

Chapter 22 Meeting Her Again

The smugness on Lily's face disappeared instantly, replaced with awkward embarrassment.

She knew what Calista was implying. As Lucian's wife, she did not need her own invitation card to attend the party.

Lily wanted to rebuke her, but when she saw Jacob still standing beside them, she held her tongue and turned to him. "Mr. Xanders, please keep an eye out for Callie.

"I know she's not on your payroll, but I'm sure you're well-connected enough in the industry to be able to get in contact with a regular restorer. I'm willing to pay any price she raises."

Jacob glanced over at Callista, who looked as impassive as ever, nodded awkwardly, and sent Lily off.

After work, Calista exited her studio and saw Lucian's car stopped at the entrance.

The Bentley, with its unique number plate, was a rare sight to see even in the richer part of the city, so naturally, it attracted a lot of attention.

Her phone vibrated in her hand. It was a message from Lucian. "Come here."

Calista ignored him and walked toward her

neighborhood.

She did not want to be the center of attention right now and become the topic of gossip the next day. When she was at Northwood Corporation, her colleagues thought she had a rich boyfriend and mocked her behind her back for it. She hated that feeling.

Lucian watched as she walked away, narrowing his eyes. Then, he laughed suddenly. It was a scary laugh.

Lucian's car followed Calista down the road. He wound down the window and said coldly, "Do you need me to force you in?"

Calista frowned. She knew that he was capable of doing what he said. "I'm going home to change."

After an entire day of work, she was covered in dust.

Lucian was silent as he stared at her coldly.

Calista continued to ignore him until the car lurched to her side and stopped. The door opened, and Lucian pulled her into the car by the arm.

Her ankle hit the edge of the door. Pain shot through her body. Calista gasped, her eyes reddening.

She almost cursed out loud. Was Lucian out of

his mind?

"Change?" Lucian pinned her underneath his body. His tone was flat, but it was clear that he was angry. "Would you like to put on some makeup as well? Curl your hair?"

Calista had no idea how she had infuriated him.

She turned away to avoid his hand on her cheek and answered lightly, "If it's all the same to you, I don't mind going there like this."

Everything she was wearing was bought at the market. Combined, they cost no more than 500 dollars. Their quality was questionable, at best.

It would reflect poorly on Lucian if his wife wore these garments at the banquet.

After a moment of silence, Lucian let go of her and told the driver, "Jonathan, go to Shimmy Studio."

Shimmy Studio was an exclusive styling studio that was popular with all the socialites. Their services cost at least 10,000 dollars.

David brought Calista a gown. It was a little outdated in style but still haute couture.

By the time they were done with everything and arrived at Riverside Manor, they were late.

Lucian tossed his car keys at the valet and went into the manor with Calista. Before they entered, he handed her a gift box.

The halls were brightly lit. Small groups of people gathered here and there, talking merrily amongst themselves.

Calista's appearance attracted plenty of attention. Most of them were wary of Lucian's presence. They did not dare to talk about her openly, but it didn't stop the disdainful looks. They were clearly wondering why she even dared to be here.

Lucian led her over to Paul.

The party wasn't really a formal business affair. Paul did not wear a suit. He only wore a white shirt with black pants. His outfit made him look gentle and courteous.

When he saw Lucian, he smiled. "You're late. I thought you weren't coming."

He glanced at Calista and nodded politely.

"Had some problems," Lucian said. "Where's Cade?"

"He's not here yet."

Calista stood by them, lips pursed, her attention unfocused.

She wasn't interested in what they were talking about. She just wanted to leave as soon as she could.

Back when she was struggling, she had sought

out Paul for help at first. However, he hadn't given her a proper answer before everything else happened.

The recording of her marriage proposal was leaked online, along with the footage of her at the hotel with Lucian. At the time, she had been branded as a shameless whore.

Calista was planning to slip away while they talked, but as soon as she moved, Lucian put an arm around her waist and stopped her.

He looked at her. "Are you tired? Give Paul his present, and I'll accompany you to the lounge."

Calista had a bad feeling about this.

She didn't know what Lucian was trying to do. He'd never spoken to her so fondly before.

That couldn't be good.

Paul's attention was on her now since she was holding the present. There were a lot of nosy glances directed at her as well.

Silently, Calista handed him the box.

Paul took the box calmly. "Thanks."

Then, he turned to Lucian. "Thanks for this."

Lucian raised his chin. "Open it now."

Without any further thought, Paul opened the box.

Inside was a wristwatch. It was a customized model from a luxurious brand.

Lucian's voice was flat when he spoke. "You mentioned losing your watch, so I got the designer to make another one."

When Calista saw the watch, she paled.

Lucian could feel her trembling, even though she suppressed it so that no one else could see her distress.

She forced herself to look away and pushed Lucian's hand away from her waist. "I need to go to the washroom," she said, her voice trembling.

Lucian watched as she left in distress. His smile was cold.

Paul watched their interaction in confusion. "What's wrong with this watch?"

"Nothing," Lucian said coldly. He smoothed out the creases on his shirt disinterestedly. "Go back to your party."

With that said, he followed Calista.

Calista slammed the washroom's door and leaned against it, feeling as if all her energy had been sapped out of her.

She had been married to Lucian for three years. She'd never seen him wear that watch during

those three years.

If it weren't for that watch, she wouldn't have gotten into the wrong bed, and this tortuous marriage wouldn't have happened.

After a while, a voice sounded in the quiet bathroom.

"How could Calista come tonight? If I were her, I would have drowned myself when Paul leaked that recording online."

"With her reputation, it's a wonder how she got to marry Mr. Northwood instead of Paul!" The woman scoffed. "Who doesn't know what she'd done? What was Mr. Northwood thinking when he married her?"

Her companion answered, "Maybe she's good. You know, in bed, or ..."

Before she could finish, the door to the washroom opened.