

The Billionaire's Intern (Maya Thompson)

Chapter 18: Paper Trails & Phantom Flights

25 Points

By the time the sun rose over the city, Maya was already halfway into her apron and pouring coffee for the early shift crowd.

Sunday mornings were always heavy, but today felt different. She welcomed the noise, the motion, the distraction. A coworker had called in sick, and when the manager offered overtime, she'd volunteered without hesitation.

Six extra hours. Double shift.

More time on her feet. Less time to think.

More money in her pocket – and right now, that meant everything.

The café buzzed with energy. People came and went in waves – business types, young couples, tired moms clutching their phones like lifelines. Maya smiled through it all, sleeves rolled up, hands working fast, mind only halfway there.

Every time the door chimed open, her eyes flicked toward it without meaning to.

No Damien Blackwood. Of course not. This wasn't his world.

She shook it off and poured another espresso.

This was safer. Simpler. Just coffee and burnt toast. Just the hiss of milk steaming and the soft murmur of indie playlists overhead.

But no matter how hard she tried to focus, her thoughts kept slipping back to the day before.

The car ride.

The accidental brush of their bodies.

The way Damien's jaw tightened when he saw Beckett.

The low edge in his voice when he asked for the doctor's name,

That wasn't curiosity.

That was something sharper.

More dangerous.

And maybe she should've been afraid –

But all she could feel was heat. Low. Lingering. Still burning beneath her skin.

She pulled the next order, set it down, and forced a smile that didn't reach her eyes.

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Only six more hours to go.

+25 Founs

Blocks away, on the quieter side of the city where engines purred and suits replaced aprons, a very different kind of morning was underway.

The interior of the Bentley was silent, save for the soft hum of tires along the asphalt and the occasional rustle of paper from the seat beside him.

James adjusted his tie as they neared the gates of the countryside club. The place was already bustling – golf carts, valets, men in blazers shaking hands with the precision of ritual.

Damien didn't even glance out the window.

He didn't want to be here.

A round of golf, followed by overpriced lunch and shallow business talk – it was part of the game, sure. But not one he cared for.

Still, appearances mattered. Especially in his world.

“Updates?” he asked quietly.

James cleared his throat. “Beckett’s transfer is finalized. All documentation processed. Airline confirmed he boarded at 4:47 a.m.-destination: Burundi, East Africa. Medical rotation in a remote, underserved region. The nation struggles with political instability, inadequate infrastructure, and widespread poverty. Civil conflict and ethnic tensions have troubled the area for decades. He won’t have access to much-no tech, no escape routes. He won’t be back anytime soon.”

Damien’s jaw flexed. “Good.”

A slow exhale. Then a faint, almost imperceptible smirk.

Not satisfaction. Not relief.

Just cold, measured certainty.

Beckett wouldn’t crawl back from this.

“He was... resistant,” James continued. “But the paperwork trail is clean. No trace of interference.”

“Perfect.”

James handed over a small folder. “There’s more. From the internal probe you asked for. His

history.”

Damien flipped it open, eyes scanning quickly.

Prescriptions handed out without logging. Private ‘consultations’ after hours. Sex-for-drugs trades.

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take care of itself.

+25 Ports

It wasn't hard. People desperate for money disappeared every day in that part of the world. If anyone looked into it, it would seem like he'd left willingly. Humanitarian mission. Career rebirth.

Bullshit.

He wasn't setting foot in some mosquito-infested wasteland just to hand out gauze and sympathy. No AC, no real hospitals, no one worth impressing. Just mud, flies, and people too poor to matter.

He told himself he was better than that.

A specialist. Educated. Deserving of prestige, not pity.

Let someone else play saint in a place that smelled like rot and failure. He had other plans. He was

destined for more.

Beckett moved through the alley behind his apartment, phone off, hat pulled low. His real phone –

the untraceable one – buzzed once.

Done, the message read. He boarded. Took the seat. No issues.

Beckett grinned.

The alibi was airtight.

Let them watch flight manifests. Let them track credit card charges. As far as the world was

concerned, he was gone.

But in the shadows of the city, he remained.

Waiting. Plotting. And this time, no one would see him coming.

He hadn't slept all night. It gnawed at him – still did.

Who could it be?

Maya. It had to be her.

She was the only thing different.

The only one who refused him. Repeatedly.

He licked his lips, heart pounding with rage- and something darker.

He'd spent months laying the groundwork. Playing the long game.

Watching her boundaries tighten every time he pushed. Her careful no's. Her soft rejections.

Her eyes when she looked through him – like he wasn't even worth a second of her fear.

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She should've been begging me.

Instead, she looked at me like I was a nobody. Like I didn't deserve her attention.

And still, he couldn't forget her voice.

Thank you, Doctor. That soft, polite tone.

25 Points

That single moment – her brushing her hair behind her ear, lips parting slightly in gratitude – had

burned itself into his memory.

He'd twisted it. Warped it. Until it meant something else entirely.

She had no idea what she'd started.

But soon, she would.

Because he wasn't gone. Not yet.

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Cedella