

Second chance 55

Chapter 55:

He stepped back into the shadows. He needed the truth. And tomorrow, he would take it.

Morning light filtered into the estate kitchen, cold and grey.

Cailin walked in looking for warm milk for Elia. Her arm throbbed steadily — a constant reminder of the enemy living under the same roof.

The kitchen was empty save for Charla, who leaned against the granite island drinking a green smoothie. She looked pristine. Unscathed.

Cailin ignored her and walked to the massive stainless steel fridge.

“Is the brat still here?” Charla asked casually.

Cailin slammed the fridge door. The sound rang out like a gunshot.

“Her name is Elia,” Cailin said, her voice low and trembling. “And she is here because you burned her.”

“She shouldn’t have been in my way,” Charla smirked, inspecting her manicure. “Clumsy child. Just like her mother — whoever that is.”

“You saw the video, Charla. We know what you did,” Cailin stepped closer.

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“Hilliard won’t do anything,” Charla laughed. “He needs my father’s vote. He loves me. Or at least, he loves my power. You are nothing, Cailin. A ghost.”

Cailin’s eyes moved to the counter. A crystal pitcher sat there, filled with ice water.

“Water for water,” she whispered.

She grabbed the pitcher with her uninjured right hand. The weight sent a jolt of sympathetic pain through her back and up her bandaged arm, but her grip didn’t falter.

Splash.

She threw the ice water full into Charla’s face.

Charla shrieked, gasping as the freezing liquid hit her. Her expensive silk blouse clung instantly to her skin. Mascara ran in black streaks down her cheeks.

“You crazy bitch!” Charla screamed. She raised her hand, face twisted in an ugly snarl.

Footsteps pounded in the hallway.

Cailin dropped the pitcher. It shattered on the tiled floor with a crash. She stumbled backward away from the glittering shards and collapsed against the kitchen island, curling into a protective ball as though bracing for a blow.

“Please! Don’t hurt me! I’m sorry!” Cailin cried out, her voice the picture of terror.

Hilliard ran in.

He took in the scene in an instant — Charla standing dripping wet, hand raised to strike; Cailin on the floor, shaking, appearing utterly defenseless.

“Charla!” Hilliard roared.

He stepped between them, his body a wall blocking Cailin from view.

“She threw water on me!” Charla screamed, pointing a trembling finger.

“And you were about to hit her?” Hilliard’s voice was lethal. “After what you did yesterday?”

Cailin gripped his pant leg and looked up with wide, frightened eyes. “She said Elia deserved it. And then she came at me.”

Hilliard reached down and pulled Cailin to her feet, keeping a protective hand on her back.

“Get out of my sight, Charla,” he said. “Before I forget about the merger and throw you out myself.”

Charla stomped her foot and slipped on the wet floor. She looked from Hilliard to Cailin, the realization of what had just happened settling across her face.

She stormed out, defeated.