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In a Love Nest with the Aloof CEO Chapter 476

Skylar froze for a moment and was upset with herself for being so impulsive. She knew that even if she had asked the question, unlike other men, Tobias would not make her any promises or vow that she would be the only woman he loved.

He was still being his lofty self and had an unrelenting attitude.

The man had made himself very clear. Skylar knew that since he had already explained to her once, he had no intention to reassure her multiple times. If she kept harping on the same issue, he would just find her immature and not sensible.

Skylar suddenly laughed, hiding her true emotions. "I'm heading downstairs for dinner. I won't be asking you any questions ever again."

That was obviously what women would say when they were upset.

However, Tobias had already gone downstairs before Skylar, and he was behaving in an extremely cold manner towards her.

Madelyn had indeed prepared a very sumptuous meal. Yet, the atmosphere at the dining table was rather tense. No one was talking, and the only sounds that could be heard were that of the utensils clanking against each other.

"Did Valerie make things difficult for you? You can tell me if you have any problems." Tobias finally broke the silence and took the initiative to show Skylar concern.

Even though he was not pleased with Skylar's confrontation, he knew that she must have a reason for asking that, and he wanted to get to the bottom of the matter.

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Skylar poked around her food and replied placidly, "Nope, I'm fine. Our boss is really nice. I'm the one who's being petty and making unfounded assumptions."

It would be obvious from one's eyes if there was love. With everything accumulated so far, Skylar looked up and met Tobias' gaze.

However, the look in Tobias' eyes was one that she had never encountered before. His pitch dark eyes were like an abyss, cold and complicated, without a single trace of warmth.

At that moment, Skylar was convinced that even his occasional gentleness and thoughtfulness was just him being charitable towards her.

Two days later, Skylar received a small parcel that was delivered from overseas, but she did not remember ordering anything from overseas.

After severing the adhesive tape with a pen, she saw a letter and a small box inside the parcel. As the letter was written in a foreign language, she did not understand a single word of it and merely put it aside.

When she opened the small box, she saw that it contained an obsidian bracelet that sparkled in the afternoon sun.

That bracelet was identical to the one Valerie wore on her wrist. As such, Skylar put it back into the box without even trying it on.

That other night, Tobias left immediately after dinner. Skylar had thought that she would feel really depressed over that, but it wasn't as bad as she expected it to be.

In fact, she was even feeling relieved and at ease.

Just then, Tobias texted: Did you receive the bracelet?

It was when Skylar saw the message on her phone that she realized that Tobias had changed his display picture.

His new picture was that of a cypress tree in the garden. If he had the time to change his display picture, why didn't he have the time to drop me a message during the past two days?

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At that thought, Skylar texted back: I don't think I need that. You can give it to someone who needs it.

Tobias replied: You can do whatever you want with it.

Skylar did not understand how the man could type out such a cold reply to her. "Whatever" was one word Skylar hated most, but it was also the word Tobias used most often when he was running out of patience.

It seemed like that was the extent of his patience towards her.

Meanwhile, Valerie was walking past the corridor toward the café on the ground floor of her office building. It was 8 p.m., the prime time for dating.

After receiving Tobias' call, she had specially gone home to change into a different set of outfit as she knew that Tobias preferred dark colors. After working alongside him for eight years, she had always dressed in gray-scale or black-and-white. However, she had always arranged for Skylar's outfits to be bright and colorful.

When Valerie reached, she saw that there were two cups of black coffee placed on the table in front of Tobias. After smoothing her dress out carefully, the woman sat down opposite him.

Valerie remembered that the previous time they had coffee together was three years ago and said, "It's a surprise that you still remember that I like black coffee, Mr. Ford."

"I don't. I didn't order any coffee. It has been busy at the café, and the staff didn't have time to clear the tables. These were left behind by someone else. Anyway, let's speak outside. It's too warm in here," Tobias replied curtly.

Feeling awkward, Valerie stood up and followed Tobias out of the café before they walked up an overhead bridge.

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The weather was growing increasingly colder. As the cool breeze swept past, it mussed up Valerie's hair. Even as she tucked her hair behind her ear, she considered whether her gesture would be beautiful in Tobias' eyes. After all, she had always been careful to maintain the perfect side of her before him.

Leaning against the railing, Tobias gazed down at the bustling crowd below as he exhaled a cloud of cigarette smoke. "How long have you been working for me?"

"It's been eight years now," Valerie replied. "If you hadn't asked me to go to Royal Entertainment, I would've really liked to continue working by your side."

Tobias flicked his cigarette before commenting, "I trust you, and I think this position really suits you. I know how difficult it'd been for you to attain everything you have today from nothing. Susan doesn't have your tenacity and gutsiness, and that's why I've been holding you in high regard.

At his rare compliment and applaud, Valerie's heart started racing. She appeared particularly stunning as the sunlight shone in and illuminated her face through the dome made of transparent glass.

"But then, you applied that gutsiness of yours onto my woman. She's only twenty-two years old, yet you keep making life difficult for her. Back then, I told you to take good care of her, and the way you're doing so has really been an eye-opener to me. You even coerced my woman into a skin flick, asking her to bare her body before everyone else. Was that you, Valerie Fey?"

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The moment his words fell, Valerie's face blanched, and a chill enveloped her. Nonetheless, she forced a chuckle. "All the arrangements I made for her are the pick of the bunch. Many female celebrities can only hope to collaborate with Hugo Lemer..."

"That's enough," Tobias interrupted, cutting her off. "You know the reason better than anyone else, so stop giving far-fetched excuses. How could Skylar be your match when you're using your power to oppress her? Have you forgotten that she has me backing her up? Or do you think that you're above me?"

Valerie opened her mouth, but no words came. After a long while, she queried, "Are you here to reprimand me, Mr. Ford?"

"If not? Did you think that I'm here to chat with you?"

Hearing that, the color gradually drained from Valerie's face.

"If you don't trust me, I don't mind handing in my resignation, Mr. Ford. I didn't deliberately make things difficult for Skylar. The jobs arranged by the company are all based on market analysis. I don't think I did anything wrong. She nitpicked several of the jobs I arranged for her and even took off moments before the filming started. It'd be disastrous if this got out, making it harder for me to manage the company's artists. I'm also in a difficult position here since I've got to consider the responsibilities of my role. It wouldn't be fair to the other artists if I were to blatantly give her special treatment."

Tobias' gaze was cold and sharp, his expression aloof and indifferent. That was precisely the kind of expression she once idolized and loved.

"Isn't the market analysis determined by the management itself? Is Skylar's market value really only at the C-list? Although I'm not very familiar with the entertainment industry, I still know that much. And she did nothing wrong in taking off moments before the filming started, for no one else would compromise blindly either. Also, don't use your resignation to threaten me. Valerie Fey, this is the final chance you've got. If you continue making life difficult for Skylar, you can leave your post immediately. Having propelled you to your position today, I can also bring you down in the same manner."

With every single ruthless word out of his mouth, Valerie inwardly writhed in pain.

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Ouch! How could he? This is the complete opposite of what I imagined would happen. Never had I thought that my company of eight years would lose to the brief time Skylar Jones spent with him! I thought I knew him inside out since he had always focused all his ambition on his career, with romantic relationships taking a backseat. But at the end of the day, the allure of women and sensual pleasure triumphed over that of power. Nevertheless, his interest in her will fade sooner or later!

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But still, Skylar Jones has stayed rather long by his side now. I keep hoping that I'll be the one filling the vacant space beside him but to no avail. Valerie's illusions gradually disappeared alongside the despair that came time and again.

Tobias then told Valerie to ponder upon it, saying that he'd send someone to take over tomorrow if she truly felt that she wasn't suited to the job. Humans were an ambitious bunch, and plenty of people coveted the position of executive president of Royal Entertainment.

When he left, Valerie stared at his retreating figure that appeared tall and strong.

That night, Skylar was notified that she was to attend a red carpet event the next day. It was a charity gala by Harper's Bazaar.

At this time every year, female celebrities quivered in excitement as they contended for opportunities to attend red carpet events.

That charity gala was basically attended by A-list celebrities.

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When Skylar suddenly received the invitation, she skeptically confirmed it with Kate.

Kate then affirmed her attendance before adding, "Your schedule will be packed in the days to come. There are a few good scripts for you now, and Empyrean Sword has already been approved."

Whoa! This is a one-eighty in the company's attitude toward me. As Skylar stared at the ceiling, she could seemingly see Valerie's face projected there. She definitely wouldn't have changed her mind all of a sudden, so Tobias must have understood my hesitance that day and spoken to her.

That night, Tobias also asked her out for coffee. She hung up on him twice, but in the end, she still wrapped herself in a coat and braved the freezing wind.

The illumination of the streetlights elongated her silhouette, reflecting it onto the road that was carpeted with golden maple leaves.

She then arrived at the location Tobias sent her. It was a café that operated 24/7. When she pulled open the door and stepped in, she caught sight of him waiting for her in a black coat in the corner.

The lighting was dim in the corner, so much so that she couldn't discern his expression. But still, he commanded attention despite his face being obscured.

"Don't ask me out so late next time. I was just about to go to bed." Taking her seat across from him, Skylar blew a few warm breaths into her hands.

A white heart adorned the coffee before her. Tobias had ordered her favorite cappuccino, and the cup was still warm to the touch.

"You were about to head to bed when it's not even ten o'clock? You're a night owl, Skylar. The night is just starting for you." Tobias knew her habits like the back of his hand.

What do you know! I could've lain on the bed two hours earlier with my cell phone in hand and watched short videos!

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"I wanted to go to bed earlier today since the company arranged for me to attend a charity gala tomorrow. If I don't have enough rest, I'll be bloated and look unsightly on camera."

Tobias then added two sugar cubes into her coffee, knowing that she would still find it rather bitter even though it was a cappuccino.

"Why didn't you tell me when you suffered so much out there? And you were so gutsy that you even dared join the cast despite the script having a rape scene!"

Stirring her coffee with her head lowered, Skylar countered, "Would it have made any difference? Is Valerie dismissed now that you're aware of it?"

"No, the company needs her. But she has promised that it won't happen again, and she won't have the guts to make life difficult for you anymore."

Hah! And here I was, foolishly hoping that he would go on a rampage for my sake! Well, I was the fool to think that, but this slap in my face has rid me of all my delusions! Valerie Fey's position is still as secure as ever.

Snickering, Skylar remarked, "I thought you'd dismiss her without any qualms. Isn't love supposed to be blind? Of course, it might just be my wishful thinking; after all, you've probably never even loved me."

Tobias stared at her dejected expression for a long while. "That's not my perception of love. Every single person is an individual entity, so thoughts naturally differ. I merely hope that you'll grow to be better. I only stepped out and helped you because you couldn't handle this on your own. I hope that you'll be able to stand on your own feet, and our relationship wouldn't have been in vain."

Hmph, look at this! He's speaking as though he's breaking up with me. In truth, Skylar knew him well enough after all the time she spent with him. Ah, but that's not surprising, no? After all, he gives out signals that he might leave anytime, even when we're lying in the same bed. He always offers me a carrot after the stick, but I pitifully finish the carrot with relish every single time.

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Ah, I'm the one who bears the brunt of the torment in this relationship! He isn't even giving me the right to question him or get jealous! How absurd! Despite it all, a ball of aggrive lodged within Skylar.

"Are things fine with us now? I don't like the silent treatment." Tobias reached out and placed his hand on hers, his palm warm and rough.

However, Skylar said nothing. Well, if I say nothing, he'll still take it as a tacit acquiescence. He said he doesn't like the silent treatment, but doesn't he know that he's best at doing that to me?

"I'll be very busy in the upcoming days, so I won't be able to make much time for you. But before that, I've resolved your problem." Tobias warned her in advance that she wouldn't be seeing much of him.

"What are you busy with when you've retired from Ford Group temporarily?"

Speaking of that, Tobias' gaze gradually darkened. "I've given Sheldon a chance, but he's not utilizing it. Ford Group is now in chaos, and no one pays him the slightest mind. He can't even keep them in line with the power he wields. How useless..."

Skylar, on the other hand, pitied Sheldon. Well, he's not inherently bad, but Tobias has been too strict with him. With all the pressure, it's only natural that he has a volatile temper. Anyway, it's truly a shame that he doesn't have the capability to lead the company. To tell the truth, their love-hate relationship boggles my mind.

When they exited the café, a young man ran smack into Skylar, almost causing her to fall down.

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Fortunately, Tobias steadied her with a hand around her waist.

Having gained her balance, Skylar then looked at the young man, only to see an intoxicated Hayden staggering to his feet.

She stared at her half-brother with a frown.

The words he spat at her back when she asked Tobias for money to pay her school fees echoed as though having been burned in her mind.

“You’re filthy, so don’t even step a single foot into our house! Avery doesn’t like you either, you mooch!” he snarled in contempt and derision.

When Hayden saw Skylar with Tobias beside her, he snorted drunkenly and drawled, “Oh, our high and mighty celebrity is still wandering around outside at this hour, huh? It really tarnishes your status to frequent such a slum!”

Skylar didn’t want to bicker with him or have anything to do with the Joneses. After all, it was all an exercise in futility.

Chuckling, she retorted, “No matter, for I don’t have much status. Instead, it’s you who shouldn’t be frequenting the outskirts out of fear that your status as a rich heir will be tarnished.”

Subsequently, Hayden took advantage of fact that Tobias had gone to retrieve his car to totter over to her. Lowering his voice to a mere whisper, he muttered, “My biggest regret in life now is not killing you before you were sixteen and allowed you to live until this day. Let me warn you that I’ll definitely make you pay tenfold if you pick on my sister again.”

Shock swamped Skylar at his words. While Hayden’s character was indeed despicable, it was undeniable that he was a good brother to Avery. And it was precisely because Avery was pampered like a princess by the entire family that she grew up to be spoiled and overbearing.

Skylar didn’t even notice when Tobias drove his car over, only snapping back to reality when he had honked twice.

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In the blink of an eye, the menace on Hayden's face vanished, to be replaced with a smile. "So long, then."

When Skylar had gotten into the car, Tobias was uncharacteristically curious and asked, "What did he say to you? Hayden is by far smarter than your father. Alas, your father wasn't willing to hand the company over to him back then. Even when Quest Group collapsed, he wasn't willing to give his son the opportunity to salvage the situation."

"That has always been the way he does things. In the face of material interests, everything else doesn't matter. Well, just like you," Skylar replied nonchalantly.

Tobias was silent for a moment. Then, he said, "You indeed know me very well. This is an era of greed, so why should I act as though I'm above everyone else? In fact, even the priest in the confessional said that I've sinned. Since I'm a sinner in the first place, why not just continue sinning?"

Meanwhile, when Hayden got home, he saw Avery watching a movie starring Largo on her iPad in the living room.

He knew that Avery had been dumped by Largo, what with the way she would begin wailing incessantly every single time she saw any news related to him ever since she came home after the filming wrapped up.

Placing the burrito he bought next to her iPad, he sat down beside her.

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"Here, eat it before it gets soggy. I bought it just for you since you had been craving this particular place's burrito."

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However, Avery had no appetite. "Hayden, Largo is still ignoring me. Before this, he promised me that he'll publicly acknowledge me as his girlfriend," she griped aggrievedly.

"There's plenty of fish in the sea, so why fixate on him? When you're in a better mood, I'll introduce a few friends of mine to you," Hayden coaxed.

"I only want Largo. I have no interest in anyone else," Avery asserted stubbornly. "This is all Skylar's fault! That damn woman seduced Largo! Ever since young, she has always been jealous of me, wanting to steal whatever I have!"

At the mention of Skylar, her eyes brimmed with rancor. Ugh! If Skylar Jones is standing right before me now, I'd truly strangle her to death!

"I bumped into her earlier, and she was with Tobias Ford. I thought they broke up long ago, but I seem to have been mistaken," Hayden commented.

At that, Avery seethed, "That b*tch is just like her mother, both fond of seducing men! In fact, she's so adept that even Tobias Ford couldn't resist her and fell prey to her!"

Nevertheless, Hayden merely crossed his legs, looking as though he had a card up his sleeve. "How could I possibly allow them both to be so arrogant? I've already bribed the media and ordered them to write about her mother being a homewrecker and murderer. I'll have her experience how painful it is for her mask to be ripped off in public."

Frowning, Avery countered, "But if you do that, everyone will know about her relationship with our family, and I'll also be dragged into the mess. If this method works, I would've done it ages ago."

"At present, her popularity surpasses yours, so this will also put you in the limelight. After having stolen so many things from our family, it's time for her to return it all to us."

Upon hearing that, Avery sniffed. With her eyes stinging, she declared, "You're always so good to me, Hayden. Hmph! That b*tch simply needs a lesson every few days for her to know her place!"

#TheShockingBackgroundOfSkylarJones

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#AnIllegitimateDaughter

#FormerClassmatesOfSkylarJones

The moment Skylar woke up, she snagged her cell phone while sprawled on the bed. Her brows furrowed in puzzlement when she saw all the missed calls from Kate.

Yawning, she returned Kate's call. As she waited for the call to be connected, she swept her gaze over the mess on the floor.

Hmm... Tobias must have been in a hurry this morning. After all, it was usually Tobias who cleaned the mess. At that moment, however, there were wads of white tissue paper littering the floor. To top it off, they all emanated a salty smell of semen.

"Skylar, go and look up the trending list on Twitter, quick! Everything about you is out there, and someone even uploaded your mother's photo to the Internet!"

When Skylar heard that, her hands started shaking. As soon as she clicked on the trending list on Twitter, she was greeted by the sight of her name occupying the top three places.

The fourth place was news about the demise of an elderly artist.

Ah well, there's no escaping the inevitable. Despite having braced herself for the possibility of her background coming to light since being in the entertainment industry was akin to living under a microscope, she was still rather shaken.

After all, even Jeremy's photo was dug up.

Skylar then watched one of the videos. The interviewee wasn't only hiding behind a flowerpot, but his face was also blurred.

"I was a classmate of Skylar Jones' during junior high school. Her conduct in school had always been terrible. She was always flirting around despite having a boyfriend, acting promiscuously. And she even took advantage of her beauty to persuade her male classmates to pick on the females. When she later rose to fame, she blacklisted all her friends in the past and exited our group chat altogether."

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After watching this two-minute video, Skylar was so livid that she almost burst a blood vessel.

Ugh! How could they simply pass him off as my former classmate when his face is blurred and his voice modified? Admittedly, I had few friends when I was in school, but they did really have to stoop so low?

Scrolling further down, it was then news about her being an illegitimate daughter and Miranda resorting to murder to ruin someone else's family.

In essence, it was one scandal after another.

Slowly, Skylar realized that something was off. Huh? Why do they have my unsavory photos during my schooldays? While I concur that netizens are indeed resourceful, only the part about my biological father is conveniently left out.

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