

Ready to Rule: The Real Heiress Strikes Back

Chapter 5

Lydia walked a little farther, then turned to glance at Jack, who was trailing behind her, completely covered in mud. "So, where's the car?"

Jack gave her a sheepish grin and ran a hand through his muddy hair. "About that... I got lost on the way, then it started pouring, and the car got stuck in a mud pit. I couldn't get it out, so I hitched a ride into the village on some old guy's tractor."

Lydia just stared at him. No wonder he looked like this. Honestly, she wasn't much better off herself. If Jack was a mud monster, she was a drenched mess.

"How far did you leave it?" she asked.

Jack hesitated. "Uh... probably... more than ten kilometers? Maybe a bit more..." His voice trailed off and he looked anywhere but at her.

Jack quickly tried to fix things. "Miss, maybe we should wait a bit and see if any cars come by heading to the city?"

But it was late, raining hard, and in a mountain village like this, everyone was probably already home and asleep. Getting a ride was going to be tough. Lydia actually had a motorcycle, but it was back at the Smiths'.

"Let's just walk," she said.

They walked in silence for about ten minutes, rain soaking through their clothes, until suddenly car headlights appeared behind them.

Jack perked up. "Miss, there's a car!" He started waving his arms, but the black luxury sedan barely slowed down as it sped past, horn blaring. The tires sent up a huge spray of muddy water, soaking both of them from head to toe.

Lydia closed her eyes and sighed.

Jack wiped his face with his sleeve and grumbled, "Just because you drive a Rolls- Royce doesn't mean you own the road." He paused, then frowned. "Wait, a Rolls- Royce?"

He stared after the car, watching the taillights disappear into the darkness. What was a car like that doing in a place like this?

Lydia noticed his look. "What's wrong?"

Jack shook his head. "Probably just my imagination. For a second there, I thought I knew that car."

The license plate he'd glimpsed was almost identical to the one owned by Connor Jefferson, the eldest son of one of the most powerful families in the Capital That couldn't be right though. Why would he be out here?

Lydia had noticed the car too. She remembered the man she'd run into earlier on the mountain, the one who seemed both unlucky and full of himself. She frowned but pushed the thought away. None of her business.

Meanwhile, in the back of that same

Rolls-Royce, a man was sprawled out, drenched and pale. It was Connor. He was holding onto a broker pendant, the kind you'd find in any street market, with a single character carved on the back: L. C6ntent

He looked up at the man beside him, his voice tired and rough. "Check everyone who was on Highridge Mountain tonight. I want to find her."

Aiden nodded right away. "Yes, sir." Tonight had been way too close. If that mysterious girl hadn't shown up, Connor probably wouldn't have made it.

Back on the road, Lydia and Jack walked for another ten minutes before finally spotting a small truck The driver, a young guy who'd been installing air conditioners in the village, was heading back to the cit He took one look at them and waved them into the cab without a second thought.

As they bumped along, Jack asked the guy to stop when they hit the paved road. He dug out a rain-soaked business card and handed it over. "If you ever need help, call

me."

The driver grinned, took the card, and tossed it onto the dashboard. "Sure thing."

Once they got out, Lydia spotted a car half-buried in a mud pit by the side of the road, completely covered in muck. She walked over for a closer look, her eyebrows lifting in surprise.