

# In a Love Nest with the Aloof CEO Chapter 391

At that very moment, Skylar thought, The cologne is meant for women too. Maybe Tobias swings both ways. At that thought, a chill ran down Skylar's spine. Tobias will be furious if he reads my mind.

Pushing those thoughts aside, Skylar then chatted briefly with Largo.

On the first day of joining the filming, Skylar belatedly realized Avery had yet to leave the crew. As it turned out, Josiah refused to let her go; he had given her a role as a side character who was slightly more important. It seemed like Josiah truly liked Avery.

Both Skylar and Avery went to the filming site on the same day. There, she encountered Thomas, the man Miranda thought about all day and night.

Miranda was still lying in bed, pretending to be ill. She was miserably waiting for the day Thomas would take her home. Yet, what he was doing was sending her daughter to the filming site as if she was a child who needed her father to send her to school.

When they encountered, Thomas had still been reminding Avery not to tire herself out and to take care of herself. Avery only nodded half-heartedly.

At that moment, Skylar wondered if she should have bought a lottery ticket. What kind of sh\*tty luck do I have to witness this scene? Or are they deliberately pretending to be sweet in front of me?

Skylar did everything alone. No one sent her to the filming site, and no one reminded her about taking care of herself. Even Tobias did not know she had joined the filming crew.

Avery was wearing the same dress as Skylar was in the show—red. However, Skylar still looked better than Avery in it.

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When the three of them locked eyes, none tried to make small talk nor did they greet each other. In fact, Avery looked as if she wanted to skin her alive.

Avery had sensed something amiss with Thomas. Generally, Thomas would at least stick around to chat since Tobias had taken over Quest Group. Yet, he did not.

After finding out about Skylar and Avery's relationship, Kate finally knew why Skylar was only interested in the show after finding out Avery was one of the main characters.

Moving the chair to the doorway of the motorhome, she frowned and said, "Your relationship with your dad and your mother's background is a ticking time bomb."

At that, Skylar only forced a smile to her face and replied, "Society isn't that nice to people like us. I even thought about having a peaceful quiet life working for the government, but unfortunately, some things are out of my control. The government checks the background of every employee they hire, and with my background, they won't hire me even if I'm excellent with everything else who knew that I'd still have to worry about everything after joining the entertainment industry. I'm scared that someone will expose every part of my history and leave me bare for everyone to attack. I know it'll happen eventually, but I just hope that the netizens will be more merciful when they attack me."

Hearing that, Kate fell silent. It was a tough matter to deal with. It was one thing to have someone who had a bad credit history in the family, but it was a whole different matter to have a murderer in the family.

Skylar's mother was a murderer, and her biological father was a man with a negative credit history. If someone were to find out about her family background, Skylar's career was destined to be negatively affected.

It was rare for Skylar to see Kate stumped. She could see that it would be a grueling matter for her to deal with the ticking time bomb.

With a smile, she mumbled, almost to herself, "I'm not popular enough for them to investigate my history yet. If that day really comes, we'll see what we can do. It's not like we can do anything about it now."

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After brief contemplation, Kate muttered, "There is a way. You can announce your relationship with Tobias. It'll stop them from talking about your family history."

Skylar immediately rejected, "He won't agree to do this. You've overestimated my place in his heart. That way won't work."

The condition of Skylar's skin was quite well, despite how she wore makeup every day.

Many celebrities in the industry looked great on camera but less-than-average off camera. Moreover, as most of them wore makeup all year long, the condition of their skin was bad. An individual like Skylar was an outlier.

Still, Kate had to remind Skylar to take good care of her skin. She had just joined the industry, so she might not see the side effects of wearing makeup all day yet.

However, those warnings from Kate only happened after Kate saw Skylar's luggage.

As it turned out, Skylar did not even have skin toner. Even basic moisturizing masks were missing from her luggage.

Her luggage looked nothing like a celebrity's luggage.

Still, Kate continued to rummage through her suitcase. "Where are your masks? Why didn't you bring them?"

Tilting her head to the side, Skylar answered solemnly, "The last time I used moisturizing masks was when I was in high school. I remember that I bought ten pieces back then."

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Pinching the bridge of her nose, Kate groaned at Skylar's honesty. She's really the plainest and humblest celebrity I have to manage.

Then, she grumbled, "Avery's assistant just moved a mini fridge into her room meant for masks. Can't you care a little more for your skin? Learn to live a more refined life."

At that, Skylar flashed her a smile. "I'll ask someone to buy it for me tomorrow. I'm not very knowledgeable in terms of skincare, but..."

All of a sudden, she blushed. She had suddenly thought about what Tobias had said to her in the past. Tobias had told her men's semen was good for the skin, so he had forced her to swallow it in the past. Back then, she had been disgusted by it, and she had a huge fight with him.

After that, Tobias stopped mentioning it. Instead, he only told her how she was still immature for being reserve in bed.

Even now, Skylar was still unsure what Tobias' size was.

Irritated, Kate went to her room to get half of her masks to Skylar before reminding her to use them before she sleep every night.

As Skylar yawned, she trudged her way to the bathroom to use the mask. The moment she placed it on her face, pricking sensations spread across her face.

Oh, my face is quite dry.

Right then, someone knocked on the door. Thinking that it was Kate who had left something behind in her room, she opened the door without asking who it was.

When Thomas saw the mask on Skylar's face, he commented, "Aren't you living a great life now? You're even putting on masks."

Skylar could hear the sarcasm in his tone.

So his daughter can bring a whole fridge into his room just to store her masks, but I can't even do some skincare routine?

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Skylar replied, "I'm doing fine enough to at least use some masks. Why is Mr. Jones looking for me so late at night? Are you here to ask about Miranda, or are you here to ask if I've split up with Tobias."

The moment Thomas heard Miranda's name, Skylar noticed a look of disgust emerge in his eyes.

Taking a chair to sit on it, he then frowned and said, "The main role was meant to be Avery's. Skylar, why do you have to make life difficult for our family? Did you know Avery is taking antidepressants ever since she lost the role?"

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Skylar chuckled, realizing that Thomas was here to demand an explanation for his daughter's situation. Gosh, look at his hateful scowl and rude tone.

Her lips curled into a wicked grin. "I don't know. What does Avery's being on anti-depressants have to do with me? Actors often lose their roles to others who are far superior; that's just the way the entertainment industry works. I lost my first ever leading role that way too. If Avery can't take the hit, then perhaps she's too weak-minded for the industry."

"You should stop picking on Avery. She's a sensitive child. I've always been around to take care of her, so she's not as mentally tough as you are, nor does she think twice before jumping into things as you do. That said, I want you to look out for her since you guys are in the same group," Thomas' words sounded heavy. He had put on a gloomy expression, perfectly feigning the image of a benevolent father.

Skylar let out a disdainful sneer. "You think I wanted to be mentally tough? What child doesn't want to be protected and loved by their parents as they grow up? You've never once

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taken me seriously as your daughter, apart from when you begged me to convince Tobias into taking over Quest Group. A word of advice, Mr. Jones, never forget those who have helped you in life. So is this how you treat your benefactor?"

At the mention of his past begging, Thomas became emotionally turmoiled. He snarled, "How can you expect me to thank you? Tobias cruelly took everything from me. I was a fool then, thinking that he would help me on your behalf. Well, look how that ended; I played right into his hands."

Seeing how Thomas behaved up till this point, Skylar knew that he was definitely up to something fishy.

Regardless, Skylar didn't know much about how businesses worked. So she opened the door and motioned for Thomas to leave. "There's no point in telling me this because I've already done what I can to help. Even if you did fall for his trap, you have no one to blame but yourself. You were the one who eagerly went along with things."

She couldn't be bothered with what Thomas had to say. After all, there was no telling whether his words were chock full of lies.

Thomas' face turned purple with rage. "If you truly are a good person, then don't pick on Avery. Don't take after your sinister, rotten-hearted mother."

In a fit of fury, Thomas slammed the hotel door on his way out. Skylar jolted a little from this sudden impact.

She then went to the washroom to remove her mask. As she rinsed her face, she thought long and hard about Thomas' words.

What exactly did Tobias do to put Thomas in such a foul mood?

After drying her face, Skylar noticed the satiny glow of her skin. There was also a pinkish tint to her cheeks as if champagne roses had flowered on them. Her complexion had improved so much that she looked flawless.

Skylar quickly put on a shower cap and took the perfect selfie at a forty-five-degree angle for her Instagram.

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The best part was that her bathroom selfie was unfiltered, and her skin still looked phenomenal.

Such a photo had an irresistible charm; its innocent yet alluring beauty was well-suited for most female audiences online.

Hence, Skylar's Instagram photo blew up with over a hundred thousand likes the next day. Her photo also ranked first as the most downloaded phone wallpaper on several websites.

All this took Skylar by surprise. She had miraculously increased her popularity and exposure through that photo of her face.

Clicking into the notifications tab, Skylar saw a never-ending list of usernames that had liked her photo.

Including Tobias.

Skylar's eyes locked onto Tobias' profile picture. Among her Instagram followers, she had always assumed that Tobias was the least interested in her photos.

He had never liked her photos before; this was the first-ever like Skylar had received from him, so she took a screenshot of this momentous event.

She texted him and teased: I see you've been snooping on my social media. Should I upload more photos in the future then?

Then she anxiously waited on the edge of her seat for his reply.

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However, Tobias took his sweet time before finally texting Skylar back around breakfast time.

Tobias: ?

Skylar gripped tightly on a soymilk bottle with one hand and typed out a response with the other.

Skylar: Didn't you like my Instagram photo yesterday?

Tobias: I don't bother with social media. Sheldon was on my phone last night, so what's the fuss about this liked photo?

Skylar downed the soymilk. It washed down her throat like stale, powdered milk due to her foul mood. She mentally sneered at herself, repulsed by how she had taken the whole thing so seriously. I even took a screenshot! Ugh!

Well there goes my good mood.

Elsewhere, Tobias noticed that Skylar had ignored his message. He became lost in deep thought as he tapped on the sides of his phone.

Curious, he opened up Skylar's social media page and found the photo in question, a bathroom selfie. It showed off Skylar's porcelain skin and rosy cheeks as if she had just hopped out of a shower. His eyes roamed on the photo and eventually landed on her plump, delectable lips.

She's good-looking, I'll give her that.

Sheldon had slept in till now. He came downstairs in his crinkled pajamas, and his hair looked like an overgrown bush. Sheldon seemed disgruntled and worn-out as he kept on yawning, despite having slept for over twelve hours.

"Good morning, Mom, Tobias. Why didn't you guys wake me up for breakfast?" Sheldon lazily slumped onto the chair opposite Tobias with his legs crossed.

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Claudia grumbled in response, "It's late. Must you sleep in every day? Look at how you're indulging in hedonism and wasting away like some bum. Do you intend to rely on your brother forever?"

At her nagging, Sheldon shoved two-thirds of toast into his mouth.

He then clamped his mouth shut and feigned a quick choke, motioning that he wasn't keen on talking. Claudia shook her head disapprovingly but said nothing about his antics.

Eventually, Claudia answered a phone call from her best friend and left the room. Tobias had waited for this moment to speak up. He asked Sheldon, "Why did you use my phone last night? Who said you could?"

Sheldon's back straightened at once. "I was bored, so I scrolled through your stuff to pass the time. Then I saw Skylar's photo and liked it. By the by, that photo is all over the internet now."

Although Sheldon kept a straight face, he was sweating buckets inside.

I can't believe Skylar texted Tobias so quickly after I used his account to like her photo. She seems pretty enthusiastic over something petty like a photo.

Although... if Skylar rats out about how Winnie wants me to split half the family's assets, then it's certainly not a petty matter.

I'll be skinned alive if Tobias finds out about that.

Besides, Winnie is overestimating my abilities with all that talk about splitting assets. I haven't done anything to deserve even a penny's worth of Ford Group's earnings. And even if I wanted to start my own company, I'm just not capable enough to do so.

Sheldon could only hope that Skylar wouldn't rat him out.

Tobias later saved Skylar's photo onto his phone. After hesitating for some time, he set it as his wallpaper.

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Avery felt inferior now that she was working alongside Skylar. It unnerved her that Skylar had gone through some magical transformation; Skylar was no longer the meek and poor little wretch that begged Avery's family for tuition fees all those years ago.

"How does it feel to play this character, knowing that you've stolen it from someone else?" Avery sneered.

Skylar responded to this with a wicked grin. "It's not too shabby. But to be fair, I was given this role. They wouldn't take no for an answer, so how could I refuse? Besides, weren't you always stealing my things when we were growing up? Now you know what it's like to be on the receiving end."

Avery's face scrunched up into a hideous frown. Skylar's smugness made her feel worse about losing the role.

Avery couldn't hold it in any longer. She shed all pretenses of amiability and turned violent against Skylar. "We'll see about that. Some things will never be yours, no matter what scheming methods you use to obtain them. You're just as shameless as your mother; she stole someone else's man while you're stealing career opportunities from me!"

Avery's heart simmered for the despicable mother-daughter duo. She hated how her family had been in tatters ever since Miranda got out of prison.

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Skylar scoffed. She would have gladly knocked some manners into Avery. However, she couldn't because they were on set; and because Largo was standing right across the room. So Skylar turned and left Avery to her own devices.

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At this, Avery flashed a vicious gleam at the female lead's costume that Skylar wore. Then she asked her manager, Jane, "Have you contacted everyone? There cannot be any slip-ups when executing this plan."

Jane nodded. "I've discussed everything with Daniel from props. He named his price—a hundred thousand."

Avery's brows drew closer. "That much to remove a couple of screws? That's basically a rip-off."

Eyes darting around, Jane cautiously leaned in and murmured, "Daniel said that removing those screws might cost someone's life, so a hundred thousand is only the deposit. It will cost us two hundred thousand if she ends up crippled, and half a million if she dies."

Delight smeared across Avery's face as she listened to these possible outcomes. Her vicious grin deepened as she pictured a stone slab crushing onto Skylar's body.

Meanwhile, Skylar and Largo were going through their scripts together. They knew that fans would go crazy over the tiniest romantic details between a female and male lead. Hence, they wanted to incorporate this into their scripts.

Skylar couldn't help but feel drawn to Largo's amorous voice as they bounced ideas off of each other.

Largo always kept a friendly smile each time he spoke. He was the kind of man that lit up an entire room. Because of this, Skylar found him to be such a gem.

Skylar realized that she wasn't entirely a masochist. While she found gratification from Tobias' torture, she was also receptive to gentler men like Largo.

She and Largo had to film their current scene with a massive green screen in the studio, then special effects would be added later on.

Skylar caught sight of Avery lingering around the set. She felt that Avery's eyes were glued onto her the whole time.

So Skylar motioned Hannah over during makeup touchups. She asked, "Are we filming Avery's scenes today? Why has she been in the studio this whole time?"

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Hannah then flipped through the day's filming schedule. "Nope. Filming for her scenes will be done at a much later date."

At this, Skylar felt unnerved. Avery hates being around me. So why would she show up on set to watch me film my scenes? That's very unlike her.

Skylar's eyelid kept twitching like a bad omen.

Before they started shooting the scene, Skylar had to put on her safety harness. She tugged at the harness rope to test its durability, just in case.

Daniel from props noticed this and grumbled, "Do you not trust the work of our props crew, Ms. Jones? Quit worrying. It's a sturdy harness. There's no chance of you falling."

Despite his attempt to calm her nerves, his voice sounded indifferent. Even his gaze was devoid of warmth.

Skylar chuckled tensely. "I tend to worry when my safety is involved. You see, I'm a very unlucky person. So please bear with me while I check things thoroughly. After all, it's better to be safe than sorry."

Nevertheless, Daniel flashed an urged look. "It's almost time to shoot. You should put on your harness now."

As he spoke, his sleeve lifted and revealed a well-crafted watch with an unmistakable logo—a Rolex.

Skylar noticed and casually pointed it out. "Your watch is superb. I had no idea that members of the props crew earned so much. My friend has the same model, by the way."

Daniel covered his watch at once. He averted her gaze and muttered, "It's a parallel import."

For some reason, Skylar felt that the man seemed familiar. Yet, she couldn't quite recall where she had seen his face before.

Regardless, Skylar and Largo were about to film a battle scene.

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Largo had already gotten his makeup done and was ready to start. Seeing this, Skylar reluctantly fastened the harness and took a deep inhale. Her eyelid twitched more furiously.

Then Josiah's voice blared through the walkie-talkie, "What the hell are you doing, Skylar? Focus! I don't have time for you to daydream on set."

Skylar quickly motioned an okay gesture, indicating that she was ready to begin.

At that moment, Avery and Daniel locked gazes. He nodded slightly to inform her that things were going as planned. Avery instinctively looked up to the harness' ceiling track. It appeared at least five meters off the ground; if Skylar fell from that height, she was sure to be disabled, if not dead.

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Brimming with delight, Avery cracked a twisted smile to Jane. "Skylar won't be using her legs anytime soon; she'll be disabled after that fall. Let's see who the director chooses as the female lead then. It'll be more than kind if she ends up dying instead."

Jane pursed her lips. Deep down, she was appalled by Avery's psychotic plan. It's not uncommon to find dirty politics between actresses in the industry. Still, Avery is pure evil for killing off her enemy without hesitation.

As the harness lifted higher, Skylar suddenly asked to halt the shoot. She requested to the director, "Can we please lay down some stunt mats? I'm afraid of heights..."

Josiah's clutch white-knuckled on the script, nearly tossing it. He let out an ear-splitting roar to Skylar, "What the hell are you doing? We don't have time to fetch the stunt mats simply because you need them. I've shot many films, and no one has ever fallen from their harnesses. So why are you insisting on special treatment?"

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Desperate, Skylar placed a hand over her forehead. She feigned a frail voice, “Mr. Zimmermann, I have vertigo. I tend to experience dizziness after reaching a certain altitude. Please, you must find me some stunt mats to catch me if I fall. I’m sure it won’t take too long to lay down some mats...”

Earlier, she noticed Avery and Daniel exchanging glances. It looked like there was something suspicious going on between them. Hence, she was worried that Avery had pulled a dirty stunt and messed with the harness.

Anger thrummed in Josiah’s veins. He mercilessly barked at Skylar in front of the filming crew, “I have never met a more troublesome actress apart from you. How dare you barge into the show and demand that I, the director, to accommodate you?”

Despite his jeering, Skylar refused to explain her suspicions about the harness’ safety. Because she couldn’t risk being wrong, yet she also couldn’t recklessly gamble with her life. After all, Daniel looked extremely pale and nervous when she inspected the harness earlier. Thus, requesting stunt mats was her safest bet.

The film crew moved quickly and layered some stunt mats under Skylar. Meanwhile, Avery’s brows furrowed tightly at this. If this keeps up, there won’t even be a scratch on Skylar when she falls.

Once they finished placing down the stunt mats, Skylar was hoisted into the air by her harness. She wielded a wooden sword in one hand. Her gaze was strikingly sharp in her expertly executed makeup. The gorgeous pink dress flowed down her body, exuding a graceful aura. According to the script, this was the female lead, Saoirse’s first time properly wielding a sword after receiving basic training.

“You have to wield the sword in a more poised manner. Skylar, don’t slouch. What kind of rubbish did your etiquette trainer teach you? How could your posture be so horrid, despite coming from a professional film academy background?” Josiah barked through the loudhailer.

Mischief flickered across Avery’s eyes when she heard this. She casually approached the director’s side and spoke in a honeyed voice, “She hasn’t even graduated film academy. I heard it’s because she failed her major.”

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Josiah frowned. "Didn't she apply to defer her course since she's not yet of age to graduate? What does her deference have to do with failing a major?"

Avery merely shrugged her shoulders in response.

Skylar was never one to use vulgarities. However, her mind went blank when the massive green screen set up toppled toward her. Hence, she uttered the first thing that came to mind, "Sh\*t!" Suspended in a harness next to Skylar, Largo tried to grab her but failed. He watched helplessly as the green screen crashed onto her. Because of this impact, her body jerked backward and made her harness loosen. Silence ensued as Skylar fell from high above and plopped right on the stunt mats.

Seeing that an accident had occurred, every staff member and film crew gathered anxiously before Skylar.

Even Josiah tossed aside his earpiece and ran towards Skylar.

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Skylar's eyes had clamped shut after the fall. All at once, an uproar of panicked voices sounded around her. This chaos made her head pound furiously.

Once she finally opened her eyes, everyone let out a heavy breath of relief. Kate immediately dashed forward. She inspected every inch of Skylar's arms and legs, leaving no stone unturned. She fretted, "Can you still move your body? The ambulance is on its way."

To this, Skylar ignored her sore muscles and propped herself upright with her arms. Then she cast a knowing look at Daniel.

Not wanting to worry the others, Skylar massaged her aching arm and forced out a smile. "I think I'm fine. What an uncanny coincidence that the green screen fell over and my harness loosened, huh?"

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Kate became alert at this statement. Her eyes darted around the set as she questioned the director, "Mr. Zimmermann. You should thank your lucky stars that Skylar requested for stunt mats. And to think you were throwing a tantrum over that simple request. Without these mats, Skylar would have suffered either physically crippling injuries, or worse, brain damage. Your props crew is truly first-rate for this to even happen. Need I remind you that we're here to film a show, not to risk our actress' life?"

Josiah knew he was in the wrong. He explained in a gentler voice than before, "I swear this has never happened. Perhaps we've used too many props for this scene. Maybe the usual safety standards have not been met."

Skylar shifted her head from left to right. She let out a sigh of relief after confirming that her neck wasn't injured. Thank God. At least I don't have any spinal or severe injuries.

She quickly saw Avery standing in amongst the crowd. Disappointment smeared across Avery's face as her brows twisted into a miserable frown.

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News about Skylar's incident spread like wildfire amongst filming crew members. It wasn't long before every single crew member at the filming site had heard about it. So now, Skylar lay in her motorhome and was slurping on some chicken soup. Kate had someone deliver the soup earlier as comfort food to soothe Skylar's rattled nerves.

Kate sat opposite Skylar in the motorhome. She cast a worried gaze at Skylar, who seemed unbothered by the whole incident as if it had never happened.

"Let's get you some protective crystals someday. Literally, how can you be so unlucky? I bet Tobias uses protective charms as décor in his office too. It's common for most businesses. Maybe you should ask him to acquire something for you."

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Skylar put a spoonful of the soup into her mouth. It was nice and warm until she tasted the yucky parsley.

Seeing that they were finally alone, she disclosed her suspicions to Kate. "I think someone tampered with the harness. It doesn't make sense that Largo's functioned normally, but mine loosened. Kate, please look into this for me. The culprit could be anyone around us. I'm sure this won't be their only attempt to harm me. And like you said, I'm not risking my life just to film a show."

Yet, Kate dismissed her, "You're reading too much into the situation. It genuinely seems like an accident to me. Besides, who would do such a spiteful thing to you?"

Skylar was quick to respond. "Avery, duh. There's no doubt that she would do something like this. When we were younger, she threw herself down a flight of stairs so that she could blame it on me. Why wouldn't she be behind this? She obviously wants me to suffer."

Kate still refused to believe her. "She was standing at the sidelines when you fell. Plus, she doesn't look like the evil scheming sort. I bet you're jumping to conclusions simply because you don't like her."

At that moment, Skylar found a striking resemblance between Kate and Tobias; the two only trusted themselves. They refused to be swayed by the opinions of others when making a judgment.

Skylar couldn't understand the logic behind their actions. Are all successful businessmen and women so stubborn? Do they all think their judgment is best while everyone else's is wrong?

Later at the hotel, Skylar had taken a shower and was sitting on the bed. She hesitated on whether she should ask for Tobias' help. Her hair was still dripping wet when she caved in and video-called Tobias.

Couples normally video-called one another on a whim. It was often relaxed and casual. However, Skylar's situation was different; she had battled herself mentally before finally pressing on that dreaded video-call button.

Tobias immediately answered. Oddly, Skylar could only hear his voice. His camera seemed to be leaning against the desk, so his face was off-screen.

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Pushing away her doubts, Skylar sprawled on the bed and placed the camera up close to her face. She ranted, "I was injured today. I fell from high up and got crushed by the green screen."

"Is there anything else you need to say? If not, I'm hanging up because I'm busy right now. I'll call you later." Tobias' voice was as swoon-worthy as usual. It could easily beat Largo without question. The only negative was that Tobias' dismissive tone was enough to ruin one's mood.

Skylar's face darkened to a hideous purple as she scowled at him.

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Anger thrummed in Skylar's chest after listening to Tobias' uninterested words.

She hissed, "Can't you at least pretend to care? You could have asked if I was fine. Is that so hard to do?"

An exasperated sigh sounded from the other end of the call. "I'm busy, Baby. Besides, you wouldn't be talking back so harshly if anything serious happened to you. Isn't that right?"

Then Skylar hung up. She fumed at how Tobias wasn't taking her seriously. Forget it. I'm not going to ask for his help anymore.

He's clearly too busy to make time for me.

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Meanwhile, Tobias sat behind his desk in a black suit. His expression turned grim as he looked at the phone in his hands. Why must the video call's audio blast through the speakers? Couldn't it just be subtle like a regular call?

Various executive members sat on the sofas around. A tense atmosphere permeated the air around them.

They represented different departments in the company and were giving detailed status reports to Tobias. It was halfway through this when Tobias' phone rang. Then they sat uncomfortably as the woman on the phone threw a fit at Tobias.

That got them curious. Who's this woman that is currently involved with Mr. Ford?

Eva, who took down the meeting notes with the other assistants, could tell that it was Skylar's voice on the call.

Delight swelled in Eve's chest. Tobias is way harsher to Skylar than I thought.

It looks like he no longer finds Skylar interesting.

"Let's resume. We'll adjourn this meeting after we complete the reports." Tobias fastened the buttons on his suit and checked the time.

If I rush over to the filming site now, I'll likely arrive by dawn. What's the point of going on a hectic journey to see Skylar, who's uninjured and perfectly fine?

I'm not the type to indulge in such romantic gestures.

After every executive member had completed their reports, Tobias dismissed the meeting. Everyone got up and left accordingly. They assumed that tonight's meeting was simply routine work.

Shortly after, Tobias' spacious office returned to its usual silence.

Then Sheldon entered. He promptly closed the door and turned on his heel to see what Tobias was up to—scribbling something. He heard the sound of Tobias' pen scratching ferociously against the paper.

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Sheldon approached the paper on Tobias' desk. It was a name list of the company's executive members. Tobias had struck off several names, such as Spencer Campbell, Dylan Slade, and others.

He immediately recognized these people. These were some of the older employees who had been in the company for the longest time. Confused, Sheldon asked, "Why'd you strike off their names? Shouldn't you at least acknowledge that they've served us for a long time? Surely you're not that heartless to remove them from the company?"

Tobias stopped striking out names. He looked up at Sheldon and said, "The company will be undergoing a reform. My company is not a nursing home for lax employees."

An inexplicable feeling lingered at the back of Sheldon's throat. He was worried that someday, Tobias would discard him like those employees.

Winnie might be right. I should start thinking about my future. I can't allow myself to waste away as I've been doing this whole time.

Tobias leaned deeper into his chair. He pulled at his tie to loosen it, then looked at Sheldon. "Why have you come to see me? Are you short on money?"

At this, Sheldon shrugged off his original intention of asking for money. He shook his head and replied, "I'm introducing Winnie to Mom. I'm counting on you to be there too. We can't have the spotlight shine on only me."

Tobias' face fell disapprovingly at Winnie's name, yet he didn't want to interfere with Sheldon's relationship. He eventually grunted, "No promises. I'll be there if my schedule isn't too packed. Otherwise, you'll have to figure it out yourself."

...

At the hotel, Skylar's spine was killing her. On top of that, her heart was in complete tatters after that video call with Tobias.

The next day, Skylar's mind was still a jumbled-up mess. She was anxious about re-filming the harness scene from yesterday. I can't trust anyone after that disaster. I'm never putting on another harness unless it is fully inspected and proven to be safe.

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Josiah was too embarrassed to say anything to Skylar. After all, Skylar's melodramatic request had saved her life yesterday. If he had stubbornly insisted on not having the mats, then his female lead would be bedridden in a hospital by now. He could never live with that guilt.

"How are you doing? Do you feel any discomfort anywhere?" Largo placed two bottles of freeze spray beside Skylar, offering them to her.

Skylar hadn't expected Largo to be so considerate. He's thoughtfully asking about my pains after the fall, and he even brought medicine!

He's way more of a gentleman than that cold-blooded monster, Tobias.

Ultimately, women yearned to be cared for by someone special; Skylar was no exception. However, she had lost all faith that Tobias would ever become a gentle and considerate man.

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"Thanks. It's not a big deal. In fact, I'm as fit as a butcher's dog," Skylar joked, realizing that it sounded funnier in her head.

Largo said gently, "That's great. I hope you don't get traumatized by this. It's completely normal to get injured on set. Acting itself is a high-risk profession, but there's nothing to complain about, to be honest. After all, we get paid so much. That's why we have to do our best to make sure we are worth the money."

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At that, Skylar wondered how much Largo was paid. After some mental calculation, she surmised that the figure on his paycheck probably had exceeded hers by a few zeroes.

When Largo left to get changed, the faint smile on Skylar's face vanished. If it wasn't for the sake of forming connections, she hated going out of her way to smile.

Largo stood tall in a white robe that billowed around him. The look in his eyes was not of this world, and an aura of immortality encompassed him.

Skylar swooned slightly. Whoever styled him is a genius! Be it the makeup and clothing, everything deserved praise.

Avery was playing the role of a maid working for the male lead, Titus Lancaster. She had followed him since she was a child, and endured the torment of unrequited love.

The appearance of the female lead, Saoirse Hafford, made her go crazy with jealousy because of how much Titus favored her. Hence, she plotted against Saoirse every step of the way, all so that Titus would come to resent her.

Skylar felt that Avery was the perfect person to play such a b\*tchy character.

Due to her status as a maid, the character played by Avery, Yaneth Mandell, did not look outstanding both in terms of makeup and clothing.

Skylar was in a very good frame of mind. After Josiah gave her a tongue-lashing the previous day, she paid special attention to her expressions and demeanor. This time, she was the one carrying the sword and not the other way around.

When Josiah shouted "action", Skylar got into character effortlessly. As the camera moved with her, there wasn't a single flaw in sight.

Avery, on the other hand, messed up several times. Thus, Skylar had no choice but to cooperate, reshooting the scenes with her.

Enraged, Josiah directed his anger at Avery this time. "Are you serious? You only have a few lines. Is it that hard to say them properly?"

Avery was scratching her left arm vehemently, the action drawing blood.

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“Director, my arm is really itchy,” she cried out in anguish.

Right then, Skylar frowned and whispered into Avery’s ear, “You know, my costume was torn open slightly in the back. Before that, it was stained with some mango powder. If I remember correctly, you’re allergic to mangoes.”

Avery’s expression froze and she gritted out, “What the hell is your problem, Skylar? Why are you targeting me at every turn? You obviously know that I’m allergic to mangoes. Yet, you did this?”

Skylar smiled. “I’m merely reminding you to keep your hands off what doesn’t belong to you.”

Avery completely lost it, shouting for her assistant to bring her some Cetirizine, but not before hissing, “Don’t go too far. Everything you have now won’t stay yours for long.”

Avery was so angry she slapped the thermos cup her assistant brought for her to the ground.

“Idiot. Did I say wanted water?”

Jane jumped in fright, quickly bowing her head to apologize, “I’m sorry. I should’ve asked you if you were thirsty first.”

Avery was filled with regret and frustration. I should’ve asked Dad to burn bridges with Skylar back then. A b\*tch like her shouldn’t be allowed to live.

She glared at Jane who was discreetly wiping her tears away. “What the hell are you crying for? You’re acting like I committed a crime against you. Ugh, look at you. You’re oozing with bad energy. Shoo! Stay away as far from me as possible!”

Hannah had witnessed this entire scene. Later on, both Skylar and she felt angry on behalf of Jane.

Hannah even marveled about how lucky she was to meet such a good boss who was unbelievably gentle and never once lost her temper at her.

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Skylar chuckled and said, "Oh, stop flattering me. You should engage with Jane whenever you're free. I feel bad for her. She doesn't have much experience and was unfortunate enough to become Avery's assistant the moment she joined this industry. I'm afraid she'd be traumatized if this goes on. If she's interested, she can switch under me."

Skylar was pulling no punches. She did not feel the need to take care of Avery's image because her goal was clear. She was going to destroy Avery's reputation, so that she would know what it feels like to get everything robbed from her.

She was too arrogant for her own good, but this wasn't why Skylar wanted revenge.

It was because Avery had made her childhood a nightmare, and she could never bring herself to forgive her.

In the past, Avery said she didn't like her long hair because it looked trashy and annoying.

On the way home from school, she and her sidekicks surrounded Skylar, then forcefully cut off her long hair. The result was a head of ugly short hair which accompanied her throughout junior high school.

When she returned home, her grandmother kept asking her what happened to her hair. Afraid that she would feel sad, Skylar lied, saying that her hair was too long and it was a waste of shampoo, so she cut it short since it would be easier to take care of.

It was also out of consideration for her grandmother that she came up with this reason. Meredith had always lived frugally. She used normal soap to wash her own hair and only bought special shampoo from the supermarket for Skylar to use. A wistful smile formed on Skylar's lips at this memory.

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After wrapping up for the day, Largo announced that he wanted to treat the filming crew to a meal. Skylar declined to join, using the excuse that she wasn't feeling well.

Since the gathering was also to welcome the second female lead to the crew, Skylar did not want to hog the limelight.

A scowl formed on Kate's face when she saw Skylar lying in bed at the hotel with a facial mask on right after getting off work, while everyone else had posted photos of the meat fondue they were having on their respective social media.

"Skylar, can you stop being so antisocial? The filming crew is having fun right now, but here you are, all alone. Don't you feel bothered by that?"

Rolling off the bed, Skylar peeled off the mask and rubbed the remaining essence from the mask onto her neck.

Then, she turned on the faucet, bent down, and washed her face before answering.

"No, I don't feel bothered in the least, neither am I interested in joining the hype. They can eat whatever they like because I'm on a diet. Recently, I feel like I can gain weight just by breathing."

Kate scanned Skylar's slim frame. Indeed, she had lost weight recently. She was close to five feet six, but only weighed about ninety pounds.

"Try not to get into an argument with Avery in public. It'd be bad if word got out," Kate said worriedly.

Due to her empty stomach, Skylar was more clear-headed and sensitive. Pursing her lips, she spat, "I just can't stand the sight of her. It ruins my mood every single time. I'm positive she's the one who caused me to fall from the wire. I just don't have evidence."

Kate felt that Skylar was being a tad paranoid. Oh, c'mon. They're sisters by blood. Why is she treating Avery like her archenemy?

Sensing Kate's skepticism, Skylar gave up trying to explain to her. She believed that Avery would slip up sooner or later. For now, she would focus on winning Jane over to her side.

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Kate sighed before saying, "I don't think Avery is the one you should be worrying about. Rather, you should watch out for Cassidy. She's a real headache."

Skylar had also just found out that the fashionably late second female lead was Cassidy Gardner.

She debuted a few years earlier than Skylar, and her career had been smooth-sailing since then. These few years, other than being cast as female leads in famous movies, she was also a frequent guest on reality shows. Besides that, her love life was constantly a hot topic of discussion among netizens.

Skylar had always found Cassidy a little odd. Before debuting, she would occasionally join in the keyboard warrior troop.

Once, she left a comment below a reality show Cassidy was invited on, asking if she was mentally disturbed because of how she was afraid of looking into the eyes of whoever she was talking to. Not to mention, it seemed like she was in her own world sometimes as she mumbled things that made no sense.

On that day, she was cursed to hell and back by Cassidy's fans. It was so bad that she turned off her private messages.

Recalling this, Skylar became slightly apprehensive, fearing that her comment from three years ago would be dug out by all those scarily resourceful netizens.

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