

You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

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Clarissa called Mimi when she arrived at Ayrith Villas. The latter said she was already waiting for her in the villa, and she asked Clarissa to meet her at the third villa on Abingdon Road.

Clarissa drove into the neighborhood. The road in front of the villa with doorplate No. 3 was jam-packed with luxury cars.

She saw Mimi coming up to her as soon as she got out of the car. Her anger spiked at the sight of the gown the latter was wearing.

"Clare, you're here! Come on in." Mimi tried to take her hand and ushered her in.

Clarissa halted her steps, shoving Mimi's hands off her. "So, you have your own party dress. Mimi Lester, what are you up to?"

Mimi flashed her an awkward smile. "Clare, actually, I did a little name-dropping, saying that my cousin is a rich and famous writer. If I didn't do so, nobody would give a damn about me since I'm nothing but a poor student. Don't worry. I didn't tell them anything except that you're an author. Clare, since you've come, join us and relax. Besides, you might as well take this as an opportunity to see if there are investors who are willing to invest in adapting your written work."

"I appreciate your kindness, but there is no need."

Clarissa turned around to get into her car, yet Mimi refused to let her go. Before Gina could help free her from Mimi's grip, someone had come up to them.

"Mimi, what's going on here? Ms. Quigley, since you're here, come and join us."

Clarissa remembered the man being the one she saw at the club with Mimi the other day.

She felt uncomfortable at the way the man was looking at her.

“Clare, this is Leo, the deputy director of the Rouge.” Mimi introduced the man to Clarissa. Then, she turned to face him. “Leo, my sister is rather shy. I’m trying to get her to join us.”

Leo flashed Clarissa a smile. “Ms. Quigley, there is no need to feel shy. Come and join us! There are many celebrities inside the house. Oh, do you know the famous Jamison Scott? He’s here as well. I heard you’re an author. Have you ever thought of adapting your work?”

“I’m not interested.”

With that, Clarissa wrenched free from Mimi’s grip and got into the car with Gina. Seeing Leo’s eyes turned icy, feeling intimidated, Mimi stood in the way of Clarissa’s car to prevent them from leaving.

“Clare, I’ve dropped your name to impress the others. Please join the party for a while for my sake. If you don’t get out of the car, I won’t let you leave.” Mimi was simply acting unreasonable and annoying.

Outside the car, Leo was still staring at Clarissa with his nasty gaze.

Gina, who was sitting behind the wheels, wanted to leave the place. Although Mimi blocked the only way out, she cared little about her bluster.

Vroom! Vroom! As for Mimi, she was trembling in fear when Gina revved up the engine as if she was going to ram into her at any second.

Right then, the sound of police car sirens rang out.

Clarissa felt her heart dropped. Before she could even react, the policemen had blockaded the road and arrested Leo, who was prepared to flee the place. The policemen’s arrival caused chaos in the villa.

Meanwhile, one of the policemen approached their car and knocked on her car window.

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It was not the first time Clarissa was being taken into custody though she never expected she would one day be mistaken as these people’s accomplices.

Sitting at a corner, she cast her eyes over the people around her. Some were giddy while some, having glazed eyes and dilated pupils, were lying lazily.

Although she had never seen how people who had taken drugs looked like, this was what she imagined whenever she heard of the news of celebrities taking drugs.

Now, she was being dragged into the crime of participating in a drug-fueled party.

After the blood test, Clarissa and Gina were subjected to the interrogation process. The policemen were stern, their eyes full of disdain and contempt when they looked at them.

Clarissa sighed internally.

Although they had told the truth during the interrogation, the policemen obviously didn't believe in their words. It was an unspoken rule in the entertainment industry that many beautiful women, be it celebrities or models, would offer sex in exchange for benefits. Thus, Clarissa's beauty made it all the more difficult for her to clear her name.

Fortunately, both she and Gina didn't take any drugs though it was unsure for Mimi.

It was not long before Matthew arrived at the police station.

Since it was because of her stupidity that she was being dragged into trouble by Mimi, Clarissa couldn't help feeling guilty when she saw Matthew.

She kept her head down, not daring to look at him.

As for Matthew, he was agitated since he received the phone call from the police station. Now that Clarissa was alright, his worries disappeared, replaced by amusement upon seeing the young lady's guilty reaction.

Oh, Clare, now this should teach you a lesson. You should be more cautious next time!

He took her hand and pulled her into his arms. "Everything is alright now."

Embarrassed, Clarissa pouted her lips, mumbling, "Am I a little too stupid?"

Hearing that, Matthew let out a chuckle. "Well, it's not too late to learn your lesson now. Just be more cautious next time."

Feeling downhearted, Clarissa pursed her lips while she remained silent.

Meanwhile, the lawyer successfully obtained bail for her after some procedure.

“Mr. Tyson, Ms. Quigley is free to go now.”

“Let’s go,” said Matthew, wrapping his arm around Clarissa’s waist.

They paid no heed to others as they made their way out. Yet, Matthew had become the center of attention the moment he entered the police station.

Mimi was staring at him with her eyes wide in disbelief. Initially, she thought Matthew was nothing but a kept man. Now, she suspected him of being someone with high social status since he could easily bail Clarissa out of custody.

Her suspicion was further ascertained when she saw the policemen and lawyer treated him with much respect, reverently calling him Mr. Tyson.

She cast her jealous gaze at Clarissa, the woman had fooled her and her family.

Clarissa has found herself a sugar daddy! She doesn’t want us to know that the man is rich, and that’s why she kept it from us and misled us into thinking that the man is a kept man.

Seeing Clarissa walking out of the police station, Mimi called out, “Clare, you’re leaving just like that? I’m your cousin! Besides, I didn’t do drugs and I’m innocent. You can’t leave me here just like that.” Her voice was loud enough that it reached everyone’s ears.

Clarissa halted her steps, her face full of disgust upon hearing Mimi’s voice.

“Clare, since you’ve cleared your name, you should bail me out as well. Don’t be so selfish! I’m innocent, and these people are the ones who tricked me to the party.” Then, Mimi shifted her gaze to Matthew, “Mr. Tyson, please save me!”

Clarissa frowned when Mimi accused her of being cold if she refused to bail her out.

Before she could say anything, Matthew instructed the lawyer, “Bail her out.”

The lawyer nodded and complied with the order while Matthew led Clarissa out of the police station.

In the car, Clarissa was still unhappy.

Matthew patted her back consolingly and pecked her forehead. "Clare, don't be angry. We'll only help her for this once."

Clarissa snuggled up to him, burying her face in his chest. After some time, she let out a deep sigh.

"I'd rather not have a cousin like her, but I can't really see her go to jail. After all, she's Aunt Gloria's daughter. I still remember how nice Aunt Gloria treated me when I was young. At that time, my father was still around, and she was not married yet. She would buy me a lot of snacks and toys. Matthew, she was very nice to me before she got married. I know Mimi is spoilt, but I can't see her getting into trouble while doing nothing."

Eventually, Clarissa went soft.

Matthew continued patting her back comfortingly while saying, "I understand how you feel. I'll have someone to watch over her and make sure she doesn't get into trouble again."

"There is no need. I can't possibly look after her forever. After all, she's an adult now. She's innocent this time, but what if she really commits a crime in the future? We can't help her every time."

"Alright, I'll listen to you. But, why did she ask you to the party? Just to impress the others?" Matthew raised his doubts.

Clarissa's mind was a mess just now, and she didn't really think about it.

Yet, being as clever as always, Matthew immediately understood Mimi's ill intention.

He had more than enough reason to tear Mimi down for what she had done, yet he eventually let her off, knowing that Clarissa couldn't bring herself to see her aunt's daughter go to jail.

Seeing the confusion on Clarissa's face, he helped cleared her doubts. "Those inside the villa were all engaged in prostitution and taking drugs. Can't you see why she asked you to the party?"

Hearing that, a disgusted look appeared on Clarissa's face.

Her anger spiked, yet she clenched her teeth and suppressed her anger. She could only blame herself for trusting Mimi.

Matthew quickly comforted her, "Alright, don't be angry. Let's not talk about her anymore."

"Hmph! I shouldn't go easy on her. Ask the lawyer to stop the bail procedure. She should be locked up in jail, and that will teach her a lesson."

Matthew readily agreed, "I'll give him an order now."

However, as he made the call, the lawyer told him that the policeman had granted the bail.

Mimi was even yelling and cursing over the phone, "Clarissa Quigley, you're a liar! You lied to my family! Why didn't you tell us that that man is rich? Are you afraid I will snatch him from you? Clarissa, how dare you! You-"

Clarissa ended the call. She was so angry that she almost smashed the phone.

At this moment, she felt herself being an idiot for being so forgiving.

She had helped Mimi many times. Each time, instead of feeling grateful for her help, Mimi would only cast blame on her though she was the one causing trouble.

I shouldn't have helped her. I should let the policemen lock her up and see her rot in jail!

"Arghh!" Clarissa screamed in an attempt to vent her anger.

Matthew let her scream her head off.

Right then, the car pulled up in front of their house.

The young lady was still pissed, sitting in the car with her arms crossed. Having no choice, Matthew carried her in bridal style all the way into the house.

He placed her on the couch and then stroked her puffed-up cheeks. "I see you're very mad at her. We should teach her a lesson! Why don't we cancel the bail and lock her up again? Don't be angry because of people like her."

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Clarissa let out a sigh; she knew she couldn't bring herself to send Mimi to jail.

Her anger soon dissipated, and she felt much better when Matthew comforted her with his kisses.

In the end, she made up her mind to cut ties with Mimi. It would be best if she could get back the money she lent to Mimi. However, if Mimi refused to pay her debt, she would take it as her spending money on a valuable lesson.

On the other hand, Mimi was finally bailed out of custody. Luckily, she didn't take drugs. Or else, even the best lawyer couldn't get her out of the lock-up.

As for the others in the party, they were not as lucky as her.

Instead of reflecting on herself, her mind was occupied by the thought that the man, whom they once thought was a kept man, was actually rich.

That night, she called her parents as soon as she was back at the hotel. After making a whole lot of complaints about Clarissa, she told them Matthew being a rich guy.

Both Gloria and Jacob were shocked and surprised by the news.

"Mimi, since that kept man, I mean, Mr. Tyson is rich, then why are you still staying in the hotel? You should go and live with Clarissa. Ask her to get that man to rent a better place for you, or even buy you a new house. I heard those from D City are all wealthy. This man must come from a prominent family since he could afford to hire a chauffeur. I believe you can find a sugar daddy when even Clarissa could find herself one. Let Mr. Tyson introduce a rich man to you. Oh, Mimi, there's no need for you to go to school or become a celebrity. You can live a good life if you get to marry into a prominent family."

"Mom, you're right! But the problem is, I don't even know where Clarissa lives, and she is wary of me. Besides, we all know she won't help me."

"We are her only family, and you're her cousin. She will need to do you this favor if she still regards us as her family. Don't worry. I'll ask your grandma about her address. If she refuses to tell us, I will send her to D City. We can then find out about Clarissa's address when she takes her grandma in."

"Will my grandma listen to you?" asked Mimi.

Gloria knew Catherine had always disliked her, yet she would do whatever it took for her daughter.

"She has no choice but to listen to me. Perhaps you can try and find Clarissa first. If you can't find her, then only will I ask your grandma about her address."

"Alright then."

After hanging up, Mimi recalled the time when she met Matthew in the past. Oh, how could I mistake such a handsome and distinguished man as a kept man? Ugh! It's all Clarissa's fault!

Her heart fluttered when she recalled his overbearing aura when his subordinates and the police treated him with respect. Oh, he's just so handsome! Every aspect of him resembles the domineering president in a romance novel. It's a pity that this man belongs to Clarissa.

Feeling displeased, she gave Clarissa a call. This time, the call didn't even get through. Ugh! She must have blocked my number! Hmph! I must find out where she lives!

Then, she once again called her parents.

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After a good night's sleep, Clarissa woke up feeling calm and refreshed.

She went downstairs and found Matthew speaking over the phone. Her heart dropped at the sight of the gloomy expression on the man's face.

As soon as Matthew noticed her, he hastily gave an order, "Okay. Settle it immediately." After hanging up, he feigned a smile as he pulled her in his arms, pecking her on the lips. "You're awake? Why did you wake up so early today?"

Clarissa looked quizzically at the man. "Has something happened?"

"It's no biggie."

With a serious look on her face, Clarissa fixed her eyes on him. "That means something has really happened, huh?"

Since it was unlikely that he could hide the news from her anyway, he told her, "Today, someone exposed the news of the celebrities taking drugs yesterday.

"This has nothing to do with us, but the news indirectly hinted that you were involved in the drug-fueled party, attracting many doubts and criticisms from the public. I've asked Donnie to settle it, so don't you worry about it."

Clarissa furrowed her brows at his words. She was once a victim of cyber-bullying, and she knew how horrible it could be.

She fished out her phone and clicked on Twitter. As expected, the home page was flooded with comments.

Her account was bombarded with countless tweets: Apart from the celebrities and models, the screenwriter, @clarissa.quigley, was also present at the drug-fueled party. She was bailed out because she has a strong background.

Anyhow, some believed in it while some didn't. Before this, she had gained in popularity as a screenwriter who worked with Director Yates. Now, someone was trying to drag her down by falsely accusing her of getting away from the law.

Regardless of the truth, the news had created a bad impression about her. It had misled the public into thinking that she must have something to do with drugs.

The public would not tolerate anyone in the entertainment industry who was involved in a drug scandal. With a tainted reputation, it would be the end of her career!

Clarissa's face turned pale in an instant. Unlike the previous sex scandal in which she was accused of sleeping her way into fame, this time, someone was trying to ruin her with a drug scandal.

Matthew's heart ached to see Clarissa's face turn ashen.

He quickly took away her phone and consoled her, kissing her on the forehead.

“Don’t worry, Clare. Donnie will take care of it. The police authority will also make a clarification. No one can throw mud at you when you’re innocent.”

Clarissa felt better with his reassurance knowing that she was not facing this alone.

Now, she could count on the man she loved.

She felt a sense of relief in his arms while surrounded by his familiar scent. “Someone is targeting me, right?” she asked with a hint of certainty, for it didn’t take a genius to guess that.

“Don’t worry. I will find out the mastermind behind all this.”

Clarissa made a bold guess. “Perhaps it’s the same person behind the car accident and the assault on Mandy.”

The mastermind behind all the above-mentioned crimes displayed cruel and fiendish tactics.

Clarissa was his target. Not only that he wanted her dead, he was also determined to destroy everything she had.

That person was lurking in the shadows, ready to drag her down, like how he seized the opportunity of her meeting with Mimi to drag her into the drug scandal. That person has always been watching me!

Clarissa shivered at the thought. She had the feeling that she was living under supervision as if there was an invisible eye watching over her.

“Clare, it’s okay. Don’t be afraid.” Matthew noticed her fearful expression, so he tightened his arms around her and made her sit on his thighs. Then, he caressed her face, kissing her softly. “Clare, I won’t let anyone harm you.”

“But that person is hiding in the shadows. We can’t find him.”

“Those who commit a crime will eventually leave traces behind. Clare, there is no need to be afraid. I will protect you.”

His words warmed Clarissa's heart and provided her with a sense of security.

Clarissa was touched. She cupped Matthew's face and showered him with passionate kisses. "Uncle Matthew, you're the best. I love you so much!"

Matthew's eyes darkened as he mashed his lips against her. The young lady's watery eyes and soft lips almost drove him crazy.

In the end, he managed to restrain himself. Letting out a sigh, he buried his face against her neck.

"Clare..." The hint of lust and desire in his voice was familiar to her.

Since the two started getting intimate, Clarissa became familiar with every one of his expressions. From his gaze and his tone, she could tell what he wanted.

From the way he murmured her name, she could feel his desire for her.

Her face flushed when she noticed that Matthew was turned on. It's still early in the morning, and we shouldn't...

She ran her fingers through his hair, ruffling it affectionately as she said, "It's time for you to go to work."

Matthew simply uttered a response, unwilling to let go of her. "Are you going with me?"

"No." She shouldn't go to his office every day or she would disturb him when he was working.

Matthew was rather disappointed, yet he didn't insist. Even though he wanted to spend every minute with her, it was not realistic.

After Matthew left the house, Clarissa had her breakfast and was now sitting by the French window with a laptop on her lap. She was trying to figure out the person who wanted her dead so badly.

She had a few people in mind, including Yvonne.

Yvonne was indeed a cruel one, yet Clarissa was rather doubtful if that woman had the intelligence to scheme against her.

That afternoon, Clarissa received a video call from Catherine as usual.

The latter asked her about her relationship with Matthew and brought up the topic of marriage, "Haven't the two of you discussed it? It's better to decide as soon as possible. As I told you last time, you should meet with Matthew's family. Matthew is not young anymore, and I believe his family would want to see him settle down and build his own family. He is a nice guy, but don't take it for granted, okay?"

Yet, Clarissa wasn't as optimistic as Catherine when she thought of the Tysons.

Unwilling to worry her grandma, she said, "Fine. I will talk to Matthew about it."

Clarissa finally made up her mind. Since there was no use in evading the issue, she might as well deal with it.

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Shermaine did not rush to the Tyson residence after she was back in D City.

She had even informed Henry after making necessary arrangements at work. However, Henry was displeased with her act of letting others have the chance that should have been hers.

He knew he only had himself to blame for this. The woman had not harbored any intention of becoming an actress since day one. If it wasn't for Matthew, he and Justin would not have helped her rise to her fame.

Great. Now she's giving up on her career just because of Matthew. I should have known better.

Of course, Henry did not intend to stop her from going after the man of her dreams. He merely snickered at her futile attempt.

You will accomplish nothing. Girl, you're just wasting your time.

However, he did not make his thoughts vocal.

After grounding herself at home for some time, the woman finally decided to do something.

She had gone out of her house after Clarissa's scandal was all over the internet.

Of course, she was off to see Margaret.

Shermaine headed straight toward the Tyson residence. However, she did not expect that Sienna was there too.

The two love rivals were not pleased to see each other, to say the least. Shermaine had thought that Sienna would have given up after being hit last time. How dare she show up here?

Smiling, Shermaine said, "Ms. Grande, it's been a while! I heard that you were injured. Are you alright? Oh, you look okay. It looks like the scar has faded after all."

Sienna smiled in response. "Thank you for the concern, Ms. Smallwood. I'm good. How can I not be when you're doing great?"

"Oh, why do you say so, Ms. Grande?"

"It just slipped off my tongue. Why so nervous, Ms. Smallwood?"

"Did I? You must have mistaken it. I have nothing to be nervous about. I'm just worried about you, Ms. Grande. You really have to be more careful in the future after this incident."

"Oh, I'll be sure to grab the bull by its thorn the next time it decides to strike again. I guess I have to be vicious in dealing with it. Otherwise, it's just going to come back and bite me."

"Haha..."

Shermaine cracked a dry laugh as a sense of trepidation washed over her.

The woman had picked up on Sienna's glacial stare, and could not help but felt terrified. Shermaine shifted uncomfortably under the latter's frosty gaze and turned her attention to Margaret instead.

"Mrs. Tyson, the weather has turned chilly these days. I know that you and Mr. Tyson have trouble with your legs because of the low temperature. I've specifically asked for my people to bring back some medicine from overseas..."

Sienna and Yuliana cast sideways glance at Shermaine as the latter was trying to butter up Margaret.

Yuliana had been suspecting that Shermaine was behind Sienna's attack. She was flabbergasted as she listened to the exchange between the two women. Shermaine has the audacity to strike Yuliana. What a brazen woman.

Not only did she not know her place, but she had also even instructed for people to strike Sienna, to the extent of almost disfiguring her. She's a vicious woman!

A frisson of annoyance fled across Yuliana's face as she regarded Shermaine. The Tysons will be in chaos if this woman becomes my sister-in-law.

Meanwhile, Margaret was grinning ear to ear from Shermaine's gentle and considerate manners.

The latter had unconsciously steered the topic in Clarissa's direction.

"I know this Clarissa, and I'd even starred in a few of the TV dramas and movies that she had written. She was really popular a while back. That was how Justin had noticed her and decided to use her script for a new movie. She really was quite close to Justin. For a while, I thought she was a decent girl. I didn't expect that she'd go off in the wrong route after she had become famous. I heard that those who were caught red-handed in the party were taking drugs and messing around. What a shame... I thought she had known better."

"Clarissa? That name rings a bell."

Margaret was only thinking that the name sounded familiar, but Yuliana and Sienna had already figured out who she was.

Sienna was surprised to find out that Clarissa was actually both a screenwriter and an author.

Having said that, she thought it was best to keep mum about her realization.

"You're talking about Clarissa Quigley, right?" Yuliana asked.

"What?" Margaret was shocked.

She was already not particularly fond of the girl and was even disdainful now that she knew that the girl was taking drugs.

What kind of girl is she? She's even messing around with men?

I knew it. She's just a bimbo who uses deceit and trickery to get what she wants.

Margaret scorned at the thought of Clarissa, albeit keeping mum because Sienna was there too. However, there was no mistaking that the old woman was irked.

"Yuliana, tell Ellie not to hang out with that girl anymore. This kind of girl has no self-respect and even resorts to such despicable acts. Nobody is allowed to mingle with that girl from now onward, and she's prohibited to even step into our house. Is that clear?"

Yuliana threw a look at Shermaine who was beaming delightfully and replied, "Yes, Mom."

"And, uh... Get Matthew to come home tonight. I need to talk to him."

"But Mom, it's not like Matthew will just listen to me."

Margaret knew that Matthew would not even listen to herself if she had asked him. That was the reason she requested for Yuliana to relay the message.

"Ask Matthias to pass on the message if he doesn't listen to you. Tell him that he has to come home tonight, no matter what, and that if he doesn't come back, then he might as well not come back for the rest of his life. The Tysons will just disown him."

Margaret's tone was stern. It was apparent that the old woman was vexed.

Shermaine's lips curled into a smug smile, and she incidentally locked her gaze with Sienna. The fearless woman stared right into the latter's eyes.

Sienna conceded and retracted her gaze. She did not linger and left just moments after.

Yuliana got up and sent her off.

"Sienna, don't leave so early. Matthew is coming home tonight for dinner after all. Aren't you going to stay and have dinner with us?"

Sienna shook her head. "Yuliana, my stay is only going to worsen the already tense situation. But did you guys already know about Clarissa and Matthew? Did Shermaine tell you guys that?"

"Yes, she told Old Mrs. Tyson. This girl really will resort to unscrupulous methods to get what she wanted. I'd seen the news about Clarissa's drug abuse on the Internet, but the matter has actually been clarified. Still, that girl insisted on telling it to Old Mrs. Tyson. It's so obvious what she's trying to pull."

Well, you didn't clear the air either.

Sienna thought to herself and felt a chill down her spine. It looked like they were going to work together to bring Clarissa down first.

Since Clarissa was the trio's common enemy, Sienna had no intention of clarifying things for Clarissa either.

She actually thought that Shermaine's viciousness posed no threat to her, and would actually be of great help to her in the future. Now that Shermaine is going all out to destroy Clarissa, I might as well give play to her advantage.

After all, Matthew only had contempt for Shermaine right now.

Sienna had gotten what she wanted.

As for Shermaine's impertinent act, the woman swore she would avenge herself later on.

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Matthew had a hunch about why he was summoned for dinner that night. Surely, it has to do with Clarissa's drug abuse news.

The man's instincts proved to be spot on. Margaret has been reprimanding and rattling on about Clarissa's drug abuse case. Even though she had not cursed at the girl, it was apparent that the old woman detested Clarissa more than ever.

"Is there anything that this girl won't do? Taking drugs is illegal, and my goodness, do I even need to remind you how nasty those men who she's been mingling with? Matthew, you're usually so smart. Why do you seem to lose your mind over this girl? I mean, why do you even like her?"

Furious, Margaret banged on the table to express her frustration on the matter.

Still cool as a cucumber, Matthew replied, "Since mother acknowledges that I'm smart, it means that I will not like her if she's the girl as rumored. The online news is only baseless gossip, aiming to slander Clare."

Matthew threw an icy cold glance at Shermaine at the mention of it, sending chills down her spine. However, she kept herself together and refuted with a smile, "Matt, who would want to harm her? She's just a girl. Let's just say that she's not taking drugs, and not having any fishy business with any men, it's still suspicious that she turned up at those places. I know the entertainment circle the best. That villa is famed for those kinky businesses every week and frequented by girls who wished to get famous through the fast track. Matt, haven't you thought about how others somehow managed to catch her there? She must have had dealings with those people there."

"Yes, Shermaine is right!"

Margaret resonated with Shermaine's words right away. "Why is she right around the corner, and bumped into the police nonetheless? Why is she there then, if she has nothing to do with the people there?"

Matthew shot daggers in Shermaine's direction.

"How did you know about the details of Clare going to the villa?"

Shermaine panicked and blurted an excuse, "I read it online."

“Online? The police have made clarification online, but there’s no mention of the details.”

“Um...”

Shermaine was rendered speechless under Matthew’s scrutinizing gaze.

Fuming with fury, Margaret reprimanded, “Who cares if she knows the details? The most important thing is that it actually happened. This girl has no self-respect and is not worthy of marrying into our family. Not only that, I insist that you break up with her right now. And Ellie, you guys have been deceived by that woman. She’s a despicable, wicked gold digger...”

“That’s enough!”

Matthew was infuriated by Margaret’s assumptions of Clarissa.

Then, Yuliana voiced out her thoughts. “Matthew, even if those are just misunderstandings, but this girl has a really bad reputation out there. Are you going to disregard our family and insist to be together with her? How are you going to explain it to others when they associate her with drug abuse? It’s going to be such a disgrace to the Tysons. Do you really want to put our family through that?”

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Yuliana escalated the scale of the problem, emphasizing that Clarissa would bring shame to the whole Tyson family.

Not only that, she also took the liberty to speak on behalf of other members of the Tysons as well.

Matthias had been keeping mum throughout the whole exchange. However, he felt the need to speak up when it came to the topic of drug abuse.

“Matthew, why was Clarissa at the villa if she was not doing drugs? Anything to do with drugs is going to make us look really bad.”

Shermaine chimed in, "That's right, Matt. It's really difficult to shrug off any affiliations with drug abuse. I'd heard about those details from my friends in the circle."

She had only thought about the way to straighten her story but it was too late.

The point was, it would be near impossible for Clarissa to clear her name.

Shermaine had employed netizens to come up with a myriad of speculation about Clarissa's involvement with drug abuse. It did not matter if the police had cleared her name. As long as the netizens were steered in the direction that Clarissa was indeed involved in drug abuse, people would affiliate her with the despicable act in the future nonetheless.

It would be an arduous task to clear people's deep-rooted assumptions about Clarissa then.

Shermaine knew how powerful social media was in influencing the opinions of others. She had used it to her advantage back then, and she was going to pull the same old trick again.

Right then, Matthew was between a rock and a hard place, facing the dissent of the whole family, especially since the only person who would support him, Ellie, was not around.

However, he actually found it to be bearable.

Instead, the man was worried about his future with Clarissa; the difficulties and disapproval that awaited her.

He was apprehensive about the accusations and disfavor his woman was about to suffer. I do not wish for her to endure this baseless maltreatment.

Up until then, Matthew thought no problem in the world would be too difficult to solve. However, he had to admit that he was at a loss about Clarissa's problem.

...

It was already late into the night when Matthew was back in Zen Highlands.

He puffed on a few cigarettes before entering the house. Hence, he stood in the frigid cold to let the smell dissipate before going into the house.

The dim nightstand lamp lit the bedroom. He did not enter the bedroom directly and tiptoed to the sofa in the living room instead. He took a seat on the sofa, deep in his thoughts amidst the silence.

The door sprung open not long after. The woman was wearing a sleeping gown with a shawl draped over her shoulders as she stood by the door.

“Why are you awake? Did I wake you?”

Clarissa shook her head and walked over to Matthew’s side. She sat on his lap and burrowed herself in his embrace.

The woman slipped her hands into his coat, and circled her hands tightly around his waist as she snuggled her head against his chest.

“Did you smoke?”

Matthew caressed her hair and replied, “Yeah, I smoked outside just now. Can you still smell it?”

“Yeah. Are you worried about something? Your family knows about my news, right?”

Matthew’s silence was a resounding yes to her question.

Even though she was dejected from the revelation, she did not wish to burden Matthew further as the man already had enough to worry about.

“Actually it’s just a matter of time for them to know about this. I’ve actually already prepared myself to be the topic of the town for some time. They’re already against the idea of us being together in the first place anyway. Even without this, they’re still going to frown upon the idea of us being together. This incident just gives them extra ammunition to do so.”

Matthew tightened his embrace around the woman, blowing kisses on her forehead. His breath felt reassuringly warm against her cheeks.

In a low voice, the man gently said, “Clare, their disapproval will not stand in our way.”

“Yes, I know. So, don’t get all tensed up because of this.”

Clarissa lifted her head. Tracing the moonlight that shone on the man's face, she pressed her fingers on his furrowed brows to ease it. In a demure manner, she said, "You're going to get so many wrinkles from furrowing your brows like that. I'm not going to find you handsome anymore if you're all crinkled."

Matthew finally eased up after listening to her.

His thin lips curled into a slight smile. Hooking her chin up, the man lowered his head and planted a kiss on her lips.

"Well, well. Do you not find me handsome now?"

"No, you're the most handsome and charismatic man I know. I'm just reminding you not to furrow your brows and take good care of that dazzling face. Of course, you still look great now."

Matthew chuckled at her words which were clearly an attempt to crack him up. He brushed against the tip of her nose.

In a low, seductive voice, he said, "You have the best taste in men, Clare."

Clarissa broke into a chuckle as well. However, the next moment, her chuckle was muffled by Matthew's kiss. Sounds of the fervent exchange soon filled the room.

In a swift motion, Matthew carried Clarissa and entered their bedroom. The door closed behind them as the duo intertwined with each other, lost in passion.

The next day, Clarissa woke up early.

She found it hard to stay in bed lately as something was bothering her.

Hence, she was roused the moment Matthew was awake.

When the man was off to exercise downstairs, she got up and straightened herself before heading downstairs to make breakfast.

Clarissa was just coming out of the kitchen when Matthew came back from his morning exercise. The woman looked greedily at the man who exuded masculinity.

She cupped her cheeks and feigned admiration. "Uncle Matthew, you're so handsome..."

The man's thin lips curled into a slight smile before he made his way over to her side. Cupping the back of her head, he lowered his head and planted a deep kiss on her lips. He had only let her go after some time.

Clarissa's eyes twinkled with a glint as her full red lips beckoned at him. Matthew felt a twitch in his pants. He almost could not hold himself in as he felt the urge to carry the alluring woman before him upstairs.

In the end, he resisted the urge and turned around to take a bath.

Clarissa grinned, knowing full well the reaction that she had elicited in the man. She cupped her hot, burning cheeks to calm herself down.

During breakfast, Clarissa recalled that her grandma had reminded her to talk to Matthew about the details of their marriage.

However, Clarissa decided to bite her tongue at the thought of what happened the night before at the Tyson residence.

It would not help things if she mentioned their marriage since the Tysons were more hostile toward her. I will only burden him further if I bring this up right now.

Ellie arrived at the Zen Highlands after Matthew had left.

Of course, she was there to discuss what happened the night before at the Tyson residence. Even though she was not there personally, she still knew what happened.

Hence, she went to the Zen Highlands early in the morning to break the news to Clarissa.

"This is all Shermaine's fault. She just has to meddle with my family affairs and make everyone unhappy. I think she's still hung up on Uncle Matt. She definitely has something to do with the drug abuse news circulated online."

Clarissa had no idea that Shermaine was behind this since Matthew had not mentioned the woman's name.

Raising a brow, she asked, "Is Shermaine back in D City already?"

"Yes, she has been back for some time. I really have to give it to her for keeping it to herself because not many people know about it."

Clarissa's heart sank. Judging by the way she is, and since she already knows about me and Matthew, I don't think she will give up on this easily.

She started to doubt whether Shermaine was behind all those incidents.

Even though it was just a hunch, Clarissa thought there was a huge possibility that it could be true.

"Clare, what are you thinking about?"

Ellie waved her hands in front of Clarissa when she noticed that the latter was deep in her thoughts. "What's with you? What are you thinking about?"

Clarissa did not hold back and let Ellie in on her suspicion.

"I think Shermaine already knew about this long ago. Sienna was the first to know and after that, it was not a secret anymore. Shermaine was only belittling me and troubling me because I was prettier than her at the set. After knowing about me and Matthew, it's only right that she would retaliate with a more vicious plan, right? Something's not right when she kept quiet after such a long time. Don't you agree?"

Ellie snapped her hands at the revelation. "Right! I know Shermaine, and it's definitely possible that she was that vicious and set you up. Quick! Report her to the police and let her spend her remaining days in the prison."

"Why are you getting all worked up?"

Clarissa hurriedly stopped Ellie and sighed helplessly. "We don't have any incriminating evidence against her. It's going to be less than useless even if you report her to the police."

"So? Are we going to let her go just like that? She's such a hazard to everyone around her. We can't guarantee that she's going to stop harming you. Damn it, I think that she's the one behind my attack last time too. I hate that b*tch so much, and it's really possible that she'd do something like that to me, right? Actually, forget it. She's definitely behind all these."

Clarissa was taken aback by the odds of it all.

“Damn it. Even if I cannot call the police, I need to ask someone to investigate more.”

Ellie made a call right after and conveyed her suspicions.

Meanwhile, Clarissa was getting more and more convinced that her suspicion would turn out to be true.

What kind of person will resort to harming, and even destroying someone just because of a man? How malicious is she to be able to do something like that?

“Clare, even though we are not a hundred percent certain that Shermaine is behind all these, I believe we’re not far from the truth. You’d better be wary of her. I think I need to rush home and let my family know about this. Otherwise, they’re going to set themselves up for trouble.”

Ellie then rushed back to the Tyson residence.

It would be up to Ellie on whether she could convince the elders in her family.

Clarissa decided to not keep her suspicion from Matthew and told him all about it after the latter had gotten back.

However, the man did not seem at all surprised at the revelation.

“You knew about it already?”

Matthew shook his head. “I was just starting to suspect her.”

“Hmm?”

Matthew then recounted Shermaine’s slip-up at the Tyson residence to her.

“Right, I bet that she was watching my every move back then. That’s why she was so clear on every single detail. Do you think she’d reported me? She was seizing the chance to mess with me.”

Matthew circled the woman in his embrace as he contemplated her words.

“It is possible, but now that you have Gina, it would be difficult for her to hurt you. We will catch her red-handed if she strikes again. I’ve already sent some people to keep an eye on her.”

“So are we spying on her like how she’s spying on me?”

It sounded like they were on a super secret mission.

You’ll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

Chapter 200

It would be a major win to be able to spy on Shermaine while they were on the lookout for her next move.

Clarissa was glad to let Matthew handle the matter, and hoped for the best.

However, it was not an effort that would bear fruit instantaneously.

Meanwhile, Clarissa was touched by another turn of event.

Clarissa’s alleged drug abuse sparked a myriad of discussions online. Even though it did not top the chart of trending topics online, it still made its way among the trending list of topics.

It had not been an easy journey for Clarissa to build her name, and now it was down in the dumps because of the alleged drug abuse scandal.

Despite the vilifications by the keyboard warriors, a few celebrities in showbiz, notably Ryler, Justin, Yaala, and Jamie had shown unwavering support for Clarissa. Almost all actors or actresses who had collaborated with her previously were vocal about supporting Clarissa except for Shermaine.

Among them, Yaala and Ryler were the most influential as they were adamant that not only was Clarissa innocent in the matter but she was framed by malicious people instead.

Ryler was the first to back Clarissa up on Twitter while Justin, Yaala, and the others followed suit by retweeting his post to show support to Clarissa as well.

In showbiz, drug abuse was a deadly taboo. Anyone who was allegedly affiliated with drug abuse would be isolated. Showing support for a celebrity with a drug abuse scandal was pretty much a suicide mission.

With Ryler's steadfast support, there was a change in the public's perception of the matter, favoring to believe that Clarissa was innocent.

Clarissa was moved beyond words, and it was a huge favor which she may never be able to repay.

They had helped her out last time and continued to show staunch support for her.

Clarissa retweeted with words of appreciation.

She had even taken the initiative to call each and every one of them personally to thank them.

When it came to Ryler, she felt like words of gratitude were too formal between the two of them.

"I knew you'd call. Why are we being this formal with each other? Why didn't you look for me when you got into trouble, girl? For goodness's sake, I only found it out from the manager."

Clarissa was embarrassed and replied, "I was too preoccupied with things. The matter had been clarified anyway. My conscience is clear, Ryler."

"Yes, you are. But I think that someone has employed netizens to attack you online. The trend is really bizarre."

"Exactly, Ryler. Somebody is working against me."

"Shermaine Smallwood?"

Ryler knew it was Shermaine even before Clarissa mentioned it.

It was clear as day that she had done it because of Matthew.

"I suspect that she's behind this but I don't have any evidence against her."

"You'd better be careful. I'm going back to D City in a few days. Let's meet up and talk more then. What about you and Mr. Tyson though? Aren't you guys going to settle down already? I don't want to nag but Grandma asks me to talk you guys into tying the knot every time she calls."

It would be a heart-wrenching moment for Ryler whenever it came to that topic. Not only was his sweetheart marrying another man, but he also had to egg her into doing it sooner, rather than later.

Despite the stinging pain, he tried his best to look out for her as her big brother. I'm going to get used to this.

"Huh..."

Clarissa heaved out a heavy sigh at the mention of marriage.

"Why? Is there a problem with you? Or with Mr. Tyson?"

She kept mum for a moment before saying, "It's complicated."

"How complicated can things get though? Does he not want to get married?"

"No, it's not that."

"So, are the Tysons against it?"

Ryler was spot-on. Gauging by her silence, he knew he had gotten the right answer.

"Why are the Tysons against it?"

It was a rhetorical question. He knew full well why they were against it.

It definitely has to do with the damned social status for these high and mighty families.

However, Ryler thought that Clarissa was a really decent girl and that they had no reason whatsoever to despise her.

The woman merely chuckled. "Ry, this is no surprise for me, but you have to promise me that you won't tell Grandma this. Otherwise, she's going to worry."

"Yes, I understand. So are you guys going to relent and not get married then? Or is Matthew using this as an excuse to not get married to you?"

"No, he wants to get married. It's me. I'm the one who's afraid, on top of this disapproval from the Tysons. It's not his fault, really. Now that things are at a stalemate, I don't see the sense in rushing things. I think I'd be better off letting things run its course instead. Things are going to turn really ugly for both of us if I mention marriage right now. Ry, I don't want to put him in a difficult situation."

Ryler tightened his grip around his phone. He was aggravated, but for the most part, he felt his heart aching for her.

Clarissa could sense that something was not quite right at Ryler's end and hurriedly added, "Don't worry, maybe the scales will tip in my favor when the time comes. As long as my conscience is clear, I believe that we will get through this. I'm the type to be showered with abundance and wealth, according to the fortune-tellers anyway. So, quit worrying about me."

Clarissa's joke managed to crack a good laugh out of Ryler.

"So are you a fortune teller now? Could you enlighten me on what awaits me in this life then?"

"That's easy. You're going to be rich and famous."

"That's really creative," Ryler mocked. "I'm really busy right now. I hope to see the famed Mr. Tyson when I get back to D City later. Since you treat me like your big brother, I should have the right to care whether you're happy or not, right? Please say yes, at least for the sake of Grandma."

"Um... Okay, I guess. Let's see how things go when you get back here."

Clarissa delved deep into her thoughts after hanging up the phone, so much so that she was still ruminating over their conversation when Matthew was home.

She had only snapped out of her thoughts when he circled her into an embrace. The cold wind and the feeling of his frosty lips made her shudder.

"Hmm..."

Clarissa gently pushed him away and looked at him with a demure smile. "Why aren't there any movements or even a single sound when you're back?"

The man pinched her waist gently, "Is this good enough?"

A tinge of pink appeared on her cheeks. "You're spacing out because you miss me?"

"Yes, very terribly. Is that okay?"

"Sure."

Matthew planted a deep kiss on her lips. The duo was locked in yet another passionate exchange before he finally let her go.

Clarissa panted lightly in his embrace and said coyly, "Ryler is coming back to D City in a few days. He wants to meet you."

"Why not!" A glint flashed across the man's eyes.

She had not expected him to agree to it in a heartbeat, and ironically a sense of trepidation washed over her. The woman found herself explaining, "I've always seen him as my big brother. He says it's only normal that he looks out for me, especially concerning marriage."

"I understand. Why are you so nervous though?"

Clarissa knitted her brows. "I'm not nervous. It's just that I'm worried about you two getting into a row. Did you see Twitter today? Ryler, Yaala, Mr. Yates, and the others voiced out and supported me, saying that I'm innocent in the matter. I think that's the main reason the discussion online is finally favoring me. This is not the first time they've done this for me, and I just feel like calling them over the phone is just not good enough to express how thankful I am. What do you think? How can I really thank them enough?"

Matthew still had his hands wrapped around her waist as he leaned against the sofa casually. The man's lips curled into a mischievous grin.

"Why don't you beg me for an idea? I'll tell you how to truly thank them then."

Clarissa was rendered speechless by his same old trick.

However, she was really at a loss and relented.

In just the blink of an eye, she beamed brightly and edged herself closer to Matthew. The woman circled her hands on his chest in a flirtatious manner.

Coquettishly, the woman pleaded, "Uncle Matthew, sir... Please. Could you tell me how I should thank my friends properly?"

Matthew's body stiffened momentarily and his gaze darkened.

"What did you just say, darling? Could you repeat? I didn't quite catch you just now?"

Clarissa rolled her eyes to herself but kept the coy smile on her face. She deliberately blinked repeatedly, fluttering her lashes.

"Mr. Tyson, sir... Please tell me how should I thank my friends? I beg you... pretty please."

Matthew broke into a hearty chuckle like he had just heard the joke of the century. Clarissa's cheeks were hot with embarrassment as the man could not seem to stop laughing. She hurriedly covered his mouth and protested, "Stop laughing. What's so funny? I'm gonna get mad if you don't stop, mister."

Clarissa muffled his laughter with the palm of her hands.

It did stop the man from laughing. However, he licked her palm in an unexpected move, spooking Clarissa and caused her to retract her hands right away. Her cheeks puffed red from feigned fury as she pouted.

Matthew titled his brows innocently, "What's the matter, Clare?"

"Drop the act! Hurry up and tell me what to do."

She switched from a flirtatious and coy manner to a shrewd woman in just a split second. Despite so, the man still found her threatening manner irresistibly adorable.

His heart softened at the sight of her. There is nothing I wouldn't do for this woman.

He circled Clarissa back in his embrace with a loving smile on his face, and pinned her underneath his body with a turn.

“Clare, how can you be so adorable?”

Clarissa pouted. “I know I’m really adorable. There’s no need to remind me every five seconds. Get away from me. We’re still in the middle of a serious talk. Tell me what I can do! Just get away from me if you have no idea what to do either. Don’t waste my time.”

“I do, really. But I think I need to do some exercise to wake my brain up so that I can recall better.”

“Pfft!”

Clarissa knew the man only had one intention in his mind, and he would do anything to achieve his goal.

She smiled in a coy manner. “Let me help you then!”

Matthew’s eyes twinkled in delight. However, what happened next stumped him. The woman proceeded to grab him by his ears and shook his head. “Let me move your head help you recall better!”