

Once The Foolish Wife, Now His Eternal Obsession

Chapter 251:

“In any case,” Zoe warned, her tone sharpening again, “never mention that report. Not once.”

If Cathryn ever got her hands on it and demanded a test with Richard, the truth—that Jordyn wasn’t his child—would come out.

“Fine,” Jordyn muttered, sullen and unconvinced. She gave her mother her word, but her heart seethed. The report was a weapon too sharp to discard. One way or another, she would wield it—and when she did, Cathryn would be mortified.

Jordyn had actually meant to share good news—that Andrew had agreed to meet her and Liam. But the sting of that slap still burned across her cheek. Resentment twisted inside her. She would see Andrew first, then decide what scraps of her triumph Zoe deserved.

Andrew had spent the entire day in boardrooms and conference calls, yet his mind refused to stay on business. That evening, he gave in and dialed Cathryn. “How was your day?”

Cathryn’s laughter came through the line, light as a breeze. “Great. How about you?”

“I’m fine too,” he replied, though his tone carried weight. “Just missing you.”

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“When are you coming back?”

“Tomorrow.”

“So soon?” She sounded genuinely surprised.

“I can’t help it,” he confessed. “I want to see you.”

The truth was, he had planned to stay away two more days, but Ethan’s call had changed everything. Jordyn and Liam had demanded a meeting.

With Watson Tech’s IPO stalled and Moore Trading’s capital frozen, desperation hung over both the Watson and Moore families. They wanted his support, and Andrew couldn’t resist seeing what kind of bargain they thought they could strike.

“Tomorrow is my first day at Brooks Group,” Cathryn said. “I won’t be at home waiting.”

“Focus on work. I would never stand in the way of that,” he said warmly.

“But I want to see you the moment you’re back,” she whispered, almost shy.

His chest tightened. Cathryn rarely showed such dependence. “You will. I promise.”

They were bound to cross paths anyway—her first day at Brooks Group coincided with his return to headquarters.

She exhaled a soft sigh. “Then it will have to be after work.”

“Fine. And good luck tomorrow, darling.”

After hanging up, Cathryn went to bed early. Tomorrow was too important to risk being tired.

Only when she lay staring at the ceiling did it hit her—she hadn’t even checked what position HR had assigned her. It didn’t matter. Getting a foot inside Brooks Group was enough; she would scrub floors if she had to.

Dawn brought a quiet determination. Cathryn slipped into a white blouse, crisp as morning light, and paired it with a black pencil skirt that sculpted her silhouette.

Margaret bustled in, hands clasped dramatically. “Mrs. Brooks, you could outshine the models in those glossy magazines.”

Cathryn chuckled, smoothing her skirt. “Don’t tease. I’ve never set foot in an office—am I overdressed?”

“On the contrary. Office work is all about image. Look at any drama series—smart, polished, elegant. That’s you, exactly.”

Cathryn considered it and realized she was right. She had only ever seen professional women on television, but they always looked just like this.

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“Let Yosef drive you,” Margaret urged.

Cathryn shook her head. “No. I’m just another employee now. Regular staff don’t arrive with chauffeurs.”

“But you are not just staff,” Margaret countered. “You are Mrs. Brooks. Even if you’re out to ‘experience life,’ surely you should still have your driver.”

Cathryn’s expression sobered. “Outside this house, I am not Mrs. Brooks. If you or anyone from this house sees me in that building, you must act as though you don’t know me. Do you understand?”

There was no room for argument. Too much was at stake. If Andrew ever learned she was his brother’s wife, he might see her as a rival instead of a potential partner and shut her out.

Margaret hesitated, then bowed her head. “I will make sure the household staff know.”

“Good. I’ll take a cab.”

The lobby of Brooks Group fell momentarily still as Cathryn entered. She hadn’t dressed to dazzle, yet every head turned, as though her quiet confidence commanded attention.

Cathryn approached the reception desk with a polite smile. “Excuse me, could you tell me where the Human Resources department is?”

“Second floor,” the receptionist replied, staring a moment too long.

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As Cathryn ascended the stairs, whispers followed in her wake.

“She’s stunning—so refined. Must have an impressive degree.”

“Looks like she comes from money.”

“So young and elegant... She’ll marry into wealth for sure.”

The chatter didn't go unnoticed. Vanessa, passing by, caught every word. "New hire?" she asked the receptionist, her voice a touch too sharp.

The receptionist nodded. "Just went to HR."

Vanessa's smile thinned. Another pretty face—another possible rival. She had set her sights on the title of Mrs. Brooks, and any woman who shone too brightly in this building set her teeth on edge.

Vanessa followed upstairs and spotted the figure outside HR's door. "Cathryn. It turns out it's you." Her brow arched, her voice laced with disbelief.

Cathryn turned, composed as ever. "Miss Grant. Looks like we're colleagues now. I hope we'll get along."

Vanessa's gaze swept over Cathryn, her jaw tightening. Until now, she had dismissed Cathryn as quiet and unremarkable. But standing here in sharp attire, carrying a grace that couldn't be ignored, Cathryn was radiant.

Last time, at the hospital, Cathryn had been surrounded like someone of status. Jordyn had sworn Cathryn was merely a servant in the Brooks household.

So long as Cathryn stayed away from Andrew, Vanessa hadn't cared. But this—walking confidently into Brooks Group? That, Vanessa wouldn't allow.

“Which department are you with?” Vanessa's eyes narrowed, challenge sharpening her tone. With her sleek, professional air, Cathryn almost looked as though she'd been carefully recruited, not merely dropped here by chance.

Cathryn closed the distance with deliberate poise, letting her gaze linger on the badge pinned to Vanessa's chest.

Technology Department.

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A faint smirk curved her lips. “So this is the best your department can offer?” The words dripped with mockery—light, yet barbed.

Vanessa stiffened, her eyes flashing. “You have no education—not even grade school—and you dare sneer at me?”

One brow arched in elegant defiance. Cathryn knew Jordyn never missed an opportunity to trumpet her supposed illiteracy to the world. She tilted her head and offered an almost saccharine smile. “Strange, isn’t it? No schooling at all, yet somehow I walked into Brooks Group. Must sting a little, doesn’t it?”

The taunt ignited Vanessa’s fury like dry tinder catching flame. In her eyes, Cathryn was nothing more than a maid who had slithered her way into the Brooks household. And now, standing here, Cathryn seemed bent on advancing even closer to Andrew.

Alan’s voice carried out from his office. “Cathryn Moore. Please come in.”

Cathryn stepped over the threshold and introduced herself. “I-I’m Cathryn.”

Alan barely looked up, a crease forming between his brows. “You’ll need to change. Your job here comes with a uniform.”

Just as he suspected, Cathryn had less than honorable intentions. She held nothing but a cleaning position, yet she had shown up dressed like that—obviously trying to catch the CEO’s attention.

“Alright, I’ll get changed.” Cathryn nodded, unbothered. The idea that Brooks Group even provided uniforms for staff was a surprise; she had to admit, it felt like a small luxury.

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Just then, Vanessa appeared in the doorway, her expression sour as she confronted Alan. “Since when did Brooks Group start handing out uniforms?”

Alan, well aware Vanessa’s job came from her connections, treaded carefully and managed a polite smile. “The cleaning staff has always had their own set of uniforms.”

Vanessa’s eyes widened in disbelief, then she broke into mocking laughter. “Oh, cleaning? So that’s her big role. She’s here to scrub floors.”

Cathryn was momentarily stunned. Never in her wildest dreams had she expected to end up with cleaning duties.

Without missing a beat, Vanessa pulled out her phone and called Jordyn, her tone dripping with scorn. “You said Cathryn was slaving away for the Brooks family—I thought you were joking. Turns out she’s not just working in their house; she’s even sweeping up at Brooks Group.”

Jordyn sounded stunned. “Wait. Cathryn’s actually gotten a job at Brooks Group?”

Vanessa scoffed, waving it off. “Relax. She’s just part of the cleaning crew. You know—the ones who scrub toilets.”

A brief silence hung in the air before Jordyn burst into uncontrollable laughter. “Cathryn, scrubbing toilets? That’s hilarious!”

Zoe, standing nearby, caught bits of their exchange and couldn’t hide the puzzled look that crossed her face. Had she misunderstood? Cathryn wasn’t married to Andrew? How could a daughter-in-law of the Brooks family end up scrubbing toilets in their own company?

Finishing her call, Jordyn glanced at Zoe. “I’m...”

...heading out now.”

Jordyn had planned to meet Andrew with Liam, and this was a chance to witness Cathryn’s predicament firsthand. It would be even better if Liam could see Cathryn’s fall from grace in person.

Meanwhile, inside the Brooks Group building, Aleena Castillo, the cleaning department manager, looked up in surprise as Alan escorted a young newcomer over. Most of her team were well past forty; someone this young stood out instantly.

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Alan handed over Cathryn's résumé, and with one glance, Aleena saw everything she needed to know. No academic record. No job history. No family influence.

Soon after, Cathryn changed into the standard-issue cleaning uniform and approached Aleena. "What exactly should I be doing?"

Aleena, an overweight woman with a hawkish gaze, studied Cathryn for a moment, taken aback by how unexpectedly stylish the drab gray uniform looked on her.

With a scowl, Aleena snapped, “You’re here to clean, not to strut around. Don’t bother coming in with makeup on next time.”

Cathryn shook her head. “I’m not wearing any makeup.”

Not convinced, Aleena scrubbed at Cathryn’s cheek with her fingers, only to find the skin bare and spotless. Cathryn’s lips held a natural blush, and her teeth were strikingly white—a kind of beauty that didn’t need any makeup.

Aleena, whose best years were behind her, couldn’t help bristling at Cathryn’s fresh-faced charm. “You’ll be responsible for every restroom in the entire building!” she barked, letting her irritation show.

A crease formed between Cathryn’s brows. She had a cleanliness obsession, but tackling bathroom stalls definitely tested her limits.

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“If you don’t want the job, walk away now. Plenty of people would jump at the chance to work here, even if it’s just cleaning bathrooms. The perks are worth it,” Aleena continued, sensing Cathryn’s hesitation.

Steeling herself, Cathryn reminded herself why she was here. Getting close to Andrew mattered more than anything else. If this was what it took, she would handle it.

“You mean every restroom?” Cathryn asked. “Does that include the CEO’s floor?”

“All of them,” Aleena replied, not a hint of flexibility in her tone.

A flicker of hope lit inside Cathryn. She might not be allowed near Andrew’s office, but sooner or later, he would have to use the facilities. That was her opening.

“Understood. I’ll start right away,” Cathryn said, agreeing without another word.

Aleena gave her a suspicious look. “Just remember, you’re here to work, not stir up trouble. Keep your head down and focus on your work.”

Cathryn nodded. “I got it.”

With a dismissive wave, Aleena sent her off. “Begin with the first-floor restrooms.”

Mask and gloves on, cleaning supplies in hand, Cathryn made her way downstairs to start her new assignment.

Stepping into the first-floor restroom, Cathryn was met by an older woman in uniform who gasped, “Sweetheart, you’re far too young for this work. Let me handle it.”

A gentle smile crossed Cathryn’s face. “It’s okay. This is my assignment.”

Surprise flickered in the woman’s eyes as she took in Cathryn properly. “You look about the same age as my daughter. She’s still in school. Why are you working already?”

Cathryn answered simply, “My mom passed away, and my dad remarried. Without much schooling, cleaning is the only job I could find.”

With a sympathetic look, the woman took the mop right out of Cathryn’s grip. “Aleena’s just piling the work on you because you’re new. Ignore her. I’ll handle the toilets. You focus on mopping the hallway.”

Gratitude softened Cathryn’s expression. “Thank you. May I ask your name?”

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The woman beamed. “Bessie Torres. Just call me Bessie.”

“Thanks, Bessie,” Cathryn said, genuinely relieved.

Bessie gave Cathryn a motherly pat on the head. “You’re welcome, dear. It’s rare to see someone your age working so hard.”

A shy grin escaped Cathryn. Hard work wasn’t really her goal; she just wanted to get close to Andrew. That was something she’d never confess out loud.

While Cathryn swished the mop outside the restroom, the sound of a familiar voice drifted down the hall.

“Liam, hold up!”

Cathryn looked up and caught sight of Jordyn, flawlessly dressed, following close behind Liam as they entered the Brooks Group lobby.

A frown tugged at Cathryn’s lips. Of all days, she had to run into them now.

“Cathryn!” Jordyn’s shrill voice sliced through the lobby, echoing like a siren.

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Cathryn froze mid-step. Dressed in a janitor’s uniform with a mask covering half her face, she had been certain she could slip by unnoticed. Yet Jordyn’s eyes—sharp and predatory—found her in an instant.

With a triumphant stride, Jordyn closed the distance, ripped the mask from Cathryn’s face, and clapped as if she had just uncovered buried treasure. “Well, well—Cathryn. What are the odds?”

Liam's jaw slackened. His gaze raked over the plain uniform, the mop in Cathryn's grip, the faint smell of disinfectant clinging to her. Had she truly sunk so low? Cleaning toilets at the Brooks estate wasn't enough—she had taken a second job scrubbing their corporate floors?

Jordyn seized Cathryn by the wrist, parading her like a prize. "See, Liam? I told you she was working here as a janitor. You refused to believe me."

Just then, a senior executive passed by. His polished shoes clicked against the marble, his eyes barely flicking toward Cathryn before landing on Liam. "This cleaner—do you know her, Mr. Watson?"

"No. Not at all." Liam's answer came fast—too fast—his expression hardening with denial. How could he admit in public to knowing a janitor?

A bitter laugh curled in Cathryn's chest. In private, Liam had begged her to reconcile, swearing he wanted to remarry her. But the moment she wore a janitor's uniform, he recoiled, ashamed to claim her.

And then another thought struck her like a pin to the heart. If Damien learned she was mopping floors at Brooks Group, would he sneer at her the same way?

Jordyn folded her arms, lips twisting in disdain. "Cathryn, you ought to do us all a favor—change your surname. Stop dragging the Moore family through the dirt."

“I couldn’t care less about being a Moore,” Cathryn replied, voice steady and cool.

“Then prove it. Change it now.” Jordyn’s smirk sharpened. “Why not take your mother’s surname instead?”

If Cathryn surrendered the Moore name, Jordyn would finally shine as the sole, unchallenged daughter poised to inherit everything.

Cathryn gave her a long, deliberate look. “I will change it. But not yet. First, I’ll reclaim every cent of the Moore fortune that belongs to me.”

When that’s done, I’ll be glad to leave the name behind.”

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Jordyn's face flamed with rage. "You would not dare!"

Cathryn arched an eyebrow, her smirk infuriatingly calm. "Watch me."

"You are not even a real Moore!" Jordyn hissed, jabbing a manicured finger toward her. "You'll never get a single penny from my family!"

Cathryn's only answer was a shrug. She hefted her mop, turned on her heel, and walked away, the steady tap of the mop bucket's wheels mocking Jordyn's fury.

Jordyn's teeth ground together. She was irritated by her mother's strict directive to keep Kathryn's lack of any blood relationship with Richard a secret, but she would bide her time. Her birthday banquet was only days away. There, in front of the city's elite, she would humiliate Kathryn by telling everyone Kathryn was an illegitimate child. Then everyone would know—Jordyn was the sole daughter of the Moore family.

"Come. Don't keep Mr. Brooks waiting," Liam urged, tugging at Jordyn's sleeve.

Drawing a breath to steady herself, Jordyn nodded and followed him upstairs.

That morning, Andrew had flown in directly from overseas and come straight to the company. Inside his private lounge adjoining the CEO's office, he was just fastening his cufflinks when Ethan entered with a file. "Liam Watson and Jordyn Moore have arrived."

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Andrew's gaze hardened, a glint flashing in his dark eyes. "Send them in."

Jordyn and Liam stood outside the grand office doors, straightening collars and smoothing hems before entering.

Jordyn's heart raced with anticipation. She had dreamed of this moment—of seeing the elusive Andrew face-to-face.

The CEO's leather chair stood empty behind the vast mahogany desk, but its very presence carried such weight that their spines instinctively stiffened. Ethan waited silently by the desk, his expression unreadable.

Jordyn leaned toward Liam and whispered, "Where is Mr. Brooks?"

Liam mustered a polite smile and addressed Ethan. "Has Mr. Brooks not arrived yet?"

A voice answered—not from the desk, but from the adjoining room. “What business do you have with me, Mr. Watson? Speak.”

The deep timbre rolled out like thunder—measured, commanding, impossible to ignore.

Both Liam and Jordyn instinctively straightened, as if under invisible scrutiny.

At last. They were in the presence of Andrew.

Jordyn forced confidence into her tone. “We came to discuss a potential partnership with you, Mr. Brooks.”

Silence.

Liam rushed to fill it. “Since Brooks Group has expanded its tech division, I assume you plan to move aggressively into AI. Rather than developing everything in-house, collaborating with Watson Tech would be far more efficient—”

A low laugh cut him off, mocking and sharp. “Watson Tech? The same company whose IPO was frozen for lack of funding? Did you think I was deaf and blind to the market?”

Sweat prickled Liam's brow. He dabbed it with a handkerchief, his voice faltering. "Those are baseless rumors. My father-in-law, Richard Moore, recently came into a considerable inheritance. Watson Tech's finances are perfectly secure."

Andrew chuckled, the sound dark and humorless. "Secure? Interesting. Because what I've heard is that Richard Moore's fortune was not clean to begin with—and that it has already been frozen."

Jordyn's eyes darted, betraying a flicker of panic. So Andrew had not yet discovered that Moore Trading's funds were already frozen. She forced a quick smile, her voice brisk. "Just routine bank inspections. Once they clear, the accounts will be released without issue."

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Andrew's tone cut through her reassurance like a blade. "Plenty of firms line up to partner with Brooks Group. What exactly do you bring to the table?"

Liam hesitated, flicking a look toward Jordyn before fixing his stare on the closed door. His voice dropped, heavy with meaning. "I have Kestrel's code."

Andrew's eyes lifted a fraction—the smallest shift, but sharp enough to slice the silence.

Ethan's head jerked up, his voice bristling with menace. "Do you even grasp what happens to those who dare deceive Mr. Brooks?"

Unfazed, Liam unlocked his phone and held it out with steady hands. "This is Kestrel's code. Mr. Brooks is welcome to have it verified."

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Ethan snatched the device, pushed open the office door, and carried it inside.

Andrew's gaze fell on the glowing screen, scanning the long string of symbols. His expression darkened, shadow settling in his eyes. He might not have been fluent in

programming, but he had etched the first half of Kestrel's code into memory. One glance told him this was no imitation. It was genuine.

"Send it to the tech department," Andrew commanded, his voice low and decisive.

Jordyn and Liam shared a quick, charged glance. The die had been cast.

"Have you ever met Kestrel, Mr. Watson?" Andrew asked, his tone even but curious.

Jordyn tilted her head and let out a sly little laugh as she called through the changing room door, "For the record, Mr. Brooks, Kestrel is actually me."

Andrew's gaze cut to the woman outside the door. Jordyn's coy, performative charm made her look nothing like the quiet girl on that rooftop years ago.

Andrew stepped into view behind the glass door; his tall silhouette loomed. He spoke with steady precision. "Ms. Moore, if you lie to me at any point, I'll see to it that Moore Trading is finished."

A chill ran through Jordyn, but she clenched her jaw and kept up her lies. "If I say anything false, Mr. Brooks, may disaster strike my parents."

Liam shot her a quick look. Who would go that far, using her parents as collateral? Ruthless didn't even begin to cover it.

Andrew's lips curved into a frosty smile. "Would you go as far as putting the man next to you on the line for that swear?"

Liam stiffened in place.

Jordyn faltered, struggling to get the words out. She couldn't bring herself to drag Liam into this; he was still her lifeline.

Seeing her hesitate, Liam felt warmth rise in his chest. She couldn't bring her heart to say it—she cared for him deeply. "Jordyn, it's okay. I believe you."

In his eyes, Jordyn was Kestrel; there was no way she could be lying.

Jordyn clenched her teeth and forced the words out. "I swear, if I'm lying, then let something awful happen to my husband, Liam."

Even though Liam tried to brace himself, a chill still crept over his skin, raising the hairs on his arms. The words stung like a curse.

Andrew seemed pleased at last. “That’s enough for me. But if you think Brooks Group will just partner up based on a few lines of code, you’re mistaken.”

Liam’s nerves were on edge. “What exactly do you want, Mr. Brooks?”

“Sign a wager agreement,” Andrew stated, his gaze unwavering.

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Liam swallowed. “A wager on what, exactly?”

Andrew answered without hesitation. “Watson Tech and Moore Trading.”

Neither Liam nor Jordyn moved an inch.

Andrew’s voice didn’t waver as he laid it all out. “If your code passes inspection, Brooks Group will back Watson Tech, support your IPO all the way, and renew our partnership with Moore Trading.”

A look passed between Liam and Jordyn, and for a heartbeat, hope flickered in their eyes. Brooks Group’s support was something every company in Olekgan could only dream of.

“But if you fail,” Andrew continued, his hands tucked casually in his pockets, “Watson Tech and Moore Trading become the property of Brooks Group.”

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The promise of victory vanished, replaced by a jolt of dread that washed over them like a cold tide.

Lowering his voice, Andrew added, “You know as well as I do—Kestrel’s code, once released, will shake the world. If you can’t risk it all, then I’ll know you’re bluffing.”

Liam's phone was tossed out from behind the door.

Jordyn didn't blink. "The code's real."

She was certain that if anyone could craft code that powerful, it was Cathryn. Cathryn had been hacking circles around Olekgan's best by the age of ten, and after years in the shadows, her skills had only become sharper. This code was proof of that.

"Liam, you have to believe me. The code is real." Jordyn's tone turned urgent.

Trust flashed across Liam's face. He looked at Ethan and said, "I'm ready. I'll sign the agreement."

On the other side of the door, Andrew's lips twisted into a smirk. "Not even going to consult your father-in-law, Mr. Watson?"

Liam met Jordyn's eyes before replying, "Jordyn and her mom both sit on the board at Moore Trading. That gives them full authority to sign off."

Without hesitation, Jordyn agreed. "Moore Trading will sign the wager agreement."

After a brief pause, they went ahead and wrote their full names on the agreement.

Andrew gave one last warning. “If the code fails, you’ll lose everything—Watson Tech, Moore Trading, both gone.”

A hint of panic crossed Jordyn’s face.

Liam gave her hand a gentle squeeze. “You were always top of the class. I believe in you.”

Jordyn managed an uneasy nod, clinging to his faith.

Once Jordyn walked out of Andrew’s office, she ducked into the women’s restroom, needing a moment to collect herself.

Liam lingered in the hall, pacing back and forth. Then, out of the corner of his eye, he spotted Cathryn wheeling a mop bucket, dressed in shapeless gray janitor’s clothes. No uniform could disguise her long, graceful silhouette. If anything, the faded fabric only made her seem more vulnerable—more striking than ever.

Dropping his cigarette to the floor, Liam stamped it out and stepped directly into her path. “Cathryn, why put yourself through this?”

Cathryn didn't bother responding. She sidestepped as if he were just another obstacle.

Liam raised his voice as she tried to move past. "Mr. Brooks just inked an investment deal with Watson Tech. In a couple of weeks, Watson Tech will go public. I'll be right up there with the richest in Olekgan."

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Shock flickered across Cathryn's face. Every ounce of effort she'd spent trying to get Andrew on her side—gone. The man who should have helped her destroy Watson Tech and Moore Trading had thrown his lot in with Liam instead.

Burning with anger, Cathryn stared at Andrew's closed office door. If fury alone could ignite the place, the entire floor would have gone up in flames.

Liam reached out and caught her by the arm. "Come back to me, Cathryn. You'll have it all again—servants at your call, luxury on every side, the life you always wanted."

Her reply came out as a hollow, humorless laugh, and she still didn't face him. "You mean I'd be your mistress. Hidden away."

Liam stepped around, gripping her shoulders, trying to force her to look at him. "Cathryn, don't blame me. Jordyn got to me first. But isn't being with me what you always wanted?"

Somehow, Liam believed offering her the role of mistress was generous—almost noble.

Cathryn's insides twisted at the arrogance stamped across his face. He leaned closer, trying to sell her the fantasy. "I'll buy you a mansion. We'll pick out your favorite car. Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays—those days are yours. I'll come to you."

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With that, he reached to brush her cheek, leaning in as if his affection were a gift.

“So Jordyn gets you on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays?” Cathryn’s voice was dry, her eyes sharp.

Liam flashed a smug grin, convinced she was jealous. “Are you really that bothered I’m not with you all week?”

A wave of nausea rose in Cathryn, so strong she almost vomited up her breakfast.

From the doorway, Jordyn overheard Cathryn’s biting remark and stormed over, anger crackling in the air. “Still hung up on Liam, Cathryn? Pathetic!” she snapped, striding forward, ready to slap.

Cathryn lifted an arm, bracing for the hit.

Suddenly, a tiny figure darted between them. “You’ve got it backward. This lady is the one being hit on,” the girl said, her voice clear and firm.

Jordyn blinked, caught off guard by the sudden interference.

The girl—slender and defiant—locked eyes with her. “I heard it all. Your husband made the first move.”

Jordyn's patience snapped. "Who do you think you are? Get lost!" Her voice rose, sharp and shrill.

Unfazed, the girl's expression turned fierce. "Somebody has to step in when things get ugly," she shot back, bold and certain.

Cathryn found the girl oddly appealing—fragile in appearance, but with a spine of steel.

Standing tall in her heels, Jordyn glared down at Liam. "Handle this. Now."

Liam hesitated. He could be a jerk, but he'd never hit a woman.

"Don't just stand there," Jordyn demanded, frustration sharpening her voice.

Trapped, Liam reluctantly rolled up his sleeves. Now that he believed Jordyn was Kestrel, he felt he had no choice but to indulge her.

"Get out of here, I'll cover you!" the girl called to Kathryn, snatching up the mop and wielding it like a makeshift sword.

Instinctively, Cathryn moved to stop her. She knew Jordyn never forgot a grudge, and she didn't want this girl dragged into trouble. But it was too late.

Dirty water splashed through the air as the mop swung down, dousing both Jordyn and Liam.

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Today was supposed to be flawless. Jordyn had chosen a couture dress that sparkled with every step, and Liam had spared no expense on a tailored suit. All...

...that glamour meant nothing now, not with the stench of dirty water clinging to both of them.

Jordyn stomped her heel against the floor, tears streaming down her face. “You have no idea how much this dress cost! I just bought it, and now it’s a disaster—completely ruined!”

Out of patience, Liam grabbed her arm and yanked her to the side. “Could you stop yelling? We’re right outside Mr. Brooks’s office. Do you want everyone to hear?”

Jordyn’s voice rose higher, not caring who listened. “Why am I the villain? She’s the one who drenched me!”

Liam’s irritation spilled over. “We finally got Mr. Brooks to talk business with us, and you’re about to blow everything by throwing a tantrum.”

At that, Jordyn bit her tongue. Picking a fight with those two women wasn’t worth wrecking their shot with Brooks Group.

“Let’s go. There’s plenty of time to settle the score,” Liam muttered, dragging Jordyn into the elevator.

The power couple who had strutted in sparkling now left in disgrace, every head in the lobby turning as the foul smell followed them out.

Once outside the building, still fuming, Jordyn spat out her anger. “I swear, I’ll make her pay for this!”

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Liam kept his cool. “Call Vanessa. She’ll find that girl, and I’ll make sure that girl regrets crossing us.”

Jordyn punched in the number and told Vanessa exactly what had happened. In no time, Vanessa had an answer. “That’s Sophie Blake. She works in Administration.”

Jordyn pressed for more. “Does she have anyone important on her side?”

A snort came through the phone. “Her mom’s on the janitorial staff. She doesn’t have anyone. Trust me—she’s got no protection.”

Furious, Jordyn spat, “A janitor’s kid thinks she can take me on?”

Vanessa sounded eager. “She’s been using her admin badge to lurk around Brooks’s office. I’ve had it with her. Leave this to me.”

Meanwhile, up on the thirty-eighth floor, Sophie—the mop-wielding hero of the moment—was offering quiet advice in the restroom. “Don’t ever just let them walk over you. If you don’t stand your ground, they’ll never stop.”

A small, genuine smile flickered on Cathryn’s face. “I appreciate it. Thanks.”

Beneath her unassuming frame, Cathryn hid a quiet strength. Years spent with that shadowy organization had hardened her, sharpened her speed and skill. She just hadn’t counted on Sophie’s sudden move—and it had caught her off guard.

A small hand reached out in greeting. “Sophie Blake,” she said.

Cathryn accepted the handshake and introduced herself in return. “I’m Cathryn Moore.”

Sizing Cathryn up with open curiosity, Sophie asked, “You’re really young, and honestly, you don’t seem like someone who’d be working as a janitor. Why take a job like this?”

An embarrassed smile played on Cathryn’s lips. “I never finished school. Without a diploma, this is about all I could get.”

Surprise flickered across Sophie’s face. “You didn’t graduate?”

Cathryn nodded.

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Message from Noa: Have a lovely morning dear readers. God loves you and Noa wishes you all the best. (๖O_>=)๖ ♥

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