

# Until You're Mine / Humble Ex-wife is Now A Brilliant Tycoon

## The Humble Ex-wife is Now A Brilliant Tycoon

### Chapter 151:



Just then, Christina and Davina walked over, catching Chloe's question.

"Did you each get your own guest room?"

After Chloe's question, silence fell. Utter, deafening silence.

Chloe couldn't read the room—her sight hadn't returned. She only felt the weight of the stillness, her brows knitting together in quiet confusion. Why the sudden silence?

Ralph finally broke the silence, his voice a shade too loud in the hushed space. "Well, obviously, everyone gets their own room. No way I'm bunking with another dude."

To mask his unease, Ralph ducked his head and focused on his bowl, spooning the rich porridge into his mouth. Surprisingly, it was delicious—Dylan had outdone himself. He hadn't planned on eating much, but after that first bite, he couldn't stop.

Elliott sank into a chair without a word. His expression was frosted over, unreadable, as he reached for a bowl of the plain porridge and began eating.

Christina approached to do the same, but just as her hand hovered over the plain fare, Dylan quietly slid the heartier version in front of her. "I made this one for you," he said evenly, moving the plain porridge in front of himself.

Davina let out a soft chuckle, unbothered, and settled into her seat with a bowl of the plain fare.

Only then did it hit Dylan—he'd only prepared two hearty bowls, completely forgetting about Davina.

Still baffled by the awkward silence, Chloe tried again, her voice light but deliberate. "Did you sleep well here last night, Mr. Hubbard?"

Elliott just lifted a spoonful to his mouth. Every gaze in the room suddenly turned to him with Chloe’s question, as though he’d stepped into a spotlight. “Yes.” He hesitated for a few seconds before continuing, “I slept quite comfortably.”

Across the table, Christina’s memory flared with the image of Elliott and Dylan embracing in their sleep from the night before. She quickly lowered her head and busied herself with her meal, hoping no one noticed the pink in her cheeks.

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“That’s good to hear. If there’s anything our hospitality lacks, do hope you’ll forgive us,” Chloe said with a warm, practiced smile.

Elliott blinked. He hadn’t expected such grace from her—he’d assumed she’d carry herself with an air of untouchable pride. “Everything’s fine,” he murmured, his voice barely brushing the air.

And just like that, the silence crept back in.

Chloe tilted her head, trying to catch a clue in the quiet. It was unusual—Ralphy, the ever-chatty whirlwind, had gone still, his silence stretching unnaturally long. Was something happening beneath the surface, something she couldn’t see? The not-knowing gnawed at her. With her sight still absent, she was shut out from their faces, their subtle cues, the silent stories told through glances. It made her feel disconnected.

Thinking about the possibility of dying anytime soon made Chloe’s mood drop. But she caught herself before she spiraled. She thought of Christina—of their laughter at the amusement park, the carefree snapshots captured in bursts of joy. She couldn’t see the photos right now, but in her heart, she knew they must’ve been glowing with happiness. That day had been full of light. The memory kindled a spark inside her, warm and steady.

“Christina, can we go shopping today?” Chloe asked, her voice brightening as she turned toward the gentle sounds she associated with her friend.

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“Of course,” Christina replied, unwavering. “Wherever you want to go, I’ll be right beside you.”

Whether her struggle was physical or emotional, Chloe had come to believe one thing above all: Hope was a kind of medicine. And joy—joy was power.

“Christina, you’re the best!” she said, her smile blooming like sunlight after a storm.

INQ was the crown jewel of Dorfield’s luxury scene—a sprawling haven where the world’s most coveted brands came to shine. Designer handbags, glittering jewelry, elegant timepieces—if it exuded opulence, INQ had it.

“Christina, choose anything you like. Today’s on me,” Chloe said cheerfully from her wheelchair, her voice bubbling with excitement. If she hadn’t abruptly lost her sight, she wouldn’t have needed the wheelchair or Christina’s steady hands guiding her. But she didn’t dwell on that. Not today.

“That’s quite generous,” Christina replied, flashing a playful grin.

“I am! And I won’t go back on my word!” Chloe replied, her tone bright and full of mischief.

Christina raised a brow dramatically. “You sure? I’ve got expensive taste. You might end up bankrupt by lunch.”

Chloe giggled, lowering her voice as if sharing a juicy secret. “Spend away. My fortune isn’t so easy to drain. And if you do manage it—well, I’ll just get Dylan to wire more. Besides, Dylan’s loaded. If you become his wife, we can burn through his bank account together.”

Christina burst out laughing. “Ah, matchmaking now, are we?”

Chloe stuck out her tongue playfully. “Let’s hit the bags first!”

“You got it,” Christina said, still chuckling, as she steered them toward the nearest boutique.

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Soon, they rolled into one of the most exclusive luxury bag boutiques within INQ—a place where the cheapest handbag could buy a car, and the priciest ones could fund a small villa.

Some rare editions didn’t even have tags. They were whispered about, not advertised.

As the glass doors slid open, a sales assistant strode toward them with a rehearsed cheer—until her eyes took in Chloe’s wheelchair and their understated clothes.

The gleam in the sales assistant’s smile dulled instantly, replaced by a thin veneer of politeness.

“Could you take that one down? I’d like a closer look,” Christina said without missing a beat. She lifted a finger toward a sleek, newly released bag perched under a spotlight—a bold piece worth over a million. She thought it would really complement Chloe’s style.

“I’m sorry, but that particular model is reserved for VIP members only. Do you have a VIP card?” The sales assistant’s tone was coated in sugar, but the condescension was impossible to miss.

Christina arched a brow, amused more than offended. Chloe, however, was less patient. She was just about to inform the sales assistant that not only was she a VIP, but an elite VIP—the kind whose loyalty tier required a yearly spend most people wouldn’t earn in a lifetime. If she wanted to, she could have the boutique emptied of customers with a single call. But before a single word left her lips, a voice chimed in from behind—light and smiling, yet drenched in mockery.

Though delivered with a grin, the tone had claws. It sliced through the air with grating smugness, instantly souring Chloe’s mood. Ugh. That voice again.

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“Well, well, look who it is! Oh! If it isn’t my shameless ex-sister-in-law,” Katie’s theatrical voice sliced through the boutique like a blade wrapped in silk, instantly drawing every pair of eyes in the store.

Customers turned, curiosity flaring. A few sales associates exchanged knowing glances. All eyes landed on Christina. And then came the looks—the slow, deliberate once-overs. Judging. Measuring. Faces shifted into masks of disdain. Lips curled in veiled contempt, and in some, barely concealed jealousy simmered beneath the surface.

“Katie, is this the one you told me about?” A girl flanking Katie raised her voice, tone laced with derision. “The ex-sister-in-law who can’t stop chasing men and stirring up drama?”

But behind the scorn, beneath the venom, flickered something else: envy. There was something that didn’t quite add up about the Christina Katie had described.

Katie had always painted Christina as a dull, mousy housewife—hair like a bird’s nest, thick glasses slipping down her nose, barely a whisper to her name. A ghost in the background of domestic life. But the woman standing before them now? Graceful, composed, striking. She didn’t just stand there—she owned the space, as if she belonged in the spotlight, not in the shadows Katie once described.

“That’s her,” Katie sneered, piling venom onto every word. “My brother had the misfortune of marrying that tramp. She turned our whole family upside down.” Her tone was theatrical, exaggerated to draw attention. Spinning gossip was effortless for her.

But Christina? She remained unbothered. Her expression unreadable, as if the scene unfolding around her was just background noise. It was Chloe who snapped, “That’s not true at all! Christina isn’t like that!”

“And who’s this? Someone who actually buys that tramp’s act?” Katie raised a brow, amused by the outburst. She let out a mocking laugh, hand daintily covering her mouth like a villain from a soap opera. “Don’t tell me she’s seduced your dad too?”

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The girl clicked her tongue mockingly. “Yikes. He must be ancient. That your type now? No standards at all?”

Chloe’s eyes flared with fury. “That’s a lie! My brother is—”

“Enough!” Christina’s voice sliced through the tension, cool and commanding. “If you’re done running your mouths, get lost.”

Her gaze, as cold as frost, locked onto Katie and her companion. Without a word, she reached for Chloe’s hand, gently patting the back of it—a quiet signal for restraint.

But rage was already simmering across from Katie and the girl. “Get lost?” the girl hissed, eyes flashing. “Do you have any idea who you’re talking to? Who do you think you are?”

The girl’s glare could’ve burned through stone, but Christina didn’t even flinch. “I don’t care who you are,” she replied evenly, her voice low and composed. “I said leave. That’s enough.”

Before the tension could escalate further, the sales assistant stepped in, her voice bubbling with flattery as she introduced, “This is Miss Thea Reed. Heiress to Reed Group—and one of our most valued premium customers.”

There was almost a bow in her tone, as though Thea’s presence alone was a privilege to witness.

The Reed Group—one of the five corporate giants of Dorfield. An empire built on wealth and influence.

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The sales assistant fully expected Christina to crumble and waited for panic, for groveling. But Christina didn’t blink. Her expression remained still, unreadable—almost amused.

The sales assistant frowned. Maybe Christina didn’t hear what she had said?

“Did you catch that? She’s a Reed. If you know what’s good for you, you’ll apologize. Quickly.” Katie brimmed with smug satisfaction.

Thea crossed her arms, her nose tilted skyward in full aristocratic disdain. “I’m in a generous mood today,” she said haughtily. “So here’s your chance. Apologize, and I might overlook your little outburst. Otherwise—”

“Otherwise what?” Christina’s voice cut in, a soft chuckle threading through her words as she lifted a brow.

Thea froze, stunned by the dismissiveness in that laugh. It wasn’t defiant. It was worse—it was amused. Like Christina didn’t even register her as a threat.

Thea’s voice rose with indignation. “Otherwise, I’ll have the staff throw you out myself! Don’t forget—I’m a premium client of this brand!”

No answer came from Christina. Instead, she pushed Chloe up to the leather sofa and sank down with deliberate, unhurried ease.

Confusion rippled through the room. Everyone watched Christina, completely mystified by her behavior.

Making herself comfortable, Christina folded one leg over the other and draped her arm along the sofa's back as though she owned the place.

Katie's temper flared. She stormed forward, saying, "Did you hear me? That's a VIP client you're disrespecting!"

A lazy smile touched Christina's lips as she lifted a brow. "So what?" she replied, her voice smooth and unbothered.

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Thea's frustration reached its breaking point. Something in Christina's casual attitude and drawled words made it feel as if she wasn't even aware of the tension in the room.

Katie's voice rose, sharper now. "You'd better apologize—unless you want the embarrassment of being thrown out! You're not even on our VIP list. Don't think we can't show you the door!"

Instead of reacting, Christina turned to the sales assistant. "Is this your usual approach to customer service?"

The sales assistant sized up Christina and Chloe, instantly pegging them as everyday shoppers with limited means—especially since Chloe's wheelchair hinted at hardship. Experience had taught her that families dealing with such challenges rarely splurged on luxury items, let alone high-end brands.

Backing these two against Reed Group's treasured girl would be nothing short of reckless. With a choice between big spenders and guests who looked out of place, her loyalty was already decided—premium clients always came first. After all, a hefty commission would be coming her way if Thea splurged on a few more handbags.

With a practiced smile, the sales assistant said, "Apologies, but our premium members are entitled to private shopping. Unless you reach that status, we have to ask you to leave. That's simply store policy."

Despite the sales assistant's polite tone, contempt danced in her eyes. The words about leaving came out sharper, almost dripping with open scorn by the end.

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Judgment flashed in her gaze. She was clearly convinced neither Christina nor Chloe could ever qualify as VIPs.

Were it not for Christina's steady grip and gentle taps on her hand, Chloe might have erupted then and there. She had never realized just how condescending some salespeople could be. Shopping at home had always spared her this—personal luxury teams catered to her every whim, bringing choices directly to her. On the rare occasions she joined friends at high-end boutiques, no one had ever treated her this way.

Maybe it had always boiled down to appearances. Her friends, dressed head-to-toe in high-end labels and announcing their names at the door, received flawless hospitality wherever they went, with staff bending over backward and no one daring to challenge them.

With a steady composure, Christina murmured, "If you insist on this, don't hold it against me when I play hardball."

A wave of surprise swept over the group. Katie narrowed her eyes, suspicion coloring her tone. "What trick are you trying to pull now?"

Suddenly uneasy, the sales assistant felt her confidence waver, worried she might have crossed someone she shouldn't. "Could you clarify what you mean?" she asked, her words cautious as she tried to feel out Christina's true intentions.

A cold sweep of Christina's gaze traveled across the room, finally landing squarely on the sales assistant. "I'm not satisfied with your service. Bring out your store manager."

Laughter broke out at her request, with Katie tossing her head back in dramatic amusement. "Is that all? I expected something dramatic, and all you want is to file a complaint?"

Thea quickly piled on, her voice dripping with sarcasm. "Honestly, I was ready to watch her pull some desperate stunt to make VIP status."

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Relief washed over the sales assistant's features, and any mask of politeness disappeared. Disdain colored her face, unmasked and unashamed. "You need to leave now. This



boutique doesn't serve your kind. If you keep refusing, we'll have no choice but to remove you by force," she said, her tone turning rigid.

Christina parted her lips, ready with a retort, but another voice suddenly cut through the tension, stopping her mid-breath.

"Please, hold on!" The voice rang out—soft, young, and a little unsure.

Heads turned toward the sound. A young woman in a store uniform stood there, her wide eyes filled with nervous determination. She was clearly another employee at the luxury boutique.

"Oh great. What is it now, Valerie?" the senior sales assistant snapped, her voice dripping with irritation.

Valerie Mitchell hesitated, her fingers twitching as every gaze landed on her. But despite the nerves tightening in her chest, she took a small step forward. "I just think maybe we should wait for the manager before making any decisions," she said cautiously. "Didn't we learn during training that every customer deserves respect?"

The senior sales assistant crossed her arms, clearly irritated. "Are you accusing me of being disrespectful?"

"N-no, that's not what I meant..." Valerie stammered. "I only remembered how they said we should make sure all customers feel welcome."

The senior sales assistant cut her off with a sharp voice. "That's enough." Her tone turned icy. "Who do you think you are, lecturing me? You haven't even finished your probation. If the manager were here, he'd back my call. You should spend less time sympathizing with customers and more time learning how to sell—unless you're looking to be fired for poor performance."

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Valerie's shoulders slumped as she stood there, silently twisting her hands in distress.

The senior sales assistant's message was loud and clear. Valerie felt for the customer because she understood their struggle. She wasn't well-off either.

Valerie understood the implication but couldn't afford to fight back. With her parents' health declining and her father facing serious problems, this job meant everything to her. Tears welled up in her eyes as she glanced at Christina.

For a moment, their eyes met, but Valerie quickly looked away, ashamed of her own cowardice.

Christina, however, wasn't about to let it slide. Turning to the senior sales assistant, she said firmly, "I'd like to speak to your manager. Let's see if your manager shares your snobbish demeanor."

The senior sales assistant bristled. "Excuse me? Just so you know, clearing the store is something we do for premium clients. Why are you insulting me? You really lack manners."

Katie eyed Christina like she was some kind of joke. "Why don't you use the money you conned out of my brother to buy yourself VIP status?" she said with a mocking smile. She covered her mouth, her mockery evident. "Then, when security tosses you out, you can scream, 'I'm a VIP!' Just imagine it."

Thea burst out laughing. She added, her voice dripping with sarcasm, "Some people are just meant to serve, yet they still dream of becoming rich and glamorous. It's honestly pathetic."

Christina didn't flinch. She kept her cool, refusing to waste breath defending herself. Her expression remained calm as she stated, "I'm not leaving until I speak with the manager. I want to hear their opinion on this."

The senior sales assistant stared at Christina, both annoyed and surprised, realizing that despite Christina's good looks, she was stubborn and unyielding. "Do you really want to be dragged out of here?" she snapped, her frustration mounting.

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Christina replied, steady and unwavering, "In any case, I'm not leaving without speaking to the manager."

"Fine," the senior sales assistant growled. "If you're so desperate to cause a scene, then don't blame me for what happens next!" She reached for her phone to call for security.

But just then, a man's voice rang out from near the entrance, deep, composed, and commanding enough to make everyone pause.

“Who’s causing a scene in here?” A man in his thirties stepped through the entrance, his eyes narrowing as he took in the situation.

“Mr. Palmer!” the senior sales assistant called out quickly, pointing at Christina and Chloe. “These two women have been creating a disturbance in the store.”

Claude Palmer, the store manager, turned his gaze toward Christina and Chloe, his eyes probing their appearance with the practiced scrutiny of someone used to judging on sight. Nothing about their outfits screamed luxury labels, but the fabric, the cut, the quiet elegance—it hinted at quality. They didn’t exactly radiate wealth, but they weren’t common either. Clients like them were wild cards: with a little finesse, they might just become long-term VIPs. But first, he needed to understand the situation. What exactly had gone wrong?

“It’s not as serious as it seems. They just had a disagreement with a premium customer. An apology should smooth things over.” Valerie stepped forward before the tension could escalate, her voice a bit shaky. She had wrestled with her thoughts for a while before finally speaking up in Claude’s presence, only to feel deflated and somewhat regretful for her impulsiveness.

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At the mention of a “premium customer,” Claude’s demeanor shifted in an instant. His tone grew sharper, louder. “They got into it with one of our VIPs?”

“Mr. Palmer, the VIP we’re talking about is Miss Reed,” the senior sales assistant remarked, lowering her voice slightly and motioning toward Thea, who stood with her back turned. “The heiress of the Reed family.”

That name hit like a jolt. Claude nearly jumped to action, hastening toward Thea with an ingratiating smile. “Miss Reed, we’re truly honored by your visit. Please let us know if there’s anything we can do for you.”

To Claude, Thea wasn’t just another shopper—she was the crown jewel of the Reed Group, the chairman’s beloved daughter. Securing even the smallest nod of approval from her

could shift the trajectory of his career in the best way. In retail and business alike, connections often mattered more than skills. A single powerful endorsement could open doors that effort alone never would. Even the most modest favor from a corporate titan could breathe life into a struggling enterprise. Even if his title remained nothing more than store manager, Claude knew that Thea was the ladder he needed to climb higher.

Arms folded and gaze cool, Thea tilted her head, a smug smile playing at her lips. “Honestly, your store’s service? It’s mediocre at best.”

“We’re deeply sorry you feel that way. If there’s anything specific you’d like corrected, we’ll make it right immediately.”

Claude hastily replied, his smile still in place though a hint of strain lingered beneath it.

Irritation flashed in Thea’s eyes as she looked toward Valerie—the one who dared to speak on Christina’s behalf. The sight alone seemed to grate on her nerves. Without hesitation, she jabbed her finger toward Valerie. “Start by firing her,” she said, her voice dripping with arrogance.

Shock rippled across Valerie’s face, her mouth parting slightly as tears began to gather. She turned to Claude, her silent plea shimmering in her eyes. She didn’t expect a defense, but a single word of fairness wouldn’t have been too much to hope for.

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But no sympathy came. Claude gave her a frosty look and said without emotion, “You’re dismissed.”

Justice, as Valerie had just learned, came with a cost she hadn’t expected to pay so swiftly. The image of her father hooked up to hospital machines raced through her mind. Panic gripping her chest, she lunged forward and clutched Claude’s arm. “Please, Mr. Palmer, don’t let me go like this,” she cried out, her tears now falling freely. “I’m begging you. This job... I fought hard to get it. My father’s in the hospital, my mother’s too ill to work, and my family depends on what little I earn. Just one more chance—please.”

Across the room, Katie rolled her eyes, her expression curled into a sneer. “Pathetic. So now you’re trying to make us pity you?”

“Don’t waste your breath. Sympathy doesn’t pay salaries,” Claude said, flat and final. The world was full of desperate people, but if he tried to rescue them all, how was he supposed to work and make a living?

Valerie cast a glance at Claude, but his face remained unmoved—cold, unreadable. Despair crept in as she realized appealing to him was useless. If anyone could sway this situation, it was Thea.

Valerie shifted her gaze from Claude to Thea. “Miss Reed, please... Don’t let Mr. Palmer fire me. If I lose this job, my whole family will be done for.”

Tears welled in her eyes, desperation clinging to every word. She wasn’t just begging for herself—this job was her lifeline. Finding another job might be possible, but time wasn’t a luxury she had. The hospital bills were due soon. Rent wasn’t going to wait. And her savings? Barely enough to last the month. She’d only just started here, but she had managed to close a sale—her first small victory with the commission. With effort, she could’ve earned even a livable salary if she weren’t dismissed now.

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“So now you realize what’s at stake?” Thea’s lips curled into a scornful sneer, her eyes gleaming with contempt. “You have a family hanging by a thread, yet you still had the nerve to speak up for that tramp? The nail that sticks out gets hammered down, and you did this to yourself.”

Katie scoffed, crossing her arms. “What’s the use of crying now? You think we’re going to pity you? Dream on.”

Valerie’s voice broke as she pleaded, her face soaked with tears. “Miss Reed, please. Tell me what I have to do for you to take back what you said. I’ll do it—anything.”

“Oh, really?” Thea chuckled darkly, as though entertained by a private joke.

“Yes!” Valerie nodded desperately. “If it means keeping my job, I’ll do whatever it takes.”

“That’s the spirit,” Thea said coolly, a wicked grin spreading across her face. “Then show me your sincerity. Kneel.”

Valerie froze. Her heart twisted with humiliation—but then her thoughts turned to her parents. All the years they had spent sacrificing for her. This was her turn to repay them. So, she drew a shaky breath, clenched her fists, and whispered, “Alright.”

Laughter erupted behind her—mocking, gleeful.

Katie smirked, tapping her wristwatch. “Well? We don’t have all day.”

With a deep breath and eyes brimming with silent pain and unbending resolve, Valerie slowly dropped to her knees. If enduring this humiliation meant keeping her job and helping her family survive the month—then so be it.

“Serves you right!” the senior sales assistant sneered with satisfaction. “That’s what happens when people like you speak out of turn.”

But just as Valerie’s knees hovered above the floor, Christina moved. She stepped forward and calmly placed her foot beneath Valerie’s knees, halting her descent without force—just quiet strength. Gasps swept through the store. Eyes widened. Even the sneering fell silent.

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Valerie looked up in shock. She hadn’t expected anyone, least of all Christina, to intervene. It might not change her fate, but in this moment, someone had chosen to step up for her.

“Christina!” Katie’s voice shrieked like nails on glass. “What the hell do you think you’re doing? Are you seriously picking a fight with the Reed family?”

Thea’s expression turned to stone. Her voice was laced with warning. “Think carefully. People who go against me never walk away unscathed.”

Christina tilted her head and gave her a serene, razor-sharp smile. “Perfect. Then I guess I’ll be the first exception.”

Thea’s eyes blazed with rage. “You’re really doing this?”

“I’ve never been more sure of anything,” Christina replied, her tone a perfect blend of silk and steel. Since she was already seen as the enemy, she had no reason to tread lightly.

That was when Claude stepped forward, trying to play peacemaker. “Ma’am, I strongly advise you to reconsider. This is Thea Reed—the cherished daughter of the Reed Group’s chairman. Offending her won’t end well. Just let her blow off some steam, apologize afterward, and everything will—”

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“Shut up!” Christina’s voice sliced through his words, cutting them off mid-sentence.

“You really don’t know when to stop, do you?” Christina shot Claude a sharp look.

Claude’s jaw tightened. His anger burned too hot for words. How could she be so dismissive? He had only been trying to help, warning her not to mess with the wrong people, but she acted as if he were just whining. Since she didn’t want to listen, then fine. He couldn’t save someone determined to walk into trouble.

“I’m only looking out for you,” Claude said through clenched teeth. “But if you want to be ungrateful, fine. Go ahead. Cross the Reed family and see what happens. You’re heading for disaster.”

Christina tilted her head, unbothered. “Really, you talk too much.”

Claude nearly exploded. He gave a bitter snort and swallowed his rage, silently vowing to enjoy watching her fall.

Katie barked at Valerie, clearly aiming to disgrace Christina through her. “You idiot! Can’t you just kneel already?”

At Christina’s intervention for Valerie’s sake, Katie was determined to force Valerie to kneel, an indirect way to humiliate Christina.

Terrified, Valerie lowered herself to kneel, her hands trembling, but her efforts were thwarted by Christina’s lifted foot.

Confused, Valerie looked up. Christina was standing firmly in front of her, completely at ease. She wasn’t even straining. Her calm gaze never wavered.

Christina radiated confidence—quiet, unshakable confidence. It wrapped around her like armor, natural and effortless.

Valerie stared in awe. There was something powerful about Christina, something rare. Christina didn’t need to raise her voice. Her very presence spoke volumes.

“I won’t let her kneel,” Christina said softly, her gaze locking onto Katie’s.

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“You’ve lost your mind!” Katie snapped. “Still playing hero when you’re in trouble?” Her voice was thick with bitterness. How could Christina—this dull nobody—outshine her without even trying?

Christina let out a low, amused laugh. “Why does that bother you so much?”

Worried the tension would explode, Valerie tugged at Christina’s pants, her voice barely above a whisper. “Miss, thank you. But I’m okay. Please go... I don’t want you to get in trouble because of me.”

Valerie figured Christina could leave right now. However, if security had to intervene, it would likely turn into a public spectacle. She didn’t want to see her rescuer be disgracefully expelled.

“I should leave?” Christina arched an eyebrow, a soft, amused laugh slipping from her lips. “No, darling. You’ve got it wrong. It’s them who should be leaving.”

Katie scoffed, her eyes filled with disdain. “What are you babbling about now? You think a few flashy bags bought with the money you conned from my brother can lift you above Thea? Keep dreaming.”

Growing impatient, Thea turned sharply to Claude. “Why are you still wasting time? Where’s security? Get rid of these annoying people! They’re ruining my mood. Honestly, they look like beggars. I don’t want to see their faces in this store ever again.”

Claude immediately straightened, nodding obediently. “Yes, of course. I’ll take care of it right away. I’ll call security to escort them out and blacklist them from the store. I’m so sorry for the inconvenience, Miss Reed. Please don’t file a complaint—we truly value your business.” Claude had tried to warn Christina, giving her a way out. But she didn’t take it. So, she had no one to blame but herself. Anyway, he couldn’t afford to offend a high-profile customer like Thea.

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Panicked, Valerie clung to Claude's pant leg, pleading, "Mr. Palmer, please don't call security. It was my fault. I'll ask them to leave. Please don't do this."

Claude yanked his leg away, his face twisted in contempt. "You can scram as well!" he growled, barely restraining the urge to kick her. Letting her go unharmed was already an act of mercy in his eyes.

Just as Claude reached for his phone to call security, Chloe's sharp voice cut through the tension. "That's enough! As long as I'm here, this young salesperson and my friend are not getting thrown out!"

Everyone's gaze fell upon Chloe. Despite the anger twisting her features, her eyes remained unfocused and empty, betraying no awareness of her surroundings. Katie and the others had never paid much attention to a person in a wheelchair. Recognition dawned quickly as they pieced together the truth—Chloe couldn't see.

Katie couldn't resist the urge to belittle Chloe. "Oh, she's blind? I assumed she was just a cripple in a wheelchair."

A snort escaped Thea as she burst into laughter. "Blind and handicapped—could it get any worse? If I ended up like that, I'd have given up ages ago. Where does she even find the will to live on?" Their harsh words stung. With King's prescription still lacking one final ingredient to cook into a potion, Chloe didn't have much time ahead of her after years of being plagued by illness. The pain in her chest flared up, and an ache spread through her empty gaze.

"Mr. Palmer, hurry up and call security to remove these rude women already! We can't let this chaos go on—a stubborn woman and her blind companion aren't good for our store's image," the senior sales assistant interjected, leaning toward Claude and struggling to mask her impatience.

"On it." Claude nodded without hesitation. Her complaint seemed reasonable enough. The threat of losing their premium customer hung in the air, making the situation feel even more tense.

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"Don't you dare lay a hand on Christina. My brother won't stand for it!" Chloe hissed, struggling to keep her voice steady.

"What's he going to do—roll over in his wheelchair? Heard disability is a family tradition for you lot!" Katie taunted, laughter bursting out of her, sharp and echoing.

Katie had no idea that the woman she was making fun of was none other than the beloved little sister of the chairman of the formidable Scott Group. The Scott family had gone to great lengths to keep Chloe's identity and appearance a closely guarded secret.

Preconceived notions had led most to believe that a blind and disabled girl couldn't possibly be a member of the Scott family. After all, the Scotts had more money than they knew what to do with, and their wealth and power alone should be enough to secure any medical treatment if any one of them was bothered by health issues.

Thea interjected with a mocking tone, "Honestly, does it need spelling out? If one of them's disabled, the rest probably are too. Even if they aren't, what good are they?"

Christina's eyes grew colder by the second. She cut through their laughter with a frosty voice. "Have you finished running your mouth?"

A sneer tugged at Thea's lips. "'And if we haven't? What will you do about it?'"

In a flash, Christina seized Valerie by the collar and straightened her up. Her eyes blazed as she issued a low, sharp warning. "Don't kneel."

Valerie's head bobbed in a daze. "'Alright, alright! I get it!'" Confusion flashed across her face as she struggled to process the sudden shift in Christina. No one would have guessed Christina could switch from gentle to menacing so quickly. Now she seemed like a drawn blade—dangerous and cold.

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