



## Chapter 50

Dominic turned his head and saw a tall figure emerge from the villa.

"Excuse me, are you Autumn?" he asked.

Autumn nodded. "I am."

Dominic hadn't expected the old lady's words to be true. Autumn was young, barely past her 20, dressed in expensive clothes that accentuated her graceful figure. Her face was flawless, her features refined and full of charm.

To Dominic, she was every bit as beautiful as Isabella.

He paused, then pointed toward the foot of the hill. "Your grandmother said it's your birthday today. She came from the countryside with some things for you, but her bike flipped over down the slope. Walk about half a mile that way, and you'll see it. She asked me to let you know."

Autumn was striking, but not so much that Dominic couldn't look away. He delivered the message without losing composure.

Autumn frowned, suspicion flickering in her eyes. "Why should I believe you?"

The four or five bodyguards around her instantly placed their hands on their batons.

Dominic's face hardened. "Believe it or not, I've said what I needed to say. I'm leaving."

With that, he turned and walked off.

One of the bodyguards leaned close to Autumn and whispered, "Ms.



Garcia, should we stop him?"

Autumn watched Dominic's retreating back, then shook her head. "Go check it out."

It was her 21st birthday, and Clarita did live in the countryside. Maybe the man was telling the truth.

The bodyguard nodded and signaled for a car.

Autumn got into the back seat calmly, and they drove in the direction Dominic had indicated.

Within minutes, they reached the slope, but there was no sign of Clarita.

The bodyguard stopped the car, scanned the area, and said, "Ms. Garcia, there's no one here."

Autumn's expression chilled. "So, that man lied to me? Find out who he is."

She needed to know how he'd learned it was her birthday and that Clarita lived in the countryside.

The bodyguard nodded. "Understood."

He was about to start the car when Autumn suddenly glanced toward the side of the road. She knew this area well. A steep slope lay just beyond, and something tugged at her chest.

"Stop the car," she ordered.

She stepped out, walked to the edge, and looked down. Her pupils constricted. Below, a bike lay overturned, bags scattered across the ground. Beneath it, she saw a faint strip of yellow fabric—so familiar it



made her blood run cold.

A tremor ran through her. "That color... It's the same as Grandma's clothes!"

Panic seized her chest. Without hesitation, she stumbled down the slope. When she reached the bottom, she finally saw the truth.

"Grandma!" Autumn cried, shoving the bike aside and collapsing beside Clarita. Tears streamed down her face as she called out again and again, but Clarita no longer breathed.

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Dominic left the villa without much thought, only irritated that his good intentions had been met with doubt.

As he walked, though, a strange unease crept in. Something about the encounter didn't sit right. He couldn't name it.

He lit a cigarette and stood still for a moment, lost in thought.

Then he turned back toward the slope. The feeling in his chest grew stronger. It was a quiet insistence that he should check for himself. And if Autumn didn't believe him, he might as well bring Clarita up with his own hands.

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