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Lyla didn't end up letting Sean send her home. She put on a considerate front as she told him that she understood he was quite busy with work, so she didn't want him to rush around and tire himself. When Sean heard that, his heart softened. He gave her a kiss and escorted her to a waiting taxi while telling her to be careful. He then watched the taxi drive off before turning around to look at Stark Tower.

Myra has changed so drastically and I sure didn't expect that. I thought that she would remain steadfast in her love for me despite how I've hurt her. Turns out that all her affections were only an act. In fact, she probably never did love me as deeply as she portrayed.

After coming to the realization, Sean clenched both fists tightly and he gave a last look at Stark Tower with his dark, brooding eyes before he turned around and left.

Meanwhile, Lyla did not make her way home after parting ways with Sean.

As soon as the driver drove a slight distance away, she looked at the driver as she bit on her lower lip and requested, "Excuse me, sir—please send me to the Hart Group."

Without any hesitation, the driver turned the car around and headed in the opposite direction.

Along the way, Lyla was lost in her thoughts as she tried to reconcile the situation. In fact, she felt quite anxious and fearful. It was as if she was stuck in a bottomless pit and while everything seemed quite calm and peaceful, it was all just an appearance.

At this moment, she was reminded of the day that Sean and Myra signed their divorce papers. As soon as Myra exited the Civil Affair Bureau, she had gone into a black sports car. I didn't see the face of the person in the car back then, but I remember feeling quite intimidated by him. All I knew is that I shouldn't mess with the guy, for he's not someone I can take onn.

Afterwards, I thought it was just an act put on by Myra. Since she had lost Sean to me, in order to flatter her ego, she must have hired an actor to show me that she wasn't such a loser after all. However, come to think of it, she was being quite secretive that day. If it was all an act, then she should by right have flaunted it in our faces to achieve her goal.

Besides, there's another strange thing—after I got married to Sean and after the incident where Tony helped settle the land issue with the Chase Group's Hillville Project, I can't seem to get hold of Tony anymore. Somehow, without even knowing the reason, my career was totally ruined. As for the Hillville Project, it's doing so well right now. Coincidentally, Myra holds 40% of the property under that project... Coupled with Sean's words earlier and Sebastian's reaction...

At the moment, Lyla had all the pieces in her mind and she was trying hard to link everything together. However, there seemed to be a missing piece and this troubled her a lot. While she exited the car, her fingers were tightly clenched into a fist, her fingernails piercing deep into her flesh.

"Miss, here's your change. Hey, Miss—" Lyla could hear the driver yelling at her from behind, but she did not have the energy to deal with him. She simply walked toward the Hart Group without a backward glance.

The Hart Group's building is quite an impressive skyscraper with its stately height. In fact, I actually wanted to go after Tony in the first place, but he was too aloof and mysterious for my liking. As such, when he came to me and handed me the option of assisting me to marry Sean, I changed my mind and went after him instead. Come to think of it, why was Tony so eager to help me then? Perhaps it was because he wanted to take over the Hillville Project at a minimal cost? I can't seem to get my head around this but something seems off here.

"I'm sorry, Miss Fisher. Mr. Clark says that Director Hart is currently occupied. He's not available to see anyone." The receptionist at the front desk spoke to Lyla politely, but she was being quite firm as well.

There are so many women like her who come here every single day, and all of them would like to see Director Hart. Apparently, Miss Fisher here has just got married to Director Chase from the Chase Group, so why is she here to see Director Hart?

Without showing it, Lyla gritted her teeth so tightly that pain shot through her gums.

She kept her eyes on the receptionist and replied in a deep voice, "Please inform Mr. Clark that I'm here regarding Myra Stark."

Upon hearing her words, the receptionist was significantly stunned and at the same time, she noticed that Lyla's expression wasn't quite right. Contemplating this, she clicked on the intercom once more and repeated Lyla's words to the person on the other end. Soon after that, Leo gave his reply, which was quite surprising to her. As soon as she hung up, she said to Lyla in an impassive tone, "Miss Fisher, Mr. Clark is ready to see you upstairs."

Without even waiting for the receptionist to finish her words, Lyla spun around and strode toward the elevator.

I was just trying my luck there in mentioning Myra's name. Surprisingly, that worked and I'm now allowed to go upstairs.

Myra... Myra Stark...

Suddenly, Lyla felt the world turn dark in front of her eyes. In fact, everything made sense to her now—for example, Sebastian's reaction and how he sided with Myra. That must have been because the guy who was with Myra was actually Tony.

At this point, Lyla felt as if there was a ball of emotion careening around her chest uncontrollably, and her whole being was clouded over by a thin veil of darkened mist. She had never experienced such a sensation before.

"Miss Fisher."

As soon as the doors to the elevator slid open, she saw Leo standing at the entrance waiting for her, a faint smile on his face. He looked at his watch as he commented in a slightly mocking tone, "Director Hart has ten minutes for you."

Without giving Leo the chance to lead the way, Lyla gripped both her hands tightly as she strode into Tony's office without a second glance at Leo. Before this, she would always make sure to check her appearance before entering this room; on this day, however, she wasn't in the mood to do so.

The door to Tony's office was slightly ajar as Lyla walked toward it. Without giving much consideration whether to knock on the door or not, she forcefully pushed the door open and made her way inside.

Upon entering the room, she noticed that Tony was standing by the full-length windows behind his work desk, and he had his back to her. His tall, strapping body fitted perfectly in his custom-made Italian suit. That being said, he managed to maintain a low profile despite his charming edge. However, it was hard to mask his dominance and indifference as it was evidently shown in every move he made.

Tony had one hand in his pocket and the other was holding onto a cigarette between his middle and index finger. He didn't take a puff; instead, he held onto it while allowing it to continue burning. As soon as he heard footsteps, he gave a quick flick to the cigarette and then turned around gradually. "Miss Fisher, what is it regarding Myra that you wish to discuss with me?"

His perfectly handsome face was currently devoid of expression and his eyes were icy cold.

Despite being aware that she could never win the heart of this man in front of her, Lyla could always feel her heart beating wildly for him every time she saw him. Nevertheless, she didn't forget her purpose of coming here today, hence she tried her best to suppress her infatuation. She took a deep breath to calm herself down before saying, "Director Hart, I would like to know why I was blacklisted previously."

It was as if Tony had expected this question from her. He looked at her with an indifferent expression as he replied, "I felt like it, so I did it. I don't need a reason for that, do I?"

Lyla was close to exploding in anger and she gritted her teeth tightly. Although Tony wasn't exactly on friendly terms with her before her marriage to Sean, he wasn't as hostile to her previously. Her hands fisted and she said with her voice lowered, "Director Hart, I suppose you remember that you gave me a stack of photos the last time I came here, yes?"

That stack of photos was the straw that broke the camel's back. Myra and Sean's disagreement had strongly intensified after that.

How ironic! I thought Tony loathed Myra and wanted to ruin her life. However, soon after that, the two of them got together! He must have been attracted to her all this while for him to resort to such a scheme to break up her marriage.

As soon as Lyla realized this, her body immediately froze in place.

That's right—helping me get into the Chase Family would mean that Myra would be thrown out from there. As such, him helping me was actually helping himself claim Myra for his own. After I married Sean, Tony then blacklisted me and severed all ties.

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All in all, did Tony help me enter the Chase Family so that he could claim Myra for himself?

Lyla's whole body was drenched in cold sweat upon this realization, and she couldn't control the icy feeling permeating from within her heart either.

"Director Hart... I'm sure you wouldn't want Myra to find out who gave me those photos, right?" Lyla blinked slowly, her expression full of anger and resentment. As she stared at the man in front of her, she was reluctant to accept what was going on.

The Hilliville Project's doing so well right now. Obviously, Tony must have had his eyes on the development of Hilliville since back then. Could it be that he's in fact after Myra's stake in the project?

As soon as Tony heard Lyla's words, his expression became unreadable. "Miss Fisher, I'm sure you wouldn't want to do that."

"Why wouldn't I?" For a split second, Lyla's emotions went out of control as she yelled at him. Upon noting his unflappable attitude, she forced herself to calm down. Biting on her lower lip, she stared at Tony while she questioned, "Tell me, Director Hart—are you interested in Myra or the Hilliville project?"

"Miss Fisher, if you're intelligent enough, you should keep a tight grip on the Chase Family as per what you've done previously." Tony suddenly took a puff of his cigarette. The billowing smoke that ensued masked not only the expression on his face, but also the flash of coldness in his eyes.

"Keep a tight grip on the Chase Family..." Lyla immediately tightened her fists.

He's right. It's quite evident that I'm gripping tightly onto them. If it wasn't for this child, I wouldn't be on speaking terms with them right now. Eve and Sean's attitude toward me isn't exactly reassuring, and the actual situation I'm in right now is a far cry from what I had imagined previously. I had thought things would end up perfect and harmonious, but that doesn't seem to be the case.

"Director Hart..." All of a sudden, Lyla's eyes brightened as she continued, "Director Hart, I believe you're only after Myra's 40% stake in the Hillville Project, yes?" Lyla questioned him hastily.

It took me so much effort to steal Sean away from Myra. Besides, I succeeded in showing that she's a complete and utter failure. How on earth did I allow her to turn the tides and recover from that?

Just then, Tony extinguished the cigarette in his hand and flung it into the trash can nearby. As he raised his head, the cold indifference in his eyes was clearly noticeable. Ignoring Lyla's question, he said instead, "I heard you went to confront Myra today."

Despite his calm voice, Lyla couldn't help shuddering at his comment. Gritting her teeth, she argued, "Myra and Sean are divorced but she's continuously bothering him. Why can't I confront her about this?"

"What do you mean by continuously bothering Sean?"

Lyla wasn't quite sure whether she had missed something. She sensed that despite Tony's cold voice earlier, it wasn't as chilling to the bone as to what she was experiencing right now. However, she refused to give in and lose momentum, so she continued, "Someone saw the two of them in a compromising position. Don't tell me you didn't know that? How can you be attracted to such a flirtatious woman?"

Tony laughed lightly in response but his eyes were devoid of any amusement.

He sat upright on his swivel chair as he placed his right hand on the desk. Tapping the desk with both his index and middle finger, he asked, "Are you going to tell Myra about the photos?"

Lyla was momentarily stunned but she maintained a tight grip on her hands as she muttered, "I just want an answer from you, Director Hart."

“Honestly, Miss Fisher, I think you already have your answer.” Tony’s eyes suddenly turned icy cold as he lifted his head to look at Lyla squarely in the eye. Noting the change in her expression, Tony causally commented, “Miss Fisher, have you considered the consequences of revealing the truth about the photos to Myra?”

Lyla’s body stiffened in response.

If I tell Myra the truth, she may seek an explanation from Sean. What’s going to happen then? What if Sean questions me about this? How am I supposed to explain that I intentionally falsified things to place the blame on Myra? I’m obviously going to expose myself by doing this. However, what does Tony mean by me having the answer?

All of a sudden, Lyla recalled another incident.

As soon as Tony had decided to bid for the Hillville Project, there was a significant incident that happened within the Chase Group. According to Tony, the deal would fall through if there was bad press surrounding Sean. As such, it was necessary to frame Myra and send her to prison.

In fact, if Tony’s end goal was to gain Hillville, then simply taking charge of it was sufficient, so why was he so concerned about Sean’s reputation at that time?

Perhaps he used that as a tactic to force us into framing Myra. By doing so, he ensured that she would sever all ties with the Chase Family and forsake her last shred of feeling toward Eve and Sean. In the end, Tony personally went in to rescue her.

The news that got reported back to me was that someone had bailed Myra out on that night itself, and everything else went smoothly. I thought it was Cameron who made that move but judging by their relationship, it’s impossible he would rescue Myra.

Lyla felt as if she was stuck in an icy underground cellar at the moment.

As such, was the Marina Bay Bridge incident an unexpected revelation or was it intentionally revealed? What role did Tony play in this incident? If he was the one who plotted all this, he’s definitely a formidable person...

Lyla couldn’t control her trembling self. She felt as if she had fallen into a trap and that she was merely a chess piece in one’s game.

"Were you the one behind the Marina Bay Bridge incident?" Lyla asked, her face as pale as a sheet.

Tony took out another cigarette and lit it. The white smoke billowed and filled the room as it masked the dangerous intent in his eyes. "From now on, stop bothering Myra," he casually commented.

As soon as Lyla heard that, she stumbled in shock and took a few steps backward as she tried to maintain her upright position.

"Tony, I don't believe that you've fallen in love with Myra!" Lyla exclaimed as she bit on her lower lip, leaving a noticeable white tinge on it.

Tony shifted his cigarette butt aside and his expression became clearly visible—his face was cold and devoid of any emotions as he shot a look at Lyla. "There will be a lot of things in the future that will be beyond your expectations."

"What do you mean by that?" Lyla was frightened by the look in his eyes.

Looking at his watch, Tony calmly stated, "Your ten minutes is up."

"Tony Hart!" Lyla yelled out. At the same time, she no longer bothered to control the envy and jealousy in her eyes.

How can this happen? This is Myra Stark we're talking about! Tony has actually fallen in love with her? How is this possible? That woman's way inferior compared to me. Despite marrying Sean, she ended up being abandoned by him. How can Tony be attracted to such a worthless person?

"Have you really fallen in love with Myra?" Lyla's chest heaved up and down.

It's no wonder that Myra had such a haughty look this morning when she was facing me. Her confidence must be due to her being aware that she can count on Tony to back her up.

"Don't you realize what kind of woman she is? She doesn't love you at all! The person she loves is Sean! She has been infatuated with him for six years—that's six long years! Besides, she was married to him for two years. How can you be attracted to such a tramp? She must be trying to get back at Sean and that's why she chose you! She's just making use of you!"

Lyla couldn't control herself as all the negative emotions she had experienced all this while spewed out of her, and her eyes had a crazed look to them.

This man here has always appeared all high and mighty and I have always thought that no one could win his heart. I don't care if no one can win his heart; or rather, I would wish him well if he met someone else from a similar background and someone as impressive as him. If he married such a woman, I wouldn't be so frustrated. However, the woman that caught his attention turned out to be Myra! I hate her so much and I've finally felt content after taking my revenge on her, so how can I accept this?

Currently, Tony's face was clouded over and it looked as if there was a storm brewing.

"Director Hart, have you considered this carefully? We're both on the same team. I'm just worried that you will fall for Myra's tricks. As a matter of fact, I know her better than anyone else—she's completely infatuated with Sean. Therefore, I don't see why she would go after someone else other than to provoke him."

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"Don't be fooled by Myra, Director Hart. She's—"

"It seems as if you don't understand what I've said, Miss Fisher." Lyla could see the dark anger that flashed in Tony's eyes as he said that, even though his expression remained unchanged.

Her nails were digging so deeply into her palms that she thought the skin on it would tear. She opened her mouth to say something, but words deserted her. Then, she heard the sound of the door opening behind her before it was followed by approaching footsteps. Leo's voice was stoic as he said, "Miss Fisher, please."

She bristled. She glared at him before turning to look at Tony incredulously. However, Tony did not glance at her anymore.

Lyla could feel herself breaking into cold sweat. I shouldn't have said those things to Tony, at least not for the time being...

"Director Hart, I'm just trying to look out for you. Please don't think otherwise. Director Hart—" Tony frowned before she could finish her sentence, prompting Leo to immediately seize her by the arm and unceremoniously drag her toward the door.

However, Lyla was relentless. She reached out and braced against the door frame, turning to yell frantically at Tony, "Director Hart, aren't you worried that I'm going to tell Myra about all of this?"

At that moment, he lifted his head and locked his gaze with hers. While there was no emotion in those obsidian orbs of his, she could not help but feel as though he was looking at her like she was a dead person.

A violent shudder went through her and before she knew it, Leo was beginning to close the door to Tony's office.

Afraid that the door would slam against her fingers, Lyla hastily drew back her hands. She bridled when she saw the scornful gleam in Leo's eyes, but when she craned her neck to say something to Tony, the door fell shut on her face.

"What else do you want now that you've already married Director Chase?" Leo appraised her with a condescending gaze. "He who wants everything will lose everything. I suggest you leave before I call security, Miss Fisher."

Upon hearing his words, Lyla turned and glared at him menacingly.

He knew everything that had happened. After all, he was the one who called her to relay Tony's messages.

She clenched her fists and gritted her teeth as hate rose within her. Why Myra? Why does it have to be Myra? What's so special about that woman? That wretched woman!

A raging fire consumed Lyla, but all she could do was suppress it as she walked out.

The fact that Tony was in love with Myra was baffling. Lyla was sure that Hillville was not the sole cause of this because if it was, then he would have demanded for Chase Group's

entire share of the real estate in Hillville in the first place. Which means he isn't doing this for Myra's share of Hillville's properties...

Lyla was still pondering on it when, upon walking out of Hart Group, she saw a familiar face seated by the window of a nearby cafe.

It was Eve and there was another woman seated across from her.

The woman was obscured by the potted plant next to her. Out of curiosity, Lyla peered past it, and all she could see was the side profile of a beautiful, young woman who looked downcast as she spoke to Eve.

Eve, on the other hand, appeared to be taken aback by whatever the lady had said and glanced behind the latter. From her vantage point, Lyla could not tell what it was that Eve glanced at.

Lyla moved to take a closer look, but halted in her tracks when she remembered how she had lost her temper the day before when she found out that Eve had been following her. If she sees me spying on her, she'll think I'm following her too. Lyla paused and glanced briefly at the woman across from Eve. Then, she shifted her angle until she had a clear view of the woman's face. She looked familiar, but Lyla could not remember where she'd seen her before.

Lyla was already downtrodden after what had happened at the Hart Group and she was not in the mood to see what Eve could be up to. With a sigh, she turned to flag down a taxi and left.

Once she was on the road, she called Kris and she asked in an icy voice, "You knew about Tony and Myra all along, didn't you?"

It was impossible for Kris to not have known about this since she had followed Myra. If she had seen Sean going over to look for Myra, surely she would've seen Tony and Myra together!

Meanwhile, Kris was not in the office. She was about to enter the City Hall when she received Lyla's call. Upon hearing what Lyla said, Kris' face grew stormy and she hummed plainly in response.

"Well, why didn't you say anything before?" Lyla demanded after hearing Kris' admission.

If only she had told me about this, then I wouldn't have looked like such a fool in front of Tony! My career is already over and if Myra says anything to Tony... Lyla faltered at the thought of this.

"I thought you knew about it," Kris said nonchalantly, shrugging off the accusation.

Lyla's eyes darkened at that.

Tony may have appeared cold and unforgiving today, but he had been generous enough to spare Lyla from his full wrath. Given Myra's recent divorce from Sean, she could not possibly have developed strong feelings for Tony so soon. If Lyla were to divorce from Sean now, it would be an opportunity for Myra to run back to him.

However, Lyla was precariously treading on the edge of a knife right now and her life was only a slip up away from being completely ruined.

Growing furious, she scoffed and warned coolly, "You ought to be more sincere if you want us to work together, Kris. After all, Myra's business no longer concerns me, and seeing as she's with Tony, it's highly unlikely for her to weasel back into Sean's life. You, on the other hand, may have to watch your back. Myra has Tony to back her now, so it's only a matter of time before she takes over the Stark Group. I wish you all the best."

With that, Lyla hung up the call.

On the other end, Kris's expression soured after she heard the last part of Lyla's warning.

So what if Tony's backing her up? Kris would like to see whether Tony—or the rest of the Hart family, for that matter—would still support Myra after tonight.

Kris had been surprised to find Old Master Hart coming to Myra's defense after the incident with Lyla today at the office, but it was not totally unexpected either. It had not been easy, but today, Kris finally came up with a plan to ruin Myra.

A malicious smirk began to play on Kris' lips as she thought of it and her gaze darkened dangerously.

By the time she stepped forward and through the doors of City Hall, a wide grin had crept onto her face.

Estelle had only just exited Shawn's office when she saw a familiar figure entering the secretary's office next door.

She retreated into the walkway and she glanced at the hardworking man behind the desk.

Estelle had to admit that there was something attractive about a man who threw himself into his work. Coupled with his good looks and charming demeanor, it was no wonder that Shawn had caught her attention in the first place.

But as soon as she thought about all the roguish things he had done to her, she felt a wave of exasperation wash over her. She could not so much as retaliate against him—it would only encourage him further and she would find herself under him before she could even react.

She gritted her teeth. What a despicable man!

Estelle bridled at the thought of how Shawn had told her 'business was business' after she came to ask him to approve her brother's project. "Hey!" She snapped and added furiously. "Hey! I'm talking to you!"

Shawn paused with his pen hovering above the papers he was signing. Then, he looked up at her. His eyes narrowed dangerously as he asked, "Why are you talking to me in that tone?"

She felt a chill run up her spine and there were butterflies in her stomach when she heard the sound of his voice. You bimbo, she berated herself angrily before she pursed her lips as she glared at him. "Let me get something straight here, Shawn—you said that there are no backdoor deals allowed for anyone, right?"

Estelle had seen Kris, the woman whom she hated with a passion, entering the secretary's office next door. She could not imagine why Kris would be here if it was not for the same reason as hers. But if I can't obtain special privileges, then neither can she. That would mean she won't have anything to lord over Myra!

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Shawn regarded her with narrowed eyes and after a while, he asked, "Why are you asking?"

Knowing that he had read her mind, Estelle let out a huff before explaining, "It's Kris—I just saw her enter the Management Department next door. Word has it that Stark Group is trying to secure the Elsinore Garden Project from the government, so I'm wondering if that might have anything to do with her coming here." She paused before she continued speaking. "But something doesn't feel right. I distinctly remember Myra saying that she's in charge of the project, so what is Kris doing here in City Hall? It's not as if she's so kind as to lend Myra a helping hand."

Upon hearing that, Shawn raised a brow and his eyes darkened. "I can't speak for others, but I would never pull strings for anybody unless..."

"Unless what?" Estelle's eyes glimmered with hope.

He gazed at her with dark amusement in his eyes. He curled his finger, beckoning her over to him.

She grew wary almost instantly. The last time he looked like this, he had been up to something wicked and the thought of it made her stomach flip.

Still, Estelle could not keep her curiosity at bay. She wanted to know what could make Shawn abandon his integrity, although she reminded herself that she had seen plenty of his less-than-virtuous side.

With caution, she began to make her way toward the man behind the desk.

An unreadable look flashed in Shawn's eyes when he saw that she was approaching him. He wanted to laugh, but his expression remained indifferent, as though he was unfazed by his own amusement.

When Estelle finally stood before him, she asked hesitantly, "Well, what's the exception—ahhh!"

She broke off in a yelp of surprise when the man reached out and pulled her into his arms without any warning.

Myra was slated to have dinner at the Zion Club with Thomas Hughes from the City Hall Management Department. It was one of the few discreet places in which they could discuss confidential work matters.

After making sure that they had everything they needed, Tilly entered the elevator with Myra.

Just as the elevator doors were about to close, an arm stretched in to hold them open and Kris walked in.

“You don’t mind if I share the elevator, do you?” she asked with a smile on her face. When her gaze fell on Myra, her smile widened even more.

Myra did not bother answering. Seeing that Tilly was on her side, she did not speak to Kris either.

Kris raised a brow and her eyes gleamed with what appeared to be scorn as she pressed the button to close the elevator doors.

The other employees in the company had not gotten off from work yet, so it was just the three of them in the silent confines of the elevator.

When they arrived at the basement carpark, Kris turned to address Myra with a small smile. “Good luck with getting the Elsinore Garden Project tonight, Sis.”

With that, she turned to make her way toward her car.

Myra frowned as she watched her leave.

Tilly, on the other hand, tugged on her arm and said, “Ignore her, Myra. She’s just being crazy.”

Myra nodded and the both of them headed over to the car.

To Myra’s surprise, Thomas and the other employees from the Management Department were already in the private room by the time she and Tilly arrived. Dinner had been ordered as well, causing her to be slightly embarrassed as the Stark Group had meant to pick up the tab tonight.

“Mr. Hughes, gentlemen—my apologies for being late this evening.”

To be fair, Myra and Tilly had arrived half an hour before the agreed time, but she was not about to make that point.

There were four City Hall employees who joined them this evening—one of whom was Thomas, who sat at the head of the table. He was a somewhat portly man who looked to be in his forties, and with his suit jacket discarded to one side, Myra could see the beginnings of a beer belly stretching beneath his shirt. He was nonetheless jovial and there was an affable appeal to him.

Upon hearing her apology, he broke into a kind smile and waved the both of them over. “Please don’t apologize. We came much earlier than expected. Take a seat, ladies. I’m sure the both of you must be hungry after driving all the way here.”

As he said that, he patted the two vacant seats next to him.

Myra and Tilly approached him and courteously took their seats.

“What would you like to drink? I’m guessing that the both of you don’t take alcohol, so how about if I get you ladies orange juice instead?”

He looked at them in askance, his gentlemanly behavior putting Myra at ease. She glanced around the room and saw that everyone else was having red wine. She and Tilly would seem awfully out of place if they were to get orange juice and she certainly did not want him to think the Stark Group was being ingenuine in any way.

With that in mind, she turned to give Tilly a meaningful look. Tilly immediately understood the gesture and addressed Thomas with a polite smile. “Mr. Hughes, we have no problem with drinking a glass of wine or two. It would be rude of us not to have a drink with you, seeing as you’ve taken the time to join us this evening.”

Tilly sounded like a natural-born diplomat. She made no indication that the both of them would drink with him till the end of the night, but having a glass of wine or two would be more than enough for them to show their sincerity. As Myra watched Tilly, she could not help but feel a sense of pride over how much and how quickly the latter had grown.

When he heard that, Thomas’ smile grew warmer and he turned to say to the waiter at the door, “Two glasses of red wine, please, but not too much of it—the ladies are only having wine out of courtesy.”

His three subordinates also chimed in, “It’s no longer a culture to drink alcohol during dinners like this. The both of you shouldn’t drink much if you can’t stomach them.”

Upon hearing that, Myra and Tilly exchanged a smile. From the looks of it, there was a good chance of them securing the Elsinore Garden Project.

Soon, both parties dived into earnest discussion on the details of the project. Thomas made it known that he was pleased with the Stark Group's tender proposal for the Elsinore Garden Project and he did not hold back on his praises for the company either.

He may have a mild disposition, but he was a good sport when it came to drinking as well. After downing several glasses of red wine, he and his subordinates were beginning to flush.

"I have high regards for you, Miss Stark. I was most impressed with your company's tender proposal for the Elsinore Garden Project. I look forward to seeing your work."

There was still quite a lot of wine left in the glass before Myra and thankfully, no one had forced her to down her drink. Whenever someone made a toast, they had only asked her to take a sip out of courtesy. She did not dare to push her limits, seeing as she was a lightweight and Tilly was no expert when it came to holding her drinks either.

Myra was surprised to hear what Thomas had said, but she was pleased all the same. However, before she could say anything, the man clapped a hand on her shoulder and gave it a couple of encouraging pats. She bristled, unsure as to whether he had done it deliberately.

She stiffened, but he dropped his hand just as quickly and raised his glass once more. Then, he went back to clinking glasses with his subordinates.

Thomas turned and chuckled when he saw the dazed look on Myra's face. He was clearly inebriated. Abruptly, he said to her, "I was wondering if you could pour me a glass, Miss Stark."

Myra saw the flush on his face and she considered the possibility that he may not have meant to clap a hand on her shoulder. Regaining her composure, she grabbed the bottle of wine and poured out a glass for him while answering plaintively, "Of course."

The wine had only just been poured into the glass when Thomas clasped his hand over hers. In a drunken voice, he slurred, "Do be considerate with me, Miss Stark. I'm afraid I might pass out if you keep pouring the wine for me."

His pinky finger caressed the back of her hand and she knew there was nothing accidental about it.

A disgusted Myra drew back her hand. She stood up abruptly, but the alcohol got the better of her and she swayed slightly on her feet. It took a while before the fog in her mind cleared up. She turned to glare at Thomas, who was regarding her with a bewildered gaze as he asked, "What's wrong, Miss Stark?"

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Myra glowered at the middle-aged man before her. If she had bristled when he patted her shoulder, then she was now fuming after he had brushed his pinky finger against the back of her hand.

Meanwhile, Thomas seemed unfazed and the smile on his face was warm and polite as he cajoled, "We should finish the rest of the wine, Miss Stark. It's getting late and we ought to head home soon."

The others in the private room were oblivious to her anger. Even Tilly was beaming as she moved to clink glasses with everyone, the remaining wine in her glass sloshing as she did so.

Myra's gaze darkened as grim realization dawned upon her. It had been far too easy for them to secure the project today. Genevieve was supposed to be with them, as well, but she was called away at the very last minute.

Things are not as simple as they seem, Myra thought.

"Miss Stark? Miss Stark?" Thomas called out for her twice and only then did she snap out of her thoughts. She did not know why she felt sleepy all of a sudden. She staggered and he reached out to prevent her from falling. He cried in alarm. "Miss Stark, are you alright?"

A piercing lucidity seized Myra and she took a step back. She wanted to yell at him and ask him what he was doing, but she stumbled backward into Tilly. A thump followed and she turned to see that Tilly had collapsed on the floor after finishing her wine.

“Francis and the others have gone to the restroom. I’ll ask them to drop Miss Quinn home safely after this, so don’t worry about her, Miss Stark.”

“Mr. Hughes...” Myra trailed off cautiously. She did not miss the gentle tone of his voice, but for some reason, her skin prickled with fear.

She forced herself to stay awake. She glanced around the room and saw that, at some point, the others had left. She grew defensive and her sense of wariness only magnified.

Myra was beginning to realize why the muzzy sensation felt so terrifyingly familiar.

The last time she felt this way had been when Eve tricked her into going to the Chase Residence for dinner. She had fallen unconscious after eating the meal that Eve prepared, but she remembered the fogginess that came over her before she sank into darkness.

“I believe you and Miss Quinn are drunk, Miss Stark. Don’t worry, I’ll make sure to drop the both of you home safely.”

Upon hearing that, Myra stiffened and her expression grew stormy. Her mind, however, did not seem to clear with anger. If anything, she only became distinctly aware of how heavy her head felt on her shoulders.

In desperation, she looked over at the half-finished glass of wine on the table and abruptly reached out for it. She summoned all the strength that was left in her and smashed the glass against the edge of the table. Then, she picked up a shard of glass that had fallen close to the tray. Without pausing to think, she drew the shard across her arm, slicing the delicate skin.

The sharp pain cleared Myra’s mind almost instantly. She snapped icily at the man, “Don’t come any closer!”

Zion Club was known for the discretion it offered to its patrons. The walls were sound-proofed and she knew no one could hear her from the outside. She had to get out of this room—the club was Elliot’s territory and surely not even Thomas was foolish enough to cause a scene here.

She made to rush out the door.

Thomas, on the other hand, remembered what the woman had told him today when she came to see him in his office. He quipped, "Miss Stark, I hear that you have recently divorced your husband. I'm sure it must have been an upsetting experience for you. I also hear that you have feelings for me—rest assured that I feel the same way for you, as well."

"To hell if I have feelings for you!" Myra seethed as beads of sweat rolled past her brows.

It had to be the work of Kris—why else would this creep believe that I have any feelings for him?

"Don't worry, Miss Stark. I find you attractive as well and I promise to marry you."

Myra bridled at Thomas' words. She saw his hand moving toward her and her eyes rimmed red. Her arm shot out before she stabbed his hand with the shard of glass in her grip.

"Ahhhh—"

He let out a bloodcurdling scream and she took the chance to run to the door.