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Samantha's father was chatting happily with Matilda at that moment. When his daughter stormed over to express her displeasure, he was taken aback. "Girlfriend? Mrs. Emmanuel, your youngest son already has a girlfriend?"

In a split second, the atmosphere turned heavy with tension.

Matilda hurriedly denied, "No, no. Please, don't misunderstand, Mr. Dunn. My youngest son doesn't have a girlfriend."

"Then who is she? They're all saying that she's his girlfriend!"

Samantha raised her hand to point at Sasha, who was only a short distance away.

Matilda looked at where she was pointing and fell silent.

She was momentarily stunned as she stared at the woman, who managed to make all the other young ladies pale in comparison. However, she failed to recognize that woman as Sasha.

Her skin was fair as snow, and her lips red as blood. Not to mention she had ethereal features that were neither too sharp nor too soft. To sum it up, she was naturally noble and elegant, so much so that Matilda couldn't take her eyes off her.

Who is she?

Matilda stared blankly at her for guite some time.

In fact, Matilda knew who Sasha was.

Back then, she was rather furious when Sasha married into the Hayes family because she originally planned to introduce her distant niece to Sebastian, but Sasha had foiled her plans.

Hence, Matilda often visited the Hayes to throw insults at Sasha.

The Sasha back then was meek and had a low self-esteem. She was also pregnant at that time. and thus, never had the time to care about her appearance. She looked quite dreadful during that year.

That was why Matilda couldn't recognize the current Sasha.

"I'm here, Mom."

When Brandon saw the dazed look on his mother's face, he cheerfully walked over to greet her.

Matilda finally came back to her senses. Pinning Sasha with a razor-sharp gaze, she snapped at her son, "Who is she? Why did you bring her?"

Words failed Brandon.

Before he could formulate a response, Sasha beat him to it. "Mrs. Emmanuel, I'm Sasha. Don't you remember me?"

Her voice was soft and had a soothing effect, but it was shockingly hostile as well.

Sasha?

This woman is Sasha Wand?

Matilda instantly flew into a rage. "It's you! Why are you here? Who allowed you to come?"

She was so angry she forgot about her agreement with Kelly.

Sasha, however, remained calm and composed. Seeing how furious she was, all she did was reply expressionlessly, "Mr. Hayes Sr. invited me. Why? Am I not welcome here, Mrs. Emmanuel?"

Her words created a ripple effect through the crowd, and the entire lobby descended into pandemonium.

"She was invited by Mr. Hayes?"

"My goodness! Who exactly is she? Why did he invite her himself? What kind of status does she hold?"

Everyone was shell-shocked as they gaped at Sasha, unable to believe their ears.

Matilda was no exception.

Frederick invited her?

But then again, Frederick has always adored this little b*tch. The reason she could marry into the family and become Mrs. Hayes was because he insisted on it.

Yes. I shouldn't be surprised at all that Frederick invited her today.

Matilda suppressed the anger threatening to overwhelm her.

"Mom, don't be mad." Brandon drew his words out. "Sasha's no longer affiliated with the Hayes. She's my friend now, so I brought her over."

Matilda kept silent.

"That's right, Mrs. Emmanuel. I was initially worried that you might be angry and never thought of coming, but since Brandon asked as well, I decided to come. This is your birthday gift. Just take it as an apology for matters of the past."

Sasha proved to be forbearing. After Brandon spoke on her behalf, she courteously apologized to the older woman and passed the gift in her hand to her.

Matilda said nothing.

When she heard "no longer affiliated with the Hayes", she finally remembered her conversation with Kelly the other day. Hence, she kept her temper in check for now.

"Alright. If that's the case, you're a guest just like everyone else. Entertain your guest well, Brandon."

"Sure!" Overjoyed, Brandon readily agreed.

Afterward, he led Sasha away from the lobby and went to the hall on the second floor.

As they were making their way upstairs, Sasha felt things were going too smoothly. Recalling the way Matilda had mistreated her in the past, she couldn't help but say, "Your mother's temper doesn't seem as bad before."

Brandon rubbed the back of his head and asked, "Really? Maybe that's what aging does to someone."

The two chatted like this and soon arrived at the beautifully decorated banquet hall.

"Go on in. My uncle and some other relatives are all inside." Brandon pushed the double doors open.

Sasha stepped into the hall.

Indeed, his relatives were all present. Sasha easily found Frederick, who was sitting inside whilst surrounded by members of the Hayes and the Emmanuel family.

The whole family was here.

Brandon walked in as well, but after taking two steps, he realized that the woman beside him had fallen behind.

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"Sasha?" He tilted his head at her in puzzlement.

However, Sasha had gone silent as she stood by the door. Her legs were frozen to the spot and there seemed to be a storm brewing in her pretty eyes as they stayed fixated on two particular people inside the hall.

That's Xandra!

She's really here. Xandra was wearing an expensive and exquisite gown, paired with jewelry that Sasha had never even seen before.

She was obediently standing beside Frederick right then, pouring him some tea with a flattering smile on her face.

"Mr. Hayes, allow me to pour you some tea. I just brought it back from Jetroina. Try it."

After brewing the tea, Xandra politely offered it to him. Anyone who witnessed this would no doubt praise her for being a sensible and well-behaved lady.

Frederick, who was chatting with his family members, turned toward her. Then he reached out to accept the teacup in her hand. "Let the other elders try some as well."

"Alright, Mr. Hayes."

Xandra beamed at his suggestion.

She started brewing more tea and poured them into cups before serving them to all the Hayes and the Emmanuels, buttering them up as she went.

Sasha took an unsteady step backward.

As she watched this scene, her heart felt as though it had been stabbed, and her vision turned blurry suddenly.

"Sasha? Are you okay? What's wrong?" Brandon rushed to her side to support her.

However, Sasha had already retreated into herself. There was a buzzing sound in her ears as disappointment and sadness spread through her veins. All she felt was a suffocating coldness and as though her heart was being carved right out of her chest.

Why?

Has Mr. Hayes abandoned me too? Is it because I'm no longer his daughter-in-law that he doesn't see me as his family anymore?

But he promised he would treat me like a daughter after Mom and Dad left. He promised.

Sasha had never been so heartbroken.

This pain was completely different from being hurt by his son. She had always understood that Sebastian wasn't obligated to give her what she yearned for.

Hence, she could still accept the outcome.

Whenever he hurt her, she would already be mentally prepared and could handle whatever he sent her way.

However, after witnessing this exchange, she was about to fall apart at the seams.

Why is he doing this to me?

Did I really do something wrong? Didn't he promise to treat me like his own daughter? Why is he being so nice to this woman just after agreeing to let me divorce his son?

He used to love the tea I brewed for him, but now she has taken my place.

Tears rolled down Sasha's face. Without even saying hello, she turned around and walked away in despair.

"Where are you going, Sasha?"

Brandon immediately went after her.

What the two of them didn't know was that the woman inside had long since spotted them. Right then, a triumphant smirk formed on her lips.

Did you really think you could win, Sasha? In your dreams!

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At Hayes Corporation.

Sebastian had been busy with company matters all morning. As the big boss, naturally, he had to review the year-end statistical reports of every department.

Finally having a moment to himself, he was about to drink some water when his phone rang.

"Hello?"

"Daddy, Mommy has gone out for a long time."

It was Ian. Though his words were short and concise, Sebastian detected a trace of anxiousness in his voice.

She went out? Where did she go?

Sebastian frowned and patiently reassured his son. "Did she go out to do something? Have you asked Ms. Dolivo?"

"Yes, but Matteo said that something's wrong with Mommy."

Sebastian was quiet for a while.

Before he could speak, a rustling sound drifted over the phone and soon came another child's voice.

"Daddy, there's definitely something wrong with Mommy. You have to find her quickly. I checked already. Her GPS tracker shows that she's in the city's east. There aren't any supermarkets or malls in the east, only hotels and high-end residential areas. Why would Mommy go there?"

Sebastian remained silent.

"Also, Daddy. I hacked into Mommy's phone and found that she has been texting someone with the number 130XXXXXX for the past two days. I also saw that Mommy has a meeting with him today!"

Matteo spoke very quickly. After relaying his discoveries, his short and chubby fingers flew across the tablet in his hand.

Sebastian felt his phone vibrate and lowered it from his ear. Then he saw that a WhatsApp screenshot and a GPS tracker location had been sent to his phone.

Sebastian was bereft of speech.

He didn't know how to react to his son's otherworldly abilities, so he decided to click on what was sent to him instead.

At first glance, he noticed that the WhatsApp screenshot was a rather familiar chat history.

"Isn't this the chat history with Ms. Fischer?"

"Ms. Fischer? How's that possible? She's still in Clear. If she came here, she would definitely have visited us by now, but we haven't seen her so far. How can it be Ms. Fischer."

Matteo immediately shot down that possibility.

Sebastian narrowed his eyes and finally sensed something amiss.