



## Chapter 77 Spending the Night at Paul's Apartment

Paul was scanning the menu when he heard Nikolette. He raised his head and glanced at Calista, who was enjoying her lemon water.

Without any hesitation, he said, "Calista wouldn't do something like that. She'd first seek my opinion if she genuinely wanted to introduce someone to me. Ms. Nikolette, if you have a penchant for stirring up trouble, I'd appreciate it if you found another table."

Calista looked up in bewilderment. Her connection with Paul hadn't reached a stage where he unquestionably believed in her.

He would probably have smoothed things over in the past to avoid an uncomfortable atmosphere. She hadn't seen him be this impolite, even with women more stubborn and temperamental than Nikolette.

Nikolette's face turned red. She wished she could vanish into thin air. Although Paul's voice wasn't booming, and the tables weren't close together, the restaurant was bustling with people.

It seemed like all eyes were on her, and even the whispered conversations she couldn't quite make out appeared to be poking fun at her. Nikolette held back her emotions.

She bit her lip, her eyes filled with tears, and murmured, "Paul, you've misunderstood me. I'm not making things up. Everything I said was true. My sister promised to introduce us."

Paul responded, "I'm sorry, but I'm not used to being addressed by my first name by strangers. You can call me by my last name."

Calista couldn't help but giggle softly. Men could sometimes be quite willing to allow a woman to seduce them and play the fool. Lucian was deceived, and he even did so willingly.

However, this wasn't the case with Paul.

Nikolette couldn't contain herself any longer. She never saw it coming from Paul, who seemed like a true gentleman, to sink so low as to utter such offensive words to a young lady, especially in Calista's presence. It was like unmasking her and trampling all over her dignity.

Nikolette quit the act and stood up abruptly. Her eyes filled with fury as she shot a fierce look at them.

"You've crossed a line!" She declared before swiftly exiting.

However, regret swept over Nikolette when she stepped out of the restaurant. She had already settled the bill. There was no reason for her to leave on an empty stomach.

Nikolette returned to the restaurant and selected a concealed spot from which she could continue observing

Calista.

She held her phone and started snapping multiple photos of them. She was determined to make Paul and Calista pay the price.

Calista explained the situation to Paul, "I was planning to talk to you before setting up the dinner. I didn't expect it to line up like this today."

Paul sighed, "You should have told me earlier. Will she use your mother's heirlooms to threaten you?"

"My mom's heirlooms probably aren't worth much." Calista didn't want to dwell on this topic any longer. "I just didn't expect you to be so sharp."

"I'm protective of my friends. I can't stand seeing them getting bullied by anyone," Paul explained.

Calista remained silent.

Paul dropped Calista off at her apartment building after finishing their meal.

"Get some rest," he said.

Calista replied, "Sure, and thank you for the apartment. I've transferred the rental to you. Please make sure you've received it."

She had just checked the rental in this area and transferred an extra 10 dollars to Paul. After all, his apartment was move

-in ready and cleaned.

On the other hand, Lucian had a busy day with several consecutive meetings. He finally saw the messages Calista had sent a few hours later.

He stared at his phone screen, infuriated by the vulgar and offensive words he had read. He tried calling Calista but got the "The number you have dialed is currently busy" message.

He attempted to make another call after fifteen minutes, but he still couldn't establish a connection with Calista.

Lucian chuckled while looking at Calista's name on the screen. His gaze darkened, seemingly capable of chilling everything it fell upon. Just then, David walked into the room while holding some documents for Lucian to review.

Lucian ordered, "Send a message to Calista and tell her that she'll be sleeping on the streets from now on if she doesn't move back to Everglade Manor."

David was left speechless by the sudden demand. He was responsible for contacting Calista's landlords recently and applying pressure on her.

Moreover, their actions had disrupted her plans for a new rental today. David was feeling a heavy burden on his conscience. Lucian might jeopardize his marriage if he persisted in this manner.

The atmosphere within Northwood Corporation had grown increasingly tense, to the point where even taking a

restroom break had become an anxiety-inducing experience.

"Mr. Northwood, knowing Ms. Everhart, I'm afraid she'd prefer to sleep on the streets rather than to move back ..."

Otherwise, why would she wait until now?

David observed Lucian's lack of reaction and suggested, "Perhaps you could consider offering Ms. Everhart a gift to mend things? Women often appreciate kindness ..."

Lucian shot David a sinister look.

"She slapped me. Why would I buy her a gift? Do you think I'm as undignified as you, a sycophant?"

David was all too familiar with Lucian's university crush story.

In those days, Lucian had experienced a breakup. Despite his fervent pursuit, his ex-girlfriend had already found someone new and showed no interest in him whatsoever.

David cursed Lucian under his breath and replied, "No. Of course, you're not a sycophant. I'll message Ms. Everhart right away. I'll leave no detail out and make sure Mr. Northwood's intentions are crystal clear."

On the other hand, Calista had just finished showering and lying on her apartment's soft, large bed when she received David's message. She chuckled coldly and ignored the messages after reading them.

The next day, Calista visited an art supply store to restock some tools. She didn't pay much attention to her suspension from the studio.

After all, it had been agreed upon beforehand, and she considered it a temporary job. Besides, she had a few freelance projects on her plate and needed to focus on completing them.

Lucian didn't know Calista was Callie. He had no grounds to interfere with her freelance work. Calista couldn't help but smile at the thought. <sup>1</sup>

If Lucian were to use his influence, he could easily uncover the truth. However, it was clear that he didn't care enough, and as a result, his subordinates weren't particularly diligent in their investigation.

If he ever decided to investigate seriously, she might not end up with bizarre rumors, like her job as a janitor at Justa. So, aside from moving to a new place, Calista's life hadn't been greatly affected.

In stark contrast, the atmosphere at Northwood Corporation was dreadful.

David walked out of the office disheartened, having witnessed yet another senior executive receiving a severe lecture from Lucian. He took a deep breath before knocking on the door.

"Mr. Northwood."

Lucian stared at the documents before him and asked, "Where did she stay last night?"

Calista could not secure a rental or find hotels willing to accommodate her. She hadn't visited Yara's place either. Where else could she have gone apart from returning to Stansend Manor?

David's entire body tensed up, and his hair stood on end as he nervously answered, "Ms. Everhart spent the night at Mr. Baker's apartment."

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