

Night Of Destiny Chapter 1 - 10

Chapter 1 A Night of Absurdities

“Anastasia, help! I’ve been molested at the club!”

The desperate and helpless sound of her best friend’s voice was the only thing on Anastasia Tillman’s

mind as she rushed over to the clubhouse.

Room 808. Anastasia looked up at the number plaque on the door of the private room. It was the same

room number that her best friend, Hayley Seymour, had texted her. Without another thought, she

barged through the door to save her friend.

When the door swung open under her hand, she was greeted by the darkness within. Suddenly, a

strong hand clasped around her wrist and dragged her into the dark room, followed by a loud thud as

the door slammed shut.

“Hey—who are you, and what do you want?!” Anastasia shrieked, her eyes darting around wildly as

she tried to make out her surroundings.

“Settle down, and I’ll treat you well.” A man’s deep and husky voice spoke close to her ear.

The next second, Anastasia was unceremoniously tossed onto the couch, and before she could

scramble to her feet, a lean and strong body pinned her down.

She let out a muffled cry when a pair of lips that tasted like peppermint captured hers.

The man on top of her felt burning hot to the touch. A sense of hopelessness brought tears to her eyes

as she tried to struggle against the man, but in the end, she could do nothing but endure the man's

ferocity.

An hour later, Anastasia staggered out of the room, looking disheveled. She had only just been through

a nightmare, but that didn't distract her from worrying about her best friend's safety.

She was just about to call Hayley's number when she saw a group of men and women walking out the

side door. Under the lights, she instantly recognized the two of the women in the group.

One happened to be Hayley, her best friend who had cried for help on the phone earlier, and the other

was Anastasia's stepsister, Erica Tillman. The two girls walked side by side with their arms linked, as if

they were the closest of friends.

Shock and rage colored Anastasia's features when she saw them. "Stop right there, Hayley!" she called

out loudly over the distance as her fists clenched tightly at her sides.

Upon hearing this, Hayley and Erica swiveled around to face her. Anastasia glowered at them, ashen-

faced as she demanded of Hayley, "Why would you lie to me?!"

Hayley smirked. "It's not my fault that you're always so gullible, Anastasia."

"Did you have a good time with that gigolo back there?" Erica asked in a sing-song voice, smiling

wickedly.

It was only then that Anastasia realized that both of them had set her up. The chastity she had held

dear for the past nineteen years was now sacrificed for their despicable glee.

Presently, Hayley's eyes were frosty as she seethed, "Did you actually think I was your friend,

Anastasia? I've been living in your shadow ever since we met! I hate you, and I want nothing more than

to ruin that face of yours!"

Erica, on the other hand, swiftly interjected by mocking, "I have the proof I need to show Dad that

you've been pimping yourself for money at the club. It won't be long until you're thrown out of the

house!"

"You two—" Anastasia was so furious that she swayed. Her body was in tatters after the ordeal she had

been through, and the collective weight of her friend's betrayal and her sister's cruelty nearly knocked

her down.

"Let's go, Hayley! We don't want to be seen with trash, do we?" With her arm looped through Hayley's,

Erica led her toward the sports car she had parked by the curb.

Three days later, at the Tillman Residence, a low male voice yelled out in rage, "You became an escort

for money just because I wouldn't let you go abroad for your studies? How can I, Francis Tillman, be

capable of having such a shameless daughter like you?"

"Dad, I didn't—"

"You didn't? But you did, Anastasia! How could you go to such shameless lengths? Did we starve you,

or did we deprive you of anything? I can't believe you would pimp yourself to random strangers in a

filthy clubhouse! For your sake, I hope you haven't brought any disease back to this house. Who knows

what my daughter and I could have caught from you," the woman who was dressed in jewels and fine

clothes sneered from where she sat on the couch.

"Dad, I really didn't do it. I—" Anastasia tried to explain herself.

However, Francis did not want to hear another word from her. He glowered at her maliciously as he

snapped, "Still lying to me, I see. Get out of this home right now! I will not stand to have you under my

roof. No daughter of mine could be so shameless. From now on, you are not my child!"

Meanwhile, on the staircase landing, Erica watched this scene play out as she leaned against the

banister with her chin propped on her hand. Everything was going exactly the way she had planned. In

a matter of minutes, Anastasia was going to be cast out of the house and wander around like some

pathetic stray mutt.

Downstairs in the living room, Anastasia fell silent when she saw the thunderous and disappointed look

on her father's face. She wordlessly rose from her seat and walked up the stairs to pack up her things.

She had only just rounded the landing when Erica barricaded her. With her arms crossed haughtily in

front of her chest, the younger girl sneered, “Get out of here! Don’t linger around like an eyesore. This

house will never have a place for you ever again!”

Anastasia clenched her fists as she glowered at Erica’s pleased expression.

Seeing the hatred and anger in Anastasia’s eyes, Erica leaned forward. “What, do you want to slap me

or something?” She turned her cheek toward the fuming girl and said smugly, “Go right ahead, then!”

Without holding back, Anastasia brought her hand down across Erica’s face, resulting in a hard slap.

“Ah!” Erica let out a shrill cry. “You just hit me! Mom, Dad—Anastasia just hit me!” She howled as she

bolted down the stairs.

Naomi Lowell quickly pulled her daughter into her arms and cried up the stairwell, “How dare you strike

my daughter, Anastasia! What the hell are you playing at?!”

Francis glanced at the red imprints on Erica’s cheek, and he had never been more disappointed in his

life. When did my oldest daughter become so infuriatingly rebellious?

“Dad, it hurts...” Erica sobbed as she burrowed into her father’s arms, taking in exaggerated deep

breaths like she was in great pain.

“Get out of here, Anastasia!” Francis roared up the stairs.

Having packed up her things, Anastasia grabbed her passport and went down the stairs. Her heart

grew stone-cold when she saw how her own father was holding Erica in his arms like she was

something precious.

Anastasia knew then that she indeed had no place in his heart. Francis had only heard Erica’s side of

the story instead of asking Anastasia about the horrific incident she had endured last night.

Ever since her mother had passed, she had spent her years in this home living like an outsider, for her

father had brought home his mistress and his illegitimate daughter to form a new family.

Anastasia’s poor mother had never known about her husband’s extra-marital affairs, not even in her

death.

I will never come back to this place ever again.

Inside the house, Erica watched as Anastasia dragged her suitcase out the front door, and a wicked

smile curled on her lips. I finally got rid of that useless eyesore!

...

Five years later, a knock came on the front door of an apartment in Dansbury.

The woman living in the apartment had been poring over her designs when she heard the knock. A little

bewildered, she walked up to the door and pulled it open unhappily. When she saw the two Asian men

in suits, she asked in Chinese, "Who are you looking for?"

"Are you Miss Anastasia Tillman?" one of the two men asked in English.

"I am. And you are?" Anastasia pressed.

"We were asked to look for you. Your mother, Amelia Chapman, saved our young master's life back in

the day. The old madam whom we serve wishes to see you."

She frowned at this. "Who's the old madam you serve?"

"Old Madam Presgrave," the first man answered respectfully.

Upon hearing this, Anastasia understood what had brought these men here. Old Madam Presgrave

was the woman behind the Presgrave Group, the foremost conglomerate in the country. Years ago,

Anastasia's mother had sacrificed her life to save Old Madam Presgrave's oldest grandson.

It gave Anastasia great pride to have been born to a police officer as capable and righteous as Amelia.

"I'm sorry, but I don't intend to see her," Anastasia said decidedly. She had a feeling that the

Presgraves wanted to repay Amelia's great deed, but she had no plans of accepting their gesture

whatsoever.

Just then, a childish and curious voice sounded from somewhere inside the apartment, asking,

"Mommy, who is it?"

"No one," Anastasia replied hastily. Then, she turned to address the men at the door, "Sorry, but I'm

really not in a mood for guests at the moment."

With that, she closed the door.

Meanwhile, back in the country, a man was seated on the couch inside the villa tucked halfway up the

hill. "Have you tracked her down?"

"Yes, Young Master Elliot. The girl from the clubhouse five years ago just sold off your watch at the

second-hand market.”

“Find her,” said the man on the couch, his voice deep and authoritative.

“Yes, sir!”

Chapter 2 The Addictive Taste of Her

The room was bathed in a warm glow of the lights. The man who sat on the couch had flawless

features, his handsome face the painstaking artwork of the heavens. He wore a finely tailored suit that

accentuated his strong silhouette. At present, Elliot Presgrave’s eyes turned icy as his grandmother’s

steely voice reverberated in his mind.

Elliot, you must take Anastasia Tillman for a wife. I will only have her and no one else as my

granddaughter-in-law in the Presgrave Family.

Right now, however, the only person Elliot was thinking of was the woman whom he had ravished in the

dark all those years ago. That fateful night, his drink had been laced and rendered him so intoxicated

that the only thing he remembered was how the woman had hopelessly sobbed while she begged for

mercy under him.

When all was done, he had taken off his watch and pressed it into her hand, thereafter passing out in

the dimness of that room.

Fast forward to five years later; he was still looking for her. It was just last week when he learned that

she had sold off his watch at the secondhand market, but the news came too late, for his grandmother

insisted that he take some other woman for a wife.

Just then, his phone rang once more. He picked it up and greeted brusquely, “What?”

“Young Master Elliot, we have found the girl. Her name is Hayley Seymour, and she was the one who

personally sold off the watch.”

“Send me her address, and I’ll pay her a visit,” Elliot ordered as an elated gleam flashed in his eyes.

The mysterious girl from that night has finally been sighted! I have to find her, no matter what. I need to

make it up to her for the things I’ve done that night.

Meanwhile, Hayley was in the women’s boutique. She had taken over the boutique a little over a year

ago, but the business had been on a steady decline. Struggling to pay rent, she had tried to come up

with ways to scrape together enough money to tide over. At last, she decided to try to sell the watch

she had in her possession, and much to her pleasant surprise, it fetched a whopping price of five

hundred thousand.

The watch hadn't been hers, to begin with. Five years ago, the clubhouse staff had contacted her and

told her that they had retrieved a watch from the private room, thereafter prompting her to collect it from

their lost and found department. Upon arriving at the club and seeing that it was a designer men's

watch, she claimed it as her own without even a second of hesitation.

Since then, the watch had been nestling in her closet until she decided to sell it off at the secondhand

market last week. Leading up to the sale, she hadn't expected that the watch would be worth much, but

that was before she was offered an astonishing five hundred thousand for it.

Hayley was glowing as she stared at the amount of money she had in her account, and she thought

happily to herself, I guess I can live comfortably for a while longer.

At that moment, the door to her boutique swung open, and she quickly rose to greet the customer.

“Welcome to...”

She trailed off then, so stunned that she abandoned the rest of her words.

The man who had entered her boutique stood tall and straight. He was handsome beyond

comprehension, and he carried with him an innate nobility.

It took a while for Hayley to snap out of her daze before she stumbled over her words to ask, “I-Is there

someone you’re looking for, sir?”

That was a fair question, considering she was running a women’s boutique. It was impossible that a

man wearing a refined handmade suit would be here to browse through dresses and the like. He

looked like he stood at six feet two, and there was no mistaking the domineering edge of his presence.

“Hayley Seymour?” Elliot asked as his narrowed eyes locked onto her. He searched her face,

desperately trying to find traces of the woman from five years ago.

“Y-Yes, that’s me. And you are...” She couldn’t quite finish her words; her faculty of speech was going

haywire under the man's burning gaze.

Having heard her reply, the man reached into his pocket and produced a men's watch before her, then

asked in a deep, rumbling voice, "Has this watch been in your possession all these years?"

Hayley glanced at the watch and instantly felt the urge to shrink into herself. Blinking guiltily, she

stammered, "Y-Yes, the watch is... mine."

"And you were the woman from the Abyss Club five years ago? The one who was in Room 808?" Elliot

pressed, eyeing the girl in front of him intently as he thought with a start, Could she really be the girl

from that night?

The wheels in Hayley's mind began to turn furiously. Room 808 from five years ago... Wasn't that the

room where Erica and I set Anastasia up? Why is this man asking me about that incident?

Without dwelling too much on this, she answered straightforwardly, "Of course, that was me."

"Keep this watch from now on, and don't try to pawn it off again. I'll make it up to you for what

happened that night," he said as he handed the watch to her. "I'm Elliot Presgrave. Remember my

name, will you?"

Hayley looked up at him in shock. Elliot Presgrave? As in, the heir to Presgrave Corporation, the

leading conglomerate? "Y-You're Elliot Presgrave?" she asked, so overwhelmed she might collapse.

The man next to Elliot handed her a name card and interjected, "Miss Seymour, this is our young

master's name card. You may look for him if you need his help in any way."

She took the card with one shaky hand, and when she saw the shell-shocking name embossed onto

the gold stationery, her heart nearly flew out of her chest. So the guy who slept with Anastasia five

years ago was not the male escort we arranged for her, but this fine specimen who happens to be the

heir to the Presgraves' family fortune?

As realization dawned upon her, Hayley reached out and grabbed Elliot's arm, then forced tears to

spring to her eyes as she threw a fit. "You have to take responsibility, Elliot. Do you know how hurt and

traumatized I was after that night?" With that, she looked down and cried crocodile tears, sobbing

miserably like she was the one who had been violated five years ago.

There was only one thing on her mind right now: to step into Anastasia's shoes and assume the role of

the victim from that fateful night. She was set on having Elliot take responsibility so that she could get

more benefits out of this. Ultimately, she hoped to marry the man and become Mrs. Presgrave.

"Don't worry, I promise to take responsibility," the man said solemnly, his husky voice steady and

reassuring.

"Miss Seymour, Young Master Elliot has arranged a villa for you, and you can move in anytime. He will

take care of all your needs from now on." Elliot's personal assistant, Rey Osborne, pointed out

helpfully.

Hayley's eyes lit up at once. She was so ecstatic she could pass out. A world of riches and glamor will

soon be in my hands!

"There are some things I have to take care of, so I'll get going," Elliot said, then after casting Hayley a

brief look, he turned to leave.

When the door swung shut behind him, Hayley clutched the watch tightly. She was so overwhelmed by

this unexpected turn of events that she could cry. "I'm going to be rich! Rich!" While she celebrated the

windfall, she found herself hoping viciously that Anastasia had dropped dead within the last five years

so that she wouldn't appear out of nowhere like roadkill.

In the understated luxury ride, Elliot sat in the backseat with his eyes closed. Is Hayley really the

woman from five years ago? Why does she seem different? Or have five years changed her?

The orange rays of the setting sun spilled through the car window and played over the man's chiseled

features. He looked so handsome that it was hard to believe he wasn't some valuable piece of art that

belonged in a museum; there was no one who could replicate such fine looks.

He was the true successor to Presgrave Group. He had taken over the reins five years ago and

launched the conglomerate to new heights, so much so that it was crowned first place among the

world's leading companies.

On that fateful night five years ago, he had experienced his first and only downfall in his lifetime. One of

his rivals had spiked his drink in hopes of manipulating him into ruining his own reputation. Elliot had

saved himself by darting into the private room, but just as the effect of the drug was at its peak, a

random woman scurried in and relieved him of his predicament.

Since then, the fact that he had just ravished and taken away a girl's innocence had been weighing on

his conscience.

He was sure that she had been chaste up to that night, for when he woke up after the deed, he saw

under the lights of the private room the traces of blood that stained the couch.

As he thought about the scattered mess in the private room that followed his misdeed, he stopped

doubting Hayley's identity and his impression of her. I have to take responsibility for what I've done to

her.

While this was happening, Anastasia was in her apartment somewhere abroad as she said on the

phone, "Got it. Give me three days tops to return to the country and prepare for the competition."

“Mommy, are we going back?” A small figure wandered over to her side. He wore a blue checkered

shirt and a pair of denim shorts. His features were delicately chiseled, albeit childish. He was only four

or so, but there was unmistakable grace and elegance to his movements.

Chapter 3 Refusing Their Favor

“Of course! I’ll go anywhere you go, Mommy!” the little guy beamed, his large eyes looking like

glistening onyxes as they curved into crescent moons.

Anastasia couldn’t help musing over how beautiful the child was. Every time she looked at his little

face, she felt a surge of comfort and gratitude, as though constantly in awe of how she had managed to

birth such an adorable little one.

“Well, then, we best pack our things now. We’re leaving for the airport tomorrow afternoon.”

“Okay!” The little one gave one firm nod, then dashed into his room to pack his things for the trip.

Anastasia heaved a sigh. She had been living abroad since her father threw her out of the house five

years ago. It wasn’t so much that she didn’t want to go home as it was that she had no place in it.

She didn't even tell her father after she had delivered her child while abroad, and now that she was

going back to her homeland for her work and career, she had made up her mind to see the old man. He

was still her father, after all.

Three days later, it was evening time at the international airport when Anastasia wheeled the baggage

cart forward. Her son was seated on top of the large suitcase on the cart, and he gazed around in

wonder. Everything about Anastasia's homeland seemed to pique his interest, and there was a curious

gleam in his sparkly eyes.

Presently, Anastasia had only just stepped out of the arrival hall when two men in suits walked up to

her, thereafter greeting politely, "Miss Tillman, we have been sent here by Old Madam Presgrave, who

has prepared a ride for you just outside the entrance. If you please—"

She blinked at them and said very courteously, "I appreciate the Presgraves' kind gesture, but I have

no need for a ride, thank you."

“Miss Presgrave, the old madam truly wishes to see you,” the middle-aged man said respectfully.

Anastasia knew that Old Madam Presgrave bore no ill will, but she really had no plans on accepting the

old madam’s kind favor. “Please tell Old Madam Presgrave that it was my mother’s duty to save others,

and that there is no need to repay the deed, at least not to me.” With that, she made to brush past the

two men, pushing the cart toward the exit.

One of the men took out his phone and informed dutifully, “Young Master Elliot, Miss Tillman has

refused our offer to pick her up.”

Presently, three gleaming black Rolls-Royce with heavily tinted windows that deterred anyone’s efforts

of peeking inside were parked by the airport entrance. There was a man seated in the backseat of the

Rolls-Royce in the middle of the fleet who kept his gaze on the airport doors, and he saw a young

woman pushing her cart through them just as he set his phone aside.

The woman wore a white blouse and plain jeans. Her hair had been gathered at her nape, revealing a

delicate and pretty face. Her skin was alabaster, and her demeanor somewhat leisurely as she

maneuvered the cart. Without a doubt, her presence among the crowd was a dazzling one.

Just then, Elliot's gaze was caught by something, or rather, someone—the little boy who leaped off the

woman's cart. He looked to be around four or five years of age, and he wore a gray sweater with

joggers, his thick and soft hair flopping over his forehead. He might be young, but his features were

finely chiseled, making him all the more adorable.

At that moment, Anastasia crouched down and helped the little one straighten his clothes; there was no

mistaking the gentle and indulgent look in her eyes.

Who's the kid? Is Anastasia married? If so, then I won't have to marry her just to fulfill Grandma's

wishes. With that in mind, Elliot watched as the taxi Anastasia and her supposed child got into pulled

away. Not long after that, his fleet left as well.

They had barely covered any distance when his phone rang. He glanced at the caller ID and greeted,

“Hey, Hayley.”

“Elliot, when are you coming to see me? I’ve missed you.” Hayley’s coy voice whined on the other line.

“I’ve been a little busy recently, but I’ll see you as soon as I’m free,” he answered, the bass in his voice

prominent.

“Promise?” Hayley asked coquettishly.

“Yes,” he replied with forced patience.

Meanwhile, over at Presgrave Residence, a silver-haired old lady was sitting on the couch sipping her

tea when she heard her subordinates’ latest findings. She looked up in shock as she demanded,

“What? Anastasia has a child? Is she married?”

“According to our investigation, the child’s father never showed up, so we’re assuming that she had the

child out of wedlock.”

“Oh, that poor dear. To become a single mother at such a young age...” Harriet Presgrave, otherwise

more widely known as Old Madam Presgrave, sighed. Guilt surged through her as she thought about

the brave female police officer who had died after sustaining eighteen fatal stabs from the ruffian who

26-Year-Old Port Harcourt Girl Hits Millionaire Status Overnight Olymp Trade

had threatened to hurt Elliot all those years ago.

She was only just lamenting on this when an elegant and towering figure sauntered into the living room.

It was Elliot, and he had returned from the airport. “Come here, Elliot,” Harriet said as she beckoned

her grandson over.

Elliot promptly took the seat next to hers and began to say, “Grandma, Anastasia kept refusing our

offer, so maybe I—”

“I just found out that Miss Tillman is a single mother who had a child out of wedlock. You must take

care of the poor mother and son, Elliot. It’s your duty.”

Elliot gaped at the old woman speechlessly, stunned by her suggestion. He had thought that she would

have given up on the matter, but as it turned out, she grew even more determined to see it through

instead.

“Grandma, I don’t have to marry her. We could always use some other way to repay her mother’s kind

deeds and make it up to her,” he countered calmly, hoping that his grandmother would see sense.

However, the moment Harriet heard this, she shot him a frigid look and said, “No, that won’t do. You

must marry Anastasia and protect her and take care of her for the rest of her life.”

Elliot frowned. He didn’t think any good could come from a loveless marriage, but he couldn’t even

reject his grandmother’s suggestion because she was set on repaying the sacrifice Anastasia’s mother

had made all those years ago.

“You can’t even imagine how many stabs Officer Amelia Chapman had sustained just to protect you.

The amount of blood... The gruesome nature of the crime...”Harriet’s eyes were sad as she said this.

Then, she looked up and cast her grandson a hard look, pointing out, “Taking care of her daughter is

the least you could do. You won’t ever be able to repay the officer’s selfless deed, even if you were to

take care of Anastasia for eternity.”

Elliot nodded quietly. “Fine, then I’ll take her for a wife.”

But there was another woman whom he could not let go of, whom he needed to compensate as well.

That said, he had no plans to tell Harriet about this just yet, and he knew that even if he did tell her, it

wouldn't dissuade her from forcing him to marry Anastasia.

“Anastasia has a kid,” he said.

That backfired on him because Harriet seemed delighted by the news. “That’s right! It’s a little boy,

probably around three or four years old. I can’t believe some scoundrel just left them like that. Listen to

me, Elliot—don’t you dare snub that child, is that understood?”

Elliot could hardly believe this. He stared at his grandmother, stumped as he thought, Is this some kind

of a buy-one-free-one deal?

The Bourgeois Jewelry Atelier was an old and well-known establishment that had been acquired by

Anastasia’s superior. In order to grow the brand, Anastasia—being the chief designer for the Queen’s

Rose QR Diamond Global—had been transferred back to her homeland to work on diversifying

Bourgeois.

Through the arrangements made by Bourgeois, Anastasia was put up in an apartment. She went about

decorating and straightening up her new abode while her son slept, and within two hours, the

apartment was transformed into the perfect cozy nest for the mother-and-son duo.

She was exhausted, but she did not feel like turning in for the day as she watched her son's adorable

sleeping profile.

Whatever had happened in this city five years ago still haunted her and made her stomach churn. Her

best friend's betrayal, her stepsister's wickedness, and her father's ultimatum that resulted in her being

exiled were like cuts that ran too deep to heal over.

It was a miracle at all that she had survived the past five years. She had had to balance raising her son

as a single mother and picking up design courses, and during the later part of the five years, she slowly

worked her way up the ladder and became chief designer. She had toiled harder than anyone else, and

the heavens must have granted her the stroke of luck she needed to get to where she was today.

As of now, she had her savings, her son, and a job that allowed her freedom.

She picked up her phone and stared at her father's number. There were several times when she

thought about calling him, but something made her hesitate. It's been five years. I wonder if he's still

angry with me.

Chapter 4 Don't Need Someone Else to Raise My Son

At the QR International Group, a mysterious acquisition team was negotiating with the owner Jack in

the conference room. The latter finally signed the acquisition contract at a price of 10 billion.

As of yet, no one knew that the boss of QR International Group had been replaced. The middle-aged

man who walked out of the acquisition meeting room took out his phone and reported to the man at the

other end, saying, "Young Master Elliot, the acquisition has been successfully completed, and you have

now become the president of QR International Jewelry Group."

"I got it," the man on the other end responded lightly.

In order to fulfill his promise to his grandmother of pursuing Anastasia, Elliot spent 10 billion to acquire

the company she was working at.

Only Anastasia could refuse the wedding proposal, so in the process, he had to show his grandmother

what he had done. Still, it was unknown whether he could marry Anastasia in the end.

Elliot hoped that Anastasia would reject him. After all, every good marriage needed to be based on a

foundation of mutual emotional interest. Otherwise, it would be meaningless to live together without any

love in the relationship.

At this point, Anastasia didn't know that her boss had changed.

In the next few days, she found a private kindergarten for her son nearby and sent her son there so

that she was free to work. The little boy was interested in the new school, so with a bag on his back, he

took the teacher's hand and skipped into the classroom.

"Is that your son? He's so handsome! I've never seen such a good-looking boy," a mother commented

in amazement.

Anastasia pursed her lips and smiled; she was naturally happy as a mother when someone praised her

son's good looks.

At Bourgeois, Anastasia came to work on her first day. As a designer sent by the design department,

she enjoyed many perks. For example, she had a dedicated office and a capable assistant herself.

Moreover, she only designed custom designs exclusively for a select few and not for the masses.

This was also one of the unique selling points of QR International Group—each customer would have a

unique lifetime customization service.

Anastasia's assistant was called Grace Ellis. She was a young, energetic, smart, and capable woman.

“Anastasia, your coffee.” Grace brought in the coffee.

“Thank you.” Anastasia nodded.

In less than 2 minutes, Grace knocked on the door again. “Anastasia, the manager said that the

meeting will be held at 3.00 PM, and the boss himself will be there, so be prepared.”

At 3.00 PM sharp, Anastasia sat in her seat inside the meeting room. There were many important

members of Bourgeois in the room, so it seemed that this was a large company meeting.

While Anastasia was checking it out, she inadvertently met a pair of sharp eyes belonging to a sexy

woman in her 20s. Her name tag read: Chief Designer Alice.

Anastasia immediately understood. Being a designer sure is very competitive. Therefore, there were no

so-called friends in this industry but only rivals in competition. Since she was transferred back from

abroad, it was normal for her to be disliked by others.

At this time, footsteps came from outside the door, as if there were still people coming. The door of the

conference room was then pushed open, and the first person who came in was a tall man with a

straight figure who was dressed in a well-cut suit. He had angular features and exuded a strong aura.

After he came in, he walked over to the main chair and sat down.

Without needing to say a word, his majestic aura made his powerful identity known to everyone.

When everyone saw him, there was an instant silence below the stage.

Why is the big boss different today?

The female designers in the audience were all surprised and excited as they felt butterflies in their

stomachs when they looked at the handsome man.

As for Anastasia, she was also surprised. Isn't the boss of Bourgeois someone in his early fifties? Why

is this man so young?

At this time, the vice president of the company, Larry Young, coughed lightly. "Let me introduce all of

you to Mr. Elliot Presgrave. He is now the CEO and chairman of QR International Group. From now on,

he will take over all the affairs of Bourgeois. Everyone, please give him a warm welcome."

There was a sudden collective gasp from the audience.

Elliot Presgrave?

He bought QR Jewelry Group?

While others were gasping in shock and confusion, Anastasia instantly raised her head and stared at

the man in question, who happened to be looking at her too.

Elliot had a pair of extremely deep eyes that were as sharp as an eagle's, so others did not even have

the courage to look at him. However, Anastasia had the guts, and she had probably guessed why this

man appeared here.

Could it be that as long as I don't accept the Presgrave Family's repayment, they will continue to

appear around me? Did I not make myself clear enough?

"Let's start the meeting! You will preside over the meeting," Elliot retracted his gaze and said to Larry

beside him.

The women present were so excited that their gazes shone. The content of the meeting was not

important at all, as they just stared at Elliot in fascination.

This man truly exuded an unparalleled superiority from head to toe, and he was also extremely wealthy.

Thus, he was the man that every woman in the country dreamed of marrying.

Anastasia also didn't listen to the content of the meeting because she was absent-minded. When she

looked up from time to time, she found that the man was looking at her, which made her uncomfortable.

Soon, all the people in the meeting discovered this. Why did Elliot only stare at Anastasia alone? Was it

because she was young and beautiful? Instantly, all the women stared jealously at her. It seemed that

Elliot's special treatment of her made them angry.

Anastasia really wanted to shout and stop Elliot from looking at her. Nevertheless, she still endured it.

She just wanted to finish the meeting and leave, and she didn't want to stay in this company anymore,

but when she remembered she had just signed a 5-year contract, she was lost for words.

After some time, the meeting was finally over.

Anastasia was the first to rush out of the conference room. She returned to the office feeling agitated.

At this moment, there was a knock on her office door. As soon as she turned around, Elliot pushed the

door open and came in. Immediately, she glared at him, feeling annoyed at his presence.

“Is there something you need, President Presgrave?” Anastasia sat down in her chair, seeming a little

impatient, and did not give him the respect one should give their boss at all.

Hearing that, Elliot pulled the chair across from her desk and sat down gracefully with an air of

arrogance and superiority. Then, he said coldly in a magnetic voice, “Miss Tillman, let's talk.”

“Are we talking about work?” Anastasia asked with raised eyebrows.

“You should know that I was kidnapped when I was five years old. It was your mother who gave her life

to save me, and I survived. For this, the Presgrave Family is forever grateful and wants to repay you.

Just say the word, and I will try to satisfy your requests.” Elliot looked at her calmly while expressing his

thoughts.

Sure enough, he is doing this just to repay my late mother.

“No need. My mother saved you because it was her responsibility as an officer. You don’t need to repay

me, and I won’t accept it.” Anastasia refused firmly.

“I heard that you have a son. If you want, I can raise him with you and take care of him.” Elliot proposed

with narrowed eyes.

Anastasia suddenly raised her head to look at the man opposite her, and at this moment, a sudden

thought flashed in her mind.

Huh?

She actually thought for a moment that her son looked like this man. Their facial features, eyes,

temperament, and even their hair were similar.

How weird.

“I don’t need someone else to raise my son for me.” Anastasia refused again.

Chapter 5 He Is Her Boss

“My grandma wants me to marry you, then take care of you and your children for the rest of your life.

Are you willing to marry me?” Elliot said bluntly. Although he was talking about marriage, his gaze was

indifferent; it was like he was simply shouldering a responsibility.

Feeling suddenly amused, Anastasia fluffed her long hair and looked at the man opposite. “Take a

good look at me. Do I look like the type who can never get married?”

She was very beautiful. In fact, it was not an overstatement to say that she was absolutely stunning.

“Miss Tillman, do you not want to marry me?” Elliot twitched the corner of his mouth and silently

breathed a sigh of relief.

“Although you are powerful and handsome, I don’t care for you,” Anastasia replied very confidently.

Elliot’s handsome face revealed a slightly startled expression. It seemed that he was not attractive at all

to this woman. Oh well, that is exactly the result I wanted, anyway.

As he wished, they were not attracted to each other.

“I hope you can visit my grandmother in person, Miss Tillman.” After all, only this woman could deny his

grandmother’s wishes because, in his heart, he was also responsible for another woman.

Anastasia pondered for a few seconds, then asked with narrowed eyes, “You really have acquired QR

International Group?”

“From now on, I’ll be your boss, so don’t worry. I’ll take care of you.” Elliot expressed that even though

he couldn’t marry her, he would take care of her at work.

Hearing that, Anastasia blinked. “Okay, let’s do that then! Goodbye, President Presgrave.”

Elliot was startled again at her words. Never before had a woman disregarded him so blatantly.

Thus, Elliot got up and left. After he did, Anastasia let out a small sigh. Suddenly, Grace knocked on

the door and asked, “Anastasia, what are you talking about with President Presgrave? Does he like you

very much?”

“Who said that?”

“Everyone is saying that he has been staring at you in the conference room,” Grace informed Anastasia

with the current juicy gossip.

When Anastasia heard that, she was annoyed. It seemed that Elliot was causing trouble for her at

work. As a boss, he should be a good boss. She would just work under him, and he should not appear

in front of her in the future.

Standing in front of the floor-to-ceiling window, Anastasia picked up the phone and called her father.

“Hello! May I know who it is?” A familiar voice came from the other end.

Anastasia’s nose burned as she called out to the other side, “Dad, it’s me. I’m Anastasia.”

“Anastasia? You... Where have you been in the past five years? I couldn’t find you.” Francis was

pleasantly surprised.

Now that the father and daughter were connected, how could any hatred last? Anastasia’s eyes filled

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with tears as she said, “Dad, I’m sorry. I have lived abroad for all these years, and now I’m back to work

in the country.”

“Okay, as long as you’re back. When will you come home?”

“I-I’ll go home in two days.”

“Okay, as long as you are healthy and safe. It’s my fault. I shouldn’t have driven you out.”

“Let’s forget about the past.” Anastasia comforted him. She had gone through all the hardships, and

she didn’t want to think about them anymore.

“Okay, come back home as soon as possible!” Francis sighed.

Anastasia hung up the phone and took a deep breath. Actually, she still didn’t want to go home yet. It

was good enough as long as her father was healthy and safe.

At this time, Larry knocked on the door and came over with a box in his hands.

“Anastasia, I’m here to

bring you something.”

Anastasia looked at the box he put on the table in surprise. “What is this?”

“Guess.”

Anastasia looked at the box with the words ‘Cloud Residence No. 1’ written on it. It was like the name

of a building.

“You better tell me directly!” Anastasia smiled; she didn’t want to guess.

“Cloud Residence No. 1 is a luxurious large condominium unit of 370 square meters that is worth 120

million. It is a top property unit that is lavishly renovated and decorated with luxurious decoration, and it

is ready for you to stay. You deserve it.” Larry finished speaking and opened the box. There were six

keys and a door card inside.

Anastasia frowned. “Is this for me?”

“Anastasia, this is a special perk from President Presgrave. He changed your residence to the Cloud

Residence No. 1 unit. Aren’t you surprised and excited about it?”

“Take it away; I don’t need it.” Anastasia refused coldly. She didn’t want to accept any favors from the

Presgrave Family at all. When her mother died, she had gone through a very painful childhood.

Her mother had died an honorable death, and she had lost her closest loved one.

Hearing her refusal, Larry was dumbfounded for a few seconds. Did she just refuse such an amazing

perk?

“Anastasia, you’re not joking, are you? This is a perk that is only for you!” Larry was 35 years old and

single. He also fell in love at first sight with Anastasia, who was young and beautiful, but he didn't

expect that Elliot had already gotten ahead first.

"Tell President Presgrave that I don't need special treatment in the company."

After Anastasia finished speaking, she pushed the box toward Larry and repeated her words. "Take it

away."

"Don't do this to me. How am I supposed to tell him? Just accept it!" Larry could see that Elliot was

interested in Anastasia.

However, Anastasia still said firmly, "Send it back. I really don't need it. Thank you."

When Larry saw that she was serious, he had to take the box away. At this moment, Elliot did not go

back to work in his company Dominion Corporation, but started working in the main office of Bourgeois

instead.

"President Presgrave, Anastasia won't accept this no matter what I said," Larry reported helplessly.

"Well." Elliot's dark eyes were cloudy. He had expected this, but it would be best if he could repay his

debt with material things so that he would not have to bind himself to Anastasia by marriage.

At the Tillman Residence, Francis had just returned. He looked at his wife watching TV on the sofa,

then sighed happily and said, “Naomi, I received a call today. Guess who it was?”

“Who?” Naomi looked at him curiously.

“It was Anastasia! She had been living abroad for all these years. No wonder I had been unable to

contact her,” Francis said happily.

He didn’t realize that his wife’s expression had suddenly changed, and the resentment in her eyes

grew. “Why are you still thinking about her? She embarrassed you in the past, so don’t let her come

back to this house.”

“Naomi, I’ve been thinking for some time, and I feel that she’s not that kind of person. There must be a

misunderstanding, and anyway, it has been so many years since. Just let it pass!”

“What misunderstanding? Erica photographed her frequenting that kind of place in the middle of the

night. The evidence is solid.” Naomi really didn’t expect Anastasia, who had been driven out, to come

back now.

Did she notice our company's development and come back to compete for the family assets? Hmph! It

all belongs to my daughter. It will be over my dead body for Anastasia to get her hands on it!

Seeing that his wife was not happy, Francis said no more and went upstairs, a little tired.

Then, Naomi quickly picked up her phone and dialed her daughter's number.

"Hey! Mom."

"Erica, guess who's back?"

"Who?"

"That little b*tch Anastasia contacted your dad today. She's back."

"What? How can she even come back?"

"She must have taken a fancy to our family's assets and wants to return for a piece of the pie. With me

here, she won't even get to lay a finger on it." Naomi snorted coldly, her face full of bitterness.

"I was able to drive her away five years ago, so even if she comes back, I can still drive her out again."

Erica was also very confident about it.

Chapter 6 Embarrassed in Front of Him

At this moment, Erica, who was at a spa club, immediately contacted Hayley after hanging up her

mother's call.

Back then, they teamed up to make Anastasia lose her virginity and then had her driven out of the

house. Now she and Hayley had become best friends, but in the past two weeks, Hayley had lost

contact with her, and Hayley's store was also closed. Hence, Erica didn't know what Hayley was doing.

Soon Hayley's voice came over the phone. "Hello, Erica."

"Hayley, what have you been doing recently? Why is your store closed?"

"Oh! I-I'm traveling! Is anything the matter?"

"Hayley, let me tell you some bad news. Anastasia has returned to the country."

In a luxurious villa, Hayley, who was enjoying the service of a servant on the sofa, was so frightened

that she dropped her phone. She quickly picked it up, took a deep breath, then asked nervously, "When

did she come back? Why did she come back? "

"Why are you so nervous? You're still afraid of her!"

"No, I'm just asking."

“My dad told me. I don’t know what she’s doing, but I’m quite sure she’s coming back to fight over the

family assets with me now, and she might cause you trouble too.”

A flash of viciousness glimmered in Hayley’s eyes when she heard that. Why didn’t Anastasia die

abroad? That way, I won’t have to panic.

Everything Hayley enjoyed now was all thanks to her. She would never let Elliot know the truth as long

as she was alive.

I can’t let him know that it was Anastasia back then.

“Erica, I’m also afraid that she will retaliate against me. Can you tell me everything you know about her

in the future? I’ll be better prepared,” Hayley said to Erica.

Erica replied, “Okay, we will deal with her together in the future.”

After hanging up the phone, Hayley bit her lip. She was now used to being treated like a wealthy young

lady, and she had only the best of everything. In order to make it up to her, Elliot gave her everything

she wanted. Hayley became even greedier; she wanted more than material compensation. In fact, she

wanted to be Elliot's wife.

It must be the happiest thing in the world to become the woman of a man like Elliot. Therefore, she

would never allow Anastasia to mess up her plans. Even Erica couldn't know. Otherwise, Erica would

be jealous of her and expose her. As such, she must have a good grasp of everything about Anastasia,

and it was best to find a method to make her disappear from this world.

At 5.00 PM, Anastasia showed up at the kindergarten on time to pick up her son. The little boy happily

said goodbye to the teacher and ran to her.

“Mommy!”

“How was school?”

“It was great! The teacher likes me very much, and my classmates like me too,” the little boy reported

happily.

“How about we have noodles in the evening?”

“Okay!”

Anastasia was very lucky to give birth to a child with such an angelic character. Since he was a baby,

he had never let her worry about him. He was not picky about food, he had a good personality, and he

was a kind and loving boy.

After shopping in the supermarket, they went home to cook dinner. The little boy played with Lego while

Anastasia cooked dinner for two. At that time, the small apartment was full of warmth and coziness.

“Mommy, did work go well today?” the little boy asked with concern.

“Yes, it went well.” Anastasia curved her lips and smiled. In front of her son, she never complained

about life or work. Even if life was hard, her son’s smile was sweet and could cure all unhappiness.

“Jared, is it okay if I take you to see your grandfather in two days?” Anastasia asked her son.

“Okay. I also really want to see Grandpa.” The little boy blinked his eyes in anticipation.

Hearing that, Anastasia felt complicated because she knew that Naomi and her daughter would

definitely not welcome Jared. She would also not let Erica know that her son was conceived when she

accidentally lost her virginity five years ago, and she planned to tell her father she conceived the child

with a man she loved.

At night, Anastasia slept with her son in her arms. The moonlight from outside the window shone in,

and the mother and son fell asleep together.

Early next morning, after seeing off her son, Anastasia took a cab to the company. Bourgeois was

located in an eight-story building in the city center, which was a little inconspicuous due to the even

taller skyscrapers next to it.

However, this brand had gained popularity in the country. Now that it had been acquired by QR, its

market value was enhanced too. As such, one month later, Bourgeois was invited to participate in a

local jewelry exhibition. Several series designed by Anastasia were selected to be displayed at the

exhibition, which was also an effective method for branding purposes.

Soon, Anastasia got out of the cab. Since she bought breakfast a little late, she paid for the cab fare

while nibbling on the bread in her hand, after which she walked quickly toward the hall.

As Jared went to school at 8.30 AM, she was a little rushed for work at 9.00 AM.

At the entrance to the elevator, Anastasia tried her best to finish her breakfast before entering the

office, as it was inappropriate to go in while eating. Thus, she filled her mouth with the last big mouthful

of bread.

While she was chewing with her cheeks bulging, the elevator door opened, and a handsome and

mature figure suddenly appeared in front of her eyes.

Stiffening for a few seconds, she swallowed the bread with some difficulty and walked in as gracefully

as possible.

“Morning,” Elliot greeted in a low and magnetic voice.

“Morning!” Anastasia replied, and the next second, she was startled by her own sudden hiccup.

While hiccupping, Anastasia felt her face flushed red as she nearly choked on her bread. What was

even more alarming was that the elevator had mirrors all around. Now, she had nowhere to hide her

embarrassment. She covered her mouth, but her body protested that she ate too fast, and there came

another not-so-elegant hiccup.

Elliot’s deep gaze fell on her face through the mirror as he watched Anastasia’s awkward act.

Finally, when they arrived at the 6th floor, Anastasia squeezed out of the elevator as soon as the doors

opened. She felt so ashamed she wanted to dig a hole and bury herself.

Elliot's calm expression on his handsome face appeared to crack, and a smile was brewing in his dark

eyes.

This girl is inexplicably interesting.

Anastasia returned to the office and quickly took a few sips of water to cure her hiccups, but the

humiliating scene could not be undone. She wouldn't be this embarrassed if it were another man, but it

just had to be Elliot.

He must be laughing at me.

10.30 AM.

"Anastasia, there is a department meeting now."

Anastasia responded, "Got it."

In the meeting room, the department director, Felicia Evans, sat on one side of the conference room.

She had eight designers under her, including Anastasia.

“Wait for a while. President Presgrave will be here soon.” Felicia took a sip of water and shrugged

nervously. Who would have thought that a departmental meeting would involve the big boss as well?

This is so stressful.

“Anastasia, did you know President Presgrave from before?” Alice looked at Anastasia meaningfully.

Anastasia immediately denied it. “I didn’t.”

“Then why did President Presgrave keep staring at you yesterday?” another female designer asked,

dissatisfied.

“You should ask President Presgrave this,” Anastasia responded gracefully.

“Work is work, and the company is not a place for you to fall in love, nor a place to take the back door.

You all better remember it well.” Felicia stared at her subordinates sternly.

Then, Alice glanced at Anastasia. In her eyes, Anastasia was someone who wanted to seduce Elliot in

order to gain the upper hand.

At this moment, the door of the office opened, and an imposing figure stepped in.

Elliot walked in gracefully, then sat down at the head of the table. Anyone who saw this man would

think that God was unfair.

God gave him wealth that could rival the government's wealth, a handsome face that all beings adored,

a perfect figure like the sun god Apollo, a graceful and princely temperament, and the majestic aura of

an emperor.

This man lived for women to worship and adore him.

Even Felicia hurriedly ruffled her hair while exuding her mellow and womanly temperament. Although

she was 35 years old, she still had a dream of marrying rich.

“Let's start.” The low and charming voice sounded cold.

Chapter 7 The Scheming Hayley

Felicia immediately coughed. “Okay, the subject of today's meeting is the competition that we're

participating in. First, congratulations to the two shortlisted designers, Alice and Anastasia.”

Anastasia raised her head and met Alice's provocative gaze. If she won this time, the company would

give her a large bonus. Hence, they were rivals. Felicia immediately analyzed the situation of this

competition. As an experienced designer, she was very confident in her work.

While Anastasia was staring at the table, she suddenly felt eyes on her. Judging from the direction, it

was undoubtedly Elliot's.

Is this man really so free? Why is he staring at me all day long?

Anastasia's mother sacrificed her life for him. To be honest, Anastasia really didn't want to see him.

Although he was only five years old at the time, and she couldn't blame him for anything, she still had a

kind of resentment in her heart.

"Anastasia, tell me your opinion." Felicia suddenly cued her.

Anastasia was daydreaming just now, and now she had no idea what Felicia was talking about. She

raised her head and looked at Felicia in confusion. "Uh... Which aspect are you referring to?"

Felicia's face immediately turned ugly. How dare someone daydream at my meeting?

"Anastasia, although you are a designer dispatched from the headquarters, you shouldn't be too

arrogant and disregard me. You didn't listen to what I said just now, did you?" Felicia was a harsh

woman and wanted to teach Anastasia a lesson.

The other designers looked at Anastasia as if they were watching her make a fool of herself, while

Anastasia's face was also a little hot. While she didn't know what to say, a low male voice sounded.

“Tell me what the unique selling point of your design is.”

Elliot was giving her a reminder.

When it came to her work, Anastasia immediately became confident. “My work this time uses platinum,

which is the most suitable material for inlays, with the addition of rhodium and palladium. Its gloss,

hardness, and durability are very good, and it is also a rare material. It holds a superior connotation, it's

not easy to depreciate, it's guaranteed not to change color, it has good stability, and it is suitable for

collection purposes. My target customers are people who like to collect and buy luxury goods.”

After Anastasia finished speaking, she suddenly caught the deep gaze of the man opposite her, and

she at once avoided it.

“In short, it's expensive!” Alice sneered. “I'm not the same as you. I focus on fashion elements.

Nowadays, trends come and go. I think my work is more suitable for the market.”

Anastasia pursed her lips and smiled. “Each of our work has its own selling point.”

Soon, the meeting finally ended. Elliot only came to listen and did not express his opinion too much.

“Okay, the meeting is over,” Felicia announced.

“Anastasia, stay here. The others may leave,” Elliot said suddenly.

Anastasia was about to take a sip of water to moisten her throat when she almost choked on hearing

this. She was instantly surrounded by envious and hateful gazes, especially Alice, who glared at her

resentfully as if she had seduced Elliot by some dirty means.

Anastasia was also lost for words. Can’t this man see my situation in the company? I’m being scorned

by other people, and he still has to fan the gossip by doing this!

After everyone left, Anastasia leaned against her chair and said coldly, “Is there something you need,

President Presgrave?”

“Why didn’t you accept the house I gave you yesterday?” Elliot narrowed his eyes and stared at her.

“Why should I? I already said that I will not accept any repayment from the Presgraves.” Anastasia

emphasized again.

“You should think about your son. The place I chose has great facilities that can support him. There is a

much better kindergarten for the elites in the community. It is also safer and more suitable for you to

live with your child.” Elliot left his status as a superior president and turned into a salesperson.

What he said was very attractive to Anastasia because, as a mother, it was her biggest wish to provide

her son with the best education and environment.

“No need. I can give my son the best.” Anastasia disagreed. For a businessman like him, he couldn’t

realize that the most precious thing was not material wealth but emotional companionship.

As long as her son was with her, even if she lived in less than stellar conditions, she would be happiest.

Frowning, Elliot stared at the ruthless woman and felt troubled.

“In the future, if it’s not for work purposes, please don’t look for me again.” After Anastasia finished

speaking, she picked up her documents, then got up and left.

In the afternoon, Anastasia received a call from her father, who asked her to go home for dinner

tomorrow. He also said he wanted to see her. Thus, she agreed, thinking that she needed to go home

for a visit.

At the president's office, Elliot sat gracefully in his seat, listening to the work report of the assistant

beside him.

"Go check the information regarding the father of Anastasia's son for me."

Since material compensation did not impress Anastasia, Elliot could only start in other areas.

"Very well." Rey immediately went off to investigate.

At this moment, Elliot's phone rang, so he picked it up and saw that it was from Hayley.

"Hello," he answered as gently as possible.

"Elliot, are you busy with work? Can I have dinner with you tonight?"

"Okay, I'll book a restaurant." Elliot agreed.

"Then I'll wait for you to pick me up." Hayley was excited.

"Sure." Elliot hung up the phone while Hayley's face appeared in his mind. For some reason, Hayley

didn't feel anything like the woman from that day to him.

He vaguely remembered the woman that night. Her lips were unbelievably soft, and her body had a

faint fragrance. Although she cried throughout the whole process, her voice was appealing, while

Hayley's voice was a little too sharp.

Since it had been five years, anyone would undergo significant changes. Thus, Elliot just wanted to

make up for her. After all, what he did that night caused irreversible damage to her life.

At a fine dining restaurant, Hayley came in a new Chanel dress, dressing to the nines. Using expensive

cosmetics and the skill of a makeup artist, she enhanced her rather average looks, but she was still not

eye-catching enough.

She belonged to the category of an average pretty girl. She was not ugly, but not stunning either.

However, tonight, she was the most enviable woman in the entire restaurant. Sitting opposite her was a

top-level man who was handsome, elegant, charming, and exuded a regal aura.

"Elliot, cheers." Hayley took the initiative to raise her glass and looked at the man opposite her eagerly.

Although she had known him for almost three weeks, Elliot had always treated her civilly and politely.

However, what Hayley wanted was far more than that, for she wanted his heart, body, and eventually,

to be his wife.

Now, because she had gotten his attention and everything he gave her, she was absolutely terrified of

losing it all.

She felt delighted to be wealthy. What she wanted could be delivered to her in the next second. Her

favorite new Chanel dresses could be delivered directly to her door for her to choose from. If she

wanted a specific bag, she could get one in every color available. If she wanted diamond jewelry, all

she needed to do was pick her favorite.

This feeling was like floating in the clouds, and Hayley never wanted to fall back to the ground again as

long as she lived.

Chapter 8 Taking Her Son Home

However, Hayley had a bad feeling that Anastasia would suddenly return home and learn the truth

about what happened that night. If that happened, she would lose everything and be forced to live her

life like she used to. At the thought of that, she told herself that she would never let something like that

happen. Thus, when Elliot took her back to the mansion after dinner, Hayley coyly invited the man into

the house. “Elliot, would you like to come inside and have a cup of tea?”

“No thanks. I still have things to attend to.”

“But I’m scared of being alone. I want you to keep me company.” Hayley immediately tried to play on

the man’s sympathy by pretending to be scared.

“I’ll get Natasha to accompany you.” Elliot reached for his cell phone.

“No! Please! I only want your company.”

“But I really have something to do at work. Next time, perhaps.” Elliot gently looked at her. “Rest well.

Good night.”

Hayley was disappointed upon hearing the man’s reply, but the man’s meek attitude prompted her to

stop insisting coyly as she bitterly nodded. “Alright then.” Setting her eyes on Elliot’s car, she bit her lip

while wishing she could be in the man’s embrace. I swear I will make him my man one day! I’m going to

be the lady that every other woman envies.

Meanwhile, Anastasia decided to spend her wonderful day inspecting some outlets with Felicia. As time

slipped by quickly, she called it a day and left work earlier than usual, around 4.30 PM, thinking she

wanted to bring her son back home to see her father.

On the other hand, Francis had specially informed the cook in the Tillman Residence to prepare dinner

for Anastasia's arrival, but Naomi made sure the cook only prepared her daughter's favorite dishes,

sparing no thought for Anastasia at all. Soon, the maid came over and asked, "Madam, Old Master

Tilman said prawns are Young Mistress Anastasia's favorite, which is why he told me to buy them. Are

you sure you don't want me to cook them?"

"Of course not. Go ahead and cook the prawns, but make sure they taste so spicy that the b*tch wishes

she didn't eat them," Naomi replied. As soon as the maid proceeded to do what she was told, Naomi

was left angrily dwelling on Anastasia's intentions of returning home. Deep down, she couldn't help but

think that Anastasia was back for a piece of the big pie now that Francis and his company were doing

so well that they had amassed a fortune over billions. As long as I'm in this family, Anastasia can forget

about her share of the inheritance.

"Mom, do you know that Anastasia is going to be back for dinner?" Erica entered through the door in

frustration.

Naomi nodded. "Your dad insists she join us for dinner, and I couldn't say anything about it."

"It's been five years. I wonder how she is now." Erica pursed her lips.

"How well can her life be? She didn't even finish her university studies when she left at 19. The way I see it, she must be back for the inheritance because she's been struggling to make ends meet." Naomi

grunted in dissatisfaction.

"You mustn't let her take what's mine away, Mom. I own everything that belongs to Dad," Erica

audaciously said, as if she was the rightful heir of her father's inheritance.

"Of course, she has nothing to do with the inheritance at all," Naomi replied firmly.

"Alright, I'm going to wear some make-up and put on my new dress." Erica headed upstairs as soon as

she finished her words, thinking she should show Anastasia that her place in the Tillman Family was

irreplaceable.

On the other hand, Anastasia took a cab and was on her way to the Tillman Residence with her son

while teaching the latter what to do later. Thankfully, her son was a smart child who understood what

Anastasia told him, melting her heart so much that she immediately hugged and kissed him. “That’s my

darling boy!” Deep down, she sympathized with her own son, thinking he would perhaps be treated

differently if he was born into a different family. At the same time, she found it ironic for his presence to

be treated in an unwelcoming manner in her father’s house.

In the meantime, Francis happened to be at his doorstep. He had left his office earlier than he usually

would because he couldn’t wait to see his daughter, who had been away from him for five years. Soon,

he saw a cab coming in his direction and walked closer to it just when the car came to a stop. Then, a

lady with a slim figure stepped out of the vehicle, and she turned out to be Anastasia. Not long after

that, he saw a boy emerging from behind Anastasia and was completely stunned by what he saw. How

come my daughter has a little boy who looks like he is 4 or 5 years old with her? Is she... Francis

couldn't help but feel surprised by what he saw.

Meanwhile, Anastasia looked at her father, realizing how much he had aged after five years. Because

of that, she began to become understanding about what happened back then while blaming herself for

not having kept in touch with Francis in the past five years.

"I'm back, Dad." Anastasia seized her son's hand and walked closer to Francis. Then, she looked at

her son and said, "Jared, greet your grandfather."

"Grandpa." Jared looked up and called out to Francis.

Grandpa? Francis was caught by surprise when he heard the child's voice, looking at Jared in awe.

"This is my... grandson? You have a child already?"

"Yes, Dad. His name is Jared, and he is three and a half years old." Anastasia refused to tell Francis

her son's actual age because she didn't want her father to deduce when she gave birth to Jared.

"Three and a half years old, and he is already this tall." Francis found it unbelievable that he already

had a handsome grandson.

“Yeah!” Anastasia smiled.

“What about your son’s father?” Francis asked.

“I’ve never lived with him ever since I gave birth to Jared,” Anastasia replied.

“Yeah, I’ve only been living with Mom all the time, Grandpa,” the child added.

Francis’ eyes were filled with tears when he realized he did nothing to help his daughter raise his

grandson. I’m such a terrible grandfather. Worse, I cast my own daughter away from home five years

ago. “This is my fault! All my fault, Anastasia! Please forgive me. I’m sure I’ll make it up to you.” Francis

was overwhelmed by his own guilt.

“No need for that. Jared and I have been managing well by ourselves.” Anastasia didn’t want her

father’s guilt to weigh him down.

“Come on in! Let me hug you, my darling Jared!” Francis bent over and hugged Jared, thinking the

child was fed well due to his firm build. Other than that, he was proud of how good-looking his own

grandson was, as he reckoned Jared was the most handsome child he had ever seen.

As soon as Anastasia entered the parlor with her father, Naomi saw her husband carrying a child in her

arms and asked in surprise, “Who’s that child, hubby?”

“Naomi, this is Anastasia’s son. She gave birth to a child when she was living abroad.” Francis happily

made the announcement, showing his exhilaration at his grandson’s arrival. After all, his biggest regret

was not having a son, although he wasn’t particular about having one. Therefore, he treated his

daughter’s son like his own because Jared was still the descendant of his bloodline.

“What?!” Naomi was stunned to learn that the child was Anastasia’s son.

“Mom.” Anastasia coldly greeted Naomi.

“Oh, dear! We didn’t know you were already a mother after five years. Why didn’t you tell us anything?”

Naomi pretended to show her concern, thinking it was a necessary move to make even in front of her

husband. “Who is the father? Why isn’t he here?”

“Naomi, Anastasia is raising the child by herself.” Francis quickly reminded her to stop asking

unnecessary questions.

At that instant, Naomi immediately thought that Anastasia was going to use her son to claim a bigger

share of the inheritance, deeming both of them a greater threat, when she noticed how Francis loved

the boy. “Oh! A single mother! How touching and noble!” Naomi said with a sarcastic tone.

Seemingly sensing what Naomi’s tone indicated, the boy looked at the lady and asked, “Who are you?”

Naomi looked askance at the child and said, “Greet your grandmother.”

“My mother said my grandmother passed away long ago, so how are you my grandmother?” the boy

asked, his innocence and purity indirectly telling Naomi’s ill intentions.

“Oh gosh, look at this child! How rude he is! Anastasia, if you don’t teach him some manners, how do

you expect him to live decently when he grows up?” Naomi questioned Anastasia’s upbringing in an

annoyed manner.

“How my son behaves is none of your concern.” Anastasia stood up for her child.

Chapter 9 Inheritance Conflict

Knowing the strained history between the ladies, Francis glared at Naomi and lectured her. “Anastasia

and her son just arrived, so there is no need for you to be so sarcastic. Get along well with her, would

you?!”

“Who is the kid, Mom?” Erica showed up on the stairs and became curious when she saw her father

with a child in his arms.

“Watch your mouth! This is your nephew whom your sister gave birth to when she was living abroad,”

Naomi answered unhappily.

Erica’s eyes were instantly left wide open. “What?!” She then walked down the stairs and closer to

Anastasia. “Why didn’t you let us know about your child? What’s wrong? He can’t be seen?”

“How could you say something like that, Erica? Jared is part of our family now, so I want you to take

back your words.” Francis unhappily glared at the lady.

Naomi noticed her husband’s reaction and immediately harbored a greater grudge toward Anastasia,

finding it hard to believe that his attitude toward Erica changed so much just because of Jared.

“D-Dad, I’m just showing my... concern for her!” Erica bitterly stood up for herself.

“Come here. I’ll take you to the garden for a walk.” Francis wanted to bond with Jared.

As soon as Francis left with Jared, Erica approached Anastasia with a glacial smile. “You had an affair

with some married man and gave birth to that illegitimate child, didn’t you?!”

While Anastasia’s eyes were filled with hatred, she could never forget what Erica and Hayley did to her

back then. For that, she told herself that she would never forgive both of them because of what they did

to her. “My business is none of yours,” Anastasia coldly replied.

For some reason, Erica started to think that Anastasia had become prettier as the latter gave off a

more dominating aura now, compared to who she was five years ago. In that instant, she began to feel

even more jealous of Anastasia’s beauty. She thought there would be no one else in her way after the

former left the Tillman Family, only to be surprised by her fair skin, curvy figure, and calm demeanor

when they met again. Man, she doesn’t even look like she’s given birth before.

“Anastasia, I don’t know what you’re up to coming back here, but I warn you—forget about whatever

silly idea you have in your mind. This family has nothing to do with you at all.” Naomi threatened her.

Anastasia glacially chuckled and asked, “Why not? When my father first built his company, my

grandparents invested in it too, but you both had the cheek to take everything without doing anything.”

“You...”

“Know your place, Anastasia. I drove you away from the Tillman Family five years ago, and I can

always do the same thing again.” Erica tried to intimidate Anastasia.

“My father is the only person I ever came back to this family for, which has nothing to do with you both

at all. Furthermore, my dad can do whatever he wants with his inheritance, which is, again, none of

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your concern.” Anastasia refuted Erica and Naomi, ridiculing both of them.

“Speaking of that, don’t you ever think that you’re going to get a bigger share of the inheritance with

your son.” Naomi gritted her teeth.

“My father is still alive and has a long way to go in his life, but you both won’t stop talking about his

inheritance. Do you want him gone so badly? If that’s the case, I’m going to make sure he lives a long

life so that you both can forget about inheriting his fortune.” Anastasia gave a cold reply, knowing that

Erica and Naomi only loved her father's money instead of the man himself.

"You..." Naomi was rendered speechless but immediately talked back to save herself from the

embarrassment. "He is my husband, so of course I want him to live long."

Erica quickly defended her mother. "What're you talking about, Anastasia?! My mom loves my father."

Nonetheless, Anastasia reached for her phone and sat on the couch, refusing to entertain the mother

and daughter. Soon, the maid proceeded to serve the dishes while Francis told her to prepare two

more dishes that were not spicy for his grandson. Seeing that, Naomi and Erica were steaming

because they could tell from Francis' eyes that Anastasia was beginning to regain his favor with her

son.

"What's your occupation, Anastasia?" Francis asked curiously during the meal.

"I studied jewelry design when I was living abroad, and I'm now a designer at Bourgeois."

"Not bad. Bourgeois is quite a big name." Francis complimented Anastasia.

"I'm looking for a job too, Dad! I'm currently interviewing as an auto salon model." Erica desperately

introduced her job to her father.

“What kind of job is that? You’d better quit before you embarrass me.” Francis shot a gaze at Erica,

giving her a stern gaze.

“Hubby, Erica is just having fun while exploring the opportunities around her. I’m sure she’ll come to

your company in the future.” Naomi immediately stood up for her daughter.

“Hmph! What can she do in my company? A receptionist?” Francis grunted coldly.

On the other hand, Erica harbored a strong grudge toward Anastasia, blaming her for indirectly

exposing her shortcomings.

“Grandpa, my mom is an impressive designer. She even took part in the International Jewelry Design

Competition,” Jared happily said.

The child’s words put a smile on Francis’ face. “Really? That’s awesome! Jared, I’m going to get you a

present later in the afternoon, so just tell me what you want. Alright?”

“Sure, thank you, Grandpa!” The little boy politely expressed his gratitude.

While Anastasia was glad that her father was so fond of Jared despite her surprise, Naomi and Erica

were growing more and more annoyed with the child's presence, deeming him a scheming little boy

they should be wary about, in spite of his young age.

After dinner, Francis took them to the nearest shopping mall, where he bought his grandson some

expensive presents, including robot toys and Lego. Although they cost thousands, he didn't hesitate to

pay for them at all.

"That's enough, Dad. Don't spoil him." Anastasia quickly tried to stop her father.

"Alright. Alright, that's all for today. I'll buy him something else again in a few more days." Francis still

felt an urge to show his good faith.

"It's okay, Grandpa. I don't need any more toys because I already have plenty of them." The child gave

a mature reply, which grew on Francis more as the latter caressed the child's head.

When they were done with their shopping, Francis gave his daughter and grandson a ride back to their

apartment. The moment he saw the building, he began to think that it was time for him to make it up to

Anastasia since his company had made him quite a fortune over the past few years.

After seeing her father off, Anastasia wrapped her arms around Jared. “Jared, your grandfather seems

to like you a lot.”

“I like him too.” Jared happily said while pouting at the same time. “Mommy, can you tell me where

Daddy is?”

Anastasia paused in the face of the inevitable question that she knew Jared would ask. She then gazed

at him in a serious manner and said, “I don’t know where he is, Jared. In fact, we may never see him

again, but anyway, I promise I’ll be by your side. I love you, Darling!”

Jared nodded and held his Lego up in the air. “Alright then, I’m going to play now!”

“Go ahead!” Anastasia nodded, watching her son unwrapping his new toys while losing herself in her

thoughts. Deep down, she knew it wasn’t hard to find her son’s father at all because she was sure that

Erica and Hayley had the answer to that. After all, she believed that they tricked her into sleeping with a

gigolo, but because of that, she vowed never to let her son know about his father’s embarrassing

profession.

It's alright. I love Jared, and that's enough for both of us. Now that my dad likes him too, I suppose

there is nothing else that can make my life even happier than how things are at this point.

Chapter 10 Hayley's Probe

Angry and annoyed, Erica immediately thought of Hayley, whom she reckoned was the only person

who could help her plot against Anastasia. Therefore, she contacted her to meet her at a cafe. When

Hayley arrived, she appeared to be in an inconspicuous outfit. Just like what she usually did, she

walked toward Erica and sat down opposite her.

"You said you went away for a trip. Where did you go?" Erica curiously asked.

"Erm... It was just a short trip around the city for a few days. After all, I needed a break," Hayley

answered in a panicky manner because she didn't want Erica to know that she had been living like a

rich woman lately.

"What about your shop? Aren't you going to be back to business?"

"Nah. The shop isn't doing well lately anyway, so I've decided to take a break." Hayley appeared

unconcerned despite the worrying situation in her business.

Erica responded in a huff. “Did you know? Anastasia got on my mom’s and my nerves today. She is

back, but that’s not all because—she is now a mother of an illegitimate son.”

Hayley was stunned when she heard that, holding Erica’s hand while anxiously asking, “What did you

say?! She has a child?!”

Noticing her friend’s dramatic reaction, Erica paused for a few seconds and comforted the former. “That

child is her illegitimate son. Are you worried that she’ll bring the man whom we put up to a one-night

stand with her and come after us? Relax, nothing is going to happen!”

“What does the kid look like? How old is he?” Hayley became especially sensitive, thinking that it was

necessary for her to be aware of everything about Anastasia. Deep down, she couldn’t help but wonder

whether Anastasia’s child belonged to Elliot.

“I heard from my dad that the kid is three and a half years old, and the father is probably someone she

got laid with when she was living abroad,” Erica replied unhappily.

Three and a half years old? Hayley carefully calculated the time and deduced that the child didn’t

belong to Elliot, instantly heaving a sigh of relief. She only had a one-night stand with Elliot. Nah, it

wasn't possible for her to be pregnant so easily in just one night. At the thought of that, Hayley gave in

to her curiosity and probingly asked Erica more about Anastasia. "How is she now? Where is she

working?"

"She is now a designer at Bourgeois, but what's the big deal with that? She is just an ordinary

designer?" Erica was apparently unhappy.

At the same time, Hayley shared the contempt and disdain that Erica had for Anastasia, expressing

exactly what was on her mind. "Well, I must admit that she was always talented at drawing, but she

didn't even graduate from a university, so how far can she go in her career as a designer?"

"Exactly! She is just a phony who is trying to act smart, yet she manages to gain my father's favor.

Besides that, even her idiotic son knows how to make my father happy. Bullsh*t!" Erica no longer cared

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about her decency as she acted like her feisty mother.

Meanwhile, Hayley, who was more cunning and shrewd, offered her a word of advice. “You know what,

Erica? You should drive her away from home and probably even out of this country since you don’t like

her so much! You need to get rid of your eyesore, after all.”

“That’s precisely what’s on my mind as well. When the time comes, I’ll make sure she is gone.” Erica

clenched her fists and swore to herself. Nonetheless, little did Erica know that Hayley wanted nothing

more than Anastasia to be gone forever because that was the only way for her to continue enjoying her

wealthy life and Elliot’s favor.

Suddenly, Erica was drawn to the necklace that Hayley was wearing. “Hayley, what’s the brand of the

necklace that you’re wearing? It looks so beautiful!”

Hayley rubbed her necklace with a smile. “Oh, it’s just a fake that I bought from a second-hand seller.”

Knowing Hayley’s financial background, Erica didn’t find anything wrong with her lack of ability to buy a

genuine necklace. However, the necklace that Hayley was wearing was, in fact, a product worth over

two million under QR Jewelry Group. Needless to say, she had no idea who designed the necklace.

Upon hearing Erica's complaints and grumbles, Hayley couldn't stop looking at the time because of her

facial appointment. After all, she was so obsessed with winning Elliot's heart that she even wanted to

undergo plastic surgery to make herself look prettier. Tired of being overshadowed by Anastasia since

they were kids, Hayley desperately wanted to kiss her ordinary appearance goodbye.

Three days later, around 5 AM, Hayley had a bad dream in which she saw Elliot recognizing Anastasia

when she confronted her. Because of that, she was harshly cast away from the mansion and forgotten

as she watched Anastasia take everything she had away from her. "No! Please! No!" Hayley sat up

straight in horror with her face covered in sweat while frantically looking at her surroundings until she

realized it was just a dream.

Frightened by the surreal nightmare, Hayley came to understand that she could never get her hands on

what Elliot gave her again once she lost all of them. As her greed for wealth got the better of her, her

obsession with the current comfort of her life unknowingly took over her mind.

No, I mustn't lose what I

have now! I mustn't! Soon, she tossed her pillow onto the ground, as if it was Anastasia. "Why aren't

you dead, Anastasia? Why aren't you dead?!" Anastasia will only prove to be a threat to me as long as

she is still breathing.

Suddenly, Hayley squinted and realized it was necessary for her to meet up with Anastasia because

she wanted to know whether the latter was aware of what was going on back then. More importantly,

she wanted to find out whether Anastasia knew she spent the night sleeping with Elliot. If Anastasia

knows what is going on, I guess I must do something to prevent the worst from happening.

Despite the thought of that, Hayley was sure that Elliot couldn't remember who he slept with that night

because the watch was all the clue he had before he decided Hayley was the one he had been looking

for. Nonetheless, she was quickly worried by another possibility when she wondered what would

happen if Anastasia was able to recognize Elliot.

She wasn't aware of what was going on that night, but there was no telling that any word they said

during their conversation could just jog their memory and help them recognize each other.

Overwhelmed by her fear and anxiety, Hayley decided to creep from her bed and get herself dressed

up because she wanted to meet Anastasia at Bourgeois to find out how much she knew.

In the meantime, Anastasia was heading toward her office after dropping her son off at school early in

the morning. Then, she was occupied by a meeting about the company's new product launching, in

which Felicia wanted everyone to submit more than ten proposals by the end of the month. When

everyone left the meeting room, Alice intentionally bumped into Anastasia and provoked her. "I heard

that President Presgrave has raised the reward to a million, so you should know that I won't be

defeated by you, Anastasia."

In that instant, Anastasia was stunned by Alice's sudden provocation, which left her wondering what

Elliot was up to with the one-million reward. Somehow, she had a feeling that Elliot was trying to

interfere with the competition, considering his power and status.

Is this guy trying to give me one million like that? No way! Fairness is the most important thing about

this competition! After all, the last thing I want is to be a champion in a rigged competition arranged by

him.

While Anastasia returned to her office with complicated emotions, Grace came over with a cup of

coffee and said, “Miss Tillman, you have a guest.”

“A guest? Who?”

“She is now in the lounge. Perhaps I should usher her here,” Grace replied.

“Sure.” Anastasia had no idea who the visitor was, so she decided to wait and find out. Not long after

that, a knock on the door was heard shortly before Grace opened the door with a silhouette that

emerged from behind her. Although it had been five years since that upsetting incident, Anastasia was

instantly filled with hatred and grudge. As soon as Grace closed the door behind her and left, Anastasia

glacially asked, “That’s audacious of you to swing by.”

Hayley curled her lips upward. “I heard you’re working in this area, and since I happened to be

somewhere nearby, I figured I should drop by to pay a visit.”

“You disgust me.” Anastasia clenched her jaw, suppressing her angry urge to give the lady a slap in the

face.

“I disgust you? What’s wrong? Weren’t you satisfied with the gigolo whom you slept with that night? I

picked the most handsome one for you.” Hayley smiled sinisterly. “Don’t tell me you still remember the

man’s face.”

“Shut up!” Anastasia shivered from head to toe in anger.

“Would you be able to recognize the man if he was standing in front of you?”

Hayley continued to ask

probingly.