

Chapter 1596 Scandal Of The Elites

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As the grand doors of the villa swung open, revealing the opulence of the lush garden beyond, a delicate figure caught Janet's attention.

Squinting to get a better view, Janet recognized the ethereal presence. It was Audrey, draped in a flowing white dress, as if she were a portrait come to life. Her head was tilted downward, allowing a cascade of silken hair to fall, shielding her face. Yet there was no hiding the melancholy in her eyes or the rivulets of tears tracing pathways down her cheeks.

The sight was heartbreaking; even the often-reserved Janet felt a pang of empathy.

Taking in the scene, Mandy's voice broke through with a mix of confusion and annoyance. "Hey, who's she? And what's her deal, crying in your backyard? A tad bit theatrical, isn't it?"

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Mandy's upbringing among the elite meant she was used to the calculated dramas of high society. She had a discerning eye for genuine pain versus orchestrated vulnerability. The latter, especially coming from those outside her circle, irked her no end.

Sighing, Janet offered a quick explanation. "Oh, that's Brandon's cousin. It seems she's run into

some trouble and wants to meet Brandon."

"Brandon's cousin?" Mandy's eyebrows knit together, a veil of suspicion forming. Her intuition, sharpened by witnessing the underhanded dealings of the wealthy, was setting off alarm bells.

Janet, sensing the need to elaborate, replied, "Her mom recently passed. She wishes for her to be laid to rest next to Brandon's mother. You know how much Brandon values his family memories, so he's on board with the idea."

Mandy, though wary of Audrey, didn't see any immediate threat. She decided not to press further, aiming to make a graceful exit.

Casting a glance back at Audrey, Janet smiled sheepishly and said, "I apologize for letting you see this."

However, as they moved towards the car, she couldn't resist a parting piece of advice. "Janet, just... keep an eye out."

Janet, momentarily disoriented by the sudden shift, queried, "Eye out? For what exactly?"

Mandy leaned in, her voice a conspiratorial whisper. "That cousin of Brandon's? Something's off."

With her eyes wide open, Janet asked in surprise, "What's wrong with her?"

"Nothing..." Mandy said hesitantly. "I can't place it, but I recall a recent scandal in Barnes that was eerily

similar to this."

Janet's intrigue intensified. "A scandal? Tell me more." Drawing a deep breath, Mandy began, "You might be out of the loop since you just got back. But a fortnight ago, one of Barnes' elite had a visit from a 'cousin' and, well..."

She hesitated, her expression inscrutable.

Impatiently, Janet pressed on, "And then what happened?"

"Then..." Mandy trailed off, her voice dripping with a mix of revulsion and condescension. "That 'cousin' of his? It turns out she was expecting his baby. Yeah, she's still nestled in their grandiose mansion, belly growing day by day."

Janet's jaw dropped, the color draining from her face. "Wait, are you serious? Pregnant? By her own cousin? That's... I mean, I've heard some wild tales, but this? It's just too... beyond."

Mandy smirked, rolling her eyes. "Oh, come on. This kind of juicy gossip is a dime a dozen among the elites. Everyone's angling to snag a wealthy partner. If a little cousin-cousin drama helps the cause, then why not?"

Struggling to find her voice, Janet replied, "But... I mean, Brandon? He wouldn't do something like that."

Mandy patted Janet's shoulder, her smirk widening. "Honey, wake up! The stars of that scandalous affair

were cousins too."

As Mandy's footsteps gradually receded, Janet stood there, her mind a whirl of confusion. Shaking her head, she tried to dispel the wild thoughts crowding her brain. But as she was about to re-enter the villa, her gaze was drawn to the garden. There, framed against an ornate pillar, was Audrey, tears flowing freely down her cheeks.

Taking a deep breath, Janet steeled herself and approached the distraught figure.

The soft rustling of her footsteps made Audrey look up, hope shining in her eyes, perhaps expecting Brandon. Quickly arranging her face into the most woebegone expression she could muster, she was startled when she recognized Janet.

"Miss... I mean, Janet? What are you doing here?" Audrey's voice quivered, her surprise evident.


Janet arched an eyebrow. "Well, considering it's my garden, the better question is, what are you doing here?"

"I..." Audrey hesitated, momentarily lost for words.


Janet, her tone softer but still wary, inquired, "Why all the tears? Need a shoulder? Or is there something else you'd like help with?"

Audrey's tear-filled eyes darted downward, her voice barely audible. "They've retrieved my mother's ashes. I'm just waiting for Brandon. I want to discuss with

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him when I can lay her to rest."

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