Are you out of your mind, Gabriela? Your mother died young—gone before you even turned eight! Well, she spared herself the shame of seeing the disappointment you became. If it weren't for my mom, you'd have starved in some gutter. She put food in your mouth, clothes on your back, and paid your way through college—and now you're after my family's property? What kind of heartless creature are you?"