

Trading My Ex for His Uncle

Chapter 421

Seeing Nyla so agitated, Spencer spoke up. "Nyla, do you have anything else to say?"

Nyla didn't respond to him. Instead, she looked directly at Melody and asked, "You're sure the 30,000 dollars I gave you was hush money, right?"

For a brief moment, Melody's expression faltered, but she quickly nodded. "I'm sure."

"Okay." Nyla calmly pulled out her phone. "I recorded our call last night."

As soon as she said that, Melody's face turned pale.

Gabriel, sitting nearby, tensed up, his expression darkening. His eyes narrowed, and his hands clenched on the table instinctively.

He hadn't expected this-Nyla had been cautious enough to record the conversation even in that situation.

Nyla placed her phone on the table and played the recording. The voices from the call echoed through the dead-silent conference room. The more it played, the paler Melody became.

When the recording ended, Nyla put away her phone and looked coldly at Melody. "If you don't want to admit it, I can show the timestamp of the recording. Or we can call the police and have them pull the phone records." With every word Nyla uttered, Melody was ashen with despair.

The room fell into an uncomfortable silence. All eyes were on Melody, and the looks of disdain and suspicion felt like needles piercing her skin. She wished she could disappear.

"It's obvious Melody's the one responsible for the data leak. Why else would she accuse Nyla?"

"Typical-women always scheming against each other. So petty!"

"Well, if she leaked the data, she should pay the price! Let her cover the company's losses. If she can't, then lock her up for years!"

The murmurs around Melody pushed her to the brink of breaking down. Her eyes filled with tears as she looked at Nyla, guilt and regret written across her face.

"Nyla, I'm sorry. The real person who leaked the data was "

Before she could finish, she caught sight of Gabriel toying with a gold ring in his hand. Her hands clenched tightly at her sides. She knew he was threatening her.

If she exposed him, her mother would be in danger.

Tears welled up in Melody's eyes as she choked out, "The person who leaked the data... was me. Whatever punishment the company decides, I'll accept it."

Nyla stared at her, her gaze devoid of emotion. She had trusted Melody, and this was how she was repaid-with a knife in her back.

"Why did you leak the company's data to Contelligence?" Nyla asked.

Clearly not expecting the question, Melody froze for a moment before looking away. "Why else? For money, of course."

"But the company already

investigated. Neither you nor your family received any large sums of money recently. How did you even get in touch with them? And why did you use my computer to send the

data? Plus, why would they choose to release the data now? Doing so doesn't benefit them at all, does it?" Nyla pressed.

When Melody admitted to the leak earlier, Nyla instinctively doubted it was really her. It felt too much like someone was orchestrating the whole thing to frame her.

Besides, she had always trusted her instincts.

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Melody stood frozen for a moment, stunned by Nyla's questions.

After a long pause, she finally spoke. "Does it really matter? As long as you know I did it, isn't that enough?"

"Of course it matters. When the police come, they'll ask for these details too. If your answers don't match Contelligence's, it will be clear someone else is behind this," Nyla replied.

If Contelligence had been interested in Prospectus Technology's research data from the start, they wouldn't have made it public. They'd know it would lead to a lawsuit. The fact that they released it meant they never intended to keep it. Their goal was simply to target Prospectus Technology.

More importantly, Nyla had checked the security footage after growing suspicious of Melody.

Melody had been delivering meals to her from the cafeteria every day, and the surveillance had never cut out. There had been no opportunity for her to drug Nyla's food or drink.

Melody bit her lip and took a deep breath. "Then I'll answer those questions when the police arrive."

Her evasiveness only deepened Nyla's suspicions. Still, if Melody refused to talk, there wasn't much she could do.

The police arrived shortly after and took Melody away. As she passed Nyla, she muttered, "Nyla, I'm sorry. You don't have to forgive me."

After Melody was led out, the others in the meeting room began to leave

Nyla was about to go when Damon stopped her.

"Do you really think Melody is responsible?" he asked. [Search The Findnøvel.net](http://SearchTheFindnøvel.net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Now that it was just the two of them, Nyla looked at him and shook her head. "I think someone else is behind this."

"Do you have any suspects?" Damon pressed.

Nyla hesitated for a moment before lowering her voice. "I suspect Gabriel."

She had resisted the thought for a long time, as she and Gabriel had once had a friendly relationship. She didn't want to believe he would hurt her. But no one else made sense now.

Damon nodded. "The week before

the data leak he was ordering two

cups of coffee every day at lunch.

But the day after your computer was sent the email, he stopped.

set to

Also according to his medical records overseas, he's been treated for insomnia."

Nyla's face darkened.

During that time, both she and Melody had been busy with experiments, and it was true that Melody had regularly ordered coffee for them.

Nyla had never been suspicious because the coffee always came sealed. It hadn't occurred to her that sleeping pills might have been mixed into her drink.

Now it all made sense. Melody had said she ordered the coffee, but if Nyla had known it was from Gabriel, she wouldn't have touched it.

"It must be Gabriel. I need to confront him and ask why he did this to me!" she exclaimed.

Anger surged through Nyla, and she turned to leave, intent on finding Gabriel.

Before she could get far, Damon grabbed her wrist. "Don't rush in. If you confront him now, he'll just deny everything. We need to gather more evidence first. Once we have proof, confronting him will be much

easier."

His words helped calm her. She lowered her gaze and smiled bitterly. "I just don't understand why he would do this to me."

Ever since Gabriel had returned to

the country, he had been treating her

well. If it hadn't been for Wren

constantly causing trouble between

them, she might have even considered him her sibling

She never imagined he'd be plotting to destroy her career and reputation behind her back.

"If you can't make sense of it, don't dwell on it. Just know I won't give him another chance to hurt you again," Damon declared.

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Seeing Nyla's sadness, Damon wanted to pull her into his arms. However, as soon as he touched her, she stepped back.

A flicker of disappointment crossed his eyes as he noticed how she deliberately kept her distance.

"You should head home for now. I've asked Spencer to investigate, and I'll let you know when we have results," he said. "Alright," Nyla answered.

She walked out of Prospectus Technology and saw Gabriel standing by her car, clearly waiting for her. She quickly approached, her attitude as cold as ever. "Do you need something?" "Nyla, have you figured it out?" Gabriel asked.

Nyla looked up at him. "Figured out what?"

"Nothing," he replied.

His gentle facade only made Nyla feel more disgusted. He clearly despised her, yet continued to put on this act. She almost pitied him for how hard he tried.

"If there's nothing else, I'm leaving," she said.

Gabriel nodded. "Alright."

As Nyla's car disappeared from sight, Gabriel finally looked away, got into his vehicle, and headed toward the police station.

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Later that evening, Nyla was making dinner when the doorbell rang unexpectedly. She opened the door to find Damon standing there.

"Mr. Sumner, has Spencer found anything?" she asked.

The moment the door opened, Damon caught the scent of her cooking.

"Are you making dinner?" he asked.

Nyla pressed her lips together. "Yes."

Seeing that she wasn't going to invite him, Damon raised an eyebrow and smiled. "I haven't eaten yet. How about we talk over dinner?"

Since he made it so clear, it would be rude for her to turn him down now.

"Sure," she agreed, stepping aside to let him in. She handed him a new pair of slippers and turned toward the kitchen.

After changing into the slippers, Damon followed her, curiosity flickering in his eyes.

Nyla's apartment was small, a two-bedroom rental. The kitchen was on the left as one entered, with the living room and dining area. straight ahead. The bathroom was at the end of the hallway, flanked by the bedrooms.

The living room wasn't large, but it was cozy.

A small vase with a few yellow roses sat on the coffee table, their buds just beginning to bloom. Drops of water elung to the petals, making them appear even more delicate.

A beige blanket was draped over the sofa, with a couple of soft, cloud-shaped pillows on top, giving the space a warm, inviting feel.

Damon took it all in before turning toward the kitchen.

Nyla was slicing potatoes while a pot of chicken simmered on the stove, steam rising in gentle wisps.

He took off his jacket, rolled up his sleeves, and walked into the kitchen. "Let me help."

Nyla was surprised but shook her head. "No need. I can handle it."

Despite her protest, Damon washed his hands and, without waiting for her to object, took the knife from her and began slicing the potatoes himself.

As she watched him work with more skill and precision than she had, Nyla couldn't help but be impressed.

"I didn't expect you to be so good with a knife," she remarked.

Damon chuckled. "Back when I was starting my business, I didn't have much money to order takeout, so I had to cook for myself."

"Didn't your family help?" she asked, surprised.

Given that he was the most
cherished son of the Sumner family,
Nyla had assumed Richard and
Marie would have supported him

She hadn't expected him to struggle with something as basic as food.

"They didn't," Damon replied. "I didn't want to rely on them. Otherwise, even if my business succeeded, I'd still be under their control."

"Oh." Nyla understood. Depending on family support often meant losing control over your own life-just like Clark.

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Nyla lowered her gaze to the soup bubbling in the pot and fell silent.

The kitchen was quiet, save for the sound of Damon chopping vegetables and the faint hum of the range hood.

When Damon finished slicing the potatoes, Nyla glanced at him. "You can go sit in the living room. I'll handle the rest."

Their relationship wasn't the kind where they should be cooking together. Nyla was already starting to regret not turning him away at the door. Damon stared at her for a few seconds before nodding. "Alright."

Once he left the kitchen, Nyla breathed a sigh of relief. She poured the soup into a bowl, quickly washed the pot, and began stir-frying the potatoes.

About ten minutes later, she brought the dishes out, surprised to find Damon asleep on the sofa. She instinctively softened her footsteps.

After setting the table, Nyla hesitated to wake him. In the end, she decided to give him another 30 minutes. If he was still asleep by then, she'd wake him. Fortunately, Damon woke on his own after just over ten minutes.

At first, there was a brief moment of confusion before clarity returned. He turned to look at Nyla, who was typing on her phone. Clearing his throat softly, he got her attention. "Why didn't you wake me?" he asked.

Nyla looked up, her expression calm. "You were tired and fell asleep on the sofa. I figured I'd give you half an hour before waking you."

Damon hadn't expected to doze off like that. He had been working nonstop and was more exhausted than he realized. Rubbing his temples, he stood up. "Next time, just wake me." Nyla nodded, though she thought to herself there probably wouldn't be a next time.

"Do you want to wash up before we eat?" she asked.

"Sure," Damon replied.

By the time they sat down to eat, it was already past 7:00 p.m.

Damon looked apologetic. "Sorry, I didn't mean to fall asleep like that."

"It's fine. You didn't sleep long. Let's eat," Nyla replied dismissively.

Throughout dinner, Nyla wanted to

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ask about the investigation into the data leak, but Damon seemed

focused on his meal, leaving her no

opening to bring it up.

It wasn't until Damon set down his cutlery that she finally asked, "So, what did you find out about the data leak?"

Seeing her anxious expression,

Damon guessed she'd been holding this question in for a while. His tone turned serious. "We discovered that Gabriel was in contact with Robert Palfrey from Contelligence. Based on their conversations, it's clear he's the one who leaked the data."

Nyla pressed her lips together, showing no excitement despite learning the identity of the culprit.

Since Gabriel had left the country, they hadn't interacted. As far as she knew, she had never done anything to offend him. She couldn't understand why he would do something like this to her.

"What's the company planning to do next?" she asked.

Damon's eyes grew cold. "We're going to formally press charges. And he will certainly not have a future in this industry."

Nyla's grip on her cutlery tightened as she lowered her head in silence.

Noticing her reaction, Damon frowned. "What's wrong? Don't tell me you're feeling sorry for him?"

Nyla shook her head. "No, it's not that. I just don't understand why he did it."

"You don't need to understand. Just know that he wanted to hurt you. Stay away from him from now on, and that's enough," Damon replied. "Okay," Nyla murmured.

After dinner, Damon insisted on helping Nyla clear the table and do the dishes, despite her protests. In the end, she gave up trying to stop him. Once the dishes were loaded into the dishwasher, she turned to him. "It's getting late. You should head home. I'm going to rest soon."

A hint of bitterness flashed through Damon's eyes. "Alright. Don't worry about the data leak anymore. I'll handle everything."

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Chapter 425

Nyla hummed in response. She was about to take out the trash, so she decided to walk Damon downstairs as well.

Damon, wanting to spend more time with her, refrained from offering to take the trash for her.

Nyla's apartment wasn't on a high floor, so despite Damon's intentions, there wasn't much time to linger.

Once they reached the ground floor, Nyla threw the trash into the bin and turned to Damon. "Mr. Sumner, I won't see you off any further."

Without waiting for a reply, she turned and walked away.

Damon watched her retreating figure with a complex expression. He sensed that Nyla had truly let go of their past.

He wasn't sure how long it would take for her to forgive him, but he believed that day would eventually come.

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Back at her door, just as Nyla was about to unlock it, a sudden noise from the stairwell startled her.

She turned to see Gabriel emerging from the hallway, his gaze fixed on her, eyes dark and unreadable.

A wave of unease swept over Nyla as she instinctively fumbled with the lock, trying to get inside. Just as her hand touched it, Gabriel grabbed her wrist. "Let go of me!" she cried, struggling to free herself.

However, his grip was firm, leaving her no chance to escape.

He smirked, his tone calm and deliberate. "Nyla, when we met earlier today, I realized you know I was the one behind it all."

Fear surged through Nyla, draining the color from her face. "Gabriel, I've never done anything to wrong you. Why would you set me up like this?"

As Gabriel met her gaze, his expression softened, his affection no longer hidden.

"Because I want to be with you," he confessed.

Nyla froze, her eyes wide with disbelief. She stared at him as if he had lost his mind.

"Are you crazy?! We're practically siblings! Who ruins someone's life just to be with them?" she demanded.

Gabriel chuckled, gently brushing his hand against Nyla's face, his expression one of pure contentment.

His cold fingers made her shudder, and she slapped his hand away. "Don't touch me!"

Her eyes blazed with anger and disgust. If he had claimed to hate her or seek vengeance for Wren, she wouldn't have been so repulsed. But to say he had orchestrated her downfall just to be with her?

"Nyla, we're not related by blood. When you were with Clark, I was abroad and couldn't come back. After you got married, I had no right to interfere. But now, you're

divorced. Why can't we be together?" Gabriel asked.

Nyla glared at him, trembling with rage. "Because I don't like you."

The moment the words left her mouth, Gabriel grabbed her chin and forced a kiss on her.

Nyla turned her head sharply, and his lips landed on her cheek, making her feel utterly nauseated.

"Gabriel, let go of me! You don't love me. You just want to destroy me!" she cried.

He leaned close to her ear and

whispered, "I just want to be the only your side. Only then will you

one

rely on me."

"You're insane!" Nyla exclaimed.

Gabriel ignored her insults. Smiling, he grabbed her chin again, attempting another kiss.

Nyla's eyes filled with disgust, and though she struggled, it was futile.

Just as Gabriel's lips were about to touch hers, the pressure on her body suddenly vanished.

By the time Nyla realized what had happened, Gabriel and Damon, who had returned, were already fighting.

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Damon stood protectively in front of Nyla, shielding her from Gabriel. All she could see was the back of his head, but the panic inside her began to fade slowly. Instinctively, she grasped the back of his suit jacket, her eyes filling with tears.

Thank goodness he had returned. Otherwise, who knew what Gabriel might have done to her?

Damon glared at Gabriel, his jaw clenched, exuding an icy, intimidating aura.

Meanwhile, Gabriel had completely shed his usual gentle demeanor. He returned Damon's glare with nothing but hostility and contempt.

"Mr. Sumner, juggling getting back together with your ex while messing around with Nyla... The men in your family are all the same, aren't they?" Gabriel sneered. "You're in no position to lecture me. Get lost," Damon shot back, his voice cold and cutting.

Instead of responding, Gabriel turned his gaze to Nyla behind Damon. "Nyla, I won't give up that easily."

"If you ever come near her again, I'll make sure you regret it!" Damon's voice was filled with warning, his eyes blazing with fury.

Gabriel met his gaze without a hint of fear. "Don't worry. I'm sure we'll have plenty of chances to face off in the future."

With that, Gabriel turned and walked away.

As Damon turned to face Nyla, he saw her pale face, clearly still shaken. The coldness in his eyes softened.

"Don't be scared. It's over now," he said gently.

Suddenly, Nyla threw her arms around his waist, her voice trembling. "Mr. Sumner, thank you!"

Damon froze. It took him a few seconds before he slowly placed a hand on her back, softly reassuring her, "It's okay now. I won't let him hurt you again."

As Damon's calm words settled in, Nyla's anxiety began to subside. Realizing how impulsively she had hugged him, she quickly let go, her expression turning awkward. "Mr. Sumner, I'm sorry... I was just really scared..." she explained.

He smiled, his tone warm. "It's fine. I'm glad you felt you could lean on me."

Flustered by the kindness in his eyes, Nyla felt her face heat up and quickly looked away, trying to change the subject. "Oh, by the way, why did you come back?"

"I left my phone on the couch," Damon replied.

"Oh, let me get it for you," Nyla said quickly.

After retrieving his phone, Nyla noticed that Damon didn't seem ready to leave. She asked, "Is there something else you need?"

"This place isn't safe anymore. Gabriel could come back at any time. Do you want me to help you find a new place?" Damon offered. Nyla shook her head. "There's no need for the trouble. I'll reach out to a real estate agent tomorrow."

She had already decided not to stay here after tonight. The idea that Gabriel had such feelings for her made her feel sick.

Initially, she had chosen to live in the

same complex as him so they could easily discuss matters related to her father. Now that she had no intention of reconciling with

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Harrison, and after what Gabriel had done tonight, moving out was the

only option.

Damon frowned. "It's dangerous for e

you to stay here. Stay at my place for a few days, at least until the data leak issue is resolved. Then you can come back for your things.

Seeing the genuine concern in his eyes, Nyla felt momentarily tempted.

However, she quickly composed herself and politely declined, "Thank you, but I'll stay with Valarie for the time being."

After a moment's thought, she added, "I really appreciate you saving me tonight. I owe you a meal sometime."

Damon caught the subtle dismissal

in her words, and his lips tightened into a thin line. "That's not necessary. Just pack a few things-I'll drive you to her place."

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Sensing that Nyla was about to refuse, Damon pressed further, "I'll drive you, or you can stay at my place. Your choice." "I'll call Valarie first," Nyla replied.

She quickly dialed Valarie and briefly explained what had happened, asking if she could stay at her place for a few days.

Valarie, furious, immediately offered to come pick her up.

Just as Nyla was about to agree, Damon calmly took the phone from her hand.

"It's too late for that. I'll take Nyla over. You don't need to come," he said firmly.

There was a moment of silence on the other end of the line before Valarie's voice came through, much louder. "Damon, why are you at Nyla's place?!"

Damon ignored her question. "Just send me the address, Ms. Weir. I'll take care of it."

He hung up and handed the phone back to Nyla, his expression calm. "Go pack your things."

Nyla pressed her lips together as if she wanted to say something. Seeing the calm determination in Damon's eyes, she took the phone and nodded before heading into the bedroom. Less than ten minutes later, she emerged with a small bag.

Damon raised an eyebrow at the bag, which clearly contained no more than a few outfits. "That's all?"

"Yeah. I'm only staying a few days," Nyla answered.

"Alright, let's go," he said, reaching out to take the bag from her.

Nyla pulled it back. "No need, I've got it."

Damon didn't insist. He turned and headed toward the door.

On the way to Valarie's place, Damon reminded Nyla that she could always reach out to him if anything happened.

"We've already confirmed it was Gabriel. I expect the issue with the data leak to be resolved within two weeks, so try not to worry," Damon assured.

Nyla nodded, then hesitated before asking, "Will Prospectus Technology sue Gabriel?"

"Yes. But if he can come up with compensation, there might be a settlement," Damon replied.

Hundreds of millions... That was no small amount. If such a debt fell on Nyla, she wasn't sure she could ever repay it in her lifetime. She doubted Gabriel had that much money either.

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"If he can't pay, will he go to prison?" she asked.

The car stopped at a red light, and Damon turned to look at her. "If he can't pay, then yes, he'll likely face prison time." Nyla's hands clenched tightly in her lap, and her face turned pale.

Damon noticed and frowned. "Are you worried about him?"

"No, not at all. If he ends up in prison, it's his own fault. I just... never thought things would get to this point," she remarked.

She remembered how, when

Harrison first married Wren, she and Gabriel had gotten along quite well. She had believed they would grow into close siblings. It turned out she had been naïve.

Wren never saw her as family, and now even Harrison had chosen to side with Wren. Nyla thought that maybe the day Harrison remarried was the day she lost her home.

"I'll have someone protect you. I won't let him come anywhere near you," Damon said firmly. "There's no need. I'll be safe staying with Valarie," Nyla said, rejecting his offer.

After a moment of silence, Damon's voice came out hoarse. "Nyla, please don't push me away. If I hadn't come back for my phone tonight... I don't want to think about what might have happened. I can't go through that again. I don't want you to be in any danger."

Although he tried to keep his voice steady, Nyla could hear the lingering fear in his tone.

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Damon's jaw was clenched, and his hands gripped the steering wheel so tightly that they turned white.

Nyla turned her head away, feeling a wave of bitterness welling up inside her.

From the moment he chose Rebecca, any possibility between them had disappeared. So why was he acting like this now? Who was he trying to convince?

He had saved her tonight, and she was genuinely grateful. She even felt a bit softened toward him. However, she knew deep down that the gap between them couldn't be bridged just by liking each other.

She also didn't want to experience the heart-wrenching pain of watching someone she loved walk away with someone else again.

"Mr. Sumner, I appreciate your help, but it's really not necessary," Nyla said.

They had broken up, and she didn't want to owe Damon any more than she already did.

Damon abruptly braked and pulled the car over to the side of the road. He turned to face her, his gaze filled with restraint and frustration. "Nyla, can you stop being so stubborn?" he asked.

Nyla frowned, her voice growing colder. "Mr. Sumner, I've told you twice that I don't need your help. Who's the stubborn one here?" "I'm doing this for your safety!" Damon insisted.

"And I've said I'm perfectly safe at Valarie's place," Nyla repeated.

Silence fell over the car, both of them unwilling to back down.

After a tense few moments of staring at each other, Damon finally gave in, starting the car with a cold expression.

Neither of them spoke again, and the atmosphere in the car was frosty.

Nyla considered getting out and calling a cab, but she could sense Damon's fury and didn't dare speak up.

When they arrived at Valarie's place, Nyla turned to him. "Mr. Sumner, thank you for tonight."

Damon stared straight ahead, his profile cold and distant. It was clear he was in a terrible mood.

He hummed in response.

Nyla lowered her gaze as she stepped out of the car, closing the door behind her.

The black Maybach roared to life and sped off the moment she got out.

She watched until Damon's car disappeared from sight before turning back toward the house. Just as she was about to press the doorbell, the front gate swung open, and Valarie hurried out.

"Where's Damon?" Valarie asked, a bit surprised to see Nyla alone, as she took the bag from her hands.

"He left," Nyla replied.

Valarie raised an eyebrow, noticing Nyla's downcast expression. "What happened? Did you two have an argument?"

"Not exactly. We just had a disagreement on the way here," Nyla explained.

"What kind of disagreement?" Valarie inquired.

Nyla briefly outlined the situation, and Valarie shook her head in disbelief. "Well, Damon isn't wrong never would've guessed Gabriel was that twisted. Doing all that because he likes you? Who would believe it?"

"I don't get it either," Nyla said wryly.

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"Don't stress over it. Just focus on resting over the next few days. Once everything settles, I'll help you move your stuff. You could even move in with me! This big house is kind of dull by myself anyway," Valarie suggested.

Nyla couldn't help but smile. "Do you realize how much envy you're inviting with that? I wish I could be as bored as you."

The two chatted as they walked inside, and Valarie showed Nyla to the guest room. "Everything here is new. If you need anything else, just let me know." "Thanks, Valarie. I really appreciate it," Nyla said.

Valarie rolled her eyes playfully. "If you keep thanking me, I might just kick you out."

Nyla chuckled. "Alright, I'll stop."

"You've had a long day. Take a shower and get some rest. Tomorrow, we'll go shopping," Valarie said comfortingly.

After Valarie left, Nyla was about to head to the bathroom when her phone buzzed with a notification.

[Ms. Jayston, that photo has been posted online. It's gaining more and more attention.]

Nyla went online and saw that a headline about Rebecca and Nathaniel was trending. Her eyes turned icy.

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Nyla responded to the message and transferred some money before putting her phone away and heading to the bathroom with her clothes.

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Meanwhile, Damon received a call from Spencer on his way home.

"Mr. Sumner, a gossip account just posted a photo of Ms. Austen and Mr. Preston kissing at a restaurant, claiming she's cheating on you with him. The Internet is blowing up with people saying you've been played. Should we address it?" Spencer reported. Damon's expression remained icy. "Ignore it. Let them handle it themselves."

He had already broken up with Rebecca. Whoever she was with now was none of his concern.

"Understood," Spencer replied.

As soon as Damon hung up, his phone rang again.

Seeing Rebecca's name on the screen, he hesitated but eventually answered. "I assume you've made up your mind about what you want?"

There was a brief silence on the other end before Rebecca's voice, filled with a touch of desperation, came through. "Damon, I called to explain. The picture of me and Nathaniel kissing is fake, taken from a misleading angle by the paparazzi. We're just friends." Damon stopped the car, feeling a flicker of irritation. "Rebecca, we've already broken up. Whoever you're involved with is none of my business, and I don't care."

"Damon, do you really... not feel anything for me anymore?" Rebecca's voice trembled, revealing her disbelief at his apparent finality.

"I'm in love with Nyla now," Damon stated firmly.

"I understand... I won't bother you again," Rebecca replied, her voice breaking.

Damon ended the call and set down his phone, his expression detached as he started the car once more.

Rebecca furiously threw her phone at the wall and collapsed onto her bed in tears. The phone hit the wall with a loud crash before falling to the floor, its screen shattering into pieces.

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It was a long while before the screen lit up again, displaying Nathaniel's name. The ringtone echoed through the room.

Rebecca, her eyes swollen from crying, got up to retrieve the phone. Taking a deep breath, she answered.

"Rebecca, did you see the trending news online? I was in a meeting earlier," Nathaniel asked.

"Yeah, I saw it," Rebecca replied, her voice husky from crying and sounding dejected.

"Should we take this opportunity to go public?" Nathaniel proposed.

Rebecca tightened her grip on the phone.

After a few seconds of silence, she finally spoke. "I'm not ready for that. I just broke up with Damon. If we go public now, people will think I jumped straight into a new relationship..."

Nathaniel's tone grew colder. "So what do you suggest we do?"

"How about... we explain that the paparazzi took the photo from a misleading angle?" Rebecca suggested.

When Nathaniel didn't respond, she frowned in frustration. "Nathaniel, why aren't you saying anything? Don't you agree?"

Nathaniel let out a cold laugh. "You

think I should agree? When you first came back, you immediately got back together with Damon, even though he was still with Nyla. You didn't care what people said about you then. So why are you suddenly afraid of being criticized for moving on too quickly with me?"

His voice was sharp and cutting.

Rebecca's eyes flashed with irritation. How could Nathaniel compare himself to Damon?

Despite her annoyance, she knew Nathaniel was the only one who could help her get rid of Nyla.

"Nathaniel, that's not what I meant. It's not that I want to upset you. I just want us to be on solid ground before we make things official..." she explained.

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Nathaniel cut her off. "If you really don't want to upset me, then go public about your breakup with Damon right now and announce our relationship." Rebecca fell silent, frustration and hesitation flashing in her eyes.

She couldn't understand why Nathaniel, who had always been so accommodating, was suddenly pushing her like this.

She had just told Damon that she and Nathaniel were only friends. If she turned around and made their relationship public, how would Damon perceive her? "Nathaniel, do you really have to force me?" she asked.

Nathaniel chuckled. "Rebecca, it's because you've never given me any security in this relationship that we're at this point. Either you make it public or never show up in front of me again. If I don't see an announcement by 8:00a.m. tomorrow, I'll assume you've made your choice." Before she could respond, he hung up.

Rebecca frantically tried to call him back several times, but he didn't answer. It was clear-he was forcing her to choose.

She was furious but also realized that, aside from Nathaniel's feelings for her, she had nothing else to rely on right now. The idea of going public? She couldn't accept it.

Once she announced her relationship with Nathaniel, it would be nearly impossible to reconnect with Damon in the future. After a sleepless night of contemplation, Rebecca saw no other option and grudgingly posted online.

Her post quickly went viral.

...

The next morning at breakfast, Valarie brought it up. "You wouldn't believe the nonsense Rebecca posted! She said that after getting back with Damon, she realized they had missed too many years and were no longer compatible, so they broke up and stayed friends. The nerve! That's not what she said when she stole Damon from you!"

Nyla quietly took a bite of her bread, her expression calm. "I saw it. But honestly, if Damon hadn't given her the opportunity, she wouldn't have been able to interfere in our relationship in the first place."

Seeing Nyla's composure, Valarie hesitated before speaking again. "Now that Damon has broken up with her... You and Damon..."

"Whether they broke up or not,

there's no chance for me and Damon Right now, my priority is studying for grad school. I'm not interested in relationships at the moment," Nyla replied.

Both Clark and Damon had taught her that relying on romance wasn't enough. She needed to be strong on her own.

"Alright, then," Valarie relented.

They didn't discuss it any further.

After breakfast, Valarie left for work, while Nyla returned to her room to study.

She had barely studied for an hour when she received a call from Wren.

"Nyla, what did you do to Gabriel? Why was he taken by the police?" Wren demanded.

Wren's accusatory tone made Nyla frown.

"Maybe you should ask what Gabriel did to me. And consider why the police took him and not me." With that, Nyla hung up and immediately blocked Wren.

Wren was shaking with anger. She

turned to Son, seething.

"Harrison, your daughter has really grown wings now. Not only has she cut ties with you, but now she's had Gabriel sent to the police! It's like she won't stop until this family is torn apart!"

Harrison frowned, his voice serious. "Go to the police station and find out exactly what's going on. We'll discuss it after we know the full story."

Since the police had taken Gabriel, it must be serious.

Deep down, Harrison still sided with Nyla-after all, the police had been involved.

Wren quickly nodded. "You're right. I'll go to the station and figure out what's happening."

At the police station...

Wren couldn't see Gabriel, but the

police informed her that he had been arrested for leaking Nyla's drug

research data and that Prospectus Technology was planning to sue him. en

Chapter 431

When Wren heard that the compensation could amount to hundreds of millions, her face went pale with fear, and she nearly fainted.

She recalled that when she married Harrison, his pharmaceutical company was valued at about that amount. How could a few leaked data points now be worth the same?

Walking out of the police station in a daze, Wren felt lost, unsure where to go or whom to turn to. If Gabriel ended up in prison, his life would be ruined!

She deeply regretted not preventing him from returning to the country. At least things wouldn't have escalated to this point.

Wait, Nyla!

As Wren considered that all this trouble began because of Nyla, anger flared in her eyes.

She took a cab to Nyla's place and pounded on the door, but there was no response.

Wren tried calling her, but the call remained ongoing, indicating that Nyla had likely blocked her number. Frustrated, she gave up and returned to the hospital to inform Harrison of the situation.

To her surprise, Harrison sided with Nyla. "This is Gabriel's fault. Nyla isn't the head of Prospectus Technology. She can't control this situation."

Wren stared at Harrison in disbelief. "Are you serious? If it weren't for her association with the same company, Gabriel wouldn't be in this mess!"

She continued to yell, "So, just because Nyla is your daughter, you take her side? I understand now-no matter how well I treat you or how well Gabriel treats you, to you, Nyla is always the real family! Gabriel and I are just outsiders!"

Harrison's face darkened due to her unreasonable stance. "Do you think the people at Prospectus Technology and the police are fools? If Gabriel hadn't leaked the data, this situation wouldn't have occurred. And how is this Nyla's fault? Did she force him to do it?"

Wren looked at him with disappointment. "Harrison, I've spent years taking care of you, and now that Gabriel is in trouble, you can't even offer a word of comfort. I'm done with you. If Gabriel's situation doesn't improve, we're getting a divorce!" With that, she grabbed her bag and left the ward.

Harrison watched her go with a grim expression but did not call after her.

Late that night, Nyla received a call from the hospital. "Ms. Jayston, we're currently unable to reach Mrs. Jayston. Your father is alone at the hospital and needs someone to stay with him tonight. Could you come over to keep him company?"

With Wren unreachable right after Gabriel's incident, the timing seemed suspiciously convenient.

17.

Nyla suspected it was a ploy by Wren, knowing that if the hospital couldn't reach her, they would contact Nyla directly instead

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Nyla considered this for a moment and replied, "I understand. I'll arrange for a caregiver to go over there shortly."

After hanging up, Nyla promptly contacted a caregiver. She signed a six-month contract and sent the caregiver to the hospital.

As for Nyla herself, she was deeply disappointed in Harrison after her last visit and had no desire to see him again.

At the police station...

Gabriel remained silent during questioning until his lawyer arrived and took over the conversation with the police. Despite facing hundreds of millions in compensation or potential imprisonment, Gabriel remained calm.

Seeing his unflappable demeanor,

the detective grew more serious

"Mr. Hackett, we hope you will. cooperate with the investigation. Prolonging this will not benefit you in anyway."

Gabriel smiled. "I am cooperating. The exact amount of compensation can be discussed with my lawyer."

Chapter 432

The lawyer beside Gabriel quickly began negotiating the compensation with Prospectus Technology's legal representative.

Once they agreed on the amount, the Prospectus Technology lawyer returned to the company to inform Damon.

Damon's expression remained cold. "He can afford to pay hundreds of millions?"

Previously, Damon had investigated Gabriel and discovered that he was merely a researcher for a pharmaceutical company in Meristate. Regardless of his capabilities, it was unlikely he had accumulated such a fortune in just a few years. The lawyer handed Damon a check. "Mr. Sumner, this is the check Gabriel has issued."

Damon glanced at the check with a cold stare.

Clearly, he had underestimated Gabriel. The fact that Gabriel could issue a check for hundreds of millions indicated there were aspects about him Damon had not yet discovered.

"I understand. You may leave now," Damon said dismissively.

After returning the check to the lawyer, Damon's demeanor reverted to its usual indifference.

"Mr. Sumner, should we continue with the lawsuit against Gabriel?" the lawyer inquired.

Damon's expression hardened, and his voice became low and frosty. "Since he has provided compensation, we'll proceed according to the process."

As the CEO of Prospectus Technology, Damon had to prioritize the company's interests.

Still, Gabriel's actions against Nyla had crossed a personal line, and he was not going to let it go easily.

The lawyer nodded. "Understood. Contelligence is also inclined to settle with compensation now."

"Then negotiate a fair price," Damon instructed.

"Got it," the lawyer replied.

Once the lawyer left, Damon picked up his phone from the desk, walked to the window, and dialed Nyla's number.

The call rang five times before it was answered.

"What's up?" Nyla asked.

Damon looked down at the busy streets below and spoke in a low voice. "Gabriel was able to pay the compensation, so he might avoid prison time. I'm sorry." There was a brief silence on the other end before Nyla's distant voice replied, "I understand. So, the data leak no longer involves me, correct?"

"Mm." Damon's tone revealed no emotion.

"Okay. I completed my resignation process before this incident

happened. I'll come by the office to collect my things tomorrow. If you're available tomorrow night, I'd like to invite you to dinner," Nyla said.

QUMS

Damon's grip on the phone tightened involuntarily. After tomorrow night's dinner, he would have no more excuses to see Nyla.

Still, he replied hoarsely, "Let me know the time."

"I'll book the restaurant soon. If there's nothing else, I'll hang up now," Nyla said.

"Okay," Damon answered.

When the call ended, his expression grew bitter as he stared at the phone for a long time.

...

Nyla was about to search for a restaurant when she received a message from Melody, asking to meet her the next day.

Melody had been released from the police station before Gabriel was taken away. If it hadn't been for her father's hospitalization, she would have contacted Nyla right after leaving the station.

After some thought, Nyla agreed and arranged to meet at a cafe near Prospectus Technology.

When Nyla arrived, Melody was already there, wearing sunglasses that covered most of her face, seemingly to avoid being recognized.

Nyla sat down across from her, her expression cold. "What do you want to talk about?"

Melody removed her sunglasses and looked at her with guilt in her eyes.

"Nyla, I'm sorry," she said.

Nyla's expression remained

indifferent. "I'm not here to hear your apology. I want to know why you and Gabriel plotted against me. During our time working together, I believe I never did anything

you."

wrong

Chapter 433

Melody couldn't meet Nyla's gaze. She looked away and let out a wry chuckle. "My mom was under his control at the time. If I didn't do what he said, she might have died." "Why didn't you call the police?" Nyla asked.

"I was too scared... Nyla, no matter what, I'm really sorry. I've already transferred the 30,000 dollars back to you. I don't expect you to forgive me, but I hope you don't hate me," Melody pleaded.

Seeing Melody's guilt and her red eyes, Nyla pressed her lips together. "I don't hate you, and I understand. If I were in your situation, I'd probably make the same choice. You don't need to feel guilty, but we can't be friends anymore."

Melody stared in disbelief. She had prepared herself for harsh words but hadn't expected understanding instead.

Tears welled up as she covered her face, choking out, "Thank you..."

Nyla handed her a couple of tissues and, without another word, stood up and left.

As she stepped out of the cafe, the shadow of betrayal that had been clouding her heart seemed to lift. At least she knew that, at one point, Melody had genuinely considered her a friend. Having shared a sincere bond, even if it ended badly, was enough for her.

Nyla went to Prospectus Technology to pack up her things.

After a final glance at the place where she had spent the last few months, she took a deep breath and turned to leave.

...

That evening, Nyla arrived at the restaurant early. As she waited by the window for Damon, a familiar figure came into view.

Her frown deepened in disgust as she silently watched Gabriel approach.

He sat down across from her, his gaze unsettlingly soft, like a snake slithering over her skin.

Unable to hold back, Nyla finally spoke, "I don't recall inviting you to sit."

"Nyla, I made a mistake before. After everything that's happened, I've learned my lesson. I'll pursue you differently from now on," Gabriel said.

"No matter how you pursue me, I will never like you," Nyla retorted.

She now saw Gabriel for what he truly was-manipulative and she had no desire to maintain any contact with him.

For ant, Gabriel's smile

faltered, but he quickly regained k composure. "That's fine. We'll have plenty of time in the future

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He stood and left.

As Damon entered, he crossed paths with the departing Gabriel, and his expression instantly hardened.

Gabriel narrowed his eyes, openly displaying his hostility.

"Mr. Sumner, what a coincidence seeing you here," Gabriel remarked.

Damon met his gaze coolly, his eyes devoid of warmth. "Are we acquainted?"

Gabriel raised an eyebrow. "We will be soon enough."

The tension in the air was palpable as their eyes locked, a charged hostility simmering between them.

It wasn't until someone next to Gabriel reminded him of something that he broke his stare, offering a smile before walking away.

Damon immediately called Spencer,

instructing him to have someone

follow Gabriel. This way, they could monitor Gabriel's movements and ensure he stayed away from Nyla.

Approaching the table, Damon sat across from Nyla, who was gazing out the window. He tapped lightly on the table.

Nyla snapped back to reality and smiled faintly. "Mr. Sumner, you're here. Let's order."

Damon flipped through the menu and selected several dishes-each one a favorite of Nyla's.

Nyla took a sip from her glass, trying to suppress the sadness welling up inside.

Chapter 434

Damon finished ordering the dishes and looked up at Nyla. "Is there anything else you'd like? Let's order two more." Nyla took the menu and added two more dishes.

When Damon heard the names, his eyes brightened with surprise. "I didn't expect you to remember what I like..." Nyla's expression remained neutral. "Mr. Sumner, I also like these two dishes."

"I see," Damon replied.

Nyla pretended not to notice the disappointment and loneliness in his eyes. She poured a glass of red wine for both of them and raised her glass.

"Mr. Sumner, I'm very grateful for your help during my time at Prospectus Technology, and for saving me several times. I'd like to toast to you. I'll finish my glass. You can drink as you please," she said.

Damon tried to stop her, but it was too late. He watched as she downed half a glass of wine in one go. His gaze grew somber as he lifted his glass and drank it in one gulp.

When Nyla reached for the wine bottle again, he stopped her. "Drinking too much isn't good for you. Let's switch to juice."

Nyla looked down at Damon's hand covering hers. The warmth of his touch felt like fire spreading through her heart.

She quickly pulled her hand away, trying to stay calm as she looked at him. "Mr. Sumner, just for tonight. We probably won't have many opportunities to meet in the future. One glass of wine isn't enough to express my gratitude." Upon seeing her tearful eyes, Damon's heart softened. She could drink if she wanted to. Even if she got drunk, he could protect her.

"Alright," he conceded.

Nyla didn't pour any more wine for him but filled her glass again.

"Mr. Sumner, this toast is for you too. Thank you for helping me when I was at my lowest and for pulling me out of my previous failed marriage. Although our ending wasn't ideal, I don't regret meeting you."

As Nyla continued drinking, the bottle was nearly empty.

Damon frowned slightly as he took it from her hand. "Stop drinking. You'll get drunk."

Nyla raised an eyebrow and looked at him. "Give it to me. I'm not drunk."

Her cheeks were slightly flushed, a clear sign she was tipsy. Her usually cold eyes now sparkled with a mix of charm and innocence. She had no idea how alluring she appeared with that innocent, slightly drunk gaze.

Damon's grip on the wine bottle tightened, his knuckles whitening. He struggled to tear his eyes away.

"Even if you're not drunk, you shouldn't drink more," he said, his voice trembling slightly, though he didn't notice.

If Nyla kept looking at him like that, he might lose control and pull her close.

Nyla gazed at him, her eyes filled with a hint of confusion before she smiled. "Alright, Mr. Sumner, I'll listen to you."

Damon placed the wine bottle on the

table and glanced up to find Nyla

resting her chin in her hand,

watching him. His expression

darkened. "Nyla, don't look at me like that."

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Nyla had always been able to handle two or three bottles of low-alcohol red

ree bottles of treat

wine, but she hadn't retent

wine was much stronger. belongs to

Now, pleasantly tipsy, she smiled and nodded. "Okay, I won't look."

She lowered her head, hiding her face behind her wavy hair, her expression obscured.

It wasn't until Nyla remained in that position for several seconds that Damon sensed something was wrong. "Nyla?"

"Hmm?" She responded instinctively but didn't move.

"Are you drunk?" Damon asked.

"No..." she instinctively denied, but the hand supporting her chin slipped, and her chin began to fall toward the table. Just before it made contact, Damon's strong hand caught her.

Chapter 435

The delicate feel of Nyla's skin against Damon's hand darkened his gaze.

Nyla's eyes were closed. Under the soft light above her, her curled lashes cast shadows on her cheeks, like a butterfly poised to take flight.

Damon gazed at her serene, sleeping face, his eyes filled with affection and tenderness.

He wasn't going to give up that easily. Even if she pushed him away a thousand times, he would keep trying until she was ready to start over with him.

A server approached with their dishes, surprised to see Nyla asleep. "Sir, should we bring the food out now, or..."

"There's no need. Just bring me the bill," Damon replied.

The server hesitated for a moment but quickly nodded. "Alright. I'll get that for you right away."

After settling the bill, Damon gently picked up Nyla and left the restaurant.

When Nyla woke up again, she found herself in a bedroom. She sat up abruptly, eyes wide in shock. Only after noticing she was wearing pajamas did she finally relax. Wasn't she having dinner with Damon? How did she end up there? Was it all just a dream?

She quickly grabbed her phone and saw the date: the 14th. She had invited Damon to dinner the night before, meaning last night hadn't been a dream after all.

It was just that she had no memory of what had happened after a few glasses of wine.

Hurriedly, she went downstairs and saw Valarie sitting on the couch, flipping through some documents. She rushed over to ask, "Valarie, how did I get back last night?" Valarie looked up at her with a teasing smile. "You don't remember?"

"Uh... Was I drunk last night?" Nyla asked cautiously.

"Not just drunk..." Valarie exaggerated, clearly amused by Nyla's confusion. "You actually threw up on Damon. He was the one who brought you back and told me to take good care of you."

"What?!" Nyla exclaimed, incredulous. "I threw up on him? I was drunk?"

She frowned. She used to be able to handle two bottles of red wine-how could she get drunk after just half a bottle last night?

Seeing Nyla's distress, Valarie

chuckled "Just kidding. You fell asleep after getting drunk. I changed you into pajamas. But why did you get drunk at your own dinner with Damon?" Search TheFindnovel.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Nyla sighed in relief. At least she hadn't vomited on Damon.

"I don't know," she muttered. "I used to handle two bottles of red wine without any issue, but last night, after just half a bottle, I lost consciousness so quickly." Valarie eyed her knowingly despite Nyla's confusion. "Did you mix up the wine labels? They have similar names, but the alcohol content varies by several degrees."

Nyla had never paid much attention to wine labels when drinking with friends. She usually remembered only the beginning of the names.

Last night, when the server recommended a wine, she instinctively thought it was the same as the one she had had before.

"Maybe..." she murmured.

Thinking about how she had gotten drunk in front of Damon, when she had planned to treat him, Nyla felt a headache forming. She wished she had avoided drinking altogether.

Seeing her frustration, Valarie

couldn't resist teasing, "You have no

idea how carefully Damon handled you when he brought you back. tried to help, but he insisted on

In

carrying you to your room before he left.

Nyla was speechless. If there were a pillow nearby, she would have gladly thrown herself into it.

"Valarie, I still feel a bit dizzy. I'm going to head upstairs," she said hastily.

She quickly turned and fled to her bedroom, hoping Valarie wouldn't continue to laugh at her.

Once inside, she closed the door, leaned against it for a moment, and then picked up her phone to call Damon.

Chapter 436

After a few rings, the call connected.

"Mr. Sumner, I'm really sorry about last night. I accidentally got drunk... I apologize. When are you free? I'd like to make it up to you-"

Damon calmly interrupted, "Nyla, you're no longer an employee of Park Pharmaceuticals. You don't need to call me Mr. Sumner."

Nyla bit her lip. "That's not the point. I'm really sorry about last night. If you're available, I'd like to invite you to dinner tonight."

There was a brief pause before Damon's deep voice sounded. "Nyla, I don't need your dinner. Last night was about wanting to see you. If you keep insisting, I might start to think you still have feelings for me."

Nyla lowered her gaze and replied nonchalantly, "Mr. Sumner, that's not what I meant... I just wanted to thank you. If my actions might lead to a misunderstanding, please send me the bill from last night, and I'll transfer the money to you." There was a moment of silence.

Nyla realized Damon was angry, but she didn't want to have any further interaction with him or give him the impression that there was still a possibility between them.

As she debated how to rephrase her words, the line suddenly went dead. Damon had hung up.

After a moment of indecision, she decided not to call back. Since he ended the call, his stance was clear.

She sent him the money and then deleted their chat history.

Afterward, she freshened up and began studying after breakfast.

Meanwhile, Damon's expression darkened immediately after hanging up.

In the following days, Nyla was busy with her studies.

It wasn't until the day before Valarie's birthday that she suddenly realized she hadn't bought a gift. If not for her schedule reminder, she might have forgotten entirely. She quickly changed and headed to the mall.

After browsing for several hours, she finally chose a pair of diamond stud earrings.

Upon paying, she turned around and saw the sales associate leading Clark and Jordyn into the store.

Jordyn was impeccably dressed in high fashion, her clothes and bag exuding opulence—a stark contrast to how she had looked before.

Jordyn and Clark's smiles faltered when they saw Nyla.

Jordyn's gaze fell on the shopping bag Nyla was holding, and she scoffed. "Clark, let's go somewhere else. This place is too low-end and doesn't match our status."

The sales associate's smile

wavered, but she still said politely, "Ms. Cheatham, we carry high-end jewelry and are a global luxury brand-the only authorized store in Saintornia."

Jordyn glanced dismissively at the sales associate and pointed at Nyla. "Letting someone like her in proves your store's not that great. There are other luxury brands out there? No need to be so arrogant."

She tried to leave with Clark, but Nyla's cold voice stopped her. "I wonder what brand is suitable for a mistress. Probably can't find it anywhere in Saintornia." Jordyn whipped around, glaring at Nyla. "Who are you calling a mistress? Watch your language!"

Nyla stepped closer, speaking slowly and clearly. "Jordyn, that's

something I should be saying to you. You're pregnant now. Maybe you should focus on setting a better

le for your child."

"You!" Jordyn raised her hand to strike Nyla, but the latter caught her wrist mid-air.

Nyla turned to Clark, her expression icy. "Clark, keep your woman in check. If she can't control her mouth, I might not be able to control my hands."

Chapter 437

Clark looked at Nyla with a complicated expression, disappointment washing over him. In the past, her gaze had always been warm and loving, but now it was so cold. "Nyla, how have you been? I heard you're involved in a lawsuit over the leak of Prospectus Technology's experimental data. You-"

Nyla frowned and cut him off sharply, "That doesn't concern you. Just keep your woman in check and make sure she doesn't lash out at random people."

Without waiting for Clark's response, she let go of Jordyn and walked away.

Jordyn had wanted to confront her, but her expression changed when she noticed Clark's gaze lingering on Nyla as she left.

She wrapped her arm around Clark's, speaking softly. "Clark, we're here to look at rings today. Let's not let someone irrelevant spoil our mood."

Clark pulled his gaze away, looking at her with a trace of coldness. "If you see her again, treat her as a stranger or avoid her."

Jordyn's eyes flashed with anger, but she tightened her grip on Clark's arm and forced a smile. "Okay, I'll do whatever you say." Now that her relationship with Clark had finally improved, she didn't want to risk it by fighting over Nyla.

While choosing rings, Clark was clearly distracted.

Jordyn pretended not to notice, trying on several rings before selecting a pair she liked and having Clark pay for them.

After buying the rings, Clark sent Jordyn home and left.

The moment Clark was gone, Jordyn's smile vanished, replaced by a cold look.

She called Rebecca. "When are you going to make a move on Nyla?"

"Soon. You're not much help anyway. Why are you so impatient?" Rebecca retorted.

"That bitch staying in this world is like a thorn in my side. I want her gone now!" Jordyn hissed.

Rebecca chuckled. "If you're that eager, why don't you handle it yourself?"

After hanging up, Rebecca's

expression darkened. Ever since she publicly announced her relationship with Nathaniel, it seemed he had completely forgotten about dealing with Nyla.

She took a deep breath and carefully poured the soup she had made into a thermal container. After changing her clothes, she headed out to find Nathaniel.

She had been visiting him frequently lately, and the staff at the front desk now recognized her, allowing her to go up without any trouble.

As Rebecca approached Nathaniel's office and was about to push the door open, she overheard his cheerful voice coming from inside.

"Deal with Nyla? I've decided not to take any action against her anymore. After all, I'm with Rebecca now, and Nyla is someone Damon likes. If I keep targeting her, I won't even be able to stay friends with Damon," he said.

Rebecca's expression darkened. So everything Nathaniel had said before was just a way to keep her under control he never intended to keep his promises!

She had been so careful with him, making soups and bringing him different meals every day. What had all her efforts been for?

Seething with anger, Rebecca pushed the door open and stormed in.

Nathaniel looked startled to see her and quickly ended the call.

"Rebecca, what are you doing here?" he asked, trying to sound calm.

Rebecca sneered. "Nathaniel, you've been lying to me. You never planned to help me deal with Nyla, did you?!"

Chapter 438

As Nathaniel met Rebecca's questioning eyes, his gaze darkened. He stood up and walked toward her. "Rebecca, let me explain."

Rebecca hurled the thermal container she was holding at Nathaniel. It hit him and then fell to the floor, rolling a few times before coming to a stop next to the sofa.

Nathaniel's face turned grim, and his gaze toward Rebecca grew cold.

Rebecca didn't notice his change in demeanor and said angrily, "I heard everything clearly. What's left to explain? If you're not going to help me deal with Nyla, then we're breaking up!" With that, she turned and walked out quickly.

While watching her leave, Nathaniel's hands clenched at his sides. After a moment of hesitation, he ran after her.

He caught up with her at the elevator, bending down to meet her gaze. "Rebecca, it's my fault. Please don't be upset. I promise I will fulfill my promises to you, okay?"

Rebecca looked up with tear-filled eyes, her face pale. "Can I still trust you?"

Her tearful appearance made Nathaniel's heart ache. He quickly reached out to wipe her tears away. "I'm sorry, Rebecca. Please don't cry. Seeing you like this breaks my heart. I promise I won't lie to you again, okay?" "Really?" Rebecca asked.

"Yes, I promise," Nathaniel assured.

Rebecca's tears turned into a smile. "Okay. I'll trust you one more time. If you dare deceive me again, I'll disappear to a place where you can never find me."

"Alright, stop crying. Seeing you in tears pains me," Nathaniel coaxed.

Rebecca leaned into his embrace, her voice still tinged with a sob. "Okay, just don't lie to me again."

"I won't," Nathaniel promised.

As Rebecca buried her head in Nathaniel's chest, she smirked.

When Nyla returned to the villa, she went straight to her bedroom to continue studying.

Soon, it was dinnertime. During the meal, Valarie mentioned that she would be going home for the night.

"My parents are throwing me a

party. There are a lot of things to handle tomorrow, and they want me to stay home tonight. Just come to my place directly tomorrow, Valarie said.

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Nyla nodded. "Okay."

She handed Valarie the diamond earrings she had prepared and smiled. "Here's a birthday gift for you. There will be a lot of people tomorrow, so I'm giving it to you today." Valarie's eyes sparkled with delight as she opened the box to reveal the diamond earrings. "They're so beautiful! I love them. I'll wear them tomorrow. Thank you, Nyla!" "I'm glad you like them," Nyla replied.

After dinner, Valarie drove off, while Nyla returned to her room to continue studying. She only paused to wash up and go to bed late into the night.

...

Meanwhile, Rebecca knew that Nathaniel would be attending Valarie's birthday party the next evening, so she begged him to take her along. Nathaniel raised an eyebrow and looked at her. "Valarie is a good friend of Nyla. You might run into Nyla. Are you sure you want to go?"

Rebecca nodded. "Of course. I'm

your girlfriend, so it's only natural for me to accompany you to events. Don't worry. I know how to behave. I

won't do anything to Nyla in public."

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After thinking for a few seconds, Nathaniel agreed. After all, he was publicly with Rebecca, and it was only right to bring her to such occasions. However, thinking about Rebecca's condition made his expression turn somber again.

Sensing his sudden change in mood, Rebecca looked at him with concern. "Nathaniel, am I causing you trouble? If it's difficult for you, I won't go." Nathaniel looked down at her worried eyes, his heart softening. "No, it's not you. I was just thinking about something else."

Seeing that he didn't seem ready to share, Rebecca didn't press further. She simply leaned against his chest and whispered, "If it's something that upsets you, don't dwell on it. I want you to be happy when you're with me."

Chapter 439

"Okay," Nathaniel answered.

As they embraced, their thoughts were worlds apart.

Nathaniel was preoccupied with Rebecca's health, while Rebecca was focused on seizing the rare opportunity to get close to Damon if he attended the party the following night. It might be her only chance to make something happen with him.

...

The next evening, when Nyla arrived at Valarie's house, the driveway was already lined with luxury cars.

After confirming Nyla's identity, a maid escorted her into the hall.

Upon entering, Nyla immediately noticed the many eyes fixed on her, accompanied by a murmuring buzz.

"Isn't that Nyla? I thought after her divorce from Clark, she'd completely fade from this circle."

"Why would she have the nerve to attend Valarie's birthday party? Is she hoping to catch a wealthy suitor here?"

"Hah, everyone knows about her past with the Sumners. Who would take her seriously? Maybe for a fling, but not as a serious prospect her looks are her only asset."

Valarie overheard the murmurs, and her expression darkened immediately.

She declared, "Nyla is my friend and a guest at tonight's party. She is no different from anyone else here. If anyone has a problem with my friend, you are welcome to leave. Tonight is my birthday party, not a stage for anyone else." As Valarie's voice echoed, the hall fell silent. Many guests shot disgruntled glances at Valarie, having just been discussing Nyla.

Phoebe, standing nearby, whispered,

"Valarie, everyone here is an elite in Saintornia. Offending them could jeopardize your father's business. They're merely gossiping, and Nyla isn't worth losing an opportunity over."

Valarie ignored her mother and approached Nyla with a warm smile. "Nyla, thank you for coming to my birthday party."

Nyla appreciated Valarie's defense but knew it might stir up even more discontent.

She whispered back, "Valarie, go mingle with the other guests. Don't let me affect your party."

Valarie took Nyla's hand and said with casual reassurance, "Don't worry. It won't affect anything. Those who look down on you aren't worth keeping in touch with. By the way, I have a surprise for you tonight." "What surprise?" Nyla inquired.

"You'll find out if you come with me," Valarie replied, leading Nyla toward a secluded corner of the hall and deliberately ignoring the other guests and their disapproving glances.

Phoebe's smile was nearly frozen, but she managed to suppress any sign of distress. She forced another smile and continued greeting the other guests, gradually restoring the lively atmosphere of the party.

Valarie guided Nyla to Oliver Raynor,

her eyes sparkling with mischief. "Nyla, this is Oliver Raynor, a senior of mine from university. He's still single. Oliver, meet Nyla Jayston, my best friend whom I've told you so much about."

Nyla glanced at Oliver, who was dressed in a white suit and appeared both gentle and pleasant.

She thought she noticed Oliver's face redden slightly during the introduction, though she wasn't entirely sure.

As Damon entered the hall, his gaze

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instinctively landed on Nyla in the corner. Seeing her standing with a man in a white suit caused him to pause momentarily. His brows

furrowed when he noticed the man's

admiring and affectionate look

toward her.

Chapter 440

Spencer followed Damon's gaze and quickly understood the reason when he noticed the sudden drop in temperature around him.

"Mr. Sumner-" Before Spencer could finish, Damon strode swiftly toward Nyla and Oliver, who were talking.

Spencer wanted to stop him but didn't dare, so he hurriedly followed behind.

Nyla was chatting with Oliver about his work when she suddenly felt a chill on her back, causing her to shiver slightly. Oliver, being attentive, asked kindly, "Ms. Jayston, are you feeling cold?"

Nyla nodded. "Yes. It might be the air conditioning."

As she spoke, Oliver had already begun to remove his jacket to drape it over her. However, a hand stopped him.

Oliver looked up in surprise and saw a man with an icy demeanor and hostility in his eyes. He recognized Damon from previous business dealings with Prospectus Technology, though he was only a department manager and doubted Damon would remember him. "Hello, Mr. Sumner," Oliver greeted.

Damon raised an eyebrow and replied coolly, "You know me?"

"Yes, I'm Oliver Raynor, the manager of the procurement department at Go Enterprise. We've met before," Oliver explained.

"Not ringing a bell," Damon said.

He remembered Oliver's name now, though.

Oliver smiled. "I'm just a department manager. It's understandable that you might not remember me."

Nyla frowned as Damon stood next to her. She didn't understand what he was trying to do.

After calling him and transferring the payment the previous morning, she thought they had no further reason to interact. Shouldn't he be ignoring her now?

Damon smirked and said, "Mr. Raynor, I need to speak with Nyla for a moment."

Oliver, aware of their past, glanced at Nyla. "Ms. Jayston, I'll go greet a few other friends for now. We can continue our conversation later." Nyla nodded and smiled at Oliver. "Sure. I'd love to hear more about your work."

Damon's expression darkened as he noticed that Nyla's smile was directed solely at Oliver and never at him.

Nyla's smile was so captivating that it felt like fireworks exploding in Oliver's chest. He quickly averted his gaze. "Alright."

Once Oliver had left, Nyla ignored Damon and began to walk away.

As she took a few steps, Damon grabbed her wrist and pulled her to a nearby balcony where there were hardly any people.

Nyla yanked her wrist free and said coldly, "Mr. Sumner, please show some respect."

"Show some respect?" Damon laughed lightly, his eyes gleaming with a dangerous intensity. "Nyla, you smiled so sweetly at Oliver just now. Do you think this is

yet

appropriate? You reject me just to be with someone like him?

Nyla's face hardened as she frowned. "Criticizing others won't elevate you. Oliver is a very nice person." Although she hadn't known Oliver for long, she could tell he was different from other men she had met.

At first glance, he might seem unremarkable, but she found him humorous and charming after talking to him. He was like a gentle stream-polite, well-mannered, and very pleasant to be around.

As Nyla praised Oliver, a chill flickered in Damon's eyes. "How so?"

Nyla met his intense gaze, her expression indifferent. "It doesn't seem to concern you, Mr. Sumner."

Chapter 441

Not wanting to waste any more time arguing, Nyla turned to leave, but Damon blocked her path. She frowned and looked up, about to speak, when he suddenly wrapped his arms around her waist. "What are you- Mmph!" Her words were cut off as Damon's lips pressed against hers.

Nyla's eyes widened in shock.

Was he out of his mind?!

The balcony was only separated from the main hall by a curtain. Someone could come by at any moment. If anyone saw this, she wouldn't be able to explain herself no matter how hard she tried.

She trembled and tried to push Damon away, but he wouldn't budge. In her fury, she bit down hard on his lip.

Damon winced in pain and released her. He wiped the blood from his mouth and was about to speak when Nyla slapped him across the face.

The sound of the slap echoed in the sudden silence between them. A cool breeze swept through, making Nyla shiver. Damon's gaze was like a brewing storm.

Nyla fought to suppress her fear and looked up at him, speaking with emphasis. "You wanted to know what makes Oliver different? I'll tell you. He's kind and doesn't force me to do things I don't want to. That's the difference between him and you." With that, she turned and walked away.

Damon's gaze remained dark and brooding as he watched her leave, but he didn't try to stop her.

Neither of them noticed a pair of cold eyes watching from the corner, taking in everything that happened on the balcony.

Rebecca was holding a wine glass, her beautiful features twisted with anger. Her grip on the glass was so tight that it almost shattered.

Taking a deep breath, she glanced at a nearby server, who gave her a nod before carrying a glass of wine toward Damon.

Back in the hall...

Damon, feeling increasingly agitated, saw the server pass by and called out to him. He grabbed a glass of wine and downed it in one go.

The alcohol did nothing to ease his frustration. If anything, it only made him more irritated, so he picked up another glass.

Spencer returned from delivering the

gift and saw Damon drinking one glass of wine after another on the sofa. He hurried over. "Mr. Sumner, you can't drink any more. You have an international meeting tomorrow morning."

Damon shot Spencer a cold glance, causing him to withdraw his hand quietly.

"Just go home for now," Damon said dismissively.

Spencer hesitated. "Mr. Sumner, you've had quite a lot to drink. Why don't I wait for you?"

"Have you finished the report for tomorrow's meeting?" Damon asked.

Spencer was taken aback, and his face flushed with guilt.

"Have the driver take you home first and come back around 10:00 p.m. to pick me up," Damon instructed.

Hearing this, Spencer didn't insist further. "Alright. Mr. Sumner, try not to drink too much. Ms. Jayston probably doesn't appreciate drunkards either."

As Damon's icy stare followed him, Spencer left quickly. Lingered any longer might be dangerous.

Damon looked down at his drink, his expression bitter.

Nyla wouldn't care if he was drunk-she didn't care about him at all now.

The memory of how she had smiled so charmingly at Oliver while barely acknowledging him fueled Damon's frustration. He brought the glass to his lips and continued drinking, one glass after another.

In the shadows, Rebecca observed Damon's increasing inebriation with a sense of satisfaction. His drunken state would boost the chances of her plan succeeding, and the more she thought about it, the more excited she became.

As Damon continued to drink, he suddenly began to sense that something was off.

Chapter 442

A wave of heat surged from Damon's lower abdomen, causing the faces of the people in the hall to blur.

With a cold glint in his eyes, he set down his glass and quickly headed for the exit.

After years in the business world, Damon was accustomed to all sorts of underhanded tactics. He had never, however, anticipated that someone would have the audacity to drug him! His steps grew unsteady. Just as he left the hall, he heard the sound of high heels behind him.

"Damon..." Rebecca called out.

Her hand wrapped around his wrist, and the faint scent of roses made his head spin even more.

Rebecca attempted to hug Damon, but he abruptly shoved her away. She stumbled back several steps before managing to steady herself.

"Damon..." She looked at him, her eyes filled with disbelief. She hadn't expected that, even under the influence of the drug, he would still have the strength to push her away. Damon glared at her icily, a storm brewing in his eyes. "Did you drug me?"

Rebecca's expression froze, and guilt flickered in her eyes. "Damon, what are you talking about? What drug?"

"Rebecca, I won't let this go," Damon spat.

His face was cold and serious, the menace in his gaze almost tangible.

Fear crept into Rebecca's heart, and she instinctively took a step back.

However, seeing Damon struggle to stay upright, she gritted her teeth and stepped forward to hug him. She believed that as long as she slept with him, he would have to take responsibility! In the next moment, Damon pushed her away with revulsion.

"Ah!" Rebecca cried out as she fell to the floor in a clumsy heap.

Pain shot through her ankle, and she winced. "It hurts so much."

As she fell, she heard a sharp crack in her left foot. It must have been fractured. She hadn't expected Damon to be so ruthless, pushing her away even after being drugged. [Search the FindNovel.net website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Rebecca, is this all you can do? Using such despicable methods? Don't make me lose respect for you!" Damon hissed.

Rebecca's tear-filled eyes were met

with Damon's cold back. Unable to hold back any longer, she shouted at his retreating figure, pouring out all her grievances and frustration.

"Damon, I was the one who met you first. Why did you fall in love with Nyla? We were so close to being together forever. How can you expect me to be content? Don't you think you've been too cruel to me?" she cried.

Damon stopped in his tracks and turned to look at her. His dark eyes were devoid of warmth.

"Wasn't it you who insisted on going abroad? Did you not expect this outcome? Even without Nyla, I could never fall for you again," he said coldly before turning and walking away quickly.

He could feel his consciousness beginning to blur and didn't want to risk what might happen if he stayed.

...

Nyla returned from the restroom after touching up her makeup.

She saw Oliver chatting with several well-dressed men and decided not to interrupt. Instead, she took a glass of champagne and found a corner to sit. After more than half an hour, she grew slightly tipsy and was about to leave when a maid approached her.

"Ms. Jayston, Ms. Weir requests your presence in the garden. She says she has a surprise for you," the maid informed.

Nyla glanced over at Valarie, who was laughing and chatting with several other women in the center of the hall. She was puzzled. "Are you sure?"

Given Valarie's apparent busyness, it seemed unlikely she would go to the garden. Yet, the maid was from the Weirs. Nyla had seen her a few times before. "Yes. Ms. Weir said you'd find out once you get there," the maid answered.

Nyla nodded. "Alright. I'll go."

After the maid left, Nyla sent Valarie a quick message to ask why she wanted her in the garden. Valarie turned to flash a smile at her and texted back that she would find out once she arrived.

Confirming that the maid's message was indeed from Valarie, Nyla got up and headed toward the garden.

Chapter 443

The Weirs' villa was expansive, and reaching the garden required walking down a winding path.

With everyone else gathered in the main hall, the path was quiet and serene. Flowers and neatly trimmed shrubs lined the way, their fragrance mingling with the night breeze to create a calming atmosphere. As Nyla approached the garden, she suddenly heard a low, muffled groan from the nearby bushes. Her steps faltered, and she glanced toward the sound, feeling a pang of unease.

Without a second thought, she turned and began hurrying back the way she had come.

Before she could get far, a hot hand clasped around her waist.

"Ah!" Nyla screamed in surprise, only to be met moments later by a fiery, demanding kiss.

The familiar scent of pine filled her senses, and she stared in shock. The man kissing her was none other than Damon!

Before she could react, Damon's hands slid from her waist to her back. She shivered and tried to push him away, but his grip was too strong. She bit his lip hard.

When he recoiled in pain, she snapped, "Damon, are you out of your mind? This is the Weirs' estate!"

For a brief moment, Damon's eyes cleared, but then they grew unfocused again as he resumed kissing her. His reason was clouded by the effects of the drug, and all he could think about was the woman in front of him.

Nyla squirmed and struggled, but it was futile. Damon's kisses were hot and aggressive, threatening to overwhelm her senses.

"Mm- Let go!" she cried.

She had drunk quite a bit herself and was struggling to think clearly, but she still fought with all her might to push Damon away.

It seemed evident to her that his behavior was out of character due to being drugged.

"Damon, let me go. I'll find someone to help you," Nyla pleaded.

Just as she managed to push him away, he kissed her again, and they both tumbled into the nearby flower bed.

Nyla's phone lit up briefly on the ground. It was a message from Valarie.

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An hour later, Valarie called Nyla's phone, unable to find her in the garden.

The call rang for a long time before Nyla's hoarse voice answered.

"Valarie," she said.

"Nyla, where are you? The fireworks are about to start. I specially prepared this for you. They were supposed to go off an hour ago, but there was an issue with the last batch. I had to get a replacement, and it's ready now," Valarie explained.

Nyla spent

of money on them, a new creation

in fireworks, and Valarie had
favorite fireworks artist.

Nyla's

belongs to en.kikistorin

Checking her messages, Nyla saw Valarie's text from an hour ago. She smiled wryly, thinking that things might have turned out differently if she had received it even a minute earlier.

"I had to leave suddenly and won't make it back in time to see the fireworks. Thank you so much, Valarie," Nyla offered an excuse.

Valarie sounded disappointed but didn't give up. "Is there time to come back now? The fireworks won't take long."

"It's probably too late. I'm almost in the city," Nyla replied.

Valarie's family villa was in the suburbs, about a half-hour drive from the city.

"Alright, it's fine. Next time you come to my house, I'll prepare something special just for us," Valarie said.

"Sure. I have other things to take care of now. So, see you next time. Happy birthday, Valarie!" Nyla wished her.

After ending the call, Nyla's phone slipped from her hand, and tears began to fall.

Fireworks exploded above the villa, their vibrant display lighting up the sky.

Nyla glanced back one last time before turning her gaze forward as she drove away.

Chapter 444

The sounds of fireworks jolted Damon, who was lying in the flower bed, awake. He slowly sat up, his clothes in disarray and scratches scattered across his chest. A look of shock crossed his face.

He recalled seeing Nyla before losing consciousness and couldn't resist hugging and kissing her.

The memory made his expression darken. He quickly straightened his clothes and picked up his phone to call Nyla, but despite numerous attempts, his calls went unanswered.

His frustration mounting, Damon immediately contacted Spencer to find out Nyla's whereabouts. After ending the call, he hurried outside to the villa.

The driver, already stationed at the entrance, saw Damon approaching and quickly came over. "Sir, are we heading back now?" Damon didn't answer. His face was grim as he got into the car.

The driver, unsure of what was happening, hesitated to make any decisions without instructions and waited in the driver's seat. Damon stared intently at his phone, his expression serious. When Spencer's call came through, he answered immediately. "Mr. Sumner, Ms. Jayston is on her way back to the city. We're not sure of her exact destination," Spencer reported. "Understood. Share her location with me in real-time," Damon instructed.

After ending the call, Damon coldly directed, "Head to the city."

Nyla's rented apartment was relatively close, so she drove straight back home. Once there, she immediately took a shower.

On the way back, she had already calmed down. After all, she reasoned, she was an adult and had dealt with such situations before just a minor bite from a dog.

After showering and drying her hair, she decided to take some medication. She remembered buying something similar when she was with Clark and thought it might be in her medicine cabinet. Finding the morning-after pills at the bottom of the cabinet, she swallowed one with water, feeling a bit of relief.

Just as she began to relax, the doorbell rang suddenly. [Search The Findnøvel.net website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Startled, she went to the door and saw Damon through the peephole. She frowned.

"Nyla, I know you're inside. Let's talk," Damon said.

Nyla pressed her lips together and, after a moment of hesitation, opened the door.

They settled on the sofa, with Nyla maintaining a calm demeanor while Damon appeared apologetic and uncomfortable.

"Nyla, I'm sorry about what happened tonight. I'll take responsibility," he said.

His gaze shifted from initial guilt to a more determined expression. He looked at her seriously and added, "I will marry you."

At his words, Nyla unexpectedly burst into laughter.

She raised an eyebrow at Damon, her gaze indifferent. "Mr. Sumner, one-night stands are quite common among adults. I don't need you to take responsibility, and marrying you isn't something I'm interested in."

QUMS

Considering the challenging dynamics within the Sumner family, she felt it was best to maintain her distance. Moreover, she had more pressing matters to attend to. Damon furrowed his brow. "Nyla, but I want to take responsibility."

"I don't need it. Let's just pretend tonight never happened. Mr. Sumner, you can leave now," Nyla said.

Damon remained seated, his face

tense. His eyes, dark and

unreadable, were fixed on her. After a long silence, he finally spoke "Since it happened, it can't be ignored."

"But I don't need you to take responsibility. Mr. Sumner, you don't think that just because we slept together, you can bind me to you, do you?" Nyla asked. Seeing that she had misunderstood his intentions, Damon instinctively tried to clarify. "That's not what I meant. I just—"

Nyla interrupted him, "No matter

what you meant, tonight doesn't change anything for me. We're adults—there's no need for melodrama. It's late now, so you should go."

Chapter 445

Seeing Nyla's indifferent gaze, Damon realized that continuing the discussion tonight would be futile.

"Then get some rest. We'll talk again tomorrow," he said.

"There's no need to talk, Mr. Sumner. Please don't come back to disturb my peaceful life," Nyla replied coldly.

The chill, combined with a hint of disdain in Nyla's eyes, struck Damon like a heavy blow, leaving his face pale.

"Then I'll... leave for now. If you feel unwell, just call me," he offered.

Nyla did not respond. She simply walked to the door and opened it.

Damon pressed his lips together, standing in the living room for a moment before sighing and leaving.

After closing the door, Nyla leaned against it, exhaling softly as her emotions churned.

Downstairs, Damon's face was stormy with anger.

"Bring Rebecca to me!" he roared.

Less than an hour later, two men in black suits brought Rebecca into Damon's villa.

Damon sat on the sofa, his gaze cold and filled with rage.

Rebecca had never seen him like this before and was trembling with fear. Her voice quivered as she spoke. "Damon... I..."

"Rebecca, the biggest regret I have now is being with you back then," Damon said.

Rebecca turned pale, tears welling up in her eyes. "Damon... do you really hate me that much?"

"I don't hate you. I just find you disgusting," he spat.

The disgust in his eyes was like a knife to Rebecca's heart. She bit her lip hard, tasting blood but refusing to let go.

The men in black forced Rebecca to sit opposite Damon, where a document lay on the table.

"Sign this document, and we'll have no further connection. I owe you nothing," Damon stated. Even without opening it, Rebecca could guess what the document was about.

"No, I won't sign it!" she cried, shrinking back and shaking her head as tears continued to fall.

Damon's smile was cold. "I advise you to sign it. If you don't, don't ever use the favor you did for me back then as a bargaining chip. I've given you a chance, but you refused."

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"No, you can't do this to me!" Rebecca said, looking up at him. "Damon, I carried you down the mountain when you were unconscious, falling countless times and getting injured. Now, just because I drugged you tonight, you want to cut ties with me? How can you be so ungrateful?"

Damon's gaze was icy. "Do you know what happened to people who drugged me in the past?"

The only reason Rebecca was still

r

sitting there was because of the favor she had done for him. No matter how significant the favor was, using it as a shield for her repeated scheming had worn out Damon's patience.

Rebecca trembled, unable to meet his gaze.

"I won't sign it no matter what. You owe me a life!" she cried.

Damon's eyes narrowed, his aura growing cold.

Everyone else in the room held their breath, knowing that attracting Damon's attention while he was furious was akin to courting death.

Just as the room fell into a tense silence, the villa's front door was suddenly flung open.

Nathaniel burst in, looking anxious. Seeing that Rebecca was unharmed, he breathed a sigh of relief and glared at Damon.

"Damon, what is the meaning of having your men suddenly take Rebecca away?" he demanded.

Damon looked up, his voice cold. "Why don't you ask her yourself what tonight's drugging was all about?"

Chapter 446

Nathaniel turned to Rebecca in disbelief, gritting his teeth. "Rebecca, what does Damon mean by this?"

Rebecca shook her head, tears streaming down her face, but she refused to speak.

At that moment, Nathaniel understood everything.

Despite being with him, Rebecca had still been seeking opportunities to be with Damon. The realization made him feel foolish for wanting to stay with her.

He chuckled bitterly, his expression growing cold. "Since you still have feelings for Damon, let's break up."

For years, he had silently loved Rebecca, but her attention always seemed to be on Damon, never on him. No matter how deeply he loved her, her lack of response over time had worn him down.

Rebecca was stunned, panic flashing in her eyes. She reached out to grab Nathaniel, but he avoided her touch.

Without looking back, he walked away.

"Nathaniel!" Rebecca cried, her face turning pale as she hurried to chase after him.

She stopped him at the villa's entrance, her eyes filled with regret and guilt. "Nathaniel, I was just confused. It was only when you mentioned breaking up that I realized I've been in love with you all along. I just didn't realize it... Please, let's not break up." Seeing the tears in Rebecca's eyes, Nathaniel felt conflicted. After all, she was the woman he had loved for so many years. Even though he had decided to break up earlier, seeing her distressed now made his heart ache.

Rebecca grew more anxious at Nathaniel's silence. She grabbed his hand, her voice choked with emotion. "Nathaniel, I truly understand my mistake. Please give me one last chance. I promise I'll be with you properly from now on." Nathaniel was silent for a moment before gently pulling his hand away from hers.

"Rebecca, I've been disappointed too many times. Since you love Damon, I should let go," he said and walked past her.

As soon as he got into the car, Rebecca threw herself against the window, pounding on it.

"Nathaniel, don't go! Let's talk... Please, I really do love you now..." she cried, her tears visible on the car's window. Nathaniel used to be heartbroken even at the sight of her frown, but now, seeing her cry, he remained indifferent. The driver hesitated. "Mr. Preston..."

"Drive," Nathaniel commanded.

"But Ms. Austen is still..." the driver protested.

"I told you to drive. Do you not understand?" Nathaniel snapped.

The driver quickly averted his gaze and started the car, intimidated by Nathaniel's icy stare.

As the car moved forward, Rebecca was knocked to the ground by the motion. She appeared to feel no pain as she scrambled to her feet, trying to chase after the car. She knew that if Nathaniel abandoned her, she would be left with nothing.

From the rearview mirror, the driver saw Rebecca limping after the car. He said quietly, "Mr. Preston, MS Austen seems to be chasing the car. She fell when the car started and it looked quite serious..." Nathaniel's expression softened slightly, but he still fought the urge to look back. Coldly, he replied, "What happens to her is none of my concern."

The temperature inside the car felt like an icebox.

The driver dared not speak further and continued driving in silence.

Soon, Rebecca's figure was left far behind, a tiny black dot in the distance.

Desperately watching Nathaniel's car drive away, Rebecca collapsed to the ground and broke down, sobbing uncontrollably. [search the FindNovel.net website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Chapter 447

Rebecca knew she had truly lost Nathaniel this time. He had always been unconditionally tolerant of her, which had made her increasingly reckless, assuming he would always be by her side. After crying, she slowly got up and headed back to Damon's villa.

As if anticipating her return, the villa's staff stopped her at the door and handed her the document Damon had given her in the living room.

"Ms. Austen, Mr. Sumner asked that you sign this document and sever all ties with him," the housekeeper said.

Rebecca's face flushed with anger. "Where is Damon? I want to see him!"

The housekeeper's eyes flashed with disdain. "Mr. Sumner isn't here right now. I'd advise you to sign the document and take the money. Mr. Sumner's patience is limited." Infuriated, Rebecca raised her hand to slap the arrogant housekeeper, but her hand was quickly caught.

The housekeeper roughly pushed her, sending her crashing to the ground. The document was tossed in front of her.

"Ms. Austen, I am not your servant, and you have no right to lay a hand on me," the housekeeper said, slamming the door shut.

Rebecca had never faced such humiliation. She picked up the document from the ground, her eyes burning with fury. She almost tore the document apart.

The disgrace of the day would be forever etched in her memory, all because of Nyla!

She wasn't going to give up easily.

In the end, Rebecca left with the document in hand.

...

Early the next morning, the doorbell rang just after Nyla got up.

"Ms. Jayston, Mr. Sumner asked me to deliver these things to you," the person at the door said.

Nyla frowned and did not open the door. "Please tell him not to send anything anymore. I don't want to see him."

The person at the door hesitated for a moment before saying, "Ms. Jayston... Mr. Sumner said if I don't complete this task, I won't have a job tomorrow."

Nyla was taken aback by Damon's audacity in using such threats. Did he really think she would be swayed?

Despite her irritation, she didn't want to make things difficult for the messenger-it was Damon's fault, after all.

She opened the door and said coolly, "Just give it to me."

The messenger looked relieved and grateful. "Thank you, Ms. Jayston."

Seeing that it was breakfast from a renowned spot in Saintornia, Nyla pursed her lips. "You can go now. Thank you." After the messenger left, Nyla called Damon. "Where are you now?"

"At the office. Did you get the breakfast I sent?" he asked.

"Yes, but I'm not very satisfied," Nyla replied.

"Don't like it?" Damon asked.

Nyla pressed her lips together. "It's not that. I just don't feel your sincerity. Sending someone to buy it only shows you have money. If you really wanted to send it, why didn't you queue yourself and bring it?" Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

There was a brief silence on the other end. Just as Nyla thought Damon might be upset, his light chuckle came through as he said, "Alright. I'll do it now." Nyla frowned and hung up.

An hour later, Damon indeed showed up at her door with breakfast from the same place.

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His hair was a bit messy, his suit jacket was off, and the sleeves of his white shirt were rolled up, exposing his strong forearms. The shirt, usually neatly pressed, was now wrinkled and looked somewhat disheveled.

It was probably the first time he had waited in line with others to buy breakfast.

When Nyla opened the door and saw the box he handed her, she said expressionlessly, "Mr. Sumner, do you realize what time it is? I've already eaten. You can keep it for yourself."

Chapter 448

Damon nodded with a smile. "Alright. What would you like for lunch? I'll bring it to you."

Nyla was taken aback by Damon's unexpectedly pleasant demeanor. She hesitated for a moment before replying awkwardly, "No need. I've bought groceries and will cook for myself." "Okay. If you're free tonight, we" Damon began.

"I'm not free," Nyla interrupted, slamming the door in his face.

A trace of helplessness crossed Damon's expression as he watched the door close. He then turned and left with a smile.

Once he was gone, Nyla took a moment to calm herself before returning to the living room to study.

In the afternoon, Valarie came over.

"Nyla, why did you suddenly move back here? What if Gabriel comes looking for you again?" she asked.

"He won't come during the day. I need to start looking for a place of my own anyway. I can't stay at your place forever," Nyla replied.

Valarie looked slightly displeased. She had intended to offer that Nyla could stay at her house for as long as needed. Knowing how proud Nyla was, though, she said, "If you're uncomfortable, you could pay me a bit of rent, just as if you were renting from me." After considering it, Nyla shook her head. "No. I need to prepare for exams, so it's better if I live alone."

Realizing Nyla's determination, Valarie knew she couldn't be persuaded and decided not to press the issue further.

Instead, she suggested, "Then I'll help you find a place. It has to have good security. Otherwise, I won't feel at ease." Nyla agreed with a nod. "Alright."

The two of them went out to search for an apartment and eventually settled on a unit near Valarie's villa. The security was excellent-access to both the residential area and the building required key cards, and

even the elevators needed a card to operate.

The apartment faced the sun, and Nyla was satisfied with it, so she decided to take it on the spot.

Valarie helped Nyla move her belongings. [search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Nyla didn't have much, just a few sets of clothes. Thus, a moving company wasn't necessary. The car's backseat and trunk were sufficient.

After several trips, they were about to leave-having done a final check to ensure nothing was left behind-when they turned and saw Gabriel standing at the door.

Valarie instinctively stepped in front of Nyla, her gaze cold as she addressed him. "Gabriel, if you try anything, I won't let you get away with it!"

Gabriel glanced at Valarie and smiled. "Ms. Weir, you've misunderstood. I don't intend to hurt Nyla."

Valarie didn't believe him for a

second. She continued to watch him

warily, her hand already in her bag, gripping the pepper spray tightly. If he dared to come closer, she'd spray it in his face. en

Gabriel's gaze shifted to Nyla, his expression softening further. "Nyla, where are you moving to?"

Nyla looked at him with a neutral expression and remained silent. There was nothing left to say between them.

Gabriel didn't seem bothered by Nyla's silence. He continued with a smile. "No matter where you move, remember to visit your dad if you have time. He misses you."

Nyla's face darkened. "Gabriel, don't try to use my father to threaten me. I've cut ties with him."

"Even if you want to sever ties, he will always be your father," Gabriel remarked.

His smile persisted as he looked at Nyla, his eyes filled with

amusement. It was as if her moving away was just a game to him. No matter where the mouse ran, it would eventually be caught by the cat.

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Nyla's hands, which had been hanging by her sides, clenched involuntarily. Disgust filled her heart.

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"Gabriel, do you really have to be this disgusting?" Nyla snapped.

Her blatant disgust and anger made Gabriel's smile falter.

After a long pause, he finally met her gaze and said seriously, "Nyla, one day you'll realize that I'm the one who's truly right for you."

"I would never like you. You're like a rat in a sewer-dark, filthy, and repugnant. Who could like someone like that?" Nyla shot back.

Gabriel smiled at her description. "You're right."

Even a rat in the sewer wanted to see the sunlight and reach for it.

Gabriel left, but his words lingered over Nyla like a shadow she couldn't shake off.

Valarie looked at her with concern. "Nyla, maybe you should come stay with me. I feel like Gabriel has lost it, and I'm worried about what he might do."

She couldn't understand how the gentle boy she had known could transform into the menacing and terrifying man he was now.

Nyla shook her head. She couldn't stay at Valarie's place forever. "No need. If he keeps bothering me, I'll just head to Capitarnia early."

Valarie sighed. "Alright, then."

"Don't worry about me. Let's go out for dinner, my treat. You helped me move today, and you must be exhausted," Nyla invited.

On the way to the restaurant, Valarie suddenly asked why Nyla had left in such a rush the night before, wondering what had happened.

At that moment, the car swerved unexpectedly.

Valarie was startled and quickly grabbed the steering wheel, pulling it back.

An SUV had nearly brushed past Nyla's car.

"Nyla, what's going on? You scared me half to death!" Valarie exclaimed.

"I'm sorry, Valarie. I was just distracted for a moment..." Nyla muttered.

Seeing Nyla's pale face, Valarie said, "Maybe you're tired from moving today. If you want, you can park the car by the side of the road, and

drive."

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"It's fine. We're almost there. I'll be more careful," Nyla replied, declining Valarie's offer. Valarie persisted, "If you're really tired, just let me know. I can drive." "Okay..." Nyla agreed.

After this minor scare, Valarie didn't mention the previous night's events again, which relieved Nyla. She planned to keep the incident a secret, buried deep inside her.

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When they finished dinner, Valarie had the driver bring her car over, and they went their separate ways.

On her way back, Nyla received a call from Damon.

"You moved?" Damon asked.

Nyla pressed her lips together and gripped the steering wheel tighter. "Yes, so you don't need to make any more grand gestures." "Nyla, you know what I want," Damon said.

His deep voice made her bite her lip. "What you want, I can't give you. Mr. Sumner, you should find someone else."

For Nyla to get together with Damon

now would be no different from

when she married Clark. She didn't

want to follow a path where she could already see the ending

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"If not you, then no one else will do. I only have room for you in my heart," Damon confessed.

Nyla pulled over to the side of the road. After a moment of silence, she said slowly, "Damon, would you be willing to be with someone you don't like?" There was silence on the other end of the line. Only Damon's heavy breathing could be heard.

"I don't like you anymore, so I don't want to be with you. And I hope you won't push me, or you'll end up being just like Clark in my eyes," Nyla said.

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Damon's end of the line was silent. After a moment, he hung up.

For the next month, Damon did not appear before Nyla. Other than occasional updates from Valarie, Nyla had no further encounters with him.

Nyla spent her days immersed in her studies. It wasn't until her period was delayed by more than a week that she began to feel uneasy.

However, recalling her previous body checkup results, which indicated she was infertile, provided some comfort. She reassured herself that the delay must be due to the stress of studying. Despite her attempts to calm herself, anxiety lingered. She donned her coat and went downstairs to the pharmacy to buy a pregnancy test. She needed confirmation before she could truly relax. Half an hour later, Nyla's eyes widened in shock as she saw two lines on the test. Wasn't she supposed to be infertile?

Moreover, she had taken a contraceptive pill for added safety-how could she still be pregnant?

After the initial shock, panic set in.

Nyla quickly made an appointment and drove to the hospital.

While waiting for the blood test results, she kept praying that the pregnancy test had been faulty and that the second line was merely faint.

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When Nyla finally received the report and saw that she was five weeks pregnant, she was frozen in place.

The doctor, sitting behind the desk, regarded her with indifference. "Do you want to keep the baby?"

Nyla, still in disbelief, stared at the doctor. "Is there any chance this report is wrong?"

The doctor frowned, their voice cold. "No."

Given Nyla's reaction, it was clear she was not eager to continue the pregnancy.

"If you don't want to keep it, I can refer you for a termination," the doctor offered.

Nyla was taken aback. She instinctively said, "No... No, I've had fertility tests before. The reports said I was infertile..."

"Where did you have the tests?" the doctor asked.

"Here at Pinnacle Hospital..." Nyla answered.

The doctor was silent for a moment before speaking in a serious tone. "If you don't believe the results, you can take another test." Nyla quickly agreed. She couldn't believe she was pregnant.

Upon receiving the second identical report, Nyla finally had to accept the reality of her pregnancy. Even though she didn't understand how it had happened despite being infertile, she had to face the truth.

When the doctor noted her pale face and the absence of a boyfriend or husband by her side, they assumed the pregnancy was unplanned.

Typically, such cases would result in

the pregnancy being not

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The doctor's attitude grew impatient. "Do you want to keep the baby or not?"

Nyla had just come to terms with the pregnancy, and now she was suddenly being asked if she wanted to keep the baby. This left her disoriented. Under the doctor's increasingly cold gaze, she took a deep breath and said slowly, "I haven't decided yet... I need to think about it."

Nyla left the doctor's office in a daze, holding the test results. Lost in thought, she accidentally bumped into someone around a corner. She stumbled back and dropped the test results. As she bent down to pick them up, a hand reached down and grabbed them first. Startled, she looked up to see Clark's dark expression. He clutched the test results, his eyes filled with anger.

His expression, as if he had been

betrayed, struck Nyla as somewhat

amusing. She looked at him with a

blank face. "Please give me back my document."

As soon as she finished speaking, Clark grabbed her hand. Despite her struggles, he forcefully pulled her into a nearby stairwell.

"Nyla, what's going on?! You're pregnant?!" he demanded.

