

Chapter 53 Rumors About Us Won't Hurt Me

A wave of discomfort washed over Caden.

His initial thought was the possibility of an inappropriate photo of Alicia circulating.

He glanced upward.

Alicia, already apart from the group, stood alone and aloof.

Her expression soured as she contemplated retreating into the adjacent greenery, evidently disturbed and intimidated by the crowd.

With a stern voice, Caden commanded, "Drive over there and confiscate their phones."

Hank caught on immediately.

As Alicia was about to flag down a taxi, a Maybach abruptly pulled up in front of her, blocking her path.

Hank exited the vehicle, demanding the group hand over their phones with authority.

He then erased all the photos they had taken right in front of Alicia.

Alicia, initially shocked, soon relaxed into a smile, saying, "Thank you, Hank."

Hank modestly declined the praise.

"Mr. Ward's orders. Where might you be heading, Miss Bennett? I can offer you a lift."

Alicia looked towards Caden.

Reclining in the back seat, Caden was absorbed in his phone, his sharp profile radiating indifference.

She hesitated, then said, "Thanks for the offer, Hank, but I'm not sure it's on your route. I'm headed to the Yates Mansion."

Hank replied with a hint of surprise, "Actually, it is on the way. Mr. Ward is also going there."

Alicia was rendered speechless.

She pondered why Caden, who harbored such disdain for his father, would visit the mansion.

Finding herself without an option, Alicia climbed into the car.

Her long skirt, reaching her calves, proved cumbersome as she sat, prompting her to adjust it along with the straps of her dress due to concerns about her neckline.

Caden caught a glimpse of this adjustment.

"There's nothing to see. Why bother covering up?" he remarked casually.

Irritated, Alicia responded sharply, "Lack of display doesn't mean I can't choose to cover up. By your logic, you should be wandering around naked since you're hardly—impressive."

Hank was taken aback by the exchange. He thought to himself, "Am I really getting all this drama for free?"

Caden's smirk was evident.

"You're quite changeable. Just last night, you expressed how much you missed me, and now, look at your demeanor."

Hank found the unfolding drama fascinating, thinking to himself about the unique content unfolding before him.

Alicia inhaled deeply. "I've already explained, that was just a typo!"

Caden responded with indifference, "Oh, was it?"

Frustration mounted within her. He always had a way of being maddening.

Caden retrieved his phone and swiftly accessed the previous night's chat history.

Alicia felt uneasy. "What are you doing?"

"I'm just taking a screenshot to see if others will believe it," Caden answered nonchalantly.

"Who are you planning to send it to?" Alicia asked, her anxiety mounting.

If it were Gerry, it wouldn't have been an issue, but Caden's answer was, "Joshua."

Shock hit Alicia, her heart racing.

This could sabotage everything!

She considered grabbing the phone but remembered a previous incident in the office and controlled herself.

"Then do what you think is best. Rumors about us won't hurt me," Alicia said, forcing a smile. "Being linked to Mr. Ward could actually work in my favor."

Caden thought back to the previous evening and cracked a smile.

"Really?"

With a flick, he locked his phone and casually remarked, "It's sent."

Alicia's smile wavered, and she clenched her teeth. "Be sure to let me know his response. I'm quite curious."

"Will do," Caden confirmed.

Choosing silence, Alicia turned away.

Hank caught a glimpse of Caden's expression—a mix of amusement and irritation.

He had never witnessed such a juvenile side to Caden.

Caden always became more talkative around Alicia, as if each meeting were a celebration.

The car then fell quiet until Alicia's phone interrupted the silence.

Answering in a gentler tone, Alicia spoke. "Monica, what's going on?"

Monica's voice came through, expressing dissatisfaction. "The outfit you chose isn't working, Alicia. It's too plain and won't achieve the effect we need."

Alicia, cautious that Caden might hear, edged closer to the car door.

In a hushed tone, she confided, "The outfits you suggested are a bit too bold for me to wear publicly."

Monica responded, "They show just a little neck and leg, and they're only slightly shorter than your usual style. Didn't you once say bolder is better?"

Under her breath, Alicia admitted, "Yet, I'm hesitant to display that much to him."

Monica chuckled and replied, "Alright, I'll leave it be." Then added, "Really, your face alone is enough."

Alicia brightened. "I've also got another strategy in mind."

"Oh? What's your alternative plan?" Monica inquired.

After ending the call, Alicia picked up a new book she had purchased.

Leaning back, she lifted the book so that its title caught Caden's attention.

The title read, "The Trick of Manipulators."

Caden found himself at a loss for words.

Noticing his interest, Alicia squinted with a playful smile. "Curious? Would you like to read it as well?"

She slid closer, extending the book toward him.

"How about we read it together?"

Caden's gaze dropped.

He struggled to make out the text, but Alicia's subtly exposed neckline was distinctly visible.