

THE HEIR SHE INSULTED

"It's about the Titanflex Skytower Infrastructure Project," Camila replied. The seriousness in her tone deepened.

"We've completed the last internal audits. The engineers at Xavier Tech are ready to begin the final construction and installation phase. I need Master Magnus's approval on the final plan. Today." 2

Leonard blinked slowly. "Today?" 1

"Yes," she answered. "If we don't get his signature now, the entire schedule will collapse. We're already cutting it close."

Steward Leonard's eyes clouded. He looked past her for a second, like he was seeing the jade bed again. 1

"Camila..." he started.

She stepped in closer, lowering her voice but not her urgency. "Mr Leonard, Imperium Bank is waiting. Their new headquarters in the capital depends on this. The Titanflex Skytower output is the only construction system powerful and precise enough for their design. No other company has anything like it." 3

Ethan's eyes narrowed slightly. So that was the project. Titanflex. A Skytower. Imperium Bank. 1

"Our fabrication line is ready," Camila continued. "But without Master Magnus's approval, we can't initiate the final sequence. If we delay, Imperium Bank might take their business elsewhere. We both know what that means." 6



Leonard's grip tightened on the edge of the door. "I know exactly what Imperium Bank means," he said quietly. "Their headquarters alone can shift the value of an entire district." 2

"Then you understand why I can't just... wait," Camila said. Her frustration leaked through for the first time. "The Titanflex system is the only construction machine in Verdanis capable of handling a skyscraper of that scale and complexity. We designed it specifically for Imperium's load requirements. If they walk, we could lose not only the contract, but years of research." 4

Leonard closed his eyes for a brief moment. "This is not a good time." 3

"I don't have a good time," she replied. "I have deadlines." 1

She glanced at her watch, lips pressing together. Ethan saw the movement even from where he stood.

Camila took a breath and pushed on. "Mr Leonard, I also have a flight tomorrow. I must be in Lingham by noon. I'm scheduled for an interview with the election council. If I don't appear, I will be disqualified from the race for the position of Mayor." 3

She had actually registered to run for mayor of Lingham north. 2

Leonard's eyes widened slightly. "You're still going through with that?" 1

"Yes," she said simply. "I've worked too hard to back out now. But if I leave without getting Master Magnus's approval, the project stalls. If I stay and miss the interview, I lose my chance at office. Either way, I lose something." 1



Her fingers tightened around the folder. For the first time since Ethan met her, there was a small crack in her armor. She was not just cold; she was cornered. 4

"So please," she said. "Just give me ten minutes with him. I'll present the final plan, he signs, I send the green light to Xavier Tech, and the Titanflex team can move ahead while I am in Lingham. We can't afford any delay, Mr Leonard." 3

Leonard stared at her for a long second.

Then he shook his head.

"Camila," he said slowly, "I'm not joking. Master Magnus is gone." 1

She frowned. "Gone where?"

"Gone," he repeated quietly. "He passed away. A short while ago. You were not here when it happened. He died." 2

The words hit her so hard it was like someone had pulled the floor from beneath her heels. 2

Her lips parted. "No," she said instinctively. "No, that... that can't be."

Leonard's eyes grew wet again. "I wish it wasn't true. But it is. Master Magnus Xavier is dead." 1

Camila's mind spun. For a moment, her ambition, her deadlines, her calculations all evaporated. She had worked under Magnus for years. He was not just a name at the top of the organisation chart. He was the mountain everyone else moved around. 1



"But..." She shook her head. "Mr Leonard, you don't understand. The men at the Titanflex facility are waiting. Imperium Bank is watching us. Their board is already impatient. They need that headquarters rebuilt. That skyscraper is not just any building; it's their symbol. Their pride. If we fail them—" 3

Leonard cut in, gently but firmly. "I understand, Camila." 1

"I don't think you do," she said, frustration returning. "The Titanflex machine is the only construction system capable of handling that project accurately. No other company can produce what we're about to deliver. We're talking about the biggest financial tower in the capital. If Imperium Bank loses faith in us, it will shake the entire market." 2

Her voice trembled now, not with fear, but with the weight of what she was holding together.

"I am telling you the truth," Leonard said. "Master Magnus cannot sign anything now. There is nothing more he can approve. He is gone."

Silence settled for a few beats. 1

Ethan watched from the distance, expression unreadable. Every word etched deeper into his mind. Titanflex. Imperium Bank. The capital. Lingham. Mayor. Everything was moving already, even while his grandfather's body was still warm. 2

Camila exhaled raggedly. "So... what do I do now? Just tell Imperium Bank that our chairman died and hope they wait?" 2



Leonard wiped the corner of his eye with the back of his hand. "Camila, listen to me. A new leader of Xavier Group has already been announced."

She snapped her gaze to him. "Already?" 1

"Yes," he said. "Master Magnus made his decision before he passed." His voice steadied a little as he spoke. "The company will not be leaderless. The projects will not be without direction."

"Fine," she said quickly, latching onto the new path. Her mind shifted gears with impressive speed. "Then I will present the Titanflex Skytower plan to the new leader. Whoever they are. We don't have time to drag this out with politics and ceremonies." 2

Her eyes sharpened, that familiar fire returning. "Who is this new CEO?"

Leonard hesitated for half a second, then answered with quiet pride. "His name is Ethan Ward."

Camila frowned slightly, the name was unfamiliar. "Ethan Ward?" she repeated. "I've never met him. Is he flying in later? Is he from overseas?" 4

Leonard didn't answer that. Instead, his gaze slid past her shoulder, down the length of the corridor. 2

A small, tired smile touched his face when he saw Ethan still standing there, half-shadowed under the warm lights. 3

"And oh..." Leonard added gently. "He is right there."



He lifted his hand and pointed straight down the hallway.

Camila stiffened.

She turned her head slowly, following the direction of Leonard's finger.

"Right where?" she asked.

