

Love Until Death Do Us Part

Chapter 14

Mystic Ridge Villa.

Newman hauled the shopping bags into the central kitchen and through his Bluetooth headset, a minion from the Bradshaw family was giving him the lowdown:

“Mr. Newman, that white BMW that’s been tailing you is a ride Zoey hired.”

A hint of menace flickered in Newman’s narrow eyes.

Zoey having a car follow him he was probably dying to figure out what’s **cooking** between him and Athena.

He sorted the groceries he brought back, putting them away in the fridge, while his underling continued, “That black Mercedes belongs to Timothy and his family

When they said Timothy and his family, they were talking about his core family. But why would Timothy and his family be having him followed?

The underling piped up again, “We’ve also ID’d that silver Bentley – it’s the Bishop family’s wheels,”

“The Bishops?” asked Newman.

“Yep, the very same,” came the reply through his earpiece.

Newman’s eyes went cold. “Why the heck is the Bishop family snooping around the Dempsey family’s ride?”

“I’m not sure, Mr. Newman. All I know is the Bishops and Dempseys have been tight for generations. Five years back, the Bishops were keen on marrying off Ms. Dempsey into their fold, but then she had a kid out of wedlock and the marriage was off. Even though there’s no bad **blood**, things have been pretty frosty between the two houses since the wedding plans with Mr. Bishop fell through.

Newman’s face was a mask of stone.

Athena’s love life sure was a colorful saga!

At the Sunrise Building, in the boardroom, Athena sneezed.

The exec giving the presentation paused, and Athena, sniffing, gestured for him to carry on.

The routine meeting dragged on, boring as hell. Athena pulled up the surveillance feed from Mystic Ridge Villa on her laptop.

She wanted to check if Newman was following her orders, getting the west-side Sunny Haven ready for her and Kevin's move-in.

Athena scanned the cameras in Sunny Haven and spotted Newman in the living room.

Newman was wiping down the glass door, still in the suit he wore to the Dempsey family mansion earlier, minus the jacket and vest.

He'd rolled up his sleeves to just above the **biceps**, secured with an armband and toned waistline.

As he cleaned the glass door, the hem of his tucked-in shirt came loose, revealing a glimpse of his trim and

He was sweating, his white shirt clinging to his back, the damp fabric highlighting the contours and textures of his muscles.

Athena bit her lip, her tongue sweeping the inside of her teeth.

Damn! How could a guy be so showy?

In the video, Newman bent over to rinse his cloth in the bucket. The camera angle perfectly captured his perky behind.

Wow! Check out that booty!

Makes you wonder if it's as firm as it looks.

Meanwhile, the exec presenting the PowerPoint couldn't help but notice Athena's animated expression and gave his iPad a few extra glances.

Was there something off with **his** presentation? Why was President Dempsey's face **running** through a whole palette of emotions?

To ensure Newman did his nanny duties properly, Athena had Linda, a long-time employee of the Dempsey family, keep an eye on him and guide him through cleaning the villa.

Linda, standing off to the side, thought the scene in front of her was picture perfect

While enjoying the view of Newman cleaning the glass, she even whipped out her phone to shoot a few clips

Newman looked up, his cold and gloomy gaze sweeping across the room.

His chiseled, expressionless face sent shivers down Linda's spine as she stuttered to Newman,

"I'm taking some videos for Ms. Athena, to show her you're actually busting your chops."

A storm of anger swirled in Newman's eyes, his jawline tense. With a **cold** look, he turned away and picked up the vacuum cleaner to continue his work.

"Newman."

Kent barged in, holding his phone. He paused at the doorstep, staring at the scene in the living room, then took a few steps back. Maybe he came in wrong. This time, leading with his left foot, he won't see the wrong scene!

9 7 2 5 7 2

"Newman, Ms. Abbott called."

Kent re-entered the living room to find Newman with one

hand in his trouser pocket and the other holding a Dyson vacuum

cleaner.

That image, plastered on a banner in a flagship store, would sell that vacuum cleaner like hotcakes!

Kent, who'd been through thick and thin with Newman, approached him with shaky steps, presenting his phone with both hands. "Ms. Abbott says she's been trying to call and text you, but it's either radio silence or she's been blocked. She had no choice but to ring me up.

"Yolanda" flashed on Kent's phone screen.

Newman turned off the vacuum cleaner, took the phone, and asked icily. "What do you want?"

A soft and gentle voice came through, "Newman, Louis's been missing you something fierce these past few days. Could you have a quick chat with him?"

Yolanda's voice was sweet as sugar, but there was a chill in Newman's tone, like he was keeping her at arm's length.

“I’m tied up. Louis should be at his piano lesson right now, right? Make sure he keeps his head in the game.”

Seeing that Newman wasn’t biting. Yolanda sweetly chirped a “sure” and then went on.

“I’ve been trying to ring you up lately, but no dice. Newman, did you give me the cold shoulder on your phone?”

The man furrowed his brows a bit. It wasn’t him who’d ghosted Yolanda’s digits; rather it was Payne who’d done it a zillion times, hitting the block button on Yolanda’s calls and WhatsApp on his phone.

After Payne got sick and was cooped up in his room, Newman had given his phone to Payne to keep him from dying of boredom.

“I’ll check out my personal phone tonight. If it’s urgent, **you** can hit up Kent directly.”

Yolanda piped up again, “Louis’s winter break is just around the corner. You took him skiing last year and he’s been harping on about it ever since.”

Yolanda was nudging him, “Newman, Louis needs his dad in the picture while he’s growing up. I’m begging you.”

Linda coughed conspicuously from the sidelines, “Mr. Bradshaw, if you don’t hustle with the chores, you’ll miss cooking dinner for Ms. Athena.

Even though it really grated on him to be bossed around by Athena, for Payne’s sake, to keep him safe and sound at Mystic Ridge Villa, Newman managed to keep his lid on.

His voice flat, he told the person on the phone.

“I gotta run. Once things settle down with Payne, I’ll swing by, and we’ll hit the slopes again with Louis.”

catch—what

Yolanda, on the other end of the call, didn’t catch what Linda was going on about and couldn’t wrap her head around why Newman was being linked to housework and cooking?

deal

She must’ve heard wrong! It had to be some business code—talk; Newman was probably off to close some big

Playing it sweet, she said, “Alright, Newman, you get back to it then. Don’t let me keep you. Take care and don’t overdo it.”

Before Yolanda could finish, Newman had already handed the phone over to Kent.

Linda came over to show him the ropes, insisting he clean up the dust under the carpet.

Kent hung up on Yolanda **and** just stood there, dazed.”

“Mr. Newman? What on earth are you **doing?**”

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Kent wanted to step in, take the vacuum cleaner from Newman’s hands – hands that were meant for signing billion-dollar deals,

not for grunt work!

“I’m cleaning.” Newman told him.

Kent was still gobsmacked and totally befuddled!

“Mr. Newman, why are you cleaning?”

All day, Kent had barely seen Newman.

At lunchtime, he’d overheard the bodyguards gossiping that Ms. Athena’s driver looked a lot like Newman. Kent even scolded

them for it.

Kent had assumed Newman had just found a quiet villa to tackle his mountain of business work, but lo and behold, here was Newman toiling away in this villa!

Newman offered no explanation, just shot Kent a silent, deadly glare.

Once Kent caught that menacing look, he didn’t dare ask any more.

Newman instructed Kent, “Go find me some recipes for home-style dishes.”

“What? Recipes?” Kent exclaimed, and before Newman could blow his top, he quickly agreed, “Sure! I’ll go dig some up online!” Why had his boss suddenly turned into a domestic god? Kent was freaked out!