

## Chapter 5 The Hospital Intimacy

Those who dared to cross Darren would meet a dark fate.

He didn't even bother masking his fury. His imposing presence was enough to send shivers down anyone's spine. If it were anyone else, they would probably be quaking in their boots, groveling on the floor.

Verena showed no signs of backing down, however. Her defiant eyes locked onto Darren's without flinching.

Just then, Richard's voice echoed from the doorway.

"Verena, where on earth are you? Show yourself!"

When he heard her father's voice, Darren's sneer only deepened. "Better get ready for the next round of this engagement farce, my dear future niece-in-law!"

Clearly, Darren had no intention of involving himself in Verena's schemes. With a huff, he exited through a nearby door.

Verena bit back a curse. It was clear she couldn't rely on Darren for help. She needed to devise a new plan, and fast.

Soon enough, Richard found his way backstage and saw Verena.

The failed engagement and this public embarrassment had him seething with anger.

"You can't even hold onto a man's attention. What use are you, then?"

But Verena remained unfazed. "I have my worth, Dad. I wasn't put on this earth to charm men!"



"You're nothing but a disappointment! Get yourself to the hospital and bring Eric back. Now! If you can't even manage that, don't bother returning home!"

"You saw the evidence today. Eric's infidelity is crystal clear. And yet, you still expect me to marry him?"

Richard brushed it off casually. "What man doesn't stray? As long as you secure the title of his wife, it matters little how many mistresses he keeps. Eric is the heir to the Briggs fortune. Sooner or later, everything in the Briggs estate will be his. You'll have wealth and status beyond your wildest dreams. If it weren't for the stroke of luck that landed you promised to Eric from a young age, where would you be?"

How could his daughter be so naive?

"Huh!" Verena let out a bitter smirk, her eyes holding a hidden scorn.

In her eyes, there were no good men. Richard was proof of that, and so was Eric!

Meanwhile, Eric had arranged a VIP room for Shirley at the hospital.

Upon waking and seeing Eric, Shirley flung herself into his arms.

"Eric, Eric..."

Eric held her close, offering reassurance. "It's okay, I'm here."

"I'm terrified, Eric. How did our private video get leaked? What if people start attacking me online?"

"Don't fret, Shirley. I'll protect you."

"You're too kind, Eric. But I've ruined your engagement. Maybe I should confess and say I seduced you. At least that way, they won't blame you."

Shirley's understanding touched Eric deeply.

"Silly girl, why do you think like that? Forget about it. Just focus on getting better."

"Eric, you're so good to me. I love you more than everything." With that, Shirley wrapped her arms around him, sealing her affection with a kiss.

Shirley knew just how to please Eric, and soon enough, passion ignited between them. Alone in the room, they were free to indulge without interruption.

Little did they know, Verena stood silently outside the door, witnessing their intimate exchange.

She hadn't anticipated their inability to resist temptation, even in the hospital!

Verena didn't barge in. Instead, she pulled out her phone and recorded a video, promptly sending it to William.

Then, she sent a text to him. "William, I came to visit Eric at the hospital, only to witness something utterly despicable."

She was determined to annul the engagement and break free from the Fowler family's grasp.

But for now, Richard held her mother's possessions hostage, leaving her with no choice but to bide her time.

Soon enough, William arrived at the hospital with his entourage. Eric and Shirley's intimacy was abruptly interrupted by William's intrusion.

"Dad..." Eric hastily fixed his attire. "Could you knock next time?"

"You disgraceful boy! You and this temptress have damaged our family's good name. How can you face Verena after this?! I ought to thrash some sense into you!"

Eric's painful cries echoed from the room. In no time, William dragged him out, dumping him unceremoniously before Verena.



William delivered two resounding slaps to Eric's face. Caught off guard, Eric could only grit his teeth and endure.

Eric shot a venomous glare at Verena, certain she was behind his father's sudden intrusion.

But Verena played innocent, feigning ignorance of Eric's hatred as she turned to face William.

"William, regarding Eric and my engagement..."

"Could it possibly be annulled?" she added silently.

William maintained a veneer of civility, but an unmistakable air of authority surrounded him. "Verena, I'll see to it that this brat learns his lesson. You needn't worry. We'll reschedule your engagement at once. Let's have dinner together this evening. Eric will offer you a proper apology."

Though it felt like negotiation, Verena knew she had no choice but to comply.

A heavy weight settled in her chest.

They had known each other since infancy; there was no lie to that. However, given the Briggs family's standing in Fleda, they were free to select any lady. Why her?


Verena dropped her eyes, failing to see the fleeting emotion in William's kind look.

Once Verena took her leave, William's expression turned grim.

Meanwhile, Eric, still smarting from his father's blows, protested, "Dad, why can't I marry someone else? Verena is utterly repulsive!"

William issued a stern warning. "I don't care what you do outside, but you will marry Verena! And furthermore, you will offer a sincere apology to her tonight. Otherwise, I'll freeze all your damn accounts!"


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Eric was thrown for a loop there. What made Verena so special?  
Why was he being forced into this?!

And now he had to apologize to her? It felt like a nightmare.

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