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She had been abandoned by her ex-boyfriend, and now, she was being treated like a mistress by Tobias. Why does life have to be so hard? I just want to live like a normal girl.

As Skylar spaced out, Shailene landed a hard slap across her face.

Skylar clutched her burning cheek. With rage boiling in her eyes, she pounced onto Shailene. "You're f*cking mad, Shailene! What was that for?"

She grabbed Shailene by the collar, her eyes filled with killer instincts.

Yet, she suffered serious injuries while her opponents remained unscathed.

Skylar spat a mouthful of blood on the floor. Her lip was now bleeding after coming into contact with her teeth, and there were a few slits on her arms. Blood seeped out of one of those wounds.

The young woman also lost a few strands of hair. The stress she had been in recently made her more prone to hair loss.

She had even named every strand of her hair.

Unfortunately, Jenny, Linda, Jackie, and so on were now in between Lydia's fingers.

The five girls ganged up on Skylar, and it was clearly a losing battle for the latter.

Right then, Mr. Duggan arrived just as Skylar picked up a chair.

Then, he called them to the beach. The evening breeze brushed against their faces, and the air carried a hint of saltiness and humidity.

"Getting into a fight at a hotel? Do you have no shame?" Mr. Duggan's brows creased as he took a puff of his cigarette.

The smoke wafted over to Lydia, causing her to cover her nose.

Seeing that, Mr. Duggan immediately put out his cigarette and tossed it onto the sand.

“Skylar started it,” the five girls said in unison while pointing at Skylar.

At that very moment, Skylar felt her phone vibrating, and she took it out. It was Tobias. Unable to pick up right now, she rejected the call.

This only infuriated Mr. Duggan. “What’s with that attitude, Skylar? You’re playing with your phone even at this time?”

Lydia stifled a laugh. “It’s probably the geezer calling her.”

Then, she let out an exaggerated cry. “Oh, no! Your old man won’t get back at us, will he? We’re in trouble! What should we do?”

Skylar shot her a glare. “You’re not too bad-looking, but it’s unfortunate you were born with a mouth.”

“That’s enough, Skylar. You’ll be punished when we get back. You’d better stop hitting your classmates. Can you even pay the price if you hurt them?”

Skylar showed the clueless man her arms. “They’re the ones who ganged up on me! Why should I be punished?”

Even so, Mr. Duggan dared not take any action against Lydia, whose father was one of the most established directors in the entertainment industry.

On the other hand, Skylar was a transfer student who had been given a spot through connections. She certainly didn’t have much of a reputation.

Mr. Duggan pointed at her. “Judging from your character, they must have had a reason to hit you.”

The five other girls laughed gloatingly.

Skylar gazed at the nest of snakes before her. Despite feeling upset deep down, her outer appearance remained cold and defiant.

“Fine. I guess I deserved it. Even if I were to get beaten to death one day, I’d still be the one being punished.”

Skylar turned, only to be called by Mr. Duggan to remain standing at the beach as punishment.

Even so, Skylar couldn’t be bothered to listen to him.

“Just you wait, Skylar Jones!” the livid instructor yelled. “You’ll be getting a serious demerit, and not even the gods will be able to save you then!”

Skylar returned to her room. Seeing Harry there too, she wearily said hi to him.

Harry rummaged through his luggage and handed Skylar a few band-aids.

“You actually brought band-aids with you? You’re more thorough than some girls are. Thanks, Harry,” Skylar remarked with a smile.

Then, Harry took out a bottle of iodine and some cotton swabs. “Don’t get on Lydia’s and Shailene’s bad side. Lydia’s dad is a famous director, and Shailene’s dad is a manager in Ford Group. You’ve heard of Ford Group, haven’t you? I’m sure everyone knows them.”

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Skylar smirked disdainfully. “It’s no wonder they get to pick on anyone they want. I’ve never even pissed them off.”

“Maybe you’re just too pretty,” Harry responded half-jokingly. “Some girls tend to be mean to those who are prettier than them.”

Skylar stuck a band-aid on her arm. There were scratch marks on her neck too, but she felt bad using up too many of Harry’s band-aids and returned the rest to him.

It was late into the night now. Skylar gazed out the window, feeling like she still had something else to take care of.

Suddenly, it crossed her mind. Her phone was in silent mode, and Tobias had given her a call earlier.

She took out her phone and found two missed calls from Tobias.

At that, Skylar hurriedly returned the call so as to not anger him.

It took a long while for the man to answer his phone.

“Why didn’t you pick up?” That was the first thing Skylar heard Tobias say.

“I was busy. Did you need something from me?” Skylar asked while gazing at the scars on her neck through a mirror.

“Hey, Skylar, are you going to use the shower yet, or should I go first?” Harry walked out of the bathroom and asked in a loud and clear tone.

At that very moment, Skylar just wanted to die. She waved her hand in a panic, signaling Harry to shut up.

Then, she let out a few coughs to hide her guilt. “The TV’s a little too loud. Let me lower the volume.”

“The female lead of a TV series happens to have the same name as you do?” Tobias’ voice was the coldest it could ever be by now.

Still, Skylar put on a calm act. “Really? I didn’t hear it. You must have misheard.”

“I heard everything loud and clear. Where are you? Are you sleeping around with another man?”

Sweat began to drip down Skylar’s forehead. Why do I have such sh*t luck?

She could already imagine the look on Tobias’ face. The man probably wanted to kill her now.

“There weren’t enough rooms, so I’ve been assigned to share one with a guy from my class. Don’t get the wrong idea.”

Skylar tried her best to explain herself, but in truth, even she would have a hard time believing herself if she didn’t know any better.

In fact, the young woman wanted to tell Tobias that she had a man in her room – a handsome one at that.

But she wasn’t ready to die yet.

“Do you think I’d believe that? Have you no shame, Skylar Jones?” The way Tobias spoke could instantly send chills down one’s spine.

Seeing how unusually pale Skylar looked, Harry wanted to ask if she needed help. Yet, the lady merely covered his mouth, reminding him to stay quiet.

“Well, there’s nothing I can do if you don’t believe me. You can always come over and see for yourself. Anyway, my phone’s about to die. See ya.”

With that, Skylar hurriedly ended the call, feeling terrified to her bones. She couldn’t take it anymore. It felt as though Tobias could murder her even through the phone.

Tobias pursed his lips upon hearing the cold beeping noise from over the line. Despite his eyes looking like a pair of glaciers, the man was now boiling with anger while also feeling slightly pained.

The sounds of laughter filled his ears as he walked out of the study. Tanya’s parents had come and were busy chatting away downstairs.

Seeing Tobias finally come down, Claudia waved at him. “Come over, Tobias. Your parents-in-law haven’t seen you in a while.”

Tobias merely shot them a cold glance and said to Claudia, “I’m heading out. I have something to take care of.”

“What could you be doing outside at this hour?” Claudia grumbled. “Your in-laws flew more than ten hours just to come back.”

Tanya held Tobias by the arm, sounding rather unhappy. "No matter how busy work gets, there's nothing more important than family."

Despite that, Tobias removed his arm from her grasp and remarked indifferently, "You can manage even without me around."

With that, the man left, and a cold glint flashed in Tanya's narrowed eyes.

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Claudia tried to ease the awkward situation. "Tobias has way too much to handle at work. Don't mind him."

Tobias didn't even spare Nathan any proper eye contact.

Yet, no matter how grim he felt about this, Nathan still had to put on an act and beam at Claudia. "Don't worry about us. We'll be back for a while anyway. Let's not disrupt Tobias' plans."

Hiding her emotions well, Tanya chimed in gently, "He's always like that when he gets busy. Anyway, I believe you're all hungry now. Let's eat."

Truthfully, Tanya couldn't enjoy her meal at all. She was instead consumed by thoughts about Tobias meeting that other woman.

I wonder what he'd think if he sees what I uploaded earlier today.

It's no fun screwing that woman over with just one move. I'm going to take my time tormenting her.

Nathan and Gillian called Tanya over to the guest room they were staying in at short notice.

Finally, the man could unleash all his wrath. "What's going on, Tanya? It doesn't matter how Tobias treats us, but why is he so cold toward you as well? He doesn't give a damn about our family!"

Tanya folded her arms and gazed at Nathan, her eyes filled with mockery. "Why should they ever give a damn about us? Our family business means nothing to them. Do you think you'd ever get to become part of their family if I hadn't saved Claudia?"

Nathan's heart turned cold. "Are you saying I'm not capable enough as your father and that I'm dragging you down?"

Tanya smirked. "Is that not how it is? I'd never get a chance to marry into the Fords if I had only depended on you."

With his own daughter trampling all over his ego, Nathan was instantly filled with rage.

On the other hand, Gillian was on Tanya's side.

She proceeded to chastise Nathan's incompetence too.

Despite being a real estate magnate, Nathan was well aware of how insignificant he was compared to Ford Group.

Still, he couldn't help but feel extremely resentful toward this mother-daughter duo.

Gillian turned to her daughter, feeling heartbroken. "How will you ever find happiness if Tobias keeps treating you this way, Tanya?"

Tanya merely scoffed at the mention of happiness. "Tobias is a man who has no feelings whatsoever. All I wanted was to be his lawful wife. I'm sure I can get a rock like him to open up to me as time passes."

"There's nothing we can do to help you. Take care of yourself," Nathan muttered in annoyance.

Tanya laughed gloatingly. "It's not like you've ever had a hand in giving me what I have today anyway. Do your best to flatter the Fords now that you're here. Spend lots of time with Claudia and tell her nothing but good things about me. If she ever asks, tell her I've never had a boyfriend and that I'm an old-fashioned girl. Don't ever tell her my birthdate."

Gillian patted her own chest. "You know how good I am at this. But what's with your birthday?"

Tanya merely rolled her eyes and replied impatiently, "Don't ask too much. Just do as I say."

This was a secret that only Tanya knew.

Claudia was a firm believer in numerology and geomancy. Even Tobias strongly believed in such things too.

Way before this, Tanya had gotten someone to measure her compatibility with Tobias, and the two were not suited for each other.

The numerologist had even told her not to force something that wasn't meant to be.

Yet, the woman was adamant about changing her fate, so she had given Claudia a fake birthdate.

Naturally, Tanya was eventually revealed to be a perfect match for Tobias.

This made Claudia even more delighted, and she approved of Tanya as her daughter-in-law.

Upon walking out of the guest room, Tanya gave Tobias a call. The man never picked up, thus causing the smile on her lips to vanish.

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You can play around with women if that's what you want, Tobias. But you should be well aware of who your actual wife is.

She was determined to get rid of every single obstacle in her way.

"Are you hungry?" With a cup of instant noodles in his hand, Harry walked over to Skylar, who was sitting crossed-legged on her bed reading.

Skylar took the noodles from Harry but gave them back after some thought.

Her throat was in so much pain that even swallowing her own saliva felt like torture, what more to say eating something.

The anger she felt only made her throat swell up too.

Even she didn't know why she was furious. Was it because of the thread or those girls? Or was it because of Tobias?

None of these were any less bothersome or trivial than the other.

Suddenly, a knock came on the door. Skylar and Harry figured it was room service.

With that, Harry walked to the door and said loudly, "We don't need any room service. We're about to sleep."

The knocking only grew louder.

Skylar, who was just about to send Penelope a text, found this increasingly strange.

Why does the knocking sound more like someone who's after revenge rather than room service?

Feeling vexed, Harry opened the door only to find several police officers standing before him.

He was petrified.

"We've received a report that someone's engaging in prostitution. Come with us."

Skylar was dumbfounded to hear this.

She put on her slippers and walked to the door, explaining, "There must be a mistake. We're on an excursion."

The leading officer rolled his eyes, sounding especially impatient. "A guy and a girl sharing a room during an excursion? Don't give me that nonsense. You're coming with us to have your statements recorded."

Harry was so flustered that his legs turned to jelly. Then, he gazed at Skylar.

The young woman merely put on her coat and looked no different from usual. "I've done nothing wrong, and I believe the police will never wrongfully punish the innocent."

She had a hunch as to who had reported them. It has to be those girls.

They're so wicked that they're beyond saving.

As the two were taken away by the police, Harry began to regret looking out for Skylar.

She really is a jinx – no, the plague itself!

Thus, he didn't speak to Skylar throughout the rest of the trip.

Upon arriving at the police station, Skylar noticed many women in skimpy outfits holding their heads and kneeling against the wall.

Captain Link pointed to where they were. "Go kneel over there."

Skylar refused. "Why should I? I did nothing wrong."

Captain Link scoffed, "That's what eight out of the ten women here said too. You're so young; why would you resort to earning a living this way?"

A grim-looking Harry was brought into the interrogation room first.

As Skylar remained uncooperative, a few officers proceeded to pin her against the wall with such force that she felt like her bones could break.

Right next to her was a young woman with black stockings and an afro. "Hey, girl! Where are you based? I've never seen you before," she whispered.

Skylar chose not to respond. She merely took a deep breath. So much for the trip. Here I was, thinking to be less anti-social. Hah! At the rate we're going, I'd rather stay at home forever!

Feeling cold, tired, and hungry, it was soon her turn to be brought into the interrogation room.

With a bright lamp shining directly onto her face, a few stern-looking officers sat in front of her. "You'll be fined three thousand and detained for fifteen days."

What? I'm getting convicted before even being asked any questions!

"I didn't do anything wrong! Why do I have to be detained? You didn't even write anything down!" she demanded in frustration.

The leading female officer's voice sounded much more shrill than the men's. "Young women these days sure are shameless, acting all pitiful after doing such despicable things. If my daughter ever grows up to be like you, I'd break her legs without even thinking twice."

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Skylar let out a cold laugh. "I did nothing wrong. You can't detain me, and I won't pay the fine."

At this very moment, someone entered the interrogation room and muttered a few words to the officers.

With a sudden change in their expressions, they hurriedly left the room.

Skylar remained seated on the chair with no one attending to her.

She didn't even have any water to soothe her dry throat.

As the hallway outside the interrogation room bustled with noise, Skylar shut her eyes in distress. The light was so glaring that it hurt.

The door opened about ten minutes later, and the three officers from earlier walked back in, but their attitudes had changed completely.

"Someone is here to see you," the female officer said with a wide smile.

Then, Tobias' taunting voice could be heard. "You sure are something, going from your trip to the police station all in a day."

Skylar gazed at him in shock. "What are you doing here? How did you know where I was?"

Never mind. That's a stupid question. She immediately regretted asking.

Tobias had everything in the palm of his hand, and finding someone would be a piece of cake for him.

There was no one he couldn't find – unless he didn't want to, of course.

Seeing Tobias show up caused a mix of emotions to swirl within Skylar.

With a sniffle, she unleashed all the indignation she felt and squeezed out as many tears as she could. "I've been wrongly accused. They brought me here without even getting their facts straight. I'm cold, hungry, and tired. What have I done wrong? Have I harmed or stolen from anyone, huh?"

Skylar broke out into a sob as tears streamed down her face.

She was now using everything she had learned during acting classes on Tobias.

Meanwhile, the police officers standing outside the door felt like they were dealing with a bomb that could detonate at any moment.

They looked utterly despaired while discussing among themselves, and the atmosphere had grown tense.

"Tobias Ford's here for her? We're screwed now. How could we have captured his own people?"

“The director has already called. We’re about to be punished severely and get a full-blown lecture.”

“Punished? We may not even get to keep our jobs! That girl is a jinx!”

Tobias ran his coarse fingers across Skylar’s face. They were now wet from her tears.

“Don’t force yourself to cry if you can’t do it. You deserve to be cold and hungry,” the man remarked with a sneer.

Skylar sniffled again. “Did you come here just to watch me make a fool of myself? I guess you’re happy now, then. You can leave whenever now that you’ve seen enough.”

Tobias’ gaze darkened. Like hell I’m here to watch you suffer.

Do you think I’d spend a few hours coming all the way to North Beach just to watch you turn yourself into a laughing stock? As if I have the time for that.

With only the two of them inside the interrogation room, Skylar got up to leave with Tobias.

Despite telling the man to leave, her actions spoke louder and more honestly.

“Where do you think you’re going?” Tobias gazed at the handcuffed woman.

Skylar was puzzled. “Aren’t you here to get me out?”

She began to panic. Tobias was always so unpredictable that she could never tell what he was thinking.

When Skylar just saw the man earlier, she thought he had come to save her from her predicament. Yet, he was behaving this way now.

He could actually slap any crime on me and get me locked up for as long as I want.

Tobias leaned toward Skylar’s face until their noses touched, and he gazed deeply into her eyes.

“Why should I get you out of here when you’ve done something so disgusting? Do you take me as someone who’d be interested in a piece of trash?”