

# You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

## Chapter 106

"How long do you expect to be away with the crew?"

One of his eyebrows raised when he heard her request.

"I'm guessing around two or three months, maybe?"

Clarissa considered this a conservative estimate.

If progress was slow, the shooting could very well stretch up to half a year.

Naturally, she would neglect to mention that, as she reckoned that that may not sit well with Matthew.

To him though, these two or three months were sufficiently long enough.

He would have much preferred for this woman to be constantly by his side. Better still, every single day.

Of course, Clarissa had to reiterate certain facts.

"I won't always have to be on set as I'm just a screenwriter... haha."

"If you don't have to always be on set, then there shouldn't be any reason for you to go along. You could always pop in to have a look once in a while."

Clarissa was stumped at his response since his reasoning was hard to argue against.

That did not stop her from trying, though. "Every piece of work is like my own babies, so I definitely want for them to become the best that they can be. I actually would love to be on set when I was working for a show, but it didn't make sense then as they were not receptive to my input. It's different this time with Director Yates at the helm. Not only would I be able to do so, but I could also maybe learn a few things here and there. Why wouldn't I want to make the best of this opportunity?"

She then wrapped her hands coquettishly around his arms. "As my boyfriend, I'm sure you'd want to support my career. Surely you don't want a woman who only lazes around at home all the time, waiting for you to warm her bed?"

It was clear from her expression that she was not going to take no for an answer.

Matthew curled his lips when he leaned back. His eyes gleamed as he regarded her ambiguously.

"First things first, Clare. Your babies are mine as well, so I've no doubt they would be the very best that they could be."

That was certainly not what she had in mind.

His words left her red to the ears.

"Why are you even talking about babies?"

Matthew's voice raised his voice slightly. "Huh? I'm pretty sure you're the one who broached the subject?"

Clarissa's brows furrowed as she offered up a retort, "I wasn't even talking about that sort of babies."

"Aren't all babies babies in themselves?"

"Y-you... y-you... ugh!"

The more flustered she got, the more she stuttered. As she knew she would not be his match in a contest of rhetoric, she decidedly changed the subject.

"What other questions do you have? Get to the point..."

Matthew chuckled in glee and found her defeated look to be rather adorable.

"Secondly, I'm definitely in support of your career but don't you think work and family should be of equal importance? You can't possibly neglect me just because of work commitments."

"I know that, which was why I've said that I'd be back. It's not as though I'll always be out and about. I'll be around so often during my off periods till you get sick of seeing me."

Matthew was all smiles when he beheld her face. He then leaned in for a peck upon her lip. "And thirdly..."

"What is it?"

"I'd rather wish that you would stay home and wait for me to warm your bed, Clare. You haven't given me a proper chance to do that to date!"

The woman's exasperation rendered her speechless.

She repelled him and then began to castigate, "You know that wasn't what I meant, so why do you insisting on twisting my words? Could we be a little more serious here?"

"I'm seriously going to keep harping on it since you won't let me."

Matthew spoke as though he felt completely justified. "So Clare, when do you think we are going to..."

"Going to do what? That, you'd have to ask Grandma."

Hmph. To no one's surprise, she defaulted to using her grandmother as an excuse again.

This time, however, Matthew was not cowed. "Great. So when do we meet her?"

"What... Are you serious?"

"Why wouldn't I be? I'm sure Grandma would be delighted to have me."

"Don't flatter yourself!"

The corners of Clarissa's lips twitched as she got sucked back into Matthew's embrace. He spoke in a low voice as he leaned into her ear, "When, Clare?"

That might well be the precursor toward meeting her parents.

In Clarissa's opinion, it was still early days.

Although her grandmother had expressed a desire to meet this handsome chap of hers countless times during their video calls, she herself was not ready for it.

"There's no hurry. Grandma said it could wait until things have firmed up."

"You mean it hasn't?"

Clarissa spat out her tongue wryly at him. "Nope."

Whether or not it was, had always been up to her discretion.

The man's eyes darkened, and his inflection dipped a notch as he propped up her chin.

"Perhaps I should take you, you know – just to seal the deal."

"No... Ah. Mmph..."

Clarissa struggled in vain like a hunted hare, inevitably and completely subject to her captor's mercy.

Fortunately for her, this hunter had no real intention of devouring her alive.

Delayed gratification would only make savoring the prize that much sweeter. At least, that was what he believed.

Having practiced abstinence for thirty-six years, he had only grown to be more patient as he went along.

He was amenable to Clarissa traveling with the crew but not if that meant she would be away for lengthy periods. The concession was for her to make occasional trips back in-between. Whether she would honor that, remained to be seen.

Per their agreement, she would be expected to check back in every two weeks, tops.

Matthew had a few tricks up his sleeve with regards to how he would deal with her should she stray from it.

Clarissa herself should know well what those were.

The man cannot afford to be too cautious when he considered how she had previously failed to return to D City after a visit to her hometown. Failure to keep her word, even in the face of exceptional circumstances, was a failure all the same to him.

As far as he was concerned, her assurances were no substitute for a penal system to keep her in check.

As the production process was not as secretive as it used to be, there was a lot of attention on Clarissa's Princess before they even saw the film.

Not only did that boosted her online reader subscription, but she had also been approached by a number of publishers.

Without the resources of Twilight Company, Clarissa was expected to have her hands full.

That motivated Matthew to find her some help in the form of a formidable female manager. The candidate was a former lawyer who had quit the practice for unknown reasons and was in between jobs. The latter quickly put herself forward when she learned that her role was to be a legal consultant and assistant of sorts for Clarissa, amongst other things.

The woman, Yael Fleming, wore her hair long and was fond of loose flowy dresses. She had the sedate and congenial quality of an unsullied goddess about her.

Clarissa was not even sure how this girl could have been a lawyer who matched wit and words with others in court.

Not that she was debating the legitimacy of the woman's credentials, she just found it hard to wrap her head around it.

After they had met, Clarissa gave Yael a run-down of what she needed from her.

Negotiations over the remuneration went swimmingly as Yael was not in it for the money, and they quickly put pen to paper. The latter was to work for Clarissa, provisionally for a year.

Renewal of the contract was subject to mutual interest.

With Yael overseeing the other things, Clarissa would be free to direct her energies toward the film adaptation.

The wardrobe had been created, and the casting more or less confirmed. Yaala Zaha was tabbed as the first female lead, and Shermaine Smallwood would be second. The male lead role would go to Quentin MacNeish. Apart from Jamie, who she had put forward herself, Clarissa did not know the other supporting stars too well.

Jamie was there as well when the cast members came in for a fitting. She then started to chat enthusiastically with Clarissa, who she saw as a benefactor, close friend, and supporter.

She knew that she would not have clinched the role had it not been for the latter.

“I love you to death, Ms. Quigley. Haha... My manager told me before that I’ve to try to ride on your tailcoats and look for an opportunity to star in your adaptations as you’ll definitely make it big time.”

Clarissa’s face fell. “Well, aren’t you honest...”

“What’s there to hide between us anyway? I’m just stating facts. You’re on the up and up...”

An encounter between the two was never short of banter. Clarissa was all smiles and quite enjoying herself.

This was when the costume-clad Shermaine stepped out. Upon seeing her, Jamie whispered in Clarissa’s ear. “What rotten luck we have to wind up in the same place as her again? She must be pissed about playing second fiddle to the main lead. Who knows what trouble she might try to stir up this time?”

Jamie shuddered as she spoke.

Clarissa had an inkling that Shermaine might be in for her again this time.

The duo immediately clammed up when the latter approached.

It was obvious that Shermaine was gunning for Clarissa.

“Fancy that I’ve yet another opportunity to work with you, Ms. Quigley, but I wonder if the feeling is mutual?”

That came across as less of a question about sentiment and more of straight-up provocation.

Clarissa was never genial when dealing with the likes of Shermaine. “As I’m just a screenwriter, I suspect that you may be working more with Director Yates than with me.”

The lofty princess costume seemed to have added an air of regality to Shermaine’s mannerisms.

Her haughty laugh was doubtlessly directed at Clarissa.

“Call it what you like. According to Justin, you’ll be on set as well, so I reckon we’ll be seeing a lot of each other. Looking forward to it then, Ms. Quigley. Haha...”

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Shermaine did not wait for Clarissa to respond before she turned and strutted off.

Even if Jamie somewhat expected to be ignored by that usually pompous woman, she did not feel good about it.

That confrontation appeared to be a challenge of sorts to Clarissa. There was a sense that there might be trouble brewing on the horizon.

“The only thing she can look forward to is my ass. Does this woman have an ax to grind with us? Now that we know what sort of person she is, we’ve to be really careful around her when on set. Don’t worry. I’ve got your back.”

Clarissa was touched by Jamie's concern. "As I remember, you got the short end of the stick getting mixed up with her the last time. It'll be better for both of us to try and stay out of trouble. As all things considered, we would only end up at the losing end."

Reality was a pain in the a\*\*, and that got Jamie fuming.

She exhaled. In her heart, she longed to find fame and recognition for herself in show business.

Clarissa understood Jamie's aspirations and rested a comforting hand on the latter's shoulder. "Don't be anxious. Your time will come."

Jamie bounced back quite quickly. Due to Clarissa's fondness for her, she brought her around and introduced her to Yaala and Quentin. Even though she was not that well acquainted with the two leads herself, the duo came across as mild-mannered and relatively easy to talk to. It would not be a bad thing for Jamie's prospects if they took a genuine liking to her as well.

Indeed, not everyone was like Shermaine. Yaala, Quentin, and Jamie clicked well enough to connect themselves on Twitter. All in all, it was a positive enough starting point for Jamie to build upon.

After the costume fitting had concluded, Clarissa informed Justin of her desire to tag along with the film crew. When the two chatted away by the side, something must have tickled Justin. Their exchange may appear a little flirtatious when observed from afar.

Shermaine was not happy to bear witness to this scene. Thus, she had secretly snapped a few photos of them. Her plans for these were unknown except to herself.

It was apparent that Clarissa remained oblivious while this was happening.

Over the next couple of days, there were only some remnant tasks that Clarissa had to see to, such as finalizing the contract with Yael, banking in a few checks, or the likes.

Thus, Clarissa felt a little dispirited when her thoughts came to Ellie.

She tried to reach her through Damon. Even though he was not sure what the whole disagreement was about, he was more than willing to help.

That same night, Clarissa met up with Damon. However, Ellie was not expecting her and did not seem pleased. Though the atmosphere was awkward, Ellie showed no inclination to get up and leave.

Meanwhile, Damon did his best to play peacemaker. "Alright, we're all grown-ups, so I'm sure we could work this through without bickering. So long as you're not stealing each other's boyfriend, there's no conflict of principle. Come on. How about we start off with a smile?"

Ellie snorted, but otherwise stayed silent.

Damon shrugged as he looked to Clarissa, who relocated herself to sit opposite Ellie. Her attempt to reach out and hold the latter's hand was resolutely blown off.

Clarissa retreated and had this to say, "I understand why you're upset, as it's my fault for holding out on you. Hit me or berate me if you want, Ellie. I only ask that you don't ignore me as I don't want to lose my best friend."

Their relationship was one that she treasured. She did not want to be reasonable when face with this impasse.

She wanted Matthew's love as much as she wished to retain Ellie's friendship.

Neither was something she would be willing to forsake even if Ellie were to make her choose between them.

"It's going to be me or him. Your call," Ellie stated plainly.

Damon appeared astounded as he listened in.

Huh? Was Clarissa's newfound romance at the heart of this conflict?

He could not help but feel sorry for Clarissa when he looked upon her face.

"Why are you being so hard on Clare? Are you also interested in her boyfriend?"

"Shut up! It's none of your business," Ellie snapped.

The man's brows knotted. "What's really going on here?"

Clarissa looked to Damon. "Could I talk to Ellie alone for a minute?"

With that, Damon pliantly stepped out of the room and left the two women to themselves. This was when Ellie was about started to get snarky.

"Look, this situation involving Uncle Matt and yourself is absurd and disappointing. I know that you're not in it for the money, being friends with you for as long as I have, but of all the young and handsome suitors out there, why do you have to date my uncle? You're my bestie, but that's my uncle we're talking about!"

Clarissa listened with eyes reddened. She sobbed quietly, deeply saddened by her friend's anger and lack of understanding toward her.

The two sat in there amidst her silent tears for some time before Clarissa wiped her eyes and lifted her head to regard Ellie.

"I won't lie to you, Ellie. I don't want to part from Uncle Matthew on your accord."

"You-"

Ellie was flabbergasted. She swiftly got to her feet as she refused to listen to another word from Clarissa.

Yet, she found her path out being blocked.

"Would it be easier for you to accept Matthew if he wasn't your uncle?"

"But he is."

"Love cannot be subject to reason. I've never expected to end up in a relationship with your uncle coming into D City. Though I can't disavow my own role in this, I found it easy to fall for him, so he and I are both complicit. I value you as much as I do him. Call me greedy or selfish, but I hope to be able to continue our friendship and still be with him."

"Then don't come talk to me about this."

"I know this may be too much to ask, but I hope to be able to gain your blessing."

"Hmph. You are one to talk. Have you considered the consequences? Sooner or later, you'll come to regret this."

Though Ellie's words were partly spoken out of spite, there was a modicum of truth to them.

The color drained from Clarissa's face, but she nodded as she eked out a bitter smile. "I'm aware of that."

"Then have it your way."

This time, Ellie shoved right past her and stormed off.

Damon stepped back in shortly after. His heart ached when he saw Clarissa mournful and vulnerable, and wished for nothing more than to hold and to comfort her. However, he just could not muster up the courage to do so.

"Don't be sad, Clare. You know how pigheaded Ellie is, but she'll never sever ties with you. She's probably just a little upset at the moment. I'm sure she'll be fine once she gets over it."

Clarissa twitched her lips. She wiped the tear from beneath her eyes and smiled.

"I know that. Thank you, Damon. I'll be away for work for some time. If you were to meet up with her, would you let me know how she is? I..."

"No worries. I'll keep you in the loop."

He tried to change the subject to something less unpleasant. "You're really doing great for yourself now, even becoming Mr. Justin's screenwriter. In future..."

Her mood markedly improved when her thoughts shifted to her work. The two of them did not stay on for long and left together.

Inside the elevator, they ran into a middle-aged man who might be an elder.

Damon addressed the man as Uncle.

Clarissa found him familiar but was too self-conscious to keep eyeballing.

"Is this your girlfriend, Damon?"

"Nah, Uncle. We're just friends."

"Haha... I see."

As the elder exited, he appeared momentarily stunned when he took another glance at Clarissa, as though he had come to some realization. However, he recovered quickly before he departed.

"Don't mind him, Clare. He's my father's elder brother." "I thought he looked a little familiar."

Damon chuckled, "Did you see him on television before?"

Her eyes widened. "Yes, that's right. He's actually..."

An important official!

"Right on. Members of my family are all pretty accomplished people, except for me."

Despite saying that, it was quite apparent that he was proud of having a family like this.

Damon's uncle from before, Jacque, arrived home.

Hannah was still awake. It seemed that she had a lot on her mind.

Jacque knew that his mother was not one for rumination. There were few causes for her to do so anyway and certainly not within these few years. The only possibility was that which concerned her younger sister.

"Why are you still up, Mom?"

Hannah had been widowed since she was middle-aged. She had always been a strong-willed person and took care to raise her sons well. However, she blamed herself for spoiling her daughter, Kayla, which led to the latter running off with a man.

Many years had passed since. Even though she never mentioned her estranged daughter, she dearly missed her. Her yearning to reconnect grew the more she got older.

“The Smallwoods visited today.”

It was no wonder then.

Jacque sat across from his mother, paying quite some attention to subtle shifts in her expression. “James Smallwood has been great to Kayla and also done quite well for himself. Their daughter too. Though an international star in the entertainment business, he is independent and managed to maintain a solid reputation for herself. Their family has also good relations with the Tysons, and it would seem that a marital union between the two families might also be in the pipeline. We’re planning a huge party for your eightieth birthday, Mom. Do you think we should invite Kayla and her family?”

His mother’s silence told him all he had to know.

He smiled. “Will do. You should turn in early.”

“And you as well. You’re no longer a young man, so you ought to take better care of yourself.”

“Got it. I’ve only shared a few drinks with some friends. Nothing too crazy. But interestingly, I ran into Damon there. He was with a pretty young lady who looked quite familiar, but I just can’t seem to recall where I might have seen her before.”

“Have you met previously?”

Jacque shook his head. “I doubt it. It just eluded me whose kid she might be.”

That conversation was discontinued as they both variously returned to their own rooms.

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Matthew found few reasons to be happy about Clarissa being away for work.

He pulled a long face most days, and the time which he whittled away moping was longer still.

What was she to do about it?

Her constant refrain was, "It wasn't my call to build the film studio that far away.

Matthew snorted, "Are you suggesting that I should consider building one right here in D City then?"

That got Clarissa stunned.

"Don't be upset, Mr. Tyson, Uncle Matthew. You may be rich, almost too rich, but could you not be so impulsive? Pretty please?"

Clarissa plastered herself onto Matthew as she begged for clemency.

As wealthy and entitled as he was, she reckoned there had to be a limit to both somewhat. She would much prefer it if he did not get any funny ideas along those lines.

The man drew her into a strong embrace before he regarded her mockingly. "Do you think I could really pull off something like that? This is D City we're talking about."

Clarissa was gratuitously obsequious with her smile.

"In my heart, there's nothing that you're not capable of. So, of course, I'd believe anything that you say."

Matthew's eyes narrowed as he propped up her diminutive chin.

"Flatterer!"

The woman spat out her tongue. She exhaled as she rubbed her slender hands soothingly upon the man's chest.

"I've met up with Ellie. She's still upset and forced me to choose."

The man's fingers tightened around her chin, and that coaxed a frown from her.

“What was that for? Do you think I could have not chosen you?”

Matthew relaxed his grip before he pulled her so close that their breaths were almost upon each other.

His searing, low voice mirrored the displeasure in his eyes.

“Would you dare?”

Clarissa heart skipped a beat. “I wouldn’t!”

“Good girl.”

His large mitts pawed her back in satisfaction at her reply.

Clarissa palmed the back of his hands with a resounding smack and lifted his wayward fingers, preventing them from drifting down unto impropriety.

“I don’t know when she might simmer down. Try to talk to her more often while I’m away. I really don’t want us to stay this way. You’re her uncle, so will you please do this? For my sake, if nothing else, alright?”

“What’s in it for me?” Matthew asked.

She furrowed as her fingers wrapped around his neck and delivered the most unconvincing of threats.

“What’s in it for you, you ask? She’s your niece. Are you going to just leave her be?”

Matthew’s lips curled up in a roguish smile.

“And what’s wrong with that? What concern is it of hers which woman I’m seeing?”

Her fingers clenched as her anger mounted but did not throttle him. Instead, she swayed coquettishly. “What if it’s of concern to me? You have to talk her around, for me. For my sake...”

“Like I said... What’s in it for me?”

“Matthew Tyson!”

The woman’s howls of anger juxtaposed against the man’s staid smile.

“Yes?”

“You... You don’t love me at all!”

Clarissa’s accusation felt oddly familiar.

“You are heartless, insensitive, and incorrigible!”

“How exactly am I heartless, insensitive, and incorrigible?”

His response had her trembling and gave her goosebumps.

She drove her opinions about that inane exchange from her head and grabbed the man’s collar as she loomed over him.

“Don’t I matter to you? Can’t you just do something to fix this upsetting situation with Ellie? It hurts that you keep disregarding my feelings...”

This was purposefully acted out.

Matthew was not rattled and merely narrowed his darkened eyes as an indecipherable smile glazed across his lips.

His poised and sensual inflection teased and then ensnared her like a hook even if he did not intend to. It left her delectably numb and itching for more.

“Does it hurt here? Shall I massage it for you and make it better, Clare?”

Amidst the lure of his voice, his large mitts were already sneaking over her chest.

Clarissa cursed at her own porous words, which allowed Matthew to sneak one in. In hindsight, she thought she should have said that it was her head.

She blushed like a peach, flagrant and ripe for his picking.

And picked at her, he did. He leaned in and bared his teeth, and left his mark on her as he nibbled away delicately at her cheek.

“Ah...”

Clarissa exhaled. She hurriedly pushed him away and raised one hand to shield her own face before she met the man’s laughter with her own outrage.

“Why are you so irritating, Matthew?”

“Haha...”

The man guffawed in his deep voice as he liked how she looked when she was annoyed and went on to pinch the other undefended side of her face.

“It’s completely your fault. I blame you for being so peachy.”

“You’re fruity, and so is your entire family.”

Clarissa brushed him aside with the intention of distancing herself. After repeatedly failing to get through to him, she thought she might as well leave.

But no such luck.

He turned around and squashed her against himself. She could only lift her eyes to him as she lay prone.

“I’m not going to beg. Hmph. If Ellie doesn’t forgive me, don’t expect that I would be in any mood to entertain you.”

If that was her ultimatum, it merely tickled Matthew. “Yeah, you don’t have to cause I’ll gladly entertain you.”

Clarissa could only puff up her cheeks and glare.

She was at a loss with regard to how to deal with a man who could neither be cajoled nor coerced. In her last gesture of defiance, she pounded her fist weakly into his chest in protest.

"You are detestable, Matthew Tyson. How could anyone be as detestable as you?"

Nonetheless, her protests sounded more like whining.

Matthew loved it when the diminutive woman was reduced to helplessness. With a turn of his body, he had her pinned underneath him before he furiously kissed away.

Deep down, she knew that in spite of his obstinate displays, he would consider her plight and talk to Ellie eventually.

He just liked messing with her, and that was something she did not appreciate.

The moment she got arrived at the film studio and checked into the hotel, she immediately video-called Matthew.

Of course, she smiled as she fawned upon him. "Remember to resolve the issue with Ellie, Uncle Matthew. You know that'll make me love you even more..."

As he was not physically present, she was not as self-conscious, considering that she was merely whispering sweet-nothings to a screen.

He did not look impressed. Needless to say, Clarissa understood his sentiments.

Clarissa was rather glad that he was not there, as she would have gotten tackled otherwise.

Hence, she was all smiles when she heard his stern reminder, "The weekend after. Don't forget."

That was when she was due to return to D City.

"Yeah, yeah. Got it."

Clarissa was secretly worried that the man would chase her all the way out here if she did not. It would be quite a bother if anyone else saw that happen.

For that reason, she would be mindful of honoring their agreement.

After she ended the call, she took some time to freshen up before she went downstairs to the conference room, which was prepared for them. There, she met the rest of the crew and fielded a meeting while Justin commenced his shoot proper.

Clarissa hardly took a breather as she moved from one agenda to the next.

Strictly speaking, she should be the one crew member with the most time on her hands, but she chose to actively involve herself in every way she could. One minute, she was at the prop department, and another, she was over at the costume department. Sometimes, she was distributing the take-out, and at others, she was beside Justin, observing the filming. As he hollered at and directed the actors, she was absorbing what she could learn about the filming process.

Justin appeared quite satisfied as they wrapped up another scene.

The moment Yaala approached, her assistant brought some hot tea over. The scene was set in rainy weather. Even though the temperature in autumn was not too cold, it was rather chilly since she was completely soaked through.

Clarissa slipped a coat over Yaala's shoulders. As there was another take after this, the latter would not be able to change out of her clothes. However, she took in her discomfort in her stride and in good humor.

"I'd say, Clarissa. Why did you choose to torture the princess this way when you first wrote this sequence?"

Clarissa shrugged. "The heavens have entrusted this person with great responsibility. She has to be made to endure hardship in order to build her resolve..."

"Oh, fine! Stop it! After we're done with the filming, I demand that you make it up to me for the emotional distress you've caused."

"Haha... alright, Ms. Zaha. Whatever you ask, I'd be much obliged."

"Perhaps I should asketh for thy hand in marriage!"

Yaala may be a major star with a dignified and elegant public persona, but in private, she was a fun-loving, easy-going, and chivalrous person. Her outgoing and big-hearted personality endeared her to many.

In Clarissa's esteem, Yaala not only had a soft spot for the vulnerable. She quite enjoyed teasing women.

She had gotten used to it, as Yaala already had quite a bit of fun at her expense a couple of times since her arrival.

Playing along thus came naturally to her. "Sure, Ms. Zaha. But would thee be willing to forsake thy harem for me?"

Yaala's harem would be her legion of fans.

"Fear nor, mine own sweet. Thou art enough, for I shall leaveth thee satisfied."

She then went over to hug Clarissa, and the two fell together into a heap of laughter.

Just as this was happening, Shermaine showed up. She came by, although she was not involved in the shooting scheduled for the day. Seeing Clarissa getting on well with the cast and crew, the role that she felt belonged to her being given to Yaala, and Justin generally in a good mood made Shermaine feel that everyone was against her. She found all of them equally repugnant.

Nevertheless, she put on a smile as she approached to chat up Justin.

Yaala curled her lips as she pulled Clarissa close. "See that, Clarissa? That woman's perfect for the role of the fake princess because she's exactly like her. Thoroughly obnoxious."

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The fact that Yaala disliked Shermaine did not elude Clarissa, who had sensed this since filming commenced, as there was almost no interaction between the two off-camera.

Certainly, it was not likely for Shermaine to go looking for trouble with Yaala, considering the latter's stature in show business.

This, however, was the first time Yaala had been so explicit about this with Clarissa.

Clarissa's brows perked up in surprise. "You don't seem to be very fond of her? I heard that she's quite popular in these parts."

Yaala sneered, "A likely story. I'd say it's mostly the work of public relations and the internet army. It's not a big industry, so word gets around. Haven't you been taken advantage of by her before?"

Clarissa's silence spoke volumes.

"Why don't you like her then?"

"Because of one particular scumbag."

Clarissa was astonished, but this was the sort of thing that was self-explanatory.

However, she did not understand this as she was under the impression that Shermaine was very much into Matthew. How could she have gotten into Yaala's bad books because of a guy?

Was it because the guy was interested in Shermaine that got Yaala so upset?

"Enough of that. That was donkey years ago. Damn, it's cold. I should be getting ready for the next scene."

After Yaala's departure, Clarissa sat down to rest.

Her eyes met with Shermaine's as the latter casually glanced over. Shermaine even smiled as though she was trying to be friendly.

After a while, Clarissa quietly rescinded her own gaze. She was not going to be fooled by that woman's superficial gestures.

The shooting was intense over the following couple of days, and Justin was a demanding director. It was exactly because of his work ethic that he was able to produce quality work. And were he not able to, the actors would all have been scared off already.

The time came for Clarissa to fulfill the agreement with Matthew. Time seemed to be passing a little too fast for her liking. Perhaps she had been too busy to find the time to think about him.

It was only at night while they conversed over video call that she acted like she missed him.

She had taken leave from the director and would depart for D City on Friday night, arriving back on Saturday as she promised.

Meanwhile, Matthew would be coming to pick her up personally.

It was only upon seeing him in the flesh at the airport did she realize how long they had been apart and how much she missed him.

In spite of that, she remained level-headed, as there were still people around this late at night. She smiled sweetly in his company but did not conduct herself with overt passion.

Matthew took her backpack off her shoulder and was quietly collected as he extended one hand toward her.

The segments of his long and slender digits were well defined. Clarissa's lips lifted into a slight smile as she extended her own hand over to be held firmly within his.

She felt the warmth in his palm and walked in tandem as he led her out.

Once settled into the car, she found herself wrapped inside his arms. She had no chance to say anything as his lips were promptly pressed against hers. His overpowering testosterone mixed with her breath instantly seeped in between her teeth.

Some time had passed before she found herself freed from this dizzying kiss. He kept his arm around her waist as he pecked lightly upon her lips, her face, the corner of her eyes, her forehead.

His low, husky voice breathed as his tongue brushed against her earlobe, "Miss me?"

Her chest rose and fell heavily as her red lips parted slightly and intoxicatingly.

"Take a guess."

Clarissa smiled wryly as she countered his question with one of her own and probably had no idea that she looked every bit as captivating as a summer flower in bloom.

Matthew's darkened eyes gazed right into hers and invited her to jump in.

The woman, however, did not fall in head-along. He then sealed her lips with his once more. The answer to that question became irrelevant.

Fueling their mutual cravings took priority over everything at that moment.

When they returned to the Zen Highlands, the house was unusually quiet. No one dared come out lest they disturbed the couple.

Clarissa was carried from the car and straight into the bedroom. The door closed behind them as Matthew took the reins.

At midnight.

Clarissa was in her nighties when she strolled into the kitchen to look for something to eat.

She skipped dinner as she left for the airport directly off the set, and she only had some light snacks before she boarded. Matthew was all over her since her arrival, which left her tired, famished, and sleepy. It was the hunger that she found it hardest to bear. A bit of noodles ought to offer a quick and easy fix.

Clarissa yawned a few times as she watched over the stove.

A silhouette appeared behind her before a pair of powerful arms reached around and enveloped her around the waist. Warm exhalation breezed past her cheeks. She yawned yet again. "Hungry?"

"No."

He had his fill, albeit of a different variety. His tone was laid-back and sounded magnetic.

That made Clarissa's heart pulse a little faster. The cover of the pot was lifted. In went some herbs and seasoning. A couple of eggs cracked. And a simple bowl of noodles was readied.

As she ladled out the strands, the man was still glued onto her back.

“Could you let go for a while? Please?”

Matthew’s chin remained propped against the top of her head, and the hardness of his body melded into hers. The man was non-compliant.

“Nope. You do whatever you have to do. I won’t be in the way.”

It was as though Clarissa had a gigantic pet following her around. She thought he might let go of her when they reached the dining table. Surely he had to release his hold in order for her to eat.

However, Matthew had other ideas.

He would not let her eat unless she sat on his lap.

At that, Clarissa had to summon all the powers of rhetoric until she almost ran out of breath – before she could sit down and enjoy, what was in that moment, the most delicious noodles she had ever eaten.

In the meantime, Matthew lounged lazily to her side with legs crossed and eyes fixated glowingly upon her body.

She did not right care about how he was looking at her. Sustenance was all that was on her mind.

Clarissa felt revitalized after downing the last mouthful of soup. That was when Matthew closed in. With a hand to the back of her head, he directed her into his kiss.

He held it there for a while before he relinquished his grip and smacked his lips. “Yummy.”

Clarissa made no comment and merely drew a tissue to wipe the corners of her own.

Having had satisfied her need, Clarissa laid her head down upon the table. Her eyes narrowed and blinked groggily as she regarded the smiling Matthew.

She did not notice until a moment ago how unkempt his usually stylish cropped hair was as it hung over his forehead. There was a smidgen of delight between his defined brows. The man was relaxed in his pajamas with the collars loosened and opened at the chest, which

exposed his bronzed and chiseled pecs. The atmosphere in the kitchen was still yet equivocally suggestive.

Under the illumination of the light against the dark of night, his features were accentuated and delicately exquisite – the perfect work of the divines.

Clarissa was not aware of her eyes becoming mesmerized.

Then his soft laugh came along and snapped out of her stupor.

She sat upright immediately. Her hands felt the flush on her cheeks as she looked upon Matthew, kittenish.

“What’s so funny? I’m tired as heck, so I’m heading back to the room. You can stay here and knock yourself out.”

Matthew swiftly swept her onto his shoulder the moment she got to her feet. She was rightly startled as she sat upon its hollow like a child. Her squeals of trepidation were blended with his boisterous laughs as she was transported upstairs.

Needless to say, Clarissa did not sleep well that night. Matthew seemed like he was in a good mood, and perhaps too good a mood, so much so that the energy that kept him awake made her restless as well.

The sun was high before she dragged herself out of bed.

The sight of an irrepressible-looking Matthew in a finely tailored black suit greeted her downstairs.

“Finally up?”

The woman did not mind that she herself was still in her nighties and slipper with her hair in a state of dishevelment. She circled him a couple of times and abruptly let out a laugh.

“You look absolutely dashing!”

Matthew appeared pleased as he pulled her into his arms and pecked passionately at the woman’s diminutive lips.

She only lifted her head to regard him when the two separated. "Did you just return, or are you on the way out?"

It was not easy for her to make time and spend the weekend with him, so she wondered why he had to step out.

"The matron of the Wynters' is celebrating her eightieth birthday today, so I've got to be there. Sorry."

"I see. Alright, you go on ahead."

Clarissa had a rough idea of who that was, as she even ran into Jacque Wynters when she was with Damon at that time. She supposed the lady must be the influential matron of that family.

Nevertheless, Matthew could not bear to be apart from her, so he lowered his head to plant another two kisses upon her forehead.

She let out a meaningful laugh. "I haven't washed my face yet."

His brows perked up. "Right, you haven't even brushed your teeth!"

Clarissa eyed him with displeasure as she poked at his chest. "You're going to lose me if you keep this up, Matthew Tyson."

Instantly, her hand was seized. One look from him had her singing his tune.

"Alright, alright. Run along. I'm going to freshen up, get some food into my system and then head out to shop, shop, shop..."

There was no opportunity for her to do any retail therapy being cooped up at the film studio for the last half a month, so she was really feeling the itch.

After she saw Matthew off, Clarissa took the time to doll herself up. She was humming a tune and was in a fine mood when she drove out in one of his more low-key rides.

Meanwhile, at the Wynters, Hannah decidedly buried the hatchet upon seeing her daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter. The family was finally reunited.

As Hannah's grandchild, Shermaine flew in early on the day. After her mother reconciled with the old matron, she, too, became part of the Wynters. She joined the other members of the family in welcoming the guests, and at the same time, was led around and introduced to those present by the elderly matriarch herself.

Shermaine broke away and made straight for Matthew the minute he arrived with the elders of the Tysons.

Seeing that, Kayla smiled when she exchanged glances with Hannah. "It's obvious how Shermaine feels. It'll be wonderful if you could lend her a hand."

## You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

### Chapter 110

Shermaine walked gracefully toward the Tysons, welcomed them with open arms, and held onto Margaret's arm affectionately. At the same time, she kept stealing a look at Matthew.

Almost everyone could sense that Shermaine was exceptionally close to the Tysons.

Nobody would miss the intense affection in her eyes when she gazed at Matthew. In everyone's eyes, they were undoubtedly a pair of lovebirds. Some of the guests started to huddle together and gossiped about the pair. They could even foresee that the Tysons would have an announcement on Matthew's marriage soon.

However, Matthew barely spared any glance at Shermaine. He greeted everyone from the Wynters courteously and handed Hannah the birthday gift on behalf of the Tysons. Both his parents and Hannah had known each other earlier. Sitting together at a corner, they were engaged in a pleasant conversation.

Shermaine was keeping them company all the time, playing her role well as Hannah's caring granddaughter, listening attentively to their conversation.

They could not help smiling approvingly at the patient and demure young lady.

"Shermaine, you don't have to accompany us here. Just go ahead to have a chat with your friends and mingle with other young people. You'll get bored with our old folks' topics," Hannah patted on her hand and said gently.

Shermaine shook her head and smiled at her. "Grandma, no issue. Since I need to get back to work again tomorrow, I'll only be able to meet you again when I'm back next round. Just let me spend more time with you now!"

Margaret said with a smile, "Shermaine is such a caring and considerate child. When she visited us previously, we had so much to chat about. Hannah, you're really blessed to have such a thoughtful granddaughter."

Hannah smiled meaningfully at Margaret. Her eyes gleamed with a glint of wisdom.

"Who's actually more blessed? Looks like Shermaine will only be by my side for a short while before she gets married. You're actually more blessed than me in a way!" Hannah replied jokingly but her intentions are obvious.

Both Margaret and Hannah smiled knowingly at each other. Upon hearing this, Shermaine could not help but blush

"Grandma, what're you talking about?" Shermaine mumbled in embarrassment.

"I'm sure you know well about what I mean. Since you're leaving tomorrow, don't just sit with us the whole night here. I know you keep stealing glances at a certain someone. Just go ahead and spend more time with him. Don't let the chance slip by," Hannah chuckled and teased her.

Shermaine's cheeks turned red as she stood up and excused herself. Needless to say, she was heading toward her target of the night.

Hannah grabbed the opportunity to bring up the topic of the potential marriage arrangement for Matthew and Shermaine.

"I actually don't have the complete picture of the whole matter, but Shermaine is undoubtedly drawn towards Matthew. What's your point of view on this?"

Margaret smiled again. "I'm more than pleased with it. I can hardly wait for the day that Shermaine officially becomes the member of our family."

Hannah nodded and did not say anything else as her mind sank into contemplation.

It will be great if the Wynters and the Tysons can really become in-laws!

At the same time, Matthew was in a conversation with Jacque. Jacque caught a glimpse of Shermaine who was approaching them and was pretty sure that she must be looking for Matthew. He instinctively waved at her.

“Ah! Shermaine, you’re here.”

“Uncle, are you in the midst of an important discussion with Matt? If so, I’d better don’t interrupt you.”

“No, we’re just having a chat. By the way, Shermaine, Matthew addresses me by my name. You call me Uncle, yet address him as Matt, does it make sense?”

Jacque was apparently having a good mood and could not help teasing his niece.

Shermaine blushed on the instant, feeling awkward, and was at a loss for words.

Jacque glanced at Matthew mischievously and laughed heartily. “Matthew, if you and Shermaine are married, you have to call me Uncle as well! Haha...”

Unexpectedly, Matthew’s face turned grim in an instant.

“Jacque, please stop joking on this,” he refuted at once with his icy-cold tone.

Jacque was dumbfounded by Matthew’s reaction. He was in puzzlement and started to make a wild guess. He doesn’t like people to joke about him, or he’s actually not in a relationship with Shermaine?

He was about to clear his doubt by asking Matthew, yet Shermaine had moved forward and blocked in front of him. Nudging Jacque’s arm, she said coquettishly, “Uncle Jacque, don’t say anything again. You know that he doesn’t like people to joke about him, don’t you? Look, more and more guests have arrived. You’d better go ahead to entertain them.”

Jacque glanced at Matthew, yet the latter remained silent with a grim look on his face. He could only smile bitterly and walked away.

To ensure nobody spotted their tense situation a while ago, Shermaine maintained her sweet smile all the time and continued to gaze at Matthew with intense affection. She was apparently putting on a good show with her convincing body language.

Arranged marriage was a normal trend especially among prestigious families like the Tysons and the Wynters. What put them in the limelight was their stunning looks. It was just natural for people's excitement to be spurred when they detected a sense of romance among the two person who appeared to be a perfect match for each other.

Matthew's eyes darkened as he stared coldly at Shermaine.

Even so, Shermaine pretended that she was not aware of the intimidating coldness in his eyes and forced herself to smile as charmingly as ever at him. It's my debut as a member of the Tysons tonight so I mustn't let it be tarnished.

With piteous eyes, she pleaded with Matthew softly.

"Matt, this is my debut as a member of the Wynters. Everyone is having their eyes on my family as if they are watching a drama. Some of them even look at me with distrust and gossip about my new identity. I hope you can understand my situation. I really have a hard time and you won't know how much I have endured all this while. Please don't let me be humiliated by them again. At least just for tonight, for this moment... Please..."

If Matthew turned and left at once, Shermaine would surely be humiliated by those who spotted something amiss between them.

Matthew did not turn and leave at once, yet he did not look at Shermaine as well. Standing motionless, he looked out of the window in silence. The two of them just stood there with their backs to the crowd, and they seemed to be talking to each other.

Nobody sensed the tense atmosphere between them. No matter how Shermaine tried to bring up something more relaxing to ease the situation, Matthew remained indifferent all the time.

When it was finally the cake cutting session for Hannah, Shermaine stood alongside her with her parents, surrounded by relatives and friends. Everyone was touched by their warm family moments.

Nonetheless, somebody was obviously not happy and smirked at the sight of the happy family.

As Ellie reached later with Damon, she did not join her family members. She observed coldly at how Shermaine and her Uncle Matt stood alongside each other as if they were newly-weds accepting guests' congratulatory words at their reception. Rage surged within her instantaneously, even she herself did not know if she was actually infuriated by Shermaine or Matthew.

Looking at how close the Tysons and The Wynters were, it was as if the arranged marriage for both Matthew and Shermaine was confirmed.

Ellie's face fell as rage rose within her.

Sensing Ellie's rising rage, Damon felt like speaking up for Clarissa, but he had no clue why Ellie was so infuriated at the moment.

"Ellie, what happened to you? You're still not happy with Clare? No doubt I'm not sure what happened between the two of you. But since both of you are best friends, are you sure you want to continue to be on bad terms with her?"

"Anything wrong? Why? You want to say that I'm being stubborn again?"

Ellie blurted out at him, "Clarissa is really dumb. She still doesn't get what I mean and refuses to let go of the things which will never belong to her. Look at the occasion today. She's really dumb! She's the silliest person in the world!"

Damon was baffled when Ellie became agitated out of sudden. What does she mean by "the occasion today"?

It has anything to do with Clarissa?

Damon sighed and was about to say something to appease her, yet his words were cut off by his buddies. He chose to leave with them, leaving Ellie all by herself. There was loathing and disgusts in Ellie's eyes as she glared at Shermaine.

Her heart sank, looking at how the Tysons were blinded by that woman who was good at playing mind games. Clare, I seriously don't dare to think how you would react if you were here at the moment!

Yet her silly friend had no idea about all this at all.

The closeness between the two families was really an eyesore for Ellie. Feeling frustrated, she did not feel like staying any longer. She turned and left alone in weariness.

“Ah...Ouch!” Ellie covered her forehead instantly and groaned at the slight pain.

She was walking aimlessly with her head lowered all the time. As a result, she bumped into someone in front of her.

She immediately raised her head to apologize to the person. The moment she saw Shawn’s cool and expressionless face, the rising anger overpowered the guiltiness within herself.

“Where are your pair of eyes? Didn’t you realize I was right in front of you?”

Shawn did not miss the sudden change in Ellie’s expression. With both of his hands tucked in his pockets, he raised his eyebrows and snickered at her.

“Ms. Tyson, do you have anything against me?”

“No.” Ellie twitched her lips with impatience.

“Or you’re thinking of threatening me?”

“What the hell are you talking about?”

Ellie lashed out at Shawn with harsh words at once, disregarding her own image as a member of the prestigious family. Shawn Hayes, how dare you block my way at this moment! Fine, let’s have a great fight!

She pushed Shawn hard and looked at him provocatively as if she was facing her opponents on a wrestling stage.

In a split second, there was a change in Shawn’s indifferent expression.

He was even gripping her wrist tightly, locking her from any movements.

“You... b\*stard! Let me off...”

Shawn loosened his grip on her wrists. He continued to glare at her with a stern look on his face.

“Ms. Tyson, take my words. A lady, especially one from a prestigious family like you should not take any risks by provoking men.”

He warned Ellie and walked past her, but she was reluctant to let him off easily.

She darted toward him impetuously to attack him from the back...

She was undoubtedly not an opponent for Shawn at all.

Nevertheless, the next moment was really out of their expectation.

Her waist was wrapped by Shawn’s arms; both of them were suddenly in an embarrassingly intimate position.

All of a sudden, there was pin-drop silence around them. Ellie could feel her body temperature rising, engulfed by the burning heat from the man’s body.

She was stunned for a few seconds. A glint of complex emotion flashed across Shawn’s eyes as he hastily let go of her. Within such a short span of time, they both felt as if there were sparks of electricity transmitting between them.

Shawn cleared his throat and strode away without saying anything. After recollecting herself, Ellie chided behind him.

Shawn’s sharp ears caught every single word gritted out of her mouth. An indescribable expression appeared on his face as his temple started to throb.

He quickened his pace in silence, ignoring the woman who was yelling furiously behind him...

Clarissa had shopped to her heart’s content and bought quite a lot of things. To her surprise, Matthew was not back yet when she finally stepped into the Zen Highlands.

Dinner was prepared by Mrs. Lawson and could be served at any time. Clarissa’s phone buzzed, and it was a message from Matthew, asking her to have her dinner without waiting for him.

Clarissa pouted her lips instinctively in disappointment. She suddenly had no appetite for the delicious food.

What a weekend! We haven't really had the chance to spend time with each other, yet I need to get back to the film studio tomorrow!

After dinner, Clarissa had a video call with her Grandma first, showing her the things that she had bought for her earlier that day. After that, she gave Hilary a call as well. Hilary seemed to be in a good mood and was unusually concerned about her, even asked her if she had enough money for her expenses, sounding exactly like everyone's mother.

Matthew was still not back yet when it was about bedtime for Clarissa. Both of them had not met each other for quite a long time. She expected Matthew to have some special requests for their intimate moments at night. Therefore, she was actually quite prepared physically and emotionally for a romantic moment with him before leaving for work the next day. Who knows he's so occupied today! Hmph! Hope he won't regret missing the great opportunity tonight!