

# Taming the Billionaire CEO ( Daniel Monroe )

## Chapter 11

### 11 Heart To Heart

"What is taking him so long?" Renee paced around, a frown on her face as she looked up the stairs.

She had promised him she wasn't going to follow him or do anything rash, but it had been so long since he went up to call her down and yet there was no sign of him coming back down.

"What exactly is he doing up there with her?" Several images ran through her mind and none of them

settled well with her.

She clicked her tongue in annoyance, "Anna is getting on my nerves. I'm pretty sure all this is some sort of plan to take Daniel from me."

Tired of waiting, she threw her hands up and walked up the **stairs**. "Since when did I start listening to him anyway?"

"No, you can't come in!" she stopped when she heard Kyra's yell. I wonder who she's fighting with

this time.

Kyra was always at loggerheads with everyone and although Renee didn't like her, she had to suck up to her since **she** was the apple of the family's eye. "Brat."

"I said I won't let you in, get out!" She heard Kyra's yell again.

She looked up the stairs and down the hallway where Kyra's voice was coming from. "You had better be down by the time I get back," she hissed as she skipped down the stairs and ran towards Kyra, **changing** to a more refined and careful manner of walking when she got closer to her.

When she arrived at the **door**, the only one she could see was Kyra who **had** her back to her and her hand on the front door. "Kyra, is everything okay?" she asked, as one of the househelps scurried past her.

Kyra turned to her and then faced the door again. Renee rolled her eyes. She wouldn't expect less **from Kyra**.

She stopped next to Kyra and opened the door slightly to see a fuming lady standing outside the door. "Didn't you hear her tell you to leave? What are you still doing here?" she questioned her.

She could have just ignored it, but since Anna **moved** in, she **hadn't** gotten an opportunity to flaunt her power as the lady of the house since no one considered Anna the owner, regardless of the documents.

"And you must be Renee," the lady said, her scornful gaze giving Renee a once over. "I must say Daniel has a really bad taste for him to have taken you back even after you jilted him at the altar."

Renee's eyes darkened. "And who the hell are you to speak to me that way?"

"Oh, shut it! I've seen people with ugly souls but beautiful faces, but you're **one** of the few with an immensely ugly face and soul. I mean, how do you do it? More importantly, how did you charm Daniel?" she questioned. "Although it's a good thing if y'all take the fools away so we can settle with

11 Head To Heat

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the good guys.

Seeing the lady wouldn't answer, Renee turned to **Kyra**, "Who is **she**?"

"She claims-" Kyra started.

"Zip it, brat!" The lady cut her off in irritation. "Unlike you, I'm who I claim to be. I'm Lily, the best friend to Mrs. Anna Solorante, the owner of this mansion," Lily **ended**, a proud smile on her face.

"Throughout her marriage to your asshole of **a** brother and husband, I never called her his wife because it seemed more of an insult **than a** blessing, but now I'm so happy I get to call her 'Mrs' and be happy about it," Lily said, her faraway look in her eyes.

Kyra's **face** darkened. "Who gives a shit about what you or your damn friend feels or thinks? Just don't talk crap about my brother and get the hell out of this house because it sure as hell doesn't belong to that bitch!"

"And don't you dare talk about Anna that way unless you want a second part of the slap she gave you yesterday," Lily retorted, satisfied when she saw Kyra go mute.

She turned to Renee, who was starting to regret involving herself in the conversation. "And I wonder how you'll raise a good **child** with your character. I genuinely hope he or she doesn't become a nuisance to society."

Lily cut her off, "Hand me your phone now," she said to Kyra.

"And why would I ever do **that**?" Kyra **laughed**.

"I wonder. Perhaps because you're a psycho who smashed my phone when I tried calling Anna?" she asked, the fury on her face rising with each word.

"Perhaps we should call a family meeting," Anna said from behind Renee and Kyra. She pushed them out of the way and walked towards Lily, hugging her.

"I'm so sorry you **had** to meet them first when you got here. I was waiting for your call but who would have expected she'd be so crazy as to smash it," **Anna** scoffed, turning to face Kyra and Renee. "Hand over your phones now if **you** don't want **to** suffer the consequences."

"And why do I have to drop mine too?" Renee **asked** in bewilderment. "Besides, what are we? Kids? Why are you taking **our** phones."

"Yes, you are nothing more than kids **and** I'm taking your phone as well because you're an accomplice," she smiled smugly **as** she added. "And I **know** this because I saw **you** watch Kyra smash the phone but you said nothing."

What happened **at** the pool came to Renee's mind and **she** scoffed. "Is this your way of getting revenge?" Although she tried to hide it, she was terrified of Anna now that she had the backing of someone so powerful

**If** she was still angry at her because of what happened at the pool, then she was in big trouble. "**Fine**,

11 Meal To Healt

take it," Renee said, handing it over to her, before turning to leave.

"Where do you think you're going? I'm not done yet," Anna stopped her before turning to Kyra *who* was still reluctant about dropping her phone. "Hand it over now unless you're hiding something, and please, unlike you, I'm not the type to go through people's phones,"

I'm the type to hand it over to her friend who'll hack it and get every bit of juicy secret on it.

“Whatever,” Kyra said, handing it over to her. “Just get ready for what’s coming,” she spat.

“Sure, I’m ready,” she said as she handed the phones over to Lily who winked, understanding what she needed to do.

“Your phone is in good condition so I’ll just take it to get reformatted and use it as mine. I think that’ll make us equal?” Lily asked Kyra whose eyes widened in horror.

“Don’t you dare!” Kyra said.

“I’ll take that as a yes,” Lily beamed and pushed past them into the bedroom. “Bring my breakfast into your bedroom and make sure it’s not poisoned.”

“Sure!” Anna yelled after her and turned to Kyra and Renee. “Now, kids. Let’s talk about your behaviour today.” Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“I’m not playing your dumb games with you,” Kyra said through gritted teeth. “I have breakfast to get to.”

“Likewise,” Renee said, before quickly adding. “for the baby as well.”

Anna stared at her for a while before nodding, “Fine then, you both can leave.”

We’ll see if you do have a baby, Renee.

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## Chapter 12

### 12 BREAKFAST **WITH** ENEMIES

“I can’t believe that worked,” Lily said as soon as Anna entered the room.

“You can’t believe what worked?” Anna questioned with a raised brow as she sat next to Lily who was rummaging through her bag for her tools.

“I’m referring to how everything worked in our favour to get Renee’s phone,” Lily chirped excitedly.

Anna smiled, falling back on the bed. “Right? I was worried she’d get suspicious or be adamant about dropping it.”

They initially had plans to get her phone that day but hadn't decided on how so the incident was perfect.

"Shouldn't you be downstairs, having breakfast with them?" Lily asked, corking her brow questioningly,

Anna shook her head negatively. "I don't want to," she sighed. "It's nerve-racking eating with them at the same table. Although I'm trying, it's a bit hard to deal with the fact that they all dislike me for reasons unknown to me."

"I hate to have you do this, but you can't have them getting suspicious. Plus, you have to spend time with them if you're going to find out anything," Anna's shoulders fell and Lily wrapped her in a hug. "It'll be fine, honey, Remember you said you won't back down, so you have to cross this hurdle."

"Fine," Anna said, getting up from the bed. "And you? Do I bring your food here or what?"

Lily shook her head lightly, "Don't worry about me, I ate before I came here. Now hurry, I need to focus."

Anna rolled her eyes and headed for the dining hall.

LI

"I wonder where Davis went," she muttered. She **was** a bit curious about him especially since they were to play as married couples.

"I'm pretty sure if I **ask**, he's going to tell me it's on a need-to-know basis. Jerk!" she hissed.

He knew everything about her, but on the other hand, she only knew what the public knew about him -nothing.

"How am I supposed to act well if I don't even know anything about him?" she complained, making a mental note to let him know when he got back

"You finally decided to grace us with your presence," Mary snorted without looking up from her plate of food as Anna entered the dining hall.

**It's** fine, Anna. It's just breakfast with people who want to put your sixteen feet under.

Ignoring her, Anna made her way towards the empty seat at the end of the large table.

12 BREAKFAST WITH ENEMIES

“Seems the fact that you’re now the owner of this mansion **has** made you so proud that you can’t even acknowledge your elders anymore,” Mary added when she didn’t get any response. This time, her cold **glare was** fixated on **Anna**.

If looks were bullets, Anna would have multiple holes in her **skull** at that moment. “**Haven’t** you heard it’s bad manners to talk while eating?” Anna asked politely in a mocking tone.

Mary slammed her fork against the table and stood up.

“You

“Sit back down, Mary! That’s enough from you,” Williams thundered, making even Anna tremble.” Even if you don’t respect her as the owner of this house, show me some respect **and** stop all this nonsense.”

Mary shot him a glare before

into her food.

Dack in her seat, muttering incoherent words as she dug back

“You should sit down to eat, Anna,” Williams said. “I just remembered we never quite had a conversation as a family when you were here so

—

“I won’t be eating here anyway, so you all can enjoy your meal,” She cut him off. Of course, she was just lying, but after what he said, it was clear he wanted to get information from her and it didn’t take a genius **to** know it was about Davis.

If he wanted a chance to ask his questions, he’d have to beg for it. She walked over towards Kyra who was still glaring at her and hadn’t touched her food.

“Seeing as you haven’t touched your food-” she picked up the plate of food, ” hungry. I’ll take this then.”

“Don’t you- ”

-you must not be

“Dare?” Anna interrupted her. “You’re full of nothing but empty threats Kyra; empty threats and immature actions that either make no difference or cause even more problems.”

Williams clenched his fist at how Anna was speaking to Kyra, but he couldn't do anything except get on her good side. "I apologize for my daughter's words."

"Dad!" Kyra exclaimed, her anger threatening to erupt as she clenched her fork tightly, wanting nothing more than to bury it into **Anna's** neck.

She wanted to keep talking, but one look from her father was all it took to keep her quiet. "The time to destroy you myself will come," she muttered in a voice so low she could barely hear herself.

William let out a sigh of anger and forced a smile on **his** face. "Why don't you sit with us for breakfast? Now that we're all living together, we should try to get along, don't you think?" He said, hoping she'd agree.

Since Davis wasn't around, he could use the opportunity to get information about him from Anna. He just needed one thing that could help me uncover who he was and how he knew their secrets.

"That won't be necessary," Anna said as she picked up Kyra's food.

## 12 BREAKFAST WITH ENEMIES

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"Although we might not have been close in the past, we're still family so eating together shouldn't be such a big deal, right?" he urged.

A small smile played on her lips but she quickly hid it. "Fine," she said, still holding the plate of food, sat in her seat and pushed her plate aside.

"You don't think we poisoned your food, did you?" Williams asked when he saw she was eating Kyra's food instead of hers. [SEAR\\*ch the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

"You wouldn't be foolish enough to do that," Anna said. "But that doesn't mean you can't put something in my food," she ended, throwing suspicious glances at all of them in the room.

She was met with cold eyes, except for Daniel, who had a deeply unsettling smile on his face and Williams who **was** still eating.

Renee stomped on Daniel's toes when she saw him smiling at Anna. "What are you doing?" she whispered to him.

"Don't act as though you don't know," he retorted in a whisper before returning to eat.

The hall was silent with the tension in the air enough to weigh down a mountain. “So, where’s your husband?” Williams broke the ice.

“He’s out,” she said vaguely. Just as she had suspected, he was trying to get information about Davis from her.

“Clearly,” Kyra, who had been served again coughed, but Anna pretended not to hear her.

“I’m curious about one thing. When did you meet Davis and why did you marry him? Because I doubt you love him,” Williams said, surprising Anna by how direct he **was**.

He’s something. How could he openly ask such a question?

“Do I have to answer you?” she raised a brow, a frown on her face. “Let me remind you that you have no right to question my relationships and make assumptions about what is and isn’t true.”

She stood up from her seat, “If that’s all, I’ll be taking my leave now; I’m rather full.”

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## Chapter 14

### 14 DR. EX

“So, did you find anything on Kyra’s phone?” Anna inquired from Lily, **a** smile on her face at Kyra’s reaction. She had been hiding behind a wall when she left Kyra’s room and her reaction was gold.

Lily shook her head, a fallen look on her face as she let **out** a sigh. “We’re back to square one. Now that we’re more or less through with Renee, we can only hope whatever we find out about her is enough to cause problems that’ll lead to more secrets being leaked.”

“Yeah, I hope so too,” Anna sighed, stretching her limbs. “Damn! I’m tired,” she moaned, falling to

the bed.

Lily joined her, laughing as she did. “It’s still so early in **the** morning and you’re already saying you’re tired?” she chuckled. “How lazy are you?” she joked, and Anna hit her jokingly.

“Anyway, I was thinking of getting a job apart from this one,” she sighed.

Lily sat up in bed with urgency, “A job? What for?” she questioned with confusion. “The contract with Davis is paying you so much so why would you need another job?”

I mean, even when you guys are through with your plans and bring the Monroes down, all the money he gives you will be more than enough to keep you going,” she added.

“Till when?” Anna sighed. “And besides, I want to make my money; I can’t keep relying on other people’s money, you know. Plus, these people go out as well so it’ll just **be** me at home doing nothing.”

“You couldn’t always go through their rooms” Lily shrugged.

“Nah, it’s too risky. Besides, I can only take that risk if there’s something in particular I want to find, not when I’m just looking for whatever will implicate them.”

“Fine, what do you want to do?” Lily asked.

Anna shut her eyes, “For now, I don’t know. But I’ll eventually figure it out.”

“If you say so,” Lily shrugged. “Speaking of which, did you watch the new episode of Liar Liar? Lady Kim turned out to be the culprit.”

Anna immediately sat up in bed, “No way.

“Yes, way. **She...**”

AAA

Renee adjusted her sun shades **and** put on her nose mask **as** she left her car. She hurriedly made her way into the hospital, trying to make sure she wasn’t spotted by anyone.

“You’re right on time, **Renee**,” The doctor said with **a** smile as **she** entered his office and took off her guise. “I don’t know why you keep hiding your face,” he said.

“And why wouldn’t I, Tommy? You expect a model as popular and loved as I am not to **get** crowded if

14 DREX

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I’m seen in public?” She raised a brow as she sat down in the seat and took off her jacket, leaving her

in only her tank top.

“I told you to stop calling me Tommy, you know that’s not my name,” Tommy said with a frown as he stood from his **seat** and **made** his way to the **cabinet**.

She rolled her **eyes**, “Since when have I ever listened to you?” she scoffed. “Just give me the pills and

I’ll be out of here.”

He retrieved a bottle of **contraceptives** and **sat** on **the** table, next to her. “If you’re so against getting pregnant, why did you tell the media you’re pregnant?” he asked curiously.

“I don’t **need** to tell you that,” **she** snapped and tried to grab the pills, but he held her hand, clicking his tongue disapprovingly.

“No answer, no pills,” he smirked.

“But I pay you so give it to me, asshole,” she said, breaking away from his grip.

He shrugged, “I still **want** to know,” he said with a boyish smile. “I mean, telling that to the media will only put their eyes on you so how are **you** going to answer their questions when after a month, we still ain’t seeing any bump?”

“Isn’t there a rare condition that makes a lady’s pregnancy grow inwards so no one would know she’s pregnant until she gives birth? I’ll just say I have it,” she shrugged.

“I see you did your research, but that’s risky and I’d advise you not to use **that** excuse because, as you **said**, it’s rare and if you claim you have it, trust me, people will find out,” he told her.

“Whatever, **I’ll** sort myself out,” she told him. “Now, the pills.”

“**Can’t** you just tell me?” he pouted.

A smile made its way to her face and she sighed in defeat, “Fine. It **wasn’t** my plan to tell the media or anyone, after all, it’d cause a pause in my career, the main reason I don’t want to get pregnant,

“she let out a groan of frustration before she continued. “But Daniel **had** to tell them.”

“Right, he **doesn’t** know. Why don’t you just tell him you don’t want a child yet?” he questioned. “I mean, with how you say he adores you, he’d understand you.”

“It was necessary,” she said, looking away and he got the message that she didn’t want **to** say anything further.

If not for the pregnancy, Anna would still be his wife.

“Alright then, here’s **your** pills,” he got off the table and raised it high above his head. “Take it,” he said, a mischievous glint in his eyes as he made his way to the **door**.

“What are you doing?” she questioned as she got up and lunged for the pills.

He grabbed her arm and pinned her against the door, locked it and then **dropped** the key in his pants. “**Tommy**, stop this. Last time was a mistake,” she said, her chest heaving up and down as his eyes

14 DR. EX

3/3

raked over her body.

He planted a kiss on her neck, biting and sucking on it. “Phil,” she moaned. “That’s enough. I have to go home. ”

He pulled away from her. “Don’t worry, we’re not doing anything today,” he smirked as he walked back to his desk **and sat on** the table. “But you’ll have to get the key yourself if you want to leave and be gentle else you know what will happen.”

“For fuck’s sake!” she muttered under her breath. “These are the disadvantages of getting help from your stupid ex,” she said as she walked towards him.

He smirked as she got closer **to** him. “Good girl,” he chuckled.

“Don’t you have other patients?” she asked as she stood in front of him. “Let’s just do this another time, please,” she pleaded knowing fully well she wouldn’t get out **of** having sex with him if she took the key herself.

He thought about it for a while and sighed. “Fine,” he said before pressing her against his body and taking her lips in his. She wrapped her arms around his **neck**, biting on his lower lips.

He pulled away and handed her the pills. “And here’s the key,” he said with a sly grin as he brought it out of his pocket.

Her **pues u**

in shock. “You sly thing.”

“You don’t expect me to put this amount of keys in my pants, do you?” he chuckled.

“You’re such an asshole,” **she** said, taking her jacket and wearing her guise.

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## Chapter 15

### 15 NINJA WAYS

“Hey, Lily. The eagle has landed, where are you?” Anna said into her phone as she watched Renee pull

up

in front of the mansion.

“The eagle has landed? What eagle?” Lily questioned, her tone was one of genuine confusion.

Anna rolled her eyes. “This is why you shouldn’t watch sweet romance all the time. I’m referring to Renee; she’s back from her appointment with the doctor if she did meet one.

away.” Lili..

“Right. I’m about five minutes her voice muffled.

Anna’s dropped curtains, her face dropping along with it. “Don’t tell me you stopped to get a hotdog,” she said as she jogged up the stairs, although she knew the answer she was getting from Lily.

She didn’t get a reply but the sound of her munching. She rolled her eyes **as** she hid in one of the empty rooms on the first floor of the house, where Renee’s and Daniel’s room **was** situated.

After watching Renee for a while, **she** knew she always took a shower whenever she came back from **an** outing, especially when it was a sunny day like that one. “Just hurry up,” Anna whispered when she heard the front door shut.

Everyone had gone **out** to their business and it was just she and Renee in the house. “This is our best, if not our only opportunity to do this, Lily. Don’t mess it up,” she muttered hopefully, her heart. pounding hard against her chest when she heard the click-clack of Renee’s heels against the tiles.

“What an asshole!” she heard Renee voice trailed off as the **door** of her



sau “I shouldn’t have...” *ber*

room slammed shut.

Asshole? Is she referring to the doctor or did she meet someone else?

“Dang! I should have let Lily trail **her**,” she muttered, hissing in regret.

Her phone vibrated in her pocket. She checked the caller ID and as expected, it was Lily. “Hey, I’m. here,” Lily said.

“Stay on the call,” Anna said and like a thief in the night, made her way out of the room. She tiptoed to **Renee’s** door, perspiration trickling down the side of her face.

She placed her **ear** on the door, listening for Renee’s movements and trying to catch what she was saying a failed attempt.

Renee threw her bag to the bed, running her hand through her hair. “This is all that idiot’s fault, she complained, “Why did he have to tell the press about me?”

She sighed as she stripped. “I have to end this as soon as possible,” a mischievous glint lit her eyes. Now that Anna is back in **this** house, I guess she could be my scapegoat.”

A sigh of relief left her as she formulated the plan in her head. “All I have to do is make it seem as though I lost my baby because of her, and not only will she be ruined In Front of the family, but also

15 NINJA WAYS

in front of Davis-”

“Who knows? It just might give me a better shot of getting with **him**,” she smiled. Although she cared about Daniel, she cared more about securing her future and Davis was a much better fit for her in every aspect.

She wrapped a towel around her **body**, dumped her clothes in the laundry basket and walked into the shower.

Outside the door, Anna heard the shower come **on**, “Hurry in now and come to the first floor. Wait in front of the second room on your left. Please, be as silent as possible,” she whispered into the phone.

“Got it,” Lily said and hung up. Anna closed her eyes, and saying a silent prayer, carefully opened the door, wincing when it let out a small creek.

She slipped into the room and immediately went for Renee's bag. Yes. The phone was in the bag just **as** she had hoped.

She immediately rushed to the door where Lily was **already** waiting. "Hurry, I have no idea how long we **have**," Anna told her as she joined her outside the door.

Lily nodded, "It **won't** take long at all," she whispered with a reassuring smile that immediately fell when the sound of running water stopped. "She's already through?" she whispered in shock, alarm written all over her **face**.

"Just hide in the opposite room **and** get the cam out," Anna whispered, barely stopping for air, "T|| lure her out so you can return her phone into her bag

"-Remember to zip the bag when you return the phone and when you're through, hide and ring me up so I don't have to talk to her anymore-"

-And also, put her phone on silent **and** when you're about to put it back in her bag, you can return it to its normal ringtone," she finished.

"Alright, I get it," Lily entered the room and Anna immediately knocked on Renee's door, for fear that she might head for her phone immediately after her shower.

"Renee!" she yelled, banging harder on the door.

Renee threw the door open in annoyance, "What the hell, Anna?" she yelled. "Are you **trying** to break down my door or **what**?"

"What the hell is the nonsense you did to my **room**?" Anna blurted, biting her lips.

Really? That's the best you could come up with?

Renee's face contorted in confusion, "Excuse you?"

Without saying anything, Anna grabbed her and dragged her out of the room. "Are you crazy or something? I'm not even dressed!" Renee screamed, terrified Anna was trying to harm her.

Anna turned to her with cold eyes when they were on the stairs. "If you fall while struggling, it'll be

15 NINJA WAYS

your loss-" she thought for a while, "-probably death, but not mine."

Renee's face paled. "What is wrong with you?"

Anna scoffed. "You have a lot of guts questioning me." Just then, her phone vibrated in her pocket and she immediately let go of Renee's arm. "Forget it, you'll probably not admit to it, but remember Renee, I'm watching **you**."

Renee watched as Anna left, rubbing her sore arm. "Has she finally lost it?" she muttered, her lips trembling.

**Will** I be able to frame her for my fake miscarriage now that she's become unhinged?

Anna descended the stairs and walked towards the front door where Lily was waiting, as though she was just arriving. "Lily!" Anna exclaimed, being intentionally loud about it so Lily would hear. "You didn't tell me you were coming over," she added, her voice even louder.

"I think that's fine," Lily said with a light chuckle and they rushed to her room.

"By the way, what was the nonsense she supposedly did in your room?" Lily teased with a chuckle. "What sort of excuse was that? What would you have said if I hadn't called in time?"

Anna shrugged. "I have no idea but I'm sure I would have found something sensible to say. Either way, I was **certain** you'd finish on time. Now-"

-we check," Lily completed her sentence, trepidation on both their faces.

"I hope it's something that'll help **us**," Anna said with a sign.

"I hope so too. All these ninja moves I've been making had better not be for nothing," Lily said, trying to lighten the mood as she turned on her phone and clicked on the audio from the spy cam.

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## Chapter 16

### 16 THE INVITATION

**Anna stared at** Lily's phone as the audio came to an end. For a while, they both said nothing and stared at the phone, a blank look on their faces.

A smile slowly spread across Lily's face. "Jack-pot!" Anna finished for her, punching the air victoriously.

Lily ran her hand through her hair, her smile getting wider. "This is way better than I could have hoped. Not only is she not pregnant, but she's cheating with her ex. Mehn! It's bound to make serious waves," Lily said.

"Right? This is so crazy. It's going to destroy her and cause a lot of damage to the Monroes regardless of how they try to get out of this one," Anna chipped in.

"So," Lily turned to face Anna, her tone serious, "Do we release it now or what?" Anna thought for a while before sighing in defeat.

"What is it? **You** can't do it?" Lily raised a brow, puzzled by her reaction.

Anna shook her head negatively, "No, it's not that. It's just-" she settled in the bed comfortably,

I want to release everything right now and show Daniel he left me for a cheat and a liar who has zero regards for him and his family.

"So what's the problem with that?"

"Because it's **not** a smart move and I'd be doing it based on emotions and not reasoning. Rather than release it now, we should wait for a week to see if a better opportunity to release the news will come. An opportunity that'll cause maximum damage-

Lily **nodded**, "**You** have a point.

## 11

"And we shouldn't release both news at once. First, the pregnancy scandal and we can use the cheating scandal when the relationship between her and Daniel is on very thin ice because I highly doubt the pregnancy scandal will cause him to leave **her**," she finished.

Lily nodded in agreement, "You're right. At most, **it'll** cause friction between those two, although it'll wreck her relationship with other members of the family. So, we wait, yeah?"

"Sadly, yes!" Anna sighed, albeit content with what she had found.

Lily pulled Anna into a tight hug. "You're choking me," Anna said, barely able to breathe, making Lily pull away.

"I'm so proud of you for not letting your emotions get the best of you," Lily said and Anna smiled in response. "Now, let's watch a movie to celebrate this, or do you want to go out instead?"

"Hmmm, let me think about it," **Anna** said.

"Whenever you say you want to think about something, it takes forever for you to come to a decision,

16 THE INVITATION

so we're just going to watch a movie," Lily decided.

"Works for me," Anna smiled, but deep down, she was worried about Daniel. How would he take the news when he finds out?

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"Is there any important news for me?" Davis asked, not looking up from the file he was flipping through.

Paul shut the door behind him and dropped some papers on his table. "I already sent the important ones via email," he said.

"Good," Davis said, leaning back **on** his couch with an exasperated **sigh**.

"Perhaps you should take a break, sir," Paul said in concern, but as expected, Davis refused.

"I have way too much to do to consider taking a break, especially now that **I have** to set my revenge

against William in motion," he argued.

Paul nodded, knowing trying to persuade him was pointless; he would do whatever he pleased. "I still don't understand why you revealed **your** identity to the Monroes because you wanted to purchase their apartment when you're still going to be living in your apartment."

"I did it for Anna, Paul," Davis said and **added**, "**She'll** be most useful when she's closer to them. Just a day **in** the house and she already found something that could be useful. Plus, I would **have** shown myself to Williams **sooner** or later, doing it now doesn't change much."

Paul sighed, "Okay, sir. Just be careful and—"he hesitated, unsure whether or not to say what he wanted to say.

Noticing his hesitation, Davis turned to **Paul**, "We've been together for a very long time now, Paul. Nothing you say could upset me; I know **it** comes from a place of concern so please don't act as though we're strangers when we're alone," he told him.

"If you say so, Davis," Paul said. "I don't trust Anna."

Davis raised a brow at him, puzzled by his words. "And why is that? You were the one who did a background check on her and confirmed she's clean or did you find something new on her?" **he** questioned, **a** bit worried.

"She is clean to the extent we need her to be, but I don't trust her feelings for the enemy. She's a woman who suffered in a loveless **marriage** for two years, yet didn't leave even when she knew her

husband was out with someone else—"

"I'm just saying if I have this thought, then the Monroes probably have too and I don't trust she won't fall into Daniel's arms if he puts effort into winning her back. She's a ticking time bomb **that can't** be left alone with the Monroes for too long," he finished. Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Davis leaned back in his seat again, "I completely forgot about that," he muttered, massaging his temples. "I guess now I'll have to keep an eye on her."

## 16 THE INVITATION

11

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Paul continued, "Exactly, sir. You might have to start staying in their house **more** and if I must add, you both are not giving off the impression that you're married. This will only lead them to assume **she's** an easy prey—"

-I don't **know** much about real-life romance, **but I** wouldn't believe it if I was told you and Anna are married out of love. You're always apart and even when together, you barely do anything." he

concluded.

Davis winced. "I **can't** believe I've been so foolish about this," he said with a sigh. "I didn't think

about how hard it would be to feign love. I'll have to discuss this with her."

"Yes, sir."

"Wait a minute-" Davis faced Paul, raising a suspicious brow at him, "-since when did he become a romance expert?" he asked.

Paul coughed, trying to hide his embarrassment, "I've been doing a lot of research about it through romance movies," he told him.

"And why is that? Is there someone you're interested in chasing after?" Davis asked, surprise written

over his face.

all

"I have no time for such, Davis," Paul stated. "I'm just doing it so I can assist you better with your task of faking love."

Davis's lips curled up in a small smile. "I don't know what I'd do without you, Paul. Thank you.

## 35

Paul nodded and then brought out an invitation letter from his pocket. "You can start from this," he said as he handed the invitation letter to Davis who stared at it sceptically.

"What's this?" Davis asked as he collected the letter from Paul.

"Every year you're invited, you decline the invitation because you don't want to reveal your identity, but now that you've already revealed it, you should attend this year's party with Anna and introduce her as your wife," Paul said to him. "It'll speak volumes about how much you supposedly love her since it's strictly by invite but you still bring her along."

Davis stared at the invitation letter distastefully. Do I really need to do this?

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## Chapter 17

17 THE CONFRONTATION.

Davis pulled up at **Anna's** mansion. Usually, he'd return to the house at night so he didn't have to see any of the Monroes, but he was a bit earlier that night; he had a party to get to later that night with

Anna.

This time she wasn't waiting for him with a smile **since** it was still early in the **morning**. Frank had insisted he take the invitation to her immediately. "Davis," a voice called him, cheerful as though they were glad to see him back.

He turned back to see Kyra approaching me and **a** frown made its way to his face. Now what does she want?

"You're back rather early today," she observed **as** she **stood** in front of him, crossing her arms beneath her full chest. She was in a top with a V-neck that stopped at her belly button.

He didn't reply and just stared at her with a "What do you want?" expression.

She cleared her throat and stepped closer to him, "I'm just curious as to why you married Anna," she began, "I don't think you two love each other, you know, so why are **you** married? And I hope you know how obsessed she is with my brother-"

"It's not a coincidence she **wanted** you to get this house for her; it's just because she wants to be in the same house with him and-" she trailed **a** finger down his chest, "-I doubt she takes care of you properly in bed. If you haven't touched her yet, which I doubt you have, she's a virgin and someone like her will be unable to satisfy you."

She moved closer to him, her breasts pressed against **his** chest, "You need someone like-"

Davis held her **hand** just as she was about to grab his crotch, his eyes darkening as he tightened his grip on her hand. "And what gives you the right to meddle in my personal affairs?" he questioned, his tone low and venomous.

"1-1 was just... I was just trying to look out for you," she stuttered, wincing in pain at how tight he was holding on to her arm.

"I don't need you or your family to look out for me," he threw her to the floor. "I have myself and my wife, and our sexual relationship **has** nothing to do with you. And the next time you disrespect her, you'll be kicked out of this house with nowhere to go," he turned away from her and entered the house.

"Are you kidding me?" Kyra scoffed, dusting herself as she got up from the floor. "How could he reject him like that? He didn't even bother to look at me."



She nodded her head, folding her arms across her chest **as** she stared at the door he went through. "I'm going to get you, Davis and you'll be begging for my love, I promise you." She was in her car, about to head out when **she** saw him come in and so she returned to it and drove out.

"I will get *you*

Davis Solorante."

## 17 THE CONFRONTATION

2/3

"Welcome back, sir," a maid said, her head bowed as her feet trembled.

Davis stared at her for a while before looking away. "Is my wife in?" he questioned.

"y-yes s-sir," she stuttered, her head still bowed.

And who else is in the house?" he asked.

"No one,

sir."

He nodded. "You may leave," he said and she sped out of the room as though she was being chased. He stared after her, wondering if he should change the househelps since they had been hired by the

Monroes.

"That's not important right now," he muttered **as** he went up the stairs to the room he shared with Anna. He raised his hand to knock but remembered they were supposed to be **married**.

Although there's no one in the house, I don't trust these maids aren't reporting things to the

Monroes.

His eyes suddenly lighted up as an idea dropped in his mind. "If they are watching us and reporting

what we do and how **we** act to their employers, then we can use them to make them believe we're in

love.”

The Monroes weren’t always indoors and since night was the only time they were all in the house together, he couldn’t put on a show for them.

He turned the doorknob and entered the room.

“What the hell, Da-” Anna jumped **out** of bed but halted in her words when she saw it was Davis. She let out a sigh of relief, “It’s **just** you.

H

She had been reading **a** book in a transparent gown. It **was** usually what she wore to sleep, but since there was no one around, she put it on as it was comfortable.

Davis dropped his briefcase on the dressing table, his eyes darkening as he approached her. “Were you expecting someone?” he questioned.

I’m sure she **was** going to say Daniel. Was Paul right?

She took **a** step **back**, “No, I wasn’t. I was just surprised someone entered my room without knocking, **and** I didn’t expect you to be back so early.”

He raised a brow at her. “And why did you think I was Daniel?”

She looked away from him, trying to think up an excuse. “I didn’t mention his name. You must have

misheard.”

He grabbed her by her shoulders and pulled her close to him. “Answer my question, Anna. Has he been in this room before?” [Search the \(F\)indNOVEL.net website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

## 17 THE CONFRONTATION

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Her eyes widened at his accurate deduction. She tried to mask her shock, but it was too late. “So he’s been in here and what happened while he was here.”

“Nothing,” she said quickly.

**He** scoffed, “I don’t **fancy** people lying to me, Anna. You had better tell me what I need to know. What happened while he was here?”

“We just talked, Davis,” she said. “He tried to make a move on me and maybe we nearly kissed, but nothing happened after that.”

Davis let go of her shoulders and ran his hands through his hair. “You...” he trailed off, his voice filled with fury.

“Nothing happened, I swear it,” Anna said in a soft voice.

“We might be faking this Marriage, Anna, but I can’t have you ruin my plan by sleeping around with the same person you’re to destroy,” he said through gritted teeth. “I don’t give a damn who you fuck, but right **now**, you’re my wife and I can’t have you causing any scandal.”

“I know and it won’t happen again, okay? Nothing even happened, Davis.”

“Kyra said you’re a **virgin**, is that true?” His question threw her off guard.

Since when did he start talking to Kyra? She wanted to ask, but it didn’t seem like the right time and knowing Kyra, it was clear she approached him first.

Davis removed his tie and unbuttoned his shirt. “If you’re so starved for sex, I’ll give it to you. Take your clothes **off**.”

“What?” her face fell. She felt like she had just been slapped.

He lifted her **off** her feet. “What the hell! Put me down!” she yelled in a whisper. “Davis, stop this.”

He dropped her on the bed and threw his shirt to the floor. “If you won’t take your clothes off, I’ll do it for you.”

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## Chapter 18

18 LILY HAS HAD ENOUGH

“Get off “With all the strength in her, she pushed him off her, “-me! What is wrong with **you**?” she yelled, before bringing her voice down.

Davis massaged his temples. “You’re attending an exclusive party with me tonight. It’s a party for only the elite of the elites in the business industry,” he straightened up and

continued, "Although it's strictly by invitation, you're coming so I can announce you're my wife."

*How*

could he just ignore the fact that he just attacked **me**? She didn't respond to him and instead glared at him. Asshole.

He looked her in the eyes. "This means all eyes will be on you starting now so don't go doing anything stupid," he paused before adding, "especially since Williams and Daniel will be there."

"I **won't**," **she** said through gritted teeth, a forced smile on her face.

"I'll send you **money** to get ready and pick you up at 8 pm tonight," **he** said and stood there for **a** while as though he wanted to say something, before sighing and leaving the room.

He got **in** his car and let out a groan. "I shouldn't have done that," he admitted.

Although he had gotten mad at her, most of his anger was directed at himself for not taking into consideration her feelings for Daniel.

"I was so foolish to have believed she took revenge because she was over him," he sighed, hoping his plan wouldn't backfire. **If** it came to it, he'd **have** to handle her as well.

He'd usually work alone, but he was tired of waiting and she was the only **one** who could work from inside the family. "Don't make me regret working with you, Anna," he said as he dialled Paul.

"**What** do you need, sir?" Paul asked.

"Send five—no, ten million dollars to **Anna's account**," Davis instructed.

Realizing what it meant, Paul asked, "You're not accompanying her **to** get ready for the event?"

After what I did, I couldn't face her yet. "No, I have other things to take care of. Besides, I'm already picking her up."

"Okay, sir," Paul said and hung up. Putting his phone back in his pocket, he shook his head in frustration. "Will he be able to pull this off?"

He had been with Davis for nearly all his life and knew he excelled at whatever he put his mind to, but he doubted he'd be able to pull off **his** act with Anna.

Perhaps he'd be able to fake the marriage, but be in love? As someone who had been isolated and had further isolated himself from the joys of life, he knew nothing about love or romance.

He immediately wired the ten million to Anna and turned to face a pale man who was bound before him. His body was marked with several fresh scars that were still bleeding and he looked half-dead

2/1

## 18 LILY HAS HAD ENOUGH

with his chapped lips and sunken eyes. Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Paul squatted in front of him, produced a knife from his pocket and hit the bloody man's head with the butt. "You've rested long enough, time for the next round," he boomed.

The man's eyes snapped open as he looked around in a frenzy. "Please, let me go!" he pleaded, struggling to break free from the ropes that bound him to the pole.

"I will, once you tell me who sent you; I already did this before so stop making this hard for yourself," Paul said with a tired groan.

The man immediately went mute and after a while, spoke. "I can't say," he said through gritted teeth.

"You really are stubborn, aren't you?" Paul nodded with a sigh, "Fine then. Let's begin the next round then. Bring in the acid, salt and pepper!" he yelled out to the men around him **as** he drew a line

on the man's arm with his knife.

"Please, please! Don't!" the man yelled frantically as he struggled even harder, not caring it was making him sustain more cuts from the knife. What was coming was a lot **worse**.

"Then speak," Paul said softly.

"Fine... I'll talk," he finally caved in and Paul took back his knife.

AJIA

"I'm telling you, he's such a jerk! Even Daniel didn't treat me that bad," Anna fumed with a scoff **as** she finished her rant and plopped down on Lily's bed.

“Why aren’t you saying anything?” Anna questioned when Lily didn’t say anything.

“So you’re telling me Daniel is better than Davis?” Lily asked after a while, a deep frown on her face.

**Anna** nodded fervently, “Precisely.”

Lily let out a sigh, “I’m sorry, Anna, but I can’t support you on this one,” she said in a serious tone.

“I know you don’t-” Anna started.

“Just stop with your nonsense already,” Lily snapped, catching Anna off-guard.

“It’s your life, which is why I watched you get married to that piece **of** garbage two years ago because you wouldn’t listen to me. For two years, I bared your delusions and the lies you made up to cover up how he was mistreating you-

-And now, you’re finally out of that goddamn marriage and you’re even taking revenge on him and **his** family for using and disposing of you like you didn’t give your all to them, but what did you say after I warned you about him taking advantage of your feelings?”

“Lily, I didn’t invite him in, he just came in,” Anna defended herself.

“Yeah, you didn’t, but **you** should have immediately chased him out of your room. What would have happened had I not shown up then? Would you have gone all the way with him?” she questioned.

18 LILY HAS HAD ENOUGH

3/3

Anna hesitated for a while, before answering in an unsure tone. “No.”

Lily scoffed, “You can’t even be sure of yourself. I get it, Anna, you love him. I’ve been in love too but when it became toxic, I left. It took a very long time, but I actively tried to get over him-”

-I barely like Davis, mainly because I don’t know him and he’s just rude, but he has every right to get angry at you. Although he’s super secretive, it’s clear his business with the Monroes is no joke and he’s serious about taking revenge on them so you knowingly or unknowingly fooling around with Daniel isn’t something he’ll take well-”

“-Besides, you claim you want him to trust you so you can work better with him but how exactly do you think that’ll happen with all these?” she sighed and sat next to Anna, “I

know you love Daniel but don't tell me you're trying to get over him because deep down, you're trying to find a way to win him back-

"-And that is what makes me so annoyed." Anna was unable to speak because Lily was right about everything.

"Of course, that doesn't excuse Davis's action towards you, that's just him being an asshole but you are being unfaithful. Fake marriage or not, he's now your husband, so you can't try to sleep with other men, especially the enemy. It'll create a weakness Daniel can take advantage of," Lily said.

"I... I don't know what to say," Anna said.

"Just think about it and bury your feelings for that piece **of** shit who wants to use you again, then trash you. But you can do all that after we go shopping for **the** gown you'll wear to the party," Lily said and Anna nodded.

"Yeah, let's go," she muttered.

"Don't think about it too much, Anna. Just run when you see Daniel, even **if** he's drowning," Lily said as she locked the front **door**.

A smile lit Anna's face. "I'll try that"

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## Chapter 19

### 19 SOLORANTE, A NAME THAT HOLDS POWER

"You. Look. Breathtaking!" Lily squealed as she applied the finishing touches of the make-up. "Mehn! **Beauty** school paid off after all," she said with a proud smile settled on her face.

"I nearly forgot you learnt so many skills over the years," Anna said, "It's a wonder you're still jobless."

"That's because **I** refuse to **do** something I do not find passion for and my passion for those things died a long time ago, although I think being a detective is more my forte," she stroked her chin, pretending she was deep in thought.

Anna rolled her eyes as she **stared** at her reflection in the mirror. “Don’t you think the make-up is a bit much?” she questioned, poking her cheek only for Lily to slap her fingers like she was a child attempting to eat bar soap.

“Ow! What was that for?” Anna yelled, shooting her glare as she resumed looking at her **make-up**.

“Are you trying to ruin my work of art by touching it?” Lily said as she dabbed the side she had poked.

“Oh boy!” Anna said with an eye roll, “More make-up.”

“Now you look gorgeous,” Lily beamed.

“**So** what did I look like before?” Anna raised a brow.

know-”

Lily held her hands in hers, **a** smile on her face. “Come on, you proud smile played **at** Anna’s lips, “-that you look like the **Grinch**.

13

Anna’s smile fell, “The Grinch is attractive in case you didn’t know,” she retorted, but Lily stuck out her tongue at her.

here!

“Have you called him to let him know he’s to pick you up Lily asked

Anna nodded. “Yeah, I sent him a text.” **SEAR\*ch** the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“Has he seen it?”

“Yeah. Anyway, I forgot to mention that we should release the recording tonight,” Anna said and Lily’s eyes lit up.

“I thought I’d never hear those words,” she chirped, resisting the urge to scream for joy. She calmed herself and asked, “Why tonight though?”

“Davis **mentioned** Daniel and Williams will be at the event today. It’d be even more scandalous and **embarrassing** if the scandal happened in the middle of such an important event after all, everyone **who** is someone will be **there**,” Anna said with a smile on her face as she pictured his horrified face **and** the **chaos** that would ensue when he returned home to challenge Rence.



‘Now I wish I was attending the event **and** living at your mansion,” Lily groaned, “But I’m just glad we’re finally doing this. I already divided the recordings and had the one we’re releasing locked and

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loaded for release to the world.”

201

Anna chuckled, “You’re something else, to, are you just going to post it anonymously ?” she asked.

Lily shook her head negatively, “Nah, I’m going to anonymously send it as a tip to Whisper Maven.. Since they’re so popular, It’ll go viral Immediately and they reply to your messages almost immediately so they’ll see the tip early,” she said as she scrolled through her phone.

She looked up at Anna, “Do I send it now or what?” she asked.

“Nah! It’ll be better if you send it when Davis and I leave the party,” Anna said. Just then, they heard the honking of a car.

Lily rushed to the window and came back with a big smile on her face, “Your date is here,” she squealed.

Anna’s lips pursed into a thin line, “It’s just Davis,” she said, standing up from the table, frowning at the excess makeup on her face, “If he does anything stupid, I’m wiping my face on his outfit.”

“You beautifully devious thing,” Lily chuckled as she adjusted the straps of her gown.

\*\*stop acting as though I’m getting married,” Anna said with a light chuckle when Lily locked her arms with hers as they descended the stairs.

smiling a little. You’re supposed to be attending an event with your husband who you’re in love with,” Lily whispered as they got outside and met Davis leaning against his car in **his** sharp charcoal

tuxedo.

The clean lines and silky lapel gave a classic vibe, and the touch of midnight blue in the pocket square added a stylish touch, with his polished black shoes completing the look with a confident finish.

“He looks effortlessly cool and classy,” Lily said dreamily.

Anna rolled her eyes, “Oh, please! He’s not that good-looking,” she said.

In all honesty, he’s a work of art.

“I thought you’d never come down,” Davis said in a teasing tone, making Anna raise a brow

Lily elbowed her in the side, “You’re his wife, remember?” she whispered. Davis walked towards them, a smile on his face.

“Wow! No wonder we’ve never seen him smile,” Lily said, “He probably doesn’t want to take all the girls. I mean, look at that smile

“It’s just a smile,” Anna said, a fake smile plastered on her face.

Why are the red flags always good looking and why do they have the most adorable smiles?

“I hope you don’t mind me borrowing your friend,” Davis said to Lily as he stretched out his hand to

Anna.

“She’s all yours,” Lily giggled, placing Anna’s palm in his.

19 SOLORANTE, A NAME THAT HOLDS POWER

30

Davis pulled her close to him, wrapping his arm around her waist, “You look breathtaking,” he said **in** a whisper, taking her breath away.

“T–thank you,” she stuttered. Clearing her throat, she added, “You also look good tonight.”

“We should get going now so we don’t miss out on all the fun,” **Davis** said **and** they both made their way to the car.

“Bye!” Lily yelled as they got into the car. “Mehn! They look really good together.” She headed back inside the house as the car drove off.

^^^

“I should have probably said this before but I can’t slow dance just **in** case we’ll have to do that, after all, I haven’t been to such an event before,” Anna said **as** they pulled up to

a mansion that was a bit smaller than hers, but one look at it was all it took for her to know hers paled **in** comparison to it.

“You’re lucky I’m **a good** teacher then,” he said as he got out of the car.

She opened the door at her side and got down to see him staring at her with a blank face. “Oh,” her mouth formed an ‘O’ when she realized. “You were coming to open the door for me? But that’s not necessary is it?” she asked with a light chuckle.

“I guess you are right,” he said with a smile. After locking the car, he took her arm in his and they walked toward the entrance where two huge bouncers stood guard.

“By the way, are **you** sure I **won’t** be sent home or something?” she asked nervously, holding onto him tighter as they got closer to the bouncers.

He placed his palm on hers, “You won’t be embarrassed so relax. I’m here, okay?” he said reassuringly.

She gave him a thankful smile **as** they continued their journey towards the bouncers. Although she found his sudden **change** in attitude awkward, she was glad he wasn’t being his cold self at that

moment.

“Name,” The bouncer boomed, startling Anna. Davis gave her hand a light squeeze,

“**Davis** Solorante.”

The bouncers’ eyes widened but they immediately composed themselves. “Welcome, Mr. Solorante.” They glanced at Anna, their eyes darting between both of them.

“She’s my wife, Anna Solorante and she’s not on the list,” Davis said.

“Since she’s with you, she can go in,” The bouncer with the list said. “**Go** through the door at the end. of the hallway.”

Davis gave him a light nod. “Thank you,” he turned to Anna with **a** sweet smile. “Let’s go **in**, darling.

Anna nodded with **a** smile as they entered and went through the door.

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## Chapter 20

20 RUN!

Anna burst into laughter the moment they went through the door. She looked around to see if there was anyone around and when she saw it was just them, she continued laughing.

Davis stared at her like she had gone mad. "What's funny?" he finally asked when she reduced her laughter.

"She's my wife, Anna Solorante, and she's not **on** the list," she mimicked him. "I don't know why but that sounded so funny and it was incredibly amusing the way they let me in just like that; it's incredible."

"Now you know the sort of power I hold," he said like it was nothing.

"I should take advantage of my marriage to you to the fullest," she said and before he could ask what her words **meant**, she was walking towards the door at the end of the hallway.

He stared at her, shook his head and briskly walked toward her. He took her hands in his when they arrived at the door.

"What am I supposed to do?" she asked, worry etched in her voice. "I don't know anything about business or your **world**."

"Just smile and do whatever you want so far it doesn't cause problems for me, and also, don't let the

knowledge that this **is** a part for elites deceive you into thinking they're responsible or proper

humans-"

"Majority of them are downright **scums-**

Π

"Like you," she muttered under her breath, but he heard her.

"I apologize for my actions earlier today," he said in defeat.

She raised a brow, nodding in approval as a smile spread across her face, "I apologize too and I take my words back," she said, "So, what were you saying about scums." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"When I said you looked breathtaking, I wasn't kidding-" he said with a blank expression, making it hard for **Anna** to take his word for the truth. "-so I'd advise you to be careful if somehow we get separated."

"How long are we going to be here?" she asked.

"Not long, why?" he asked.

She gave him a mischievous smile. "You'll find out."

He nodded his head and turned to face the door. "Let's go in now," he said and pushed the door open.

The party pulsed with soft, golden light, casting a warm glow over the hall. Laughter and animated conversations filled the air, weaving a lively tapestry of social energy.

20 RUN

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The delicate clinking of glasses and the distant hum of music created an atmosphere of refined celebration. Intricate decorations adorned the space, adding a touch of luxury to the already elegant.

ambience.

"Wow! This place **is** amazing. Everything is just beautiful," **Anna observed**, looking around the room.

"They might find you more amazing than the room," he said **to** her and that was when Anna noticed all eyes were on them.

She descended the stairs, along with Davis, in her gown, a cascade of shimmering silk that hugged her petite **figure** with elegance. The fabric, a dance of midnight blues and silver threads, caught the light with every step, turning more heads. Completing the ensemble, her accessories glinted like stars.

"Well, this is unnerving," she said, a forced smile on her face as they reached the very bottom of the

stairs.

"Try to stay calm," he said as his eyes scanned the crowd.

"Mr. Solorante!" Anna turned to her left where the hysterical scream was coming from to **see a short**, but fit man dashing in their direction.

“Mr. Solorante?”

“He finally attended after years of being invited.”

“Is she his girlfriend?”

“Who’s the lady next to **him?**”

“I finally got a chance to see him.”

“I heard he was a troll, but he’s so handsome.”

Whispers came from all directions. “Are they trying to whisper or do they want you to hear them?” Anna asked Davis who appeared unmoved by the discussions.

“What does it matter?” he said. He had expected the reaction and so wasn’t moved by them. All he wanted was to establish his marriage to Anna **and** get out of there.

“And who’s the **man** headed towards us?” she asked, worried he’d trip with the way he ran.

“The organizer of the party, Richard Peterson,” Davis said.

“Oh,” Anna slowly nodded.

“You don’t know him, do you?”

“No, I don’t,” she shrugged.

“Mr. Solorante,” Richard stopped in front of them, panting as he tried to regulate his breathing.

“Mr. Peterson-“Davis took his hand in a handshake. “-thank you for inviting **me** to your party.”

20 RUN!

3/4

“No, no, I should be thanking you for finally showing **up**. **It’s a pleasure** to meet **you**,” Peterson said in admiration, before noticing Anna who stood awkwardly, uncomfortable with the stares she was

getting.

“And who is this dazzling lady over here?” he asked.

Davis wrapped his hand around Anna's waist, pulling her closer to himself. "She's my wife," he said

with a proud smile **on** his face.

Richard's eyes widened in shock. "Is getting married in secret the new trend these days?" he chuckled. "Perhaps I should do the same."

Davis and Anna chuckled at his words. "Mr. Solorante, I'd like for you to meet a few people if you don't mind," Richard said with hopeful eyes.

Davis nodded. "Of course I don't, so far my wife gets **to** come with me," he said and added, "I can't stay away from her for far too long."

"Of course, it's no problem," Richard said.

"It's fine," Anna quickly said, "I need to use the restroom anyway, **so** you both should go ahead. Just **call** me when you're done, okay?" she said to Davis, kissing him on the cheek.

He had better not mention this later on.

"Okay, be careful," he said sweetly, pulling her in for a hug. "I don't know what you're doing, but be

careful. I mean it."

She wasn't sure if it came from a place of care or if he just didn't want her to mess up his reputation, but she still smiled at him and pulled away. "Take care, Mr. Peterson," Anna said, watching as they left.

Davis turned to look at her as he left. What is she thinking of leaving my side?

Anna let out a sigh of relief. She felt so awkward standing there unable to add anything to their conversation. She didn't want to go with them only to stand and smile like a doll because she didn't understand what they were discussing.

"I'll just hide in the hallway or something till all these die down," she muttered when she saw some ladies approaching her.

re **you**

She immediately headed for the door only for someone to block her path. "What the hell are doing here? Especially when you most definitely weren't invited." Daniel questioned in bewilderment.

"My husband brought me here," she said, taking a step back from him.

Daniel's brow furrowed in annoyance at the way she addressed Davis, but he couldn't say anything because she was right. "Why would he bring you here?"

"Unlike someone else, he's proud to have me as a wife and loves me enough to show me off. Does that answer your question?" she said with a scoff.

20 RUNI

"Yeah..." he trailed off. "You look gorgeous by the way."

"Thank you," she said and walked away. Lily had said to run *if* she saw him and she planned on taking her advice.

She entered the hallway and walked down it, wondering where its branches led to. She turned back when she heard the door creak open and saw it was Daniel.

"Can we talk?" he said.

"Hell no," she muttered and without thinking, dashed down the nearest hallway.

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