

## Chapter 6

Elena Vitiello POV:

Dante pinched the cheap rhinestone ring between his index finger and thumb as if he were holding a dead fly. He stormed down the hallway and kicked the master bedroom door open.

I was sitting at the vanity, wearing a silk robe. I calmly brushed my long, dark hair. I did not even turn my head to look at him.

Dante slammed the fake ring down onto the vanity table. The cheap metal rattled against the glass surface. He demanded to know what happened to the pink diamond, the symbol of the Fazio family's immense glory and wealth.

I looked at his reflection in the mirror. His eyes were completely bloodshot. I kept my voice perfectly flat and told him it was just a plastic toy I bought for fun.

Dante stopped breathing for a second. His chest heaved. He immediately assumed I was using this childish method to protest his absence from the banquet last night. His arrogance would not let him consider any other possibility.

To cover up his own guilt, Dante quickly changed his expression. The violent anger faded, replaced by a mask of generous tolerance. He was trying to take control of the narrative.

He walked up behind me. He placed his heavy hands on my shoulders. He lowered his voice, putting on that fake, sexy tone he used when he wanted to manipulate people, and began to spin his lie.

He told me he had to leave the banquet last night because he saw an innocent girl being harassed by street thugs on his way home.

He shamelessly described how he stepped out of his car, fought the men off, and even took a few minor hits to protect the poor girl. 🙄

I stared at his deeply affectionate face in the mirror. My stomach twisted violently. I felt physical bile rising in my throat. This exact brand of heroic bullshit was the same tactic my father used to use on my mother after he spent the night in another woman's bed. It hit every

single one of my triggers.

I forced the physical disgust down. I lowered my eyelashes, perfectly faking the look of a weak, worried woman who was deeply moved by her man's bravery.

Dante saw me take the bait. A flash of contempt crossed his eyes. He clearly thought women were stupid, easily manipulated creatures.

Satisfied with his performance, he stood up straight and snapped his fingers. Two of his senior assistants immediately walked into the bedroom, pushing a massive clothing rack.

They unzipped the black garment bag. A custom Vera Wang wedding dress, encrusted with thousands of Swarovski crystals, caught the morninglight.

Dante proudly announced that this was his surprise for me. He claimed he had it flown in overnight from Paris to make up for missing the end of the banquet.

The assistants immediately began to coo, using exaggerated, dramatic tones to praise the extreme cost of the dress and Dante's deep devotion.

I stood up. I reached out, letting my fingertips brush against the cold lace fabric. My eyes saw nothing but a very expensive, very heavy body bag.

Dante ordered me to try it on immediately. His tone was not a request; it was a command from a man who expected total obedience.

I did not fight him. I let the assistants guide me into the massive walk-in closet to begin the exhausting process of putting the gown on.

Dante loosened his tie. He fell back onto the soft mattress, looking exhausted from his night of cheating. He carelessly tossed his suit jacket aside, and two phones slid out of his pockets, landing on the nightstand.

Inside the closet, the assistants pulled the corset tight. A wave of intense suffocation hit me. It felt like the noose of my destiny was tightening around my ribs.

I clenched my jaw. I let them arrange the heavy train around my feet, standing perfectly still like a lifeless puppet.

Just as I stepped toward the closet door, a sudden, harsh vibration broke the silence of the bedroom.

The sound came from the black burner phones sitting on the nightstand. It

was a phone Dante rarely used in my presence.

Dante's eyes snapped open. He shot up from the mattress as if a live wire had shocked him.

He lunged for the phone in a total panic. His arm swung wildly, knocking over a glass of water on the nightstand.

The sharp crash of breaking glass masked the sound of my footsteps as I walked out of the closet.

I stood just a few feet away. My vision bypassed Dante's broad shoulders and locked perfectly onto the glowing screen of the phone in his hand.

The caller ID flashed in bright, undeniable letters. It was an incredibly intimate nickname: My little rose Mia.

Dante snatched the phone to his chest. He turned around and met my cold gaze. I was standing there in the million-dollar wedding dress. He swallowed hard, his Adam's apple bobbing in panic.

"I need to take an urgent work call."



✓ You have unlocked exclusive  
limited-time offer >>

Claim Now