

Love Until Death Do Us Part

Chapter 9

Athena was all claws and hisses at him, but Newman just scoffed. He had bulldozed his way into the Dempsey family's Mystic Ridge Villa, and he did need to make a **personal** visit to chat with Mr. Simon Dempsey, to nip any potential beef they might have with the Bradshaw Group in the bud.

was a

Ten minutes later, Newman double-checked on Payne's situation. Stepping out from the hot spring building, there was a black Cayenne parked in the courtyard, its window rolling down to reveal Athena's pretty, radiant face.

"Newman, hop in"

Seeing Newman heading toward the back seat, Athena crossed her arms and gently reminded him with a smile, "Your spot's up front, buddy. Got your license? You can drive, right? The way down the mountain's kinda tricky, **so** you can take it slow"

With a simmering temper, Newman walked past the front of the car and slid into the driver's seat

He buckled up, took a deep breath to calm himself, and caught sight of Athena's bold, beaming grin in the rearview mirror Newman kept a poker face as his irritation bubbled up inside.

As the black Cayenne rolled out, the Bradshaw family's bodyguards at the gate did a double-take at the guy behind the wheel, and boy, did they jump!

The two **guards** exchanged a look, and only after the Cayenne had left did they start speculating

"The Dempsey family's driver looks a helluva lot like our Mr. Bradshaw!"

"Yeah, dead ringer! Hahaha, scared the bejeezus outta me just now!"

Both were screaming inside, "We must be seeing things!!"

The big boss of Everglade City, Newman, being Ms. Dempsey's chauffeur? As if!

Half an hour later, the black sedan pulled into the Dempsey family villa. Driving along the asphalt road lined with plane trees. Scircling the manicured flower beds and the fountain, the car finally came to a stop in front of the villa's grand entrance

Dark clouds hung low, and a drizzle began to fall. Newman glanced in the rearview mirror and saw Athena looking at him with a smile, like a pampered pedigree cat waiting to be adored.

Taking a deep breath, he stepped out of the car, Newman grabbed the long-handled umbrella from the car door, reaching out to open the rear door for Athena

His movements were smooth as silk, utterly graceful: beneath the curtain of rain, he was the epitome of a refined aristocrat.

Athena stepped out into the shelter of the big black umbrella, casting a glance at Newman, who held it for her, a mischievous triumph twinkling in her eyes: Newman turned his face away the umbrella shielding Athena while half of his body got drenched The servant from the villa approached, noticing the pair at the stairs. Athena and Newman together, a picture-perfect couple that turned heads.

The servant didn't recognize Newman, but this man, with his casual elegance and distinguished demeanor, didn't look like any driver. While the servant was still daydreaming. Athena and Newman had already reached them

This is Newman"

Athena introduced him briefly, snapping the servant out of their daze, who quickly bent at the waist, Newman, please come this way"

Athena and Newman followed the servant into the side hall, where they were told Zoey was having lunch with Simon.

Athena thought to herself, good thing she had eaten her fill before coming. Otherwise, she wouldn't have been able to stomach anything with Zoey's face in view.

Before they entered the side hall, a soft, inquiring voice reached them, "Is Athena coming over? Should I step out for a bit?"

Hearing this voice made Athena grit her teeth.

"Anna, step out for what? Is Athena a tiger or something? It she dares to be mean to you, I.."

“Grandpa Simon, what are you planning to do to me? Kick me out of the house or make me kneel down?”

Athena breezed in her voice bright and assertive. Sitting next to Simon, Anna stiffened up when she saw Athena.

Athena was dressed in a black, knitted turtleneck dress with a Y-shaped diamond belt cinching her waist, making her slim figure even more pronounced.

Seeing Athena’s graceful shape, Anna couldn’t help but slyly think, how did this wildflower, a mother no less, keep her figure

so trim?

Zoey, who had been sitting next to Anna, shot up from his chair the moment he **saw** Athena. His gaze was fixated on the coveted princess of Stardale City. Her every frown and smile was enchanting.

“Are you Ms. Dempsey? Have we met before?”

fixed on her. The most

Upon laying eyes on Athena, Zoey felt a pain in his neck. Athena gave a coy smile, shaking her head as if she had no clue who Zoey was.

Just as Zoey was about to cozy up to Athena, the man who appeared behind her sent Zoey reeling, like a mouse that had just seen a cat, with a whimper escaping his throat!

“Newman, what are you doing here?”

Zoey’s question hung in the air unanswered **as** Newman’s gaze swept over Zoey, leaving him breathless.

Everyone present was meeting Newman for the first time, their eyes lingering on him for quite long.

Athena took her seat gracefully, with Newman pulling out the chair for her, capturing everyone’s attention. **And** Athena just basked in it, enjoying Newman’s attentiveness as if it was her due.

She spared Newman some face, promising to herself **that** as long as he played nice, she wouldn’t broadcast to the world that he **was** her slave.

Anna, curious, asked, “Athena, how come you’re here with Mr. Newman Bradshaw?”

Athena’s lips curved into a thinly veiled smirk, brushing Anna off with few words, “Just crossed paths.”

Anna picked up her teacup, flashed a sweet grin at Athena, and buttered her up with a line, “Here’s to you with tea instead of booze, cheers to Athena for tying the knot with Zoey soon. Grandpa, Uncle, and the rest have been busting their guts over your big day.”

Athena’s thick lashes drooped, treating Anna like she was thin air. Seeing this, Anna’s eyes fell, and a shade of desolation crossed her face, “Guess I’m still persona non grata to Athena. It’s been five years, and she still can’t forgive me. Maybe I should just duck out.”

Anna made a move to stand, but Simon slapped a hand down, pinning her in place. He struck a patriarchal pose and spoke with a stern voice, “Athena, family feuds don’t last overnight. Anna’s been abroad for five years, and she’s paid her dues for the wrongs she’s done. Your aunt fell ill, and that’s why she’s back, to take care of her. Anna’s going to stick around in Stardale City from now

on

The old man laid down the law, “Over at the Dempsey Group’s HR department, they say all the managerial appointments need your John Hancock. Pop into the office this afternoon to sign off on Anna’s joining the Dempsey Group

Athena’s lips curled with a hint of sarcasm. Simon had got two sons, but his golden child was his youngest, David Dempsey, and Anna was his brainy med school daughter.

Five years back, they were skiing in Havenbrook near Everglade City and Anna slipped Athena some poison.

Out cold, Athena was dumped by Anna’s orders into a ravine, left to fend for herself. It was Mrs. Cornelia Bradshaw who saved Athena, whisking her back to Everglade City.

Athena was recovered by Timothy, detoxed, and came back with a vengeance, cleaning house in the Dempsey family with an **iron fist and** sending Anna packing overseas.

Anna’s return this time was news to Athena, and it didn’t take a genius to figure out the old man had a hand in it, keeping it hush–hush.

Simon didn’t want Athena clinging to past grudges with Anna. He switched gears and prodded Newman, Ur. Newman Bradshaw, what’s with the early morning crash at Mystic Ridge Villa? What’s the deal?”

Newman sat down, his presence commanding the room. He spoke with a cool, detached **tone**, “My boy’s under the weather and needs the hot springs at Mystic Ridge for some R&R. I’ve struck a deal with Ms. Dempsey, She’s given the green light for me and my boy to shack up at Mystic Ridge for his recovery.

Simon cast a thoughtful look at Athena. Her business savvy was second to none, even David, who the old man took as his protégé, couldn't hold a candle to her.

The old man

was

wondering what sort of deal Newman and Athena had cooked up to let him move into Mystic Ridge Villa

"What's alling your kid, Mr. Newman Bradshaw? Anna asked, all curious.

A chill crossed Newman's handsome face, giving off a bit of a cold shoulder, Anna's smile

was all warmth, "I'm a student at the national hospital. I can't help but be nosy when I hear someone's sick. Does your kid need Mystic Ridge's hot springs for a skin

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condition or the chills?"

Newman wasn't keen on broadcasting Payne's illness. But Anna was on the nose about Payne's condition, so Newman replied,

The chills."

Anna softly offered, "I'm under the tutelage of Doctor Jerry Gellar at the hospital. If you trust me, I could take a look at your son."

Before Anna could finish, Athena chimed—in with a warning, "Anna, remember how your treatment nearly did me in last time.

Don't mess this up."