

The Mocked Miss's Hidden Crowns – Chapter 2 |

What a pain to find this place. Tucked away in the middle of nowhere, it felt like the universe was trying to keep people out. The car had broken down halfway up the mountain, and Aaron was lucky to hitch a ride in some rusty old clunker just to get here.

"Let's go." The words drifted over, making Aaron turn around on instinct. He froze, still holding his sleeve to his sweaty forehead, and stared at the girl coming toward him.

Was this really the person Anthony wanted him to pick up? She looked so young. Was that even possible?

While Aaron stood there, lost for words, the girl didn't wait. She opened the car door, tossed her backpack inside like she owned the place, and climbed in without a second glance.

"...Huh?" Aaron blurted out, confused.

"Aren't you the one taking me to Cabinda?" she asked, barely giving him a look. Charlotte slipped into the back seat, buckled up, and closed her eyes.

"There's a storm coming in thirty minutes. If we don't leave now, we'll get stuck on the mountain."

Cabinda. That was the right place. Aaron ran a hand through his hair, trying to wrap his head around it. Was this quiet, young girl really the legendary "Healer" everyone talked about? He couldn't help but wonder if he was being scammed.

But the location checked out, and the clouds overhead looked ready to burst. Aaron decided not to risk it. He got in and hit the gas, the car rumbling away down the mountain road.

Just as their car disappeared around the bend, a bearded man carrying a medical bag came jogging up, breathing hard. "Where's the ride? Did they leave already?"

Zoe didn't even try to hide her annoyance. She grabbed her son, who was sniffing and wiping his nose, and gave the man a glare. "Come on, let's go home. Stay away from that quack."

The so-called "Healer" was famous in the village, but not in a good way. People joked that anyone he treated seemed to end up worse off. It sounded like he'd found another gullible victim this time.

As Zoe and her son stepped into their house, there was a sudden, sharp creak

overhead. Without warning, a heavy wooden beam crashed down from the ceiling, landing right on top of them.

"Aaah-"

Her son was completely unscathed. Zoe, though, screamed in pain as her leg broke under the weight.

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The sun burned overhead, but a thin drizzle made the air sticky and hot. The car sped along the highway, spraying water in its wake.

Charlotte had dozed off for a bit. When she woke, she reached into her bag and pulled out a tablet from a hidden pocket.

The screen flickered on, lighting up with messages from a group chat called "Family Ties."

Adonis: @Nine, someone's asking around about you. Wants to hire you to treat a dying old woman. You in?

Adonis: @Nine, someone's pretending to be you and already took the job. Want me to stop them?

Charlotte barely glanced at the screen. Not interested.

Adonis: @Nine, seriously? It's ten million. You're sure?

Nine: You need the money?

Adonis: @Nine... Come on, think about it. That's ten million...

Adonis: @Nine, ?

["Adonis" has been removed from the group chat.]

The rest of the group went silent.

Charlotte sighed, her patience wearing thin. She turned off the car's Wi-Fi,

tossed the tablet back in her bag and stared out the window at the gloomy sky.

It looked just as dark as the day she first came here. But she wasn't the same Charlotte anymore.

Aaron kept sneaking glances at the rearview mirror. Charlotte was

sitting perfectly straight, knees

together, arms folded in her lap The breeze from the window played with her
long, silky hair, making her delicate features even more striking. Content

Were all mountain healers this mysterious? She was nothing like he expected.

Charlotte must have dozed off again,

car She woke up to the

let

car bouncing over potholes before.. jerking to a sudden stop s novels

Her lips pressed into a thin line. She opened her eyes, her gaze icy and sharp.

"We're here, Miss Healer!" Aaron called as he got out and hurried to open her
door. Charlotte frowned, looked up at him, and asked coolly, "Who?"