

## Chapter 86

An hour earlier...

Isabella was in her office reviewing reports when her assistant knocked on the door. She looked up.

"Ms. Sinclair, Mr. Grant wants to see you," the assistant said.

"Let him in," Isabella replied evenly.

A moment later, Alexander stepped inside and quietly closed the door behind him. Isabella kept her eyes on the financial report.

"What is it?" she asked, her tone detached.

Alexander studied her flawless profile, and a sudden urge to pull her into his arms washed over him. But he didn't dare.

"Bella," he said hesitantly, "I'd like to take the afternoon off to visit my mom."

Isabella nodded. "Alright. Let HR know."

Time passed, yet Alexander still didn't leave. She finally looked up. "Is there something else?"

He hesitated before saying, "I promised my mom I'd bring my girlfriend over today..."

Isabella paused, instantly understanding. Seeing his awkward expression, she thought for a moment, then said, "I'll go with you."

Alexander's face lit up. "Really? That's great! Thank you, Bella!"

"That's not what I meant," Isabella said coolly. "I'll go with you to explain to your mother that we're only colleagues, not what she might think."

The joy on Alexander's face vanished.

Isabella met his gaze—those eyes so much like that person's—and sighed softly. "I'm sorry. I can't agree to something like that. But I'll still go with you to visit her."

With that, she stood and walked out first. Alexander lingered for a moment, a shadow flickering in his eyes before he followed.

In the parking garage, Isabella got into her Porsche.

"Sit in the back," she said.

Alexander froze, then reluctantly opened the rear door and climbed in.

As she drove, Isabella's eyes stayed calm and focused. Over the past few days, she had thought everything through. Her sister was right—she couldn't keep making the same mistake. With her husband's growing coldness, fear had begun to take root in her heart.

If she pretended to be Alexander's girlfriend and Dominic found out, the consequences would be disastrous. Their already fragile marriage would shatter completely.

Her grip on the steering wheel tightened. 'I can't get divorced. I can't lose my husband.'

Once she dealt with today's situation, she would turn her attention to winning Dominic back. She would clear every misunderstanding between them.

Soon, they arrived at the hospital. Near the entrance, Isabella bought several high-end nutritional supplements before following Alexander into the ward.

Inside, a pale woman sat propped against the bed, scrolling through her phone. She was Alexander's mother, Mary Grant. He had never met his father and had grown up relying solely on her.

When Mary looked up and saw Isabella, she froze for a moment, then broke into a warm smile. "Isabella, you're here! Come in, come in!"

She tried to sit up, but Isabella quickly set the supplements aside and said, "Don't get up, Ms. Grant. You should rest. Alex and I just came to see how you're doing."

Alexander gently pressed his mother's shoulder. "Mom, stay in bed. Bella and I just dropped by for a bit. We'll head back soon. There's still work to finish."

Mary smiled kindly. "Thank you, Bella! You even brought all these things, that's too thoughtful of you. How's Alex treating you? If he's not good to you, just tell me. I'll make sure he behaves!"

Her tone carried the warmth and teasing affection of a mother-in-law speaking to her daughter-in-law.

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