

His Housewife Had Secret Identities

Housewife 17

Niamh caught the apron in one swift, practiced motion—so automatic she barely realized she'd done it.

But this time, with the stained apron in her hands, she didn't immediately tie it around her waist as she always used to.

Back at every family gathering, she'd been the busiest person in the house.

With more than thirty dishes to prepare, Niamh handled everything herself—from washing and chopping the vegetables to cooking and plating each course.

Her grandfather would always tell her not to work so hard, reminding her there were hired chefs and housekeepers to help. But Niamh knew he preferred her cooking above all, so she'd insist on doing everything herself.

Other relatives, out of respect for her grandfather, would offer her the faintest of compliments—never too enthusiastic, but just enough to be polite.

And when it came time to clear the table and wash the mountain of dishes, it was always Niamh again, quietly tidying up after everyone.

After all, her mother-in-law had always said a woman's worth was in how well she managed a home.

Niamh was exhausted, but at the end of those long days, Jonathan would at least say thank you. Hearing those words, she'd suddenly feel as if the day's work hadn't been so tiring after all—

Looking back, she realized how naïve she had been.

“What are you standing around for? Get moving!” Lucy barked at her.

But Niamh didn't budge. Instead, she tossed the dirty apron aside.

“There are chefs and housekeepers in the kitchen. If I go, I'll just be in the way.”

Lucy was taken aback. “What do you mean? Since when does a Thomas daughter-in-law get out of helping?”

Niamh shot her a look. “Aunt Lucy, aren't you a Thomas daughter-in-law too? Why aren't you in there working?”

Lucy nearly bit her tongue in shock.

“Watch your mouth—have some respect. You’re the younger generation; you think you can compare yourself to me?”

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“If you’re the elder, shouldn’t you be more considerate—maybe set a good example for us younger folks by pitching in yourself?”

Lucy stared, speechless. In all the years she’d known Niamh, she’d never seen her talk back like this.

“Have you lost your mind today? Marigold, come here! Come see what your precious daughter-in-law is saying.”

Lucy called over Marigold—Niamh’s mother-in-law.

Their argument drew the attention of almost everyone nearby.

Out of the corner of her eye, Niamh caught sight of Jonathan, his face heavy with disappointment.

“What’s all the commotion?”

A commanding voice echoed from the staircase. Niamh glanced up and, as expected, saw Jonathan’s grandfather, Clifford.

If there was anything still holding her back from divorcing Jonathan, it was Clifford. Niamh felt a pang of guilt—she didn’t want to let him down.

“Nia, you’re here! Come, sit with me and chat for a bit,” Clifford called, his stern features softening into a rare, gentle smile reserved only for her.

After a few words with Niamh, Clifford turned to Lucy. “If the kitchen’s short-staffed, just hire more help.”

Lucy fell silent, and Marigold’s bluster evaporated.

From that moment on, no one in the Thomas family dared order Niamh around.

Marina slid up next to Jonathan, whispering, “I had no idea Niamh had so much authority here—even the elders defer to her.”

As Jonathan’s brow furrowed even deeper, Marina’s delight was impossible to hide. Niamh spent a while chatting quietly with Clifford until dinnertime arrived.

The whole family gathered around the enormous dining table—Niamh sat on Jonathan's left, Marina on his right. With so many people squeezed around the table, Niamh blended into the background, almost invisible, while everyone else peppered Marina with questions.

From her PhD in psychology to her job at FY, Marina patiently answered them all. Niamh only knew about Marina through Jonathan's constant comparisons: Marina,

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the internationally educated prodigy, the rising star in jewelry design, the accomplished pianist. And she—she was just a high school dropout and housewife.

It was hard not to feel inferior. Marina seemed exceptional possible way.

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“I wrote my thesis on Jung's theory of the collective unconscious. In his 1923 essay on analytical psychology and poetry, Jung introduced the iceberg model, dividing the mind into three parts: the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious..