

## Impulsive Vow to an Enigmatic Husband Chapter 1641

### Chapter 1641

Garrett's phone buzzed unexpectedly as he was mid-sentence. He immediately picked up. "Zavier, I'm at school."

Skyler couldn't hear what Zavier was saying on the other end, but she heard Garrett reply, "Why would it be strange for me to be at school today? I'm just checking up on that cute girl who applied to be a tutor at my place a few days ago."

Garrett paused for a moment before adding, "Funny thing is, she happens to be our underclassman. I figured I'd swing by early to see if she needs any help with anything."

Skyler had zero interest in their conversation. While Garrett was on the call, she seized her suitcase and bolted.

Meanwhile, Garrett continued, "Oh, and I heard your folks set you up with a fiancée who's also a freshman at our college. When are you going to introduce her to us, so we can check her out for you?"

He hadn't even finished when Zavier hung up on him. Listening to the dial tone, Garrett shook his head. "Well, if he doesn't want to meet, it's his loss. What's with hanging up on me, though? That kid's getting more unpredictable by the day."

...e2

Skyler was self-reliant and quickly adapted to the communal life of college.

Her dorm mates, all from different cities, were like her-alone in the big city. They all soon became close companions. Once they were comfortable with each other, the other three girls let their guard down.

Even before classes officially started, Skyler knew all about their families-how many siblings they had, and she even learned about one girl's father who had an affair and abused her mother. But due to her own circumstances, she couldn't share everything about herself.

In the days leading up to the start of the semester, and before the official classes, Skyler took the opportunity to land two tutoring jobs. There was a high school adjacent to Capital College, most of whose students lived in nearby residential areas, making it convenient for Skyler to reach her students'

homes.

Her roommates would often tease her. "Skyler, you don't act like someone from a poor family. Why are you working so hard?"

Whenever she heard this, Skyler would just smile and say, "The only person you can truly rely on in this world is yourself." She had known for a long time that the only reliable person was herself.

One evening, after finishing her tutoring sessions, Skyler returned to the dorm later than usual, but her roommates were still up.

One of her roommates, Emma, said, "Skyler, the counselor's been looking for you all afternoon. Tried calling, but your phone was off. He's freaking out. You better call him back ASAP."

Skyler asked, "Did the counselor say what it was about?"

Another roommate, Amanda, chimed in, "There's the opening ceremony the day after tomorrow. You're supposed to be the freshman representative speaker. That's probably why he's been trying to reach you."

Without further questions, Skyler immediately called back the counselor.

As soon as the call connected, she heard him say, "Skyler, there's been a change for the opening ceremony speech. The school has revised the schedule of the speeches, and you're no longer going solo. You'll be presenting with a senior. I'll set up a group chat right now, and you two can work out the specifics of the speech and coordination."

Skyler responded, "Okay."

The call ended, and within seconds, Skyler's WhatsApp pinged with a new message.

The counselor had created a group, sending a text that read, [I've posted the details and the speech in the group. It's up to you two to sort it out. Let me know if there are issues.]

Skyler replied, [Got it.]

The other student didn't respond. Their profile picture was a blank avatar, and their WhatsApp nickname was just a comma.

Skyler took the lead as the other student didn't initiate any communication. She tagged him, "Hey, if you have any preferences or requirements, feel free to let me know. I'm happy to work with you."

She waited after sending the message, but it was like casting a pebble into the ocean-no response.

After waiting for a while with no reply, Skyler decided to take a shower. Lying in bed after her shower, she checked her phone again. The senior student was still silent on WhatsApp.

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Chapter 1642

Skyler's phone buzzed with a new message from the counselor in their group chat.

[Skyler, this is the one who will be joining you in the speech. He's a senior.]

[Work on your own speech, and he'll handle his. Tomorrow at 2 PM, meet in the B Wing auditorium to practice working together – the opening ceremony is a big deal, no room for mistakes.]

Skyler shot back a quick, "Got it," and didn't give it another thought.

Then she scrolled to her sister's chat. [Hey Iris, how's the new term treating you?]

Iris replied, [Skyler, I miss you like crazy. How much longer until I can come to the Capital to see you?]

[Just focus on your studies, and in a few years, you can come to the Capital for college. Then we'll be back together.] Skyler typed, trying to sound more upbeat than she felt.e2

Iris answered with a sad, [Skyler...]

[What's up, Iris?] Skyler asked, sensing her sister's distress.

After a pause, Iris confided, [Mom says we're jinxes because we replaced our brother that she never had.]

Those cruel words were all too familiar to Skyler; she'd heard them so often they practically echoed in her ears. At first, such comments made her cry and question why her mother wished she was a boy instead. But over time, Skyler grew numb to the hurt.

In this day and age, it was maddening that some families still preferred sons, especially families like theirs. Hearing these things herself was bad enough, but for her parents to say it to Iris too was outrageous.

Before leaving for the Capital, they had promised to treat Iris better.

Holding back her pain and anger, Skyler messaged Iris. [Ignore what they say. Remember what I've told you, we haven't taken anyone's place.]

Iris, not fully understanding but trusting her sister, simply replied, [Okay.]

After making sure Iris was settled for the night, Skyler sent a message to their mother, Barbara. [You promised me. Please, spare Iris from those hurtful words.]

Barbara replied swiftly, [Kalene told me you need to have Zavier's child within six months.]

Skyler didn't respond. She and Zavier, her supposed fiancé, couldn't stand each other. She had already moved out of the Rivera household and hadn't seen Zavier in ages. There was no way she'd be having his child in six months.

But Barbara persisted, [If you don't produce an heir for the Rivera family within half a year, they will have no choice but to 'return' you. And if that happens, your sister will have to take your place and do what you couldn't.]

The words were like daggers to Skyler's eyes. She understood every word, but strung together, they formed a message so vile it was almost unreadable.

How could parents be so cruel?

Yet, she knew not all parents were like that. Above her bunk, Emma was on a video call with her parents, her voice lively and full of affection. "Mom, Dad, don't worry. My roommates are great, and they're really kind to me."

Through the speaker, Skyler heard Emma's parents. "Honey, we know you're doing well, but we still miss you." Her mother's voice was warm with love. "And I miss you too, pumpkin. We've decided to visit you in the Capital at the end of the month," her father added.

"Mom, Dad, I'm not a little kid anymore. You've got to let go..."

Their words, so full of care, suddenly seemed hazy to Skyler. She wished just for a moment that she could have been born into a simple, loving family like Emma's. But life didn't deal with 'what ifs.

Curling up in her bed, Skyler pulled the covers tight around her, wiping away tears she wouldn't allow anyone to see.

She reminded herself that she had no luxury to cry. For a child with no one to show affection toward her, even tears were a privilege denied.

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Chapter 1643

After a night had passed, Skyler had carefully tucked away the hurt in her heart,

Come afternoon, she arrived punctually at the location designated by her college advisor. Some students were practicing their lines, while others were rehearsing their acts; everyone was busy with their own tasks.

Only Skyler found herself waiting far longer than anticipated, as her partner was nowhere to be seen. She pinged her speech partner in their three-person WhatsApp group. [Hey, are you here yet?]

No response came.

Skyler glanced at the clock; they had agreed to meet at 2 PM, and it was now 2:30 PM, a full half-hour late. In life, there was little she detested more than those who didn't respect time. Even so, true to her nature, Skyler refrained from harsh words. [Hey, if you get this, please respond. We're half an hour past our meeting time. Do you know how much longer you'll be?]

She sent the message and waited some more, but still, there was silence from the other end.

The counselor, perhaps feeling the awkwardness of the situation, stepped in and said, [Skyler, why don't you just focus on memorizing your speech for tomorrow? Don't worry about the rest.]e2

Skyler replied with a simple "OK," but she harbored a tiny grudge inside.

She could handle her own tasks perfectly fine. But a two-person job, with the other failing to cooperate, meant not only their embarrassment but hers as well. She had no desire to embarrass herself in front of her peers.

If her partner was so reluctant to speak onstage, they shouldn't have agreed to the advisor in the first place. Agreeing and then showing this kind of attitude was downright infuriating.

Unable to manage the situation, Skyler simply focused on her own speech, determined to do her part impeccably, regardless of anyone else's attitude.

September 8th arrived.

The Capital College opening ceremony was held in the grand Capital Stadium.

Before the ceremony, the warm-up acts, "Visions of the Future" and "Seeds of Hope," not only lifted the spirits of the attendees but also gave many students like Skyler a glimpse of what could be.

After all, wasn't that what life was about? Holding on to hope.

The ceremony went on smoothly, following the program to a tee, and Skyler watched each performance with great interest. Emma tugged at Skyler's sleeve. "Hey Skyler, who's the guy you're supposed to speak with today? His name isn't even on the program."

Skyler just shook her head.

“You went to rehearse with him yesterday, right? You mean to tell me you didn’t even see him?” Emma asked incredulously.

Just a nod from Skyler.

“Can you believe it? Skipping out on something this important? Our counselor is so strict; they wouldn’t let someone mess around like this,” Emma exclaimed.

Skyler didn’t want to elaborate; such talk, if overheard and passed around, could easily be misconstrued as gossip. “I’m not sure what’s up. Let’s just focus on the show, shall we?”

After a couple more acts, the stadium announcer’s voice boomed, “And now, please welcome our freshman representative, Skyler, to the stage for her speech.”

Skyler’s name echoed through the stadium.

As she walked elegantly towards the stage amidst loud applause and the watchful eyes of her classmates, Emma whispered to Amanda, “Hey, doesn’t Skyler look exceptionally stunning today?”

“Is today the only day Skyler looks great?” Amanda retorted.

“Of course not. You should’ve seen my face when I first saw her on move-in day; I was absolutely gobsmacked, Emma confessed.

“Who wasn’t? Sometimes I wish I were a guy,” Amanda mused.

“We’re so lucky to have such a gorgeous roommate, Emma sighed with a smile.

While they chatted, Skyler had already reached the podium. Just as she settled into her stance, the announcer added, “Let’s also invite another Outstanding student representative, Zavier, to join her onstage.”

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Chapter 1644

Boom-

The name “Zavier” struck like a bolt of lightning, exploding into Skyler’s mind and paralyzing her entire body. She stood frozen on the stage, not daring to move an inch.

Below, applause roared like thunder, but Skyler heard nothing. She was just standing there in a daze. It had been ten days since she had enrolled at the school. During that time, she had no interactions with Zavier, and the Rivera family hadn’t sought her out.

Just as she was beginning to forget the reason her family had sent her to the Capital, Zavier reappeared before her eyes, and panic was an understatement.

Emma and Amanda were beside themselves with excitement. “Oh my gosh, I can’t believe Skyler is sharing the stage with Zavier.”

In the Capital, Zavier’s name was known to all, especially within the walls of their school, where his presence was akin to celebrity status.

Everyone craned their necks, scouring the crowd for a glimpse of Zavier, to no avail. Reluctantly, the host called out again, “Please welcome our outstanding student representative, Zavier.”

It was then that Zavier emerged from backstage, approaching the host and Skyler with deliberate, unhurried strides.

The host, noticing Skyler’s distraction, nudged her gently. “Skyler...”

Jolted back to reality, Skyler scrambled to compose herself.

As Zavier closed in, the host quickly passed him the mic. “Zavier, why don’t you introduce yourself to everyone?”

Zavier didn’t take the mic, instead casting a cold glance at Skyler.

Skyler thought, “What’s he looking at me for?”

It wasn’t like she asked him to come. It wasn’t like she wanted to be paired with him!

With that thought, a realization struck her—could this all be a setup by the Rivera family? It didn't make sense for her to represent the new students; she wasn't that outstanding. And being paired with Xavier was news that had only reached her two days ago. It was highly possible, then, that this was all orchestrated by the Rivera family.

If her speculation was correct, Xavier's apparent 'resentment' towards her was no surprise.

To avoid an awkward silence, the host quickly offered the mic to Skyler. "Skyler, why don't you start?"

Taking the mic, she pushed down the nervous flutter in her chest.

When she turned back to face her classmates, her composure was impeccable. "Good day to our faculty, staff, and fellow students. My name is, Skyler, a freshman from the class of 2014, hailing from Southern Port..."

Skyler delivered a concise introduction and then handed the mic back to the host.

The host turned to Xavier, extending the mic but whispering, "Xavier, would you like to introduce yourself?"

Xavier gestured for the mic, and upon receiving it, he spoke indifferently. "Do I really need an introduction?"

No introduction was necessary; there wasn't a soul in the school who didn't recognize him, and some knew more about him than he knew about himself.

Skyler thought, "How can someone be so full of themselves?"

Without looking at Skyler, Xavier continued, "I have no interest in being an 'outstanding student representative, and I don't know who insisted on me speaking. But since I'm here, I might as well share my thoughts.

"Good grades aren't always about hard work; often, it's a matter of innate talent. Some are born with everything, while others struggle in the mire their whole lives. My life, for all of you here, holds no relevance."

His words were a harsh truth. Some were born in Rome, while others spent their lives dreaming of it.

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### Chapter 1645

After making his statement, Xavier didn't wait for a reaction from anyone. He handed the mic back to the host and sauntered off the stage, disregarding the collective gaze of the audience that followed his every move.

Wherever Xavier was, he was the center of attention. As he walked over to his clique of troublemakers and whispered something to them, they all got up and left with him in plain view of the entire school assembly.

With his departure, it wasn't just the eyes that followed him; it felt like he'd taken everyone's souls with him. No one seemed to care about Skyler, still standing on the stage.

The host quickly passed the microphone to her, saying, "Skyler, please, continue."

Being so thoroughly ignored didn't seem to faze Skyler. With Xavier gone, she seemed to breathe easier. When she spoke again, her voice was clear, and her delivery impassioned, quickly recapturing the audience's attention.

The morning flew by, and soon it was time to disperse.

Skyler walked back to the dorm with her roommates. Amanda grabbed her arm, bubbling with excitement. "Skyler, you were so close to Xavier! How did it feel? Didn't you just want to jump him?"

Skyler replied flatly, "No."

Amanda teased, "I'm beginning to wonder if you're even into guys. A son from one of the Capital's top families, the Hortons, is after you, and you won't even give him the time of day. And now, you're just inches away from Xavier, and nothing?"

Emma chimed in, "Amanda, cut it out. Let's think about how we can help Skyler."

Amanda quipped, "Help Skyler chase Xavier?"

Emma gave her a nudge. “Even though there was no interaction between Skyler and Xavier today, it’s still gonna stir up jealousy. Mark my words, Skyler won’t have a moment’s peace for a while.”

As they were talking, a girl they didn’t know blocked their path. “Skyler?” The girl asked.

Skyler nodded. “That’s me.

And

you are?”

The girl said, “Desiree wants to see you at the tennis courts. She’s waiting.”

Skyler replied apologetically, “I’m sorry, but I don’t know any Desiree.”

The girl’s tone turned frosty. “Desiree has been courteous to you. You better show up if you know what’s good for you. Don’t make the mistake of refusing her invitation.”

Skyler didn’t appreciate the tone. “Listen, I don’t know this Desiree you’re talking about, and I have no intention of meeting her.”

The girl sneered, “Who do you think you are? Everyone at our school knows Desiree. Don’t get cocky just because you shared the stage with Xavier.”

Skyler turned to her roommates. “Do any of you know her?”

Amanda, who loved to indulge in campus gossip, had heard about Desiree. She whispered to Skyler, “I’ve heard Desiree is the prettiest girl in the school and, rumor has it, Xavier’s girlfriend. Looks like trouble’s found us sooner than expected...”

Skyler’s eyes widened. “Xavier’s girlfriend?”

Amanda nodded vigorously. “Yep.”

Skyler said decisively, “Then I’ll go.”

If the girl was Xavier’s girlfriend, she might have heard about his supposed engagement. Although it wasn’t Skyler’s doing, she felt she might have

inadvertently come between them. It would only be right for her to explain things to Desiree.

The tennis courts were vast.

Skyler walked for a bit before she spotted a girl in a crisp white tracksuit, vigorously swinging her racket.

The girl was stunning, and her vibrancy and energy in motion made her shine as bright as the sun.

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Chapter 1646

Skyler wasn't surprised that Xavier had a thing for girls bursting with energy.

The girl sent tennis ball after tennis ball flying across the court, rapidly emptying a small cart. Wiping sweat from her brow with a towel, she then turned to look at Skyler. Her gaze was part appraisal, part disdain. "Skyler? From Southern Port?"

"Yeah, Skyler replied.

"Play tennis much?" The girl, Desiree, questioned with a hint of challenge.

Back home, the Blues had always emphasized the arts over athletics. Skyler could paint, play piano, and recite poetry like a pro, but sports? Not so much. "Nope," she admitted.

Desiree swung her racket and smacked another ball served up by the machine. "Tennis isn't exactly a high-roller's game. A few private lessons outside, and you're set. What, a couple hundred bucks a pop? Your folks can't spare that?"

A couple hundred bucks. That was a month's living expenses for many folks.e2

Skyler didn't like the tone, but she didn't bite. "What do you want with me?"

Desiree twirled her racket, sauntering closer with deliberate steps. "Heard you're engaged to Xavier?"

“That’s right.”

That single word was like a nail hammered into Desiree’s heart, making her eyes flash with hurt. “So what if you’re engaged? You think that means Xavier’s actually going to marry you?”

“I haven’t assumed anything,” Skyler said coolly.

Desiree wasn’t buying it. “You don’t think so? Skyler, lies will make you ugly, you know.”

“Are you Xavier’s girlfriend?” Skyler cut to the chase.

Desiree almost said yes; the word was on the tip of her tongue but got swallowed back down. She’d been chasing Xavier since freshman year, and now, as a senior, everyone thought they were an item. But deep down, she knew Xavier wouldn’t even give her a second glance. How could she possibly be his girlfriend?

Desiree’s silence seemed like confirmation to Skyler. “If you’re his girlfriend, then you should know the engagement is just family pressure. He’s made it clear he doesn’t like me,” Skyler stated.

Desiree seized on that. “He said he doesn’t like you?”

“You can relax,” Skyler assured her.

But Skyler’s calm and her indifferent references to Xavier only irked Desiree more. In a flash, she grabbed Skyler’s chin. “Listen, Skyler, Xavier is out of your league. Stay away from him if you know what’s good for you. Otherwise, I’ll make sure you get kicked out of Capital College.”

Skyler was usually the peaceable type, but even she had her limits. She pushed Desiree away. “If you want Xavier, he’s all yours. But if you try any dirty tricks on me, I won’t make it easy for you.”

Desiree was exasperated. Did this woman think Xavier was some kind of prize to be won?

Skyler continued, “I don’t know you, and I don’t want to. So, please, keep your distance. I don’t want any part of whatever you’re planning.”

With those parting words, Skyler walked away.

Desiree, fuming, slammed her racket against the wall, snapping it. "Who does she think she is? Thinks she can threaten me at Capital College?"

Another girl, who had called Skyler to come here, approached. "Hey, don't sweat it. Getting worked up over someone from a backwater town isn't worth it."

Desiree shot her a cold look. The girl was clueless. Southern Port wasn't some backwater, and the Blue family was anything but ordinary. Otherwise, why would the Rivera family even consider an alliance through marriage?

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Chapter 1647

Desiree couldn't help but feel the sting of envy. If only her family had been among the top three in the Capital, things would have been different. The Meador family was already esteemed, but they paled in comparison to the Riveras' grandeur.

Had her family's status been just a bit higher, she would have been the one betrothed to Xavier. Instead, that privilege had fallen to some girl from Southern Port—a nobody in Desiree's eyes. Deep down, Desiree knew the truth, but she couldn't let it go. She stubbornly blamed everything on Skyler..

Meanwhile.

Xavier had gathered his entourage and headed to his spacious loft near campus. It's a sprawling 2,000-square-foot sanctuary he had purchased during his freshman year. It served as his primary residence during the academic year.

Xavier had converted the space to suit his lifestyle, keeping only one bedroom intact. He had opened the rest into a massive gaming den, where he and his classmates spent countless hours under the guise of "testing new games," which was free labor in disguise.

Years ago, Xavier and a handful of like-minded friends had developed a few indie games, making a tidy sum. But to Hudson, his grand-father, this was mere child's play, a distraction from more serious pursuits. Only his older brother, Brodie, saw the potential.e2

“Zavier’s got a real knack for making money at such a young age; that’s a big deal. How can anyone call it a waste?” Brodie would encourage him.

Zavier admitted, “Grandpa always says I’m not as good as you. I wish I could be as outstanding...”

“Being good at making games is outstanding,” Brodie said, ruffling Zavier’s hair. “Think of how many people love gaming. It’s definitely lucrative. Doing what you love and making a fortune? That’s my dream.”

Naively, Zavier missed the regret in his brother’s voice and asked, “You like business, right, Brodie?”

Brodie smiled. “Yeah. And remember, Zavier, I’ve got your back. Do whatever you want, and don’t mind what others say”

Encouraged, Zavier and his team dove into their gaming projects. Their latest release went viral instantly.

Elated, Zavier rushed home to share the news with Brodie, his staunchest supporter. But on his way, he was blindsided by the news of Brodie’s passing—a sickness that took him swiftly and silently...

A year after its release, Zavier’s game boasted an incredible three hundred million registered users worldwide, with daily active users hitting the sixty million mark. The game was a phenomenon, and the revenue was astronomical. Yet the one person who believed in his success couldn’t witness it.

Zavier’s net worth now made the Rivera family inheritance seem trivial, but he couldn’t just walk away.

Brodie had been groomed from birth to take over Rivera Inc., to bolster the family’s power and legacy. With Brodie gone, there were few in their generation up to the task. The company would surely decline if Hudson handed Rivera Inc. over to them.

That would dishonor Brodie’s memory. So, Zavier had to step up and take the reins of Rivera Inc., to fulfill his brother’s dream. To honor Brodie’s legacy, he’d have to grow stronger, and until then, he’d have to abide by Hudson’s wishes—even if it meant entering a marriage arranged by his grand-father.

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### Chapter 1648

As Xavier leaned back against the worn leather of the booth at the local pub, the memory of Hudson's call earlier that day grated on his nerves. "Xavier, you're presenting with Skyler at the event. It was my doing. You've got no choice but to show up."

Xavier knew all too well that it was a command from Hudson, and Skyler was merely a pawn in whatever game Hudson was playing.

The thought of Skyler's petite frame, her vulnerability that seemed like a house of cards ready to collapse with the slightest gust, did little to soothe his restlessness. With a flick of his lighter, he lit a cigarette and took several deep drags, the smoke swirling around him like fleeting spirits.

Garrett slid into the seat opposite him, his presence a stark contrast to Xavier's brooding silence. "Hey Zav, what do you think of my girlfriend?" He asked, a cheeky grin playing on his lips.

Exhaling a ring of smoke, Xavier's response was dry and devoid of interest. "Which one?"

"Man, what's that supposed to mean?" Garrett scoffed, pretending to be offended. "Sure, I've dated a few girls, but I'm not the kind to juggle. I always make a clean break before moving on to the next."

Xavier shot him a cool glance. "Can't live without a woman, can you?"

Garrett laughed it off. "You think everyone's like you and plans to join a monastery or something? You've never had a girlfriend; you don't know how sweet it is to have one. I can't blame you for not understanding."

Xavier just scoffed in response.

Pushing on, Garrett probed. "So, tell me, Xavier, what's the deal with Skyler?"

Xavier's hand stilled briefly at the mention of her name as he snuffed out his cigarette. "Is she your latest conquest?"

"Not yet," Garrett smirked. "But she will be soon enough."

“Do you even know who she is?” Xavier asked, his tone flat.

“No matter who she is, if I set my sights on her, she won’t escape my grasp...” Garrett boasted before a sudden realization dawned on him. “Wait, Xavier, you’re not trying to compete with me for her, are you?”

“You like her without even knowing her background?” Xavier finally said, his voice edged with disapproval.

Garrett shrugged it off. “Why bother with a background check when you’re not planning to marry the girl?”

Xavier just looked at him. His gaze conveyed all his thoughts about Garrett’s naivety.

Feeling unnerved under Xavier’s gaze, Garrett’s voice wavered. “She doesn’t have some ulterior motive, does she? She knows I’m a Horton, so is she playing the tutor to get close to me?”

Xavier merely snorted, too tired to deal with Garrett’s foolishness. Long exposure to such idiocy could be detrimental to one’s intellect.

Garrett, now sensing something was off, whipped out his phone and made a call. “Check out the girl who spoke at the school’s orientation today. Skyler. I want all the dirt on her, pronto.”

He didn’t need to wait for an answer, as the other end quickly informed him, “Dude, aren’t you Xavier’s best bro? How can you not know who Skyler is?”

Garrett’s mind went blank, failing to see the connection. “What’s my friendship with Xavier got to do with Skyler?”

The voice on the other end was patient. “Skyler is Xavier’s fiancée, you know, the one Hudson arranged for him a while back. Their joint presentation today? All orchestrated by Hudson.”

Garrett’s world spun. “What? Say that again...”

After getting confirmation, a sense of betrayal by his best friend washed over Garrett. He whirled around to confront Xavier, his eyes blazing. “You’re playing me, aren’t you, Xavier?”

“Who has the time to play you?” Xavier replied nonchalantly.

Garrett, feeling played and not getting the acknowledgment he wanted, exploded. "So, she's your fiancée, and you meet at my place, acting as if you don't know each other. And when I say I'm going after her, you don't stop me... How is that not messing with me?"

Calm as ever, Xavier simply replied, "Who said I acknowledged her as my fiancée?"

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Chapter 1649

Garrett's frustration was palpable as he struggled to make sense of the situation. "You mean to tell me that she's fair game just because you didn't put a ring on it?"

Xavier shot back with a nonchalant shrug. "Did I ever stop you from trying?"

Garrett cursed under his breath. It was like talking to a brick wall,

Xavier goaded him with a smirk. "What's wrong? Got cold feet already?"

Garrett approached the matter with caution. "So, what you're saying is... I can keep chasing after Skyler?"

"You better get a move on and seal the deal with her," Xavier responded, his voice laced with a hint of a challenge.

Finally, it clicked for Garrett. "Xavier, oh Xavier, you've got a heart of stone. You want me to woo your fiancée, hoping I'll sweep her off her feet so you can call off the engagement with Hudson. Have you ever thought about the repercussions? What Skyler would go through?"

The implications were clear: the Rivera family's reputation would be tarnished, Xavier would be the man who couldn't keep a woman, and poor Skyler's future would be bleak.

The first two didn't concern Xavier in the slightest, but the thought of that delicate woman made him hesitate. Still, he couldn't afford to be soft-hearted. "Whether you chase her or not, this marriage is getting called off."

Garrett was incredulous. "Is there really no turning back?"

“There isn’t,” Xavier stated flatly.

Garrett confessed, “I might be a player, but I’m not a fool. Knowing she’s the girl Hudson picked for you makes my attempt to pursue her like signing my own death warrant.”

Zavier taunted, “Are you scared that easily?”

Garrett squeezed next to Xavier and looked at him with eager curiosity. “Don’t try to provoke me; it won’t work. But tell me, Xavier, with Skyler being such a catch, I can’t help but wonder... are you actually holding a torch for Desiree?”

“Who?” Xavier feigned ignorance.

“Desiree, man. Lydia’s little sister.”

“Our school must really be scraping the bottom of the barrel if she’s considered the prettiest girl in school,” Xavier scoffed.

Garrett laughed. “Well, she’s no match for Skyler, but that was before Skyler transferred to our college. Mark my words, the next campus queen will definitely be Skyler.”

“Don’t lump me with her; I’ve got nothing to do with that,” Xavier said dismissively.

“Alright, alright, I’ll drop it,” Garrett conceded, though his mouth was unstoppable. “But seriously, Xavier, are you not going to stop me from going after Skyler?”

“Not scared anymore?” Xavier prodded.

“It’s not about fear. It’s just that chances are slim with an outstanding guy like you as her fiancé. She wouldn’t even glance my way.”

“At least you’re aware of your standing,” Xavier quipped.

“Let me finish,” Garrett pleaded.

“Go on.”

“Before I knew she was engaged to you, I told her to dump her no-name fiancé and get with me. Now I realize I’ve been making a fool of myself, playing the jester.”

‘So what’s your point?’

“If you want out of this engagement, you’ll have to do it on your own. I hope you end it fast so I might have a shot with her later.”

Garrett’s words struck a nerve in Zavier, igniting a flame of anger. “Enough talk. Are we playing this game or what?”

**"Impulsive Vow to an Enigmatic Husband"** What’s better than a classic

Chapter 1650

Garrett slumped into a chair, his face the very picture of heartbreak. “Man, I’m in no mood for games right now.”

Zavier, barely looking up from his computer screen, replied with a cold, “Then you can just get out.”

“Seriously? Is that how you ask for my help with game testing? Now that it’s making bank, look at you,” Garrett retorted. “Zav, you can’t treat people this way. You’re gonna end up friendless.”

Zavier quirked an eyebrow. “How did you even manage to get a girlfriend with that mouth?”

“Are you kidding? I had a girlfriend because I’m a catch. First off, I’m hot. Secondly, I’m loaded.”

Zavier couldn’t help but chuckle. “A fine specimen of humanity, and here you are, talking about yourself like you’re a piece of merchandise.”

“I’m just telling the truth, Zav,” Garrett shot back, exasperated.e2

Zavier, done with the conversation, checked his watch, stood up, and headed for the door.

“Where are you off to? Everybody’s here breaking their backs testing your game,” Garrett called after him.

“Marc and the guys are back at school. We’re grabbing a bite to eat, Xavier replied, slipping on his jacket.

“Marcus? Steven? Lucas?” Garrett’s interest was piqued.

Yeah, it’s been a couple of months, Xavier said, a hint of excitement in his voice.

Garrett hurried to catch up. “Zav, those guys are legends. Marcus, especially. He’s only twenty and has been running the Hartley Group for years, turning it into a global powerhouse.”

Marcus, Steven, and Lucas were all students at Capital College, but Marcus had taken over his family’s empire even before starting college. Despite rarely attending classes, Marcus managed to top his courses, making his presence on campus a rarity.

Garrett had long wanted to meet these titans of the industry but never found the opportunity. “Zav, take me along. I want to meet them.”

Zavier didn’t respond but gave him a look that said it all.

“Fine, fine, I won’t go. I’ll keep an eye on the testers here and make sure they get their reports done,” Garrett conceded.

“Appreciate it,” Zavier said, and with that, he left.

Garrett grumbled to himself, “Appreciate it, my foot.”

The rendezvous was at a private bistro near the school, owned by Marcus himself. Known for his picky palate, Marcus had not only brought his personal chef to Capital College but had also built his own restaurant.

Marcus’ bistro was an exclusive spot that didn’t serve the public, only his inner circle. Its privacy, cuisine, tastes, and hygiene were beyond reproach. When all four were at Capital, they enjoyed meeting there for meals, tea, and cards. However, with their busy schedules, it was rare for the four to gather.

Today’s full house wasn’t just because of the new semester but also because the Rivera family had arranged a fiancée for Zavier.

As soon as Zavier stepped in, Steven’s teasing voice greeted him, “Zavier, congratulations on snagging a delicate bride!”

Without missing a beat, Zavier landed a playful punch on Steven's arm. "Are you looking for a beating, Steven? You know I can't stand her, and I'm being forced into this. What's there to congratulate?"

Lucas chimed in, "If you truly didn't like her, with your expertise, this engagement would have never happened."

In other words, the successful engagement had something to do with Zavier's own plans.

Zavier grinned. "At least you guys get me."

Steven continued, "We all know you've got your eye on taking over Rivera Inc., but you're not yet sure you can beat those eyeing the company. So you're playing this game to throw them off."

"Can you leave me some dignity? Don't lay me bare," Zavier protested, turning to Marcus, who had been silent. "Marc, I'm curious about your take on this."

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