

ONCE THE FOOLISH WIFE, NOW HIS ETERNAL OBSESSION

Chapter 9:

“Cathryn Moore, you set me up!” Jordyn’s accusation sliced through the room, her glare cold and blazing.

Cathryn only shook her head, calculated hurt settling over her features as she turned to Harold. “Jordyn is having an affair with my husband, and now she’s blaming me for everything?”

The guests could barely contain themselves.

“Liam betrays his wife, and Jordyn sleeps with her own sister’s husband—what a pair. The very definition of shameless.”

Fury tightened Jordyn’s face. “Cathryn cheated too! She’s been sneaking around with some rich old man for money!”

That was the final straw for Harold. Rage broke free as he slammed his cane against the floor with a sharp crack. It was one thing for the Moores to mistreat Bettina and Cathryn. But to smear Cathryn’s name on top of it? Unforgivable.

“Richard Moore!” Harold snarled.

A heavy hush fell over the hall at the sound of Harold’s outburst.

Richard turned on Jordyn and slapped her, the sound echoing. His voice shook with anger. “If you make mistakes, you own up to them. Don’t drag your sister through the dirt!”

Jordyn stumbled to the floor from the impact, stunned, tears spilling down her cheeks. “I’m telling the truth! That old man was the one who drove Cathryn here tonight—in some fancy car!”

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Everyone’s attention swung to Cathryn, eyes narrowing with suspicion. If she had sold herself to an older man, it would be beyond disgrace.

A servant hurried to Richard’s side. “Mr. Moore, a man in his fifties dropped Miss Cathryn Moore off tonight. The car was a Maybach.”

Zoe finally snapped out of her stupor. “See? Cathryn was unfaithful first. Her marriage to Liam was already broken. That’s why he and Jordyn ended up together.”

Richard and Zoe exchanged a subtle breath of relief, grateful for the flimsy excuse Jordyn had handed them.

Just then, a calm voice cut through the tension. “Were you talking about me?”

Gavin stepped forward from the crowd.

Jordyn lurched upright, jabbing a finger at him. “That’s him! That’s the man I saw!”

Harold's hands trembled with anger as he took in the chaos. "Richard, is this the kind of child you've raised?"

Richard struggled to hide his glee, masking it beneath a show of regret. "I've already disowned Cathryn. She's not part of this family anymore."

Sensing an opening, Jordyn leaned in, eager to sway Harold. "Mr. Newman, please understand—Liam and I truly love each other. But Cathryn chases rich old men for cash. She's the greedy, shameless one—"

Crack.

Harold's hand struck Jordyn's face, the sound echoing through the hall.

Shock locked Jordyn in place. Harold's temper had only worsened since Gavin appeared, but she couldn't understand why his anger had landed on her.

Gavin approached Harold, his voice calm and respectful. "Mr. Newman, it's been years since we last met." Gavin had once served in Harold's regiment.

Then, facing Jordyn, Gavin spoke evenly. "Miss Moore, I think you're mistaken. I'm only a butler—nothing more. I drove your sister here because my employer requested it. He considers her an honored guest."

The message was unmistakable. Gavin—once a soldier under Harold's command—now served as a butler for one of the most powerful families in Olekgan.

A ripple moved through the crowd as a few businessmen recognized him. “He’s with the Brooks family.”

Murmurs swept the hall. Cathryn had ties to the Brooks family—and more than that, she had been welcomed as their guest of honor.

Then Gavin delivered the final blow, his gaze fixed on Jordyn. “Miss Moore, in the video, you said you’ve been with Mr. Watson for three years. Your sister has only been married to him that long. Does that mean you were involved with your brother-in-law from the very start of their marriage?”

The room erupted.

“Who would want to be connected to a family like this? We should cut ties with them entirely.”

“We came expecting a party, not a front-row seat to a scandal. Let’s get out of here.”

The women among the city’s elite—never inclined to show mercy to mistresses—turned their backs on Zoe and Jordyn. The realization that both mother and daughter had played the role of homewreckers was the final straw. They spat sharp remarks as they swept past, dragging their husbands along in a swirl of silk and scorn.

Richard pushed through the crowd, desperate to stop the exodus. He reached for Harold, his voice pleading. “Mr. Newman, there’s been a terrible misunderstanding.”

“Please, just let me explain—”

Harold rose, fury shaking his voice. “I’ll tell my son to stop supplying the Moore Group. Every agreement between us is over.”

With that, he took Cathryn by the arm and led her away without another glance.

Losing the Newman Group’s support meant Moore Trading was finished. Its future hung by a thread, and Richard’s panic showed plainly.

Unable to sway Harold, Richard hurried after them and tried to corner Cathryn instead. “Please. You have to talk to Mr. Newman for me. Your mother and I built Moore Trading together. If it goes under, how can you live with yourself?”

Cathryn met his eyes without flinching, her tone cold and cutting. “You want someone to blame? Look at Jordyn. She’s the one who destroyed Moore Trading, not me.”

Richard stopped short and turned toward Zoe and Jordyn.

Jordyn’s face was swollen—struck once by Richard and once by Harold—both cheeks puffy and raw as she sobbed into Zoe’s arms.

“Richard, this is all Cathryn’s fault,” Zoe hissed, rage burning in her eyes as she watched Cathryn’s retreating figure. “You’d better stand up for Jordyn. Don’t let Cathryn get away with this.”

“Bring me the whip—now!” Richard roared, his voice booming across the hall.

A twisted smile tugged at Zoe’s lips as she snapped at the nearest servant. “What are you waiting for? Go fetch it. If Richard has to break Cathryn tonight, so be it.”

That whip had been Zoe’s purchase years ago—a tool meant to terrify more than to discipline. No one in the house had ever faced it except Cathryn, and the memory of it carried its own kind of dread.

When the servant returned, Zoe placed the whip into Richard’s hands, her expression steady and cold. “Don’t hold back. Show her what real punishment feels like.”

Richard’s eyes gleamed with fury as he lifted it.

The first crack sounded like thunder.

But it wasn’t Cathryn who cried out.

Jordyn’s voice tore through the silence—sharp, agonized.

Zoe’s smile froze.

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