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Then, Matthew took Clarissa and Damian to another place. They ended up buying plenty of toys, filling the car boot to the brim. Some of them were even brought over from D City.

Only when night fell did the man finally drive them home.

Clarissa lingered at the door for a long while before carrying a sleeping Damian into the house.

Surprisingly, Catherine hadn't gone to bed yet. After tucking her son in with Jenny's help, Clarissa returned to the living room and had a glass of milk.

Catherine questioned upon seeing her enter, "Did you have fun? Why did you buy so many toys?"

Chuckling, Clarissa replied, "It's been a long time since I last spent time with Damian, so I figured it was fine to go along with his wishes today."

At that, Catherine nodded in acknowledgment. In reality, both of them knew the truth of the matter, but she didn't mention a single word about Matthew.

"Alright, you must be tired after going out for the entire day, so rest earlier."

Just when Clarissa walked out after taking a shower, her cell phone rang. Going into the study, she closed the door before having a video call with Matthew.

As Matthew gazed at the freshly-showered woman, whose hair was a touch messy and her face flushed, his heart jolted.

Noticing the darkening of his eyes, a fissure of embarrassment crept into Clarissa, and she spoke to divert his attention.

"Say, was it you who arranged for the contract I signed in D City back then?"

However, Matthew's face was a mask of puzzlement. "What contract? Did you sign a contract with Tyson Corporation's media company?"

"Please drop the act. Mr. Yates mentioned it when I had a meal with him back then."

Hearing that, Matthew chuckled. "I did know about that, but I didn't arrange it. Tyson Corporation only makes profitable deals, so they only signed you because you are viewed as profitable. Besides, it's very difficult to get an appointment with you nowadays. Your popularity has soared. You've now become a renowned screenwriter."

Clarissa tilted her head and smirked proudly. "Of course! If it weren't because of you, I wouldn't have signed with them."

"Then, I've got to thank you, Ms. Quigley."

"You've naturally got to thank me since a script I write will definitely make you a ton of money!"

While that seemed to be the truth, Clarissa didn't dare boast as much to others. She would only say it to Matthew brazenly.

"I'll give you a bonus if I make a ton of money."

"Sure! I'll invest it in my island. The annual maintenance is so costly that I'm about to become a pauper. Say, I haven't even gotten to enjoy the island you gave me, but I'm already investing money in it. What a travesty..." Clarrisa groused.

However, she then remembered that the island had initially been meant for their wedding.

At the thought of that, melancholy flooded her. She didn't dare blather on about the island, so she changed the topic and spoke mostly of Damian.

Although Matthew couldn't be a regular part of their son's life, she always remembered to take photos or videos of their son's growth. She then edited and combined them all to send to him from time to time, for she didn't want him to miss any moment of Damian's life, no matter the happy or sad times.

She had no idea when such days would end, but Catherine's attitude seemed to have eased a lot compared to the previous year. She was no longer as adamant in forbidding her from meeting Matthew. At present, she most likely knew that they were in contact privately, but she merely turned a blind eye to it.

Perhaps Grandma will soon allow Matthew to be part of our lives for Damian's sake, she mused.

Half a month later, Clarissa unexpectedly set out for D City again despite just having returned a while ago.

This time, it was wholly for work reasons.

She was truly reluctant to part with Damian, but she couldn't take him with her. For that reason, she spent the entire day with him before leaving. Early the next morning, she departed at the crack of dawn. She knew her son would probably burst into tears and throw a tantrum when he woke up.

Upon arriving in D City, she was seized by the urge to wrap herself up in a thick quilt. When Mandy picked her up, she demanded, "Why did you ask me to come over when there are no problems with the script? Can't the others in the studio amend it? If they really can't handle it, you could've sent me an email!"

Mandy merely shrugged. "Yael said you've got to accommodate them if they've got any requests since they're paying an exorbitant amount. Besides, it's indeed rather busy now at the end of the year. On top of that, now that you're famous, many people are requesting that you write them a script, so those in the studio are swamped."

Oh, God, that's a lot of excuses! But the bottom line of what she means is that the other party is paying an exorbitant amount...

Clarissa's lips twitched. "Alright, I got it. It's really not easy to make money nowadays!"

All at once, Mandy's expression changed. You're merely writing scripts, so what's so difficult when a single script of yours is selling at a king's ransom now?

Nonetheless, it wasn't all that persuasive.

Clarissa headed to the studio and treated everyone to a meal before checking into the hotel. She took a nap in the afternoon, and no one bothered her at night either, so she had an unusually peaceful day.

The next day, she received a call from the media company, requesting that she go over for a meeting early in the morning. She was to meet the director as well.

It wasn't her first rodeo, so Clarissa merely dolled up for a bit before going to the media company alone.

While the media company under Tyson Corporation was lagging behind its peers in the other industries, it was doing considerably well in the entertainment industry.

Most importantly, the company had the funds to produce top-notch work. As quality triumphed over quality to them, their reputation had been on the rise throughout the past few years. Many people now had the perception that works produced by Tyson Media were sure to be of top-notch quality, becoming a branding of sorts.

It was the first time Clarissa was collaborating with them. Honestly speaking, she would still proceed with the collaboration even if it weren't Matthew's company.

When she arrived, the receptionist allowed her up upon learning that she had an appointment. She was then led upstairs to a small conference room.

After waiting for a while, the company's representatives arrived. She recognized the company's president and director, followed by the film producer and director...

All of them then exchanged some pleasantries, both parties naturally hoping that the collaboration would go smoothly.

Unexpectedly, someone whispered something into the president's ear while the meeting was underway. His gaze flickering slightly, the president announced with a smile, "It so happens that the big boss made a sudden visit today. When he heard that we're discussing a new script, he expressed his interest to join us."

"Are you referring to Mr. Tyson?" the young director recommended by Justin asked in astonishment.

"Yes, that's right."

Just as his words fell, the general manager walked out. In no time, he then escorted Matthew in.

Matthew sat down, looking cool and indifferent as he placidly murmured, "Carry on."

The general manager nodded with a smile and continued discussing the script, acting as though Matthew was a bystander.

While others in the room were a tad nervous, the manager was still considerably calm. Meanwhile, Clarissa rolled her eyes inwardly.

Nonetheless, business and pleasure were two different things, in which she was exceptionally good at drawing the line. Of course, she was no match for Matthew, the trickster.

"Generally speaking, there are no problems with this script, Ms. Quigley. However, I think the ending needs to be amended. I'm sure you're well aware of the trends now, so it'll be good to have the ending in that fashion..." the producer suggested.

Before Clarissa could reply to that, the director—Maddox Wilson—interjected, "Mr. Jensen, it'll be too mainstream if we really follow the current trends. It'll then lose its meaning. I think Ms. Quigley's ending is very well written…"

Clarissa then indicated the same opinion as Maddox, and they discussed the matter again.

Matthew, on the other hand, took the notebook the general manager handed him. He then glanced through the outline of the script, seeming very much interested in it.

While Clarissa and the managers were in the midst of their discussion, he suddenly chimed in. His voice was clear and cool, yet it seemed threaded with a hint of steel.

"Just go with the script."

Since the ultimate president himself had spoken, the decision was now set in stone.

"But..."

Matthew then changed his tune, causing everyone present to swing their gazes at him, only to see that he was staring at Clarissa with a darkened gaze.

"I'm very interested in this script, Ms. Quigley. However, there are some parts I don't quite understand, so I wonder if you've got time to answer my queries alone?"

Upon hearing that, shock descended upon everyone in the room. Uh... Why does Mr. Tyson sound as though he's propositioning her for some reason?

Clarissa, however, merely answered mildly, "I'm sorry, Mr. Tyson, but I believe that the director is also very familiar with the script. Why don't you have the director explain it to you? I might not be able to spare the time."

In other words, she rebuffed him right then and there.

At that, Matthew's face darkened, and he began emanating an oppressive aura. That sudden change in the atmosphere had everyone present gripping the edges of their seats.

Being Justin's friend, Maddox couldn't just twiddle his thumbs when Clarissa was put in a difficult position.

Thus, he hurriedly helped her out by interjecting, "I'm indeed much more familiar with the script than Ms. Quigley, Mr. Tyson. I've studied it, so I'll explain it to you if you have any queries. After all, Ms. Quigley still has to go back and amend the script."

Clarissa instantly nodded in agreement. "That's right."

"Amend the script? We are going to follow the original script, so no amendments are necessary. In that case, you now have time, yes?"

It seemed as though Matthew was simply unwilling to relent.

"Although the script doesn't have to be amended, there are still some minor details to be considered, Mr. Tyson..."

In truth, such an excuse wasn't all that convincing. When Matthew swept his pitch-black eyes over Maddox, the man immediately broke into a cold sweat as apprehension swamped him.

The next moment, Matthew stood up and cast Clarissa a cold look before leaving the conference room.

Everyone breathed a sigh of relief when he left. Flashing them a faint smile, Clarissa murmured, "Please excuse me if there's nothing else, gentlemen."

"I'll drive you back, Ms. Quigley," Maddox offered.

However, Clarissa declined and left the media company.

As soon as she left, she phoned Matthew in the car.

The call was promptly answered, upon which she demanded in chagrin, "Was that fun?"

Conversely, the man on the line snorted softly. "Wasn't that fun?"

Hmm? Why does he sound rather peeved now?

Clarissa couldn't figure out why he was pissed off.

"What was the meaning of that?"

"What could it mean? It's a film produced by my company, so can't I have any queries? Or are you so high and mighty now that I can't even have a say in such matters?"

Since he had said as much, Clarissa was dead certain that he was indeed fuming, what with the obvious sarcasm.

However, she wasn't an accommodating person either. "Matthew Tyson, spit it out if you've got something to say. Stop venting your anger on me, for I've got no time to beat around the bush with you."

"Hah! You've got no time to beat around the bush with me, but you had time to attend a blind date, huh?"

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A blind date? Clarissa's fury dissipated slightly at that moment. But that was a long time ago, okay?

"That was a long time ago. It was more than a month back, so why are you digging up the past? Besides, I only attended to appease Grandma. I never took it seriously," she explained patiently.

Nevertheless, it still bugged Matthew.

In the past three years, he had been like a living corpse and had only barely scraped through. He didn't want to tell her that, for he did not want to be seen as weak and whiny. However, not saying anything didn't mean that he wasn't bothered about it.

He had a standing instruction to be informed about everything regarding her and their son twice a month.

Recently, he changed it to once a month since he had more interaction with her these days. So, there wasn't much need for him to read those personal reports anymore.

Clarissa had attended blind dates several times after giving birth. He could have put up with it the first, second, and even the third time, but he wouldn't be Matthew Tyson if he could still keep his cool when it happened all too often.

He merely glanced through the report this time, but he unexpectedly discovered that she had actually attended a blind date a day before coming to D City back then.

That was the reason for the scene earlier; he was exceedingly aggravated because jealousy and fury had engulfed him.

Despite Clarissa having explained it now, he was still feeling very much disgruntled.

"How many times has it been, Clare? I understand if you were embarrassed to decline the first few times, but couldn't you have declined later?"

At that, Clarissa frowned. "Are you blaming me? Do you not believe me?"

"That wasn't what I meant."

I just want to know how much longer this stalemate between us has to persist, but if I were to give voice to it, it would sound as though I'm interrogating her.

Thus, he could only keep mum. Such silence was rare between them, and the atmosphere turned a touch cold.

Clarissa wanted to explain herself, but a ball of anger lodged within her, and the words got stuck in her throat. Perhaps she knew that she was indeed in the wrong or was similarly enraged, but she didn't feel like talking to him anymore.

So, she hung up without a word. When Matthew heard the disconnect tone from his cell phone, he heaved a sigh.

He massaged his temples with his long and slender fingers, trying to null his headache. He hadn't rested well in the past few days. Knowing that Clarrisa was visiting D City again, he had sped through his work and rushed back. He had never anticipated things to end on a sour note between them.

A trace of helplessness stained his profound gaze, and he closed his eyes with a sigh.

"Are we heading to the hotel, Mr. Tyson?"

Clarissa stayed in a hotel every time she came to D City, and Matthew would always join her there.

This time, however, Matthew paused for a moment before ordering, "Head back to Zen Highlands."

Donnie was taken aback, but he didn't comment on it, merely telling the chauffeur to head back to Zen Highlands.

That night, neither contacted the other. The usual excitement of seeing each other in the past was gone; it was replaced by loneliness and disappointment.

Clarissa had a fitful sleep, so she woke up looking haggard with dark circles under her eyes.

Even so, she couldn't use it as an excuse to skip work because she still had to do her job.

She rarely made an appearance, so it was the employees at the studio who handled everything. For that reason, she would try to complete her work to the best of her ability every time she came to D City.

She signed documents the entire morning and didn't even take a nap in the afternoon. After having a lunch box, she resumed signing.

Right after she was done, Yael dragged her to have dinner.

The filming of a TV series she collaborated on had just wrapped up, so the production team was having a celebratory dinner. She had previously cooperated with the promotional activities despite not having shown up in person. But now that she happened to be there, Yael dragged her along.

In the evening, the two of them headed to the hotel together. The dinner would be attended by the cast, director, investors, and every other important figure. When they entered the room, almost everyone had already arrived. At the sight of Clarissa's beauty, which wasn't at all inferior to that of female celebrities despite her being a mere screenwriter, many were astounded.

However, she was merely a screenwriter at the end of the day, so the attention was only momentary. In the next instance, the limelight returned to the cast and director.

Of course, besides pleasantries, there was also gossip that would only be known to those within the circle during the dinner.

When Clarissa was shooting the breeze with the director, someone started gossiping beside her, and the conversation fell into her ears.

"I bumped into a renowned producer when I arrived earlier, but there was an internet celebrity hanging on his arm. I actually bumped into her when I went to the washroom

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earlier, and that woman was on the phone, proclaiming loudly that she had convinced the producer to cast her as the female lead in his next movie by sleeping with him. Tsk-tsk. While that's not uncommon, I've never seen someone who advertises it to the world like her. Have morals truly regressed that much nowadays?"

"Haha... In today's world, one can become an internet celebrity just by applying some makeup. If she hires some people to boost her popularity, she would soar to fame overnight. If that doesn't work, she can just undergo plastic surgery. As long as she has something going for her, she can be the female lead by getting herself an investor as a sugar daddy."

"That's indeed true, but those floozies must have slept with numerous men. How could those investors bring themselves to seal the deal? From what I heard, that internet celebrity slept with countless men. She was the one who had tons of indecent photos published a while ago... What was her name again?"

"Oh... You're speaking of Misty? Her name is sweet and refreshing, but her character is really far from that."

"Yup, that's her."

Clarissa knew who "Misty" was, but that had nothing to do with her.

She took a sip of juice, pretending not to have heard the two women. Out of the blue, an investor who had been chatting with the female lead turned his attention on her.

"Why are you drinking juice, Ms. Quigley? Well, never once had I imagined that not only are the cast good-looking, but even the screenwriter of this series is stunningly beautiful. I've long since heard of you, so I definitely have to toast you today. Here, here."

He addressed her directly before he gulped down the wine in his hand, so there was no reason for Clarissa to not do the same.

Everyone at the table had their attention fixed on them. After all, one couldn't afford to offend investors.

Although the filming had already ended, many a time, they all had to make concessions for capital in this industry.

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Even actresses who were currently famous had to treat the investors cautiously, much less an insignificant screenwriter.

Beside her, Yael wasn't at all perturbed. She continued eating and drinking without any intention of helping her out.

Of course, Clarissa didn't need any help either.

She smiled and replied, "I'm sorry, Mr. Warren, but I can't drink. I'm allergic to alcohol."

"Haha... Are you not going to show me even the slightest respect, Ms. Quigley?"

"Not at all, Mr. Warren. I'm really allergic to alcohol. It'll disfigure me at the very least, and at worse, it's life-threatening. Please let me off, Mr. Warren. How about I toast you with tea in place of alcohol?"

While Clarissa was speaking, she had already picked up the glass of tea beside her. Just when she was about to drink it, Winston Warren placed a hand over the glass.

Pausing, Clarissa didn't insist on drinking it. Meanwhile, Winston's expression was already darkening.

With his eyes pinned on her, he looked her up and down frostily. He didn't say anything, but he snorted coldly after taking his seat.

At the side, the female lead promptly extended the wine glass in her hand and exclaimed, "I haven't toasted you yet, Mr. Warren..."

Smirking, Winston threw a threatening glance at Clarissa before dipping his head and drinking the wine the female lead handed him.

Everything seemed to revert to usual as all of them continued eating and drinking. However, Winston would certainly be holding a grudge after having been rejected so publicly.

Thus, Yael reminded Clarissa to be on her guard when they were in the washroom.

Hearing that, Clarissa chuckled. "There's not much use saying that to me, Yael. I'm not in D City often, so even if he wants to pick trouble with me, he'll probably target the studio. Hence, you'll have to be the one to deal with it."

"Hmph! Are you not at all embarrassed to leave me cleaning up after you?"

"Ah well, you definitely have a solution, no? Considering your swift and precise temperament, I'm sure that man wouldn't dare do anything reckless."

Curling her lips, Yael groused, "Hah! You're always flattering me. But in terms of being swift and precise, I'm no match for Mr. Tyson."

At the mention of Matthew, Clarissa's gaze dimmed slightly.

"What happened? Did you fight with him again?" Yael asked perceptively.

Clarissa was silent for a moment. She said nothing, merely washing her hands before walking out.

Yael, on the other hand, didn't pursue the matter. Well, well... they've never fought in all these years. For the most part, it's because they had no opportunity to fight. Secondly, they really love each other deeply. Thus, it's truly a new thing for them to have a row this time. Well, I guess bickering is inevitable between couples.

After the two of them left the washroom, Yael went to retrieve the car, and Clarissa sat in the lobby waiting for her.

As she waited, Clarissa glanced at her cell phone, but to her dismay, there were no calls or messages from Matthew. At that, a sense of disappointment and despondency inexorably inundated her.

He seldom gets angry, so is he thinking of making a fuss when he throws a tantrum this time?

She snorted, and mild ire blanketed her face.

All of a sudden, a rush of warm breath tinged with a revolting reek of alcohol along with an unfamiliar musk assailed her from behind. Her heart jolting, she swiftly shifted away and glanced over her shoulder.

She looked back with wariness and fury in her eyes, only to be greeted by the sight of Winston, who was slightly intoxicated.

A wave of repulsion assaulted her at the thought of him having plastered himself against her back just now. Goosebumps rose all over her body, and utter disgust showed on her face.

Seeing that, Winston's eyes glinted coldly, though a smile remained on his face. He inched closer to her.

"It's late, so I can't bring myself to see a beautiful lady like you going home alone, Ms. Quigley. How about I give you a ride?"

Clarissa moved away again to put distance between them.

"I'm not alone, Mr. Warren. I'm just waiting here while Yael retrieves the car. Thank you for the offer, but no thanks."

"Haha... you're really straightforward, Ms. Quigley. You must have had enjoyed smooth sailing in this industry that you're so blunt, yes? But Ms. Quigley, your candidness is really childlike in its naivety!"

Hmm? Is this a warning and a threat?

In response, Clarissa snickered coldly. Ignoring his threat, she spun around to leave without even dignifying him with a reply. However, Winston seemingly wasn't giving up, for he blocked her path. Then, he reached out and wrapped his arm around her shoulder.

Her heart lurched, and she promptly struggled to shove the audacious man away.