

Chapter 75 I Can Help You

Caden cast a contemptuous glance her way.

"Are you trying to grab another kiss from me?" he taunted.

Alicia matched his disdain with her own sharp tone. "Are you admitting to it now? I always knew you had ulterior motives."

All the care she had shown him that evening had been for nothing.

Instead of reciprocating her kindness, he chose to betray her trust, proving that old habits were hard to break.

She swept her hair back and spoke firmly. "I have important things to handle. I'm done wasting my time with you."

With those words, she began to scan the crowd, searching for Rachel.

Alicia was just about to leave when Caden interrupted her, saying, "I understand what you're trying to do today. While she might not be able to assist you, I certainly can."

Even after hearing that, she remained unconvinced by his statement.

She hadn't even shared her plans with Monica yet, making her wonder how Caden could possibly know about them.

"Thank you, but I'll pass," she responded firmly.

Noticing her defiance, Caden let out a chuckle.

"You have a great opportunity right before you, yet you choose to ignore it. Don't expect my help later on."

Alicia felt her competitive spirit ignite. "I appreciate your concern, but please stay out of my affairs."

She reminded herself not to fall back on deceitful tactics as she had in

the past.

From a distance, Alicia noticed Rachel approaching.

Alicia reached for her drink, preparing herself to approach Rachel across the room.

"Why are you in such a rush? Handle my issue first, and then you're free to go," said Caden.

He took a sip of his drink and immediately frowned, finding it completely tasteless.

Alicia felt a surge of annoyance. She glanced at his glass and asked, "Your drink has no flavor?"

Caden looked down at his glass and replied, "This is just warm water."

She paused for a few seconds before calmly suggesting, "Would you like something with a bit more taste?"

Caden turned his gaze towards her lips.

As their eyes met, an unspoken understanding passed between them, and Alicia couldn't help but smile.

It seemed they were both thinking along the same lines.

Caden reluctantly agreed. "That's not a bad idea, but in this setting, it might not be convenient for you, Ms. Bennett."

Alicia smiled reassuringly. "I'll be quick."

Caden straightened up and responded, "Suit yourself."

Instead of leaning in for a kiss immediately, Alicia took a sip of her own drink first.

Caden raised an eyebrow, clearly noticing her deliberate move.

However, his expectations were unmet as Alicia decisively spat the sip from her mouth into his glass.

Her actions were smooth and intentional.

She made it all seem so natural.

Caden stared silently at the now pinkish water, choosing not to respond.

Alicia wiped the remaining drink from her lips and casually remarked, "Now you can drink it. It's completely bland, just like your taste."

Alicia exited with a graceful stride, leaving the room behind.

Caden let out a laugh of frustration, clearly exasperated.

Once she was gone, Gerry wandered over and casually picked up a snack to nibble on. "What was going on between you and Alicia?"

"We had a little argument," Caden replied flatly.

"You've got a lot of time on your hands," Gerry remarked with a hint of amusement.

He took a couple of bites from the dessert, its overwhelming sweetness catching him off guard, making him cough in discomfort.

Instead of getting his own drink, Gerry reached for the glass in Caden's hand. "Let me have a sip of that."

Caden pushed the glass out of reach with a frown. "Get your own drink."

"Why can't we share a drink? What's the big deal?" asked Gerry.

"I've already drunk from it," Caden said, shooting him a glare.

"I don't mind," Gerry remarked before making another attempt to grab it. "We've shared drinks since we were kids. Come on, I'll grab you a new one after."

Without another word, Caden downed the entire glass himself.

This left Gerry speechless.

He then swallowed and asked, "What's so special about that drink you're guarding?"

As Caden recalled drinking the water Alicia had spat into, a wave of

nausea hit him.

In all honesty, he wasn't even thirsty. He just didn't want Gerry to have it. What on earth had been going through his mind?

Setting the glass down, he walked off without another word.

A server passed by, and Gerry casually requested a glass of water.

After looking down at the crystal-clear liquid, he was confused.

Why was this glass so clear, while the one Caden had was tinted pink?

He turned to the server and asked, "Do you serve different types of plain water here?"

Seemingly perplexed, the server replied, "Sir, the only difference is the temperature, not the taste."

"Is that so?"

Gerry took a sip, then smacked his lips.

There was nothing remarkable about the taste.

So why was Caden so protective of his drink?

Meanwhile, Alicia approached Rachel and greeted her.

Rachel didn't even acknowledge her.

It seemed as though her mind was elsewhere.

Alicia followed Rachel's gaze and noticed Randolph by the wine cabinet, purchasing a bottle.

A woman was standing beside him.

Even though they weren't standing close together, their body language suggested an undeniable closeness.

Any woman could immediately sense something was happening between them.

Rachel quickly snapped out of her daze when she noticed Alicia. She avoided direct eye contact and asked, "Ms. Bennett, when did you arrive?"

"I just got here. You looked upset, so I thought I'd stay with you," Alicia replied gently.

Rachel tried to smile but failed, casting a sorrowful glance toward the pair again.

Noticing that Alicia had likely caught on, Rachel didn't hold back. "She's an old flame of Randolph's. There's nothing between them now, but they've stayed close. She asks for his help often. She came by today to have him choose wine for her elders, and they've been at it for quite a while."

Alicia didn't sugarcoat her response. "It doesn't look like they're just picking out wine."

Their body language told another story.

They laughed and talked easily.

The two of them seemed more like a couple.

Rachel's jealousy simmered beneath the surface, but her pride kept her from causing a scene. All she could do was quietly endure.

When the woman finally chose her bottle, Randolph took out his card and paid without a second thought.

That was the last straw for Rachel, so she walked over to them.

"Randolph."