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"Why?" asked a puzzled Anastasia.

"Whenever Alex takes a second look at you, I feel that he's damned." Elliot's voice was dripping with jealousy.

Anastasia's red lips curved up slightly. It's funny how this guy looks whenever he gets jealous. "All I have for him now is hatred," she explained.

"Let me deal with these people. I'll give them the most tragic end." Elliot couldn't wait to do it himself.

Anastasia replied, "Naomi is taking the blame for everything now, but I know that Alex, Erica, and Colin are also involved in the plot against my dad's life. None of them are gonna get away with it." Her eyes flickered with rage in the darkness. Perhaps her father would wake up, causing the allegations of him changing his will to fall apart. Still, it was unknown when he would come round. On the other hand, these people were now reaping the fruits of others' labor, dividing up his company amongst themselves and enjoying his wealth. Therefore, she hoped that these people would pay the price when he regained consciousness.

The night deepened, and Elliot held his posture without moving. The lady in his arms was already soundly asleep, as though she slept best in his arms. However, she didn't realize that the man almost always lost sleep on nights when they slept in the arms of each other like this. There was no way he could hold her in his arms without feeling aroused, so he could only suppress his urges. Still, in the face of the woman whom he longed for day and night, his self-control, which he always prided himself on, had long broken down. All he could do was kiss her several times on the cheek in the moonlight to comfort himself.

When Anastasia woke up the next morning, she found that the man beside her was still sleeping. She got out of bed quietly without waking him. Having had a good night's sleep, she washed up and had breakfast before leaving to check on Francis. However, as soon as she reached the hallway, she saw the lady who was signing her name at the nurses' station-Erica. Consequently, her face darkened slightly.

Erica saw her as well. Taking a deep breath, she concealed the glint of hatred in her eyes, recalling that she was here today to beg Anastasia. "Sis, how is Dad?"

This was the first time she called Anastasia 'sis' in such a calm manner. Anastasia didn't want to acknowledge such a woman as her sister, though. She retorted impassively, "So you still care about my dad, huh? I thought all you cared about was the company."

"He's my dad. Of course I care about him," Erica argued somewhat guiltily.

"Dad is fine. You don't have to come if there's nothing." Anastasia wished she could see through Erica. She wanted to know whether the latter's heart was black and why the latter would conspire with her mother against her own father.

"Sis, did you have Elliot steal Dad's company's clients to make his company go bankrupt?" Erica questioned between clenched teeth.

Folding her arms across her chest, Anastasia replied deprecatingly, "Aren't you and your husband the ones in charge of the company?"

"Please, sis, I'm begging you. It's Dad's company that we're talking about. The company matters more to him than his own life. Could you please not make it go bankrupt?" Erica pleaded with an imploring look in her eyes. She was willing to humble herself for money.

Just then, Anastasia's phone rang. After glancing at its screen, she walked to the other side of the hallway and answered it. "Hello?"

"Miss Tillman, we found several abnormal payments that might've been misappropriated. The total amount misappropriated is more than three million."

"Trace the money and find out where it is."

"Roger that, Miss Tillman. We'll go to the bank to track down the money in the company's name."

Anastasia hung up the phone. She had caught hold of evidence of Alex misappropriating the company's funds, but this was far from enough. Alex was also in that car on the night of Francis' accident. Along with Naomi and Erica, he had delayed the rescue of Francis. His end shouldn't be so simple, she thought. Erica had entered the ward. As she looked at Francis, who was lying comatose in his sickbed, her eyes flickered with resentment. She had called this man 'Dad' for over 20 years despite having no blood ties with him. If she didn't gain anything from him, the 20 years she had spent calling him 'Dad' would go to waste.

Seeing Anastasia's figure, she instantly started playacting with tears gushing from her eyes. "Wake up, Dad. Please wake up, Dad, please!"

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"Dad, I miss you. I miss you so much."

Anastasia looked on while standing in front of the French window, knowing full well that Erica's tears were all crocodile tears.

Meanwhile, in a downtown shopping mall, a stylishly-dressed Hayley was holding Alex's arm and shopping with her face mask on. Her face had gone under the knife, but it was still pretty.

Alex had come to like Hayley as well. Having a way with men, she indulged all his desire for fulfillment when he was with her.

"This shirt is nice. Try it on."

"It's too pricey." Alex didn't feel like trying it on when he saw the price tag.

However, Hayley tugged at his hand, saying, "No, that won't do. You have to try it on. You're not Mr. Hunter anymore. You're now President Hunter."

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Alex was instantly pleased by the look of adoration and admiration in her eyes. He tried the shirt on, after which she paid for it with his money, which he spent willingly. Erica could never give him this kind of feeling. Despite marrying him, she always looked down on him. Only Hayley could tickle his vanity.

Getting very sentimental at this moment, he suggested, "Hayley, once I get money from Tillman Constructions, let's buy a house by the sea. We'll get married, have kids, and live out our lives there in retirement, okay?"

"Sure! I can't wait to enjoy such a life with you."

"Give me some more time. Once I get the money, I'll quit right away. I'll divorce Erica and marry you."

"Alright, I'll wait for you patiently." Hayley smiled with smugness in her eyes.

Anastasia will never know that I'll be spending her father's money for the rest of my life, she thought to herself.

On the other hand, Erica left the hospital and went back to the Tillman Residence. What was once a cozy home for her was now devoid of warmth. All that was left was a servant who was still in employment, who took care of the housekeeping and cooked meals for her.

"Welcome back, Miss Erica. Would you like something to eat?" asked Mrs. Garner. Erica sat on the sofa. She missed Naomi and wanted to get her out of police

custody. Otherwise, with the evidence Anastasia was holding, Naomi would definitely be sentenced to jail. She could only be released if Anastasia relented and dropped the case against her. Anastasia is so uncompromising in her stand, and she hates Mom. There's no way she'll let Mom off, thought Erica.

The thought made her feel anxious and unsettled. Just then, the doorbell rang. Mrs. Garner got up and went outside to answer the door. When she saw a strange man outside

the gate, she asked curiously, "Who are you looking for?"

The man outside was in his early fifties, with a wrinkly face, a hunchback, and grayish-white hair. One could tell at a glance that he belonged to the underclass society. "Excuse me, but does Naomi Lowell live here?"

"Why are you asking for our madam?" Mrs. Garner asked with a hint of disdain in her voice as she somewhat looked down on the man.

"I've got something urgent to discuss with her."

Mrs. Garner dared not let him in carelessly, though. "Madam isn't at home. Only Miss Erica is."

In the living room, Erica also wondered who was popping in on them. She waited for a long time, but Mrs. Garner didn't let the visitor in, so she had no choice but to come out on her own. "Who is it, Mrs. Garner?"

"Miss Erica, it's a stranger. We don't know him," Mrs. Garner replied before looking at the man outside through the gate.

The man outside also looked at Erica through the gate. Suddenly, his eyes lit up with excitement. "You're Naomi's daughter?"

Erica looked at him before waving her hand in disgust. "Go away! Don't come begging at my door."

The man outside was stunned. Grasping the railing tightly with both hands, he asked, "Are you really Naomi's daughter?"

"What does that have to do with you? Get lost, you damn beggar!" Erica yelled crossly.

The man's expression changed. "Can we talk, young lady? I've got something to ask you about."

"I don't have time to talk to you," Erica said before tugging at Mrs. Garner. "Just ignore him."

The man watched as Erica left. Then, he looked at the Tillman Family's mansion with a glint of greed in his eyes.

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Erica returned to the sofa, her mood made even worse by the man outside. She said to Mrs Garner, "If you see that guy again in the future, just ignore him and shoo him away."

"But he knows madam, Miss Erica. Could he be a friend of hers?"

"How could my mom possibly have such a poor friend? One can tell at a glance that he's a beggar who came to my house to beg for money," Erica swore unmannerly.

Having developed an air of superiority at this house, Mrs. Garner nodded in agreement. "That's right. How could madam possibly be friends with such a person?"

Erica then dialed Alex's number, upon which he answered the phone on the other end. "Hey, Erica."

"Where are you?"

"I'm meeting a client."

"When are you coming home?"

"I'll be back in a while."

"Come back, then. I'm bored of being alone." Erica was yearning for Alex to come back to this home.

Unbeknownst to her, however, Alex was sitting in a cafe with Hayley in his arms at this very moment. Not only did she watch coquettishly as he answered the phone, but she even snuggled up to him somewhat purposely.

After hanging up the phone, Alex looked down at Hayley. "I have to go back to keep her company tonight."

Reluctant to part with him, Hayley held him in her arms. "I don't want you to leave. I want you to sleep with me tonight."

"Just be good and put up with it a little longer. Once I get the money from Tillman Constructions, I'll divorce her right away," Alex said, comforting her.

Only then did Hayley pout her lips. "Okay."

Anastasia didn't go to her office today. Instead, she went to the Presgrave Residence in the afternoon to take Jared out to relax. They took a stroll in the park, with several bodyguards escorting them from behind to ensure their safety.

Jared seemed to know something, and a hint of grief sprang to his big eyes.

"Mommy, when will Grandpa wake up?"

"Your grandpa is ill, so he needs some time to wake up. Let's wait for him a little longer, okay?"

Jared blinked his eyes. Being a sensible child, he behaved himself very well at the Presgrave

Residence. Elliot often took the boy with him to the Presgrave Group or to hang out at shopping malls.

"Jared, I'll be busy these days."

"It's okay, Mommy. Just go ahead with your business. I'll be good," Jared replied sensibly. He was well taken care of at the Presgrave Residence, where Harriet treated him like her own great grandson. He said mysteriously, "Mommy, I saw Mr. Presgrave's photo album last time. Guess how much I look like him."

"Do you look very much like him?"

"Yeah, that's right! I'm the double of him. When I looked at the photos of him as a child, I felt like I was looking at myself."

Anastasia gave an inward sigh. To think there's such a coincidence, she thought. After they finished taking a stroll in the park, the bodyguards took Jared back to the Presgrave Residence, whereas Anastasia returned to the hospital. As soon as she arrived downstairs, her cell phone rang. "Hello?" she said.

"Miss Tillman, we found that Alex had bought a small apartment with the misappropriated money," reported someone from the finance department.

"Alright. Note it down and keep looking into it," Anastasia instructed.

As soon as she stepped into the lobby, she saw Elliot coming in with several doctors. She turned to see the man, who carried himself with the grace of a leader. Like other women in the lobby, she stood aside and started to admire him.

Fixing Anastasia with deep, fathomless eyes, Elliot whispered something to an elder next to him before coming toward her.

Anastasia sized him up with her head slightly tilted to one side.

Elliot narrowed his eyes, asking, "What are you looking at?"

"I find that you're really quite handsome," Anastasia praised.

Elliot was inwardly pleased by her words. Sull, he asked somewhat sourly, "Only now do you realize it?"

Anastasia couldn't help but chuckle, "I've never seen the doctor just now before. Is he newly hired?"

"Mm-hmm. They're cardiac and neurology specialists specially hired from other

hospitals in hopes of improving your dad's condition."

Seizing the opportunity, Rey, who was standing beside them, said, "Miss Tillman, President Presgrave has gone to a lot of trouble to hire these specialists. He personally went to them and earnestly pleaded with them to come over."

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Elliot turned his head and gave Rey a dirty look, signaling the latter to shut up. Anastasia was visibly stunned; inwardly, she was incredibly moved. He's done so much behind the scenes for my dad's condition, she thought. "Thank you so much," she said. Then, ignoring the crowd coming and going around them, she flung her arms around Elliot's neck and stood on tiptoe to kiss him on the cheek. Elliot put his muscular arms around her waist to make it easier for her to kiss him. Rey turned around behind them while stifling a laugh. President Presgrave has to thank me for this. Would Miss Tillman have been so moved if I hadn't spoken out of turn?

After kissing Elliot, Anastasia held his hand, saying, "In that case, let's go upstairs and take a look!"

Elliot nodded before heading for the elevator with her in his arms.

Rey didn't go with them, though; Elliot had something else for him to do. Perhaps because he was too disgusted with Alex, he ordered Rey to monitor Alex's every move from now on. He wanted to get something on Alex as soon as possible in order to send the latter to jail. Now that the latter was obviously not capable enough of managing Tillman Constructions, he would definitely take some illegal shortcuts, or he might want to wangle some money out of the company and then run away. Whatever he wanted, he would certainly do something.

Standing in front of the French window, Anastasia looked at the few specialists, who were standing before Francis' sickbed in the middle of a discussion. Her heart was filled with hope and anticipation as she hoped that they had a better way to bring him round.

Just then, Elliot came over to her from behind with two cups of coffee in his hands.

Taking a cup of coffee from him, Anastasia turned to look at him, only to see a somewhat tired look on his good-looking face. Not only that, but there seemed to be dark circles under his eyes, which caused her to feel sorry for him at once. "You didn't sleep well last night? Did I disturb you while we were sleeping?" she asked with self-reproach. The man's beautifully-shaped eyes were bloodshot, making her feel even sorer for him.

Elliot curled his lips into a smile before gracefully taking a sip of his coffee.

"Nope. You slept like a log."

"Then why couldn't you sleep well?" Anastasia was puzzled. Elliot turned to look at her, but he was somewhat hesitant to speak. This woman probably has never been romantically involved with a man before, which is why she's clueless about men's troubles. Well, it's not her fault. I'm glad that there's never been another man in her life. Not wanting to put her on the spot, he could only find a random excuse. "Nothing. It's just that I slept late last night because I was too preoccupied with work."

Anastasia took a drink of her coffee, which was aromatic and silky smooth. Somehow, looking at the specialists standing before Francis' bed, she felt even more reassured. These people are probably leading medical authorities from different hospitals, so this guy must have done a lot of things for them to show up in Dad's ward together. For someone as proud as him, it must've been difficult to plead with them in person. "Sorry for causing you so much trouble over what happened to my dad," she said sincerely.

"He's not only your dad; he's also my father-in-law. Isn't it my duty to save my father-in-law?" Elliot asked her in reply.

Anastasia was floored by his question right away. For a moment, she didn't know what to say, so she could only let out a laugh. "Okay! If you say so, I'll have to marry you in the future."

"That's of course. Who are you gonna marry if not me?" Elliot had absolute confidence in himself.

Anastasia blinked her eyes. Seems like I won't be getting the short end of the stick by marrying him. So, I'm the one who has struck gold by taking advantage of him, right?

Meanwhile, Erica didn't get to see Alex at the Tillman Residence that night. He said he had to visit a client on business, so she stayed alone all night.

Unbeknownst to her, however, instead of going anywhere, he spent the night finding solace in Hayley.

Early the next morning, Erica left home in her car. However, when she drove out

of the gate, a figure suddenly dashed over and stopped her car. Startled, she hurriedly slammed on the brakes, upon which she felt that she had knocked down the person.

Frightened, she immediately opened the car door and got out of the car to take a look, only to see the man who had lingered outside her home last night. He was lying on the ground, but it was obvious that he wasn't injured.

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"It's you again? What the hell do you want? Get lost!" Erica swore in exasperation. Just then, the man got up and suddenly approached her. After studying her face with probing eyes, he finally saw the mole on her cheek, upon which he laughed happily like a fool.

"What the hell are you looking at? F*ck off! Get in my way again and I'll run you over!" Erica snapped with a snort.

The man gave a sigh, as if to lament about something. "Did Naomi teach you to conduct yourself like this? Well, that's understandable. Your mom is such a person, after all. One can't expect her to teach you to be good."

"What nonsense are you talking about? And what did you call my mom? Naomi? Who gave you the right to call her on a first-name basis?" Erica only assumed the man to be a former friend of Naomi. But what makes him think he can come asking for Mom right now? He looks so ignoble and disgusting. He's got to be up to something.

"What's your name? Do you know what your father's name is?"

"I'm Erica Tillman. My dad is Francis Tillman." Erica proudly told the man Francis' name.

Upon hearing her words, the man gave a wry laugh right away. "Francis Tillman isn't your father."

The smug look on Erica's face instantly vanished. She and Naomi were the only ones who knew that she wasn't Francis' daughter. How did the man know that?

"What bullsh*t are you talking about? I'm warning you, cut that nonsense!"

However, the man said again, "You're not Francis' daughter."

Erica's face instantly paled with horror. She glared at the man, saying, "That's nonsense! I am Francis' daughter."

The man was finally unable to restrain himself any longer. Staring at Erica, he growled somewhat irritably, "You're not! You're the daughter of Naomi and me! I'm your father, and you're my daughter!"

Erica's eyes widened in horror; fear enveloped her as she looked at the man in disbelief. What? The low-class man before me is my father? No, that's not possible. I'll never acknowledge such a man as my father. "F*ck off! Who wants to be your daughter? I'm warning you, if you dare talk nonsense again, I'll—"

"I need 10,000. As long as you give me the money, I promise you that I won't go around telling people about it." The man didn't go out of his way to come here to reunite with his daughter. He was here to ask for money.

Erica really looked down on the man before her from the bottom of her heart, but she had to silence him. She looked around, and luckily, there wasn't anyone else around

Ind, and luckily, there wasn't anyone else around. She hurriedly took her bag out of her car and grabbed a handful of cash out of it. Handing the cash to him, she said in a quavering voice, "Get out of my face with the money and don't show up in front of me ever again. I don't care who you are; I'll never have anything to do with you."

Seeing the cash, the man took it from her without counting it; he knew just by touching it that there had to be more than 10,000 in it. He said happily, "Whether you admit it or not, I'm your father. And, you're quite pretty."

Erica only found his words disgusting. Nevertheless, she stared fixedly at the man for a few seconds. He was by no means comparable to Francis, who had regular features and gave off an air of scholarly refinement through every pore. On the other hand, one could tell at a glance that this man was struggling for a living at the bottom rung of society. "Take the money and don't show up in front of me or come to me again," she warned.

The man couldn't help but take another look at her car before stretching out his hand to touch its painted surface. "This car must be expensive, right? The paint seems to be of such a high quality."

"Don't touch my car with your dirty hands!" Erica was pissed off. She didn't want to see the man even for a second!

The man felt a twinge of inferiority as well. He could only pull his hand back, asking, "Where's your mom?"

Erica didn't want to tell him about Naomi, though. Pulling the car door open, she

said, "Don't come to us if there's nothing." With that, she revved up her car and sped away.

The man crouched on the ground and began to count the cash. After counting out a total of 15,000, he happily produced a packet of cigarettes and started smoking.

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Now. I'll have someone to rely on for cash, thought the man as he left while smoking happily.

At this moment. Mrs. Garner, the servant, stood up behind the wall next to the little door with a shocked expression. She couldn't believe she had just learned a big secret by chance.

She happened to be sweeping the yard when she heard Erica yelling outside the gate earlier. She had wanted to head out to take a look, but when she saw that Erica was alright, she didn't feel like doing so anymore. Consequently, she eavesdropped on Erica's conversation with the man.

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She couldn't believe that the plainly dressed man was actually Erica's biological father. Perhaps nobody in the Tillman Family knows the secret of Erica's parentage. Now that she thought about it, that would make Anastasia the only real daughter of the Tillman Family.

Having worked here for more than ten years, Mrs. Garner had witnessed with her own eyes how Naomi had abused Anastasia both verbally and physically during Anastasia's maiden years. Naomi's daughter lived like a princess whereas the real daughter of the Tillman Family couldn't even buy a piece of clothing.

Inwardly, she felt somewhat sorry for Anastasia, but she felt even sorrier for Francis, who had raised another man's daughter for over 20 years. Even his company had fallen into Naomi's and Erica's hands now, whereas Anastasia seemed to have only gotten less than one-third of its shares.

Mrs. Garner was shrewd, so she wouldn't easily let out such a big secret. Not only that, but she had learned how to be shrewd and calculating while living here. This was a great opportunity to make a fortune!

Erica would make a fortune in the future with the shares she now held in Tillman Constructions. I'll trade this secret for some money, which will be enough for me to live out my life in retirement. She didn't have to live the humble life of a servant anymore. And besides, it wasn't like Naomi was nice to her, anyway. She resented Naomi and Erica deep down.

Meanwhile, Rey left home for work in the morning. On his way to his office, he received a phone call. As it turned out, the person he had sent out last night to trail Alex found something. "Send me the photos," he said.

The person quickly sent Rey the photos. The instant he tapped on them, he was stunned right away. Why was Alex with Hayley? Who else is the coquettish-looking woman holding Alex's arms in the photos if it isn't Hayley? Is Alex having an affair with her as soon as he is married to Erica?

As for how Hayley and Alex ended up getting involved with each other, Rey was no longer interested to know because he had to report this to Elliot.

Elliot's motorcade set out from the hospital for the Presgrave Group's headquarters. On his way there, he received a phone call and a few pictures from Rey.

Elliot's frosty eyes narrowed slightly as he merely took a glance at the photos before swiping them away. "Send these photos to Anastasia and see if they're of any use to her.

"Roger that, President Presgrave."

Having gotten up early in the morning, Anastasia was sitting in the specialists' office and listening to their discussion on Francis' condition. She didn't understand the terms they used, but it seemed from the way they sounded that there was hope for Francis' condition.

At that moment, her cell phone beeped with an incoming text message. She picked up the phone and saw Rey's message, which read, 'Miss Tillman, I have some photos for you to look at:

Right after that, he sent her over ten photos.

When she saw the first photo, she was stunned for a few seconds. The photo showed Hayley holding Alex's arm in a seductively charming posture. Not only that, but there were also several photos of them kissing each other affectionately on the cheek.

Seeing these photos, Anastasia felt uncomfortable because Alex cheated on Erica so merrily shortly after marrying her. Apart from that, the person whom he was cheating with was someone whom Erica thought was her bestie! On the other hand, Hayley really had no scruples; she wasn't ashamed of stealing Erica's

husband at all.

Anastasia gloated over the photos with a feeling of exultation. I'll just watch what happens next and let the two women rip each other to shreds when it's necessary.

However, something occurred to her. Hayley only liked Alex for his money. It was especially so after he became the president of Tillman Constructions and she was only too eager to please him.

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What if... A smile curled the corners of Anastasia's lips. Will she still be able to laugh if I freeze all of Alex's debit cards? The finance department had confirmed from the account statements that Alex had embezzled the company's funds, which gave her the right to freeze and audit all his bank accounts, during which time he wouldn't be able to spend even a penny.

She went outside and called the person in charge of the finance department, telling them to start preparing for this. The department would go through all the procedures and have Alex's debit cards frozen by this afternoon.

At this moment, Alex was having a meeting at Tillman Constructions. Now that he had suddenly lost quite a few clients thanks to Elliot, he had to source for new clients, so he was quite busy.

Erica came soon afterward, but her mind was elsewhere today, preoccupied with the man she had come across this morning. The man's face filled her with loathing and disdain. Damnably, however, the man was her biological father.

"What's wrong, Erica? Did you not sleep well last night?" Alex asked with concern.

"Were you really meeting with a client last night? Why did you come back early in the morning?" Erica asked dubiously.

Alex couldn't help but give her his puppy-dog eyes, saying, "I came back early in the morning for the meeting. Don't you see that my eyes are bloodshot?"

As expected, Erica bought his story. Not only that, but she even felt sorry for him and hugged him, saying, "Sorry, I shouldn't have doubted you. You've worked hard enough for the company."

Alex didn't forget to express his love for her. "It's okay! I can bear all kinds of

hardships for your sake. You're my wife, after all."

Upon hearing his words, Erica cheered up a little. Well, nothing wrong will happen as long as the secret of my parentage remains hidden. Otherwise, if Anastasia learns about it, the whole Tillman Constructions will be back in her hands, she thought.

It was soon 3:00 PM, and Alex was up to his ears in work. However, Erica didn't understand the company's affairs, so she could only go out and hang around. Recalling that she hadn't gotten in touch with Hayley for a long time, she called her immediately.

Hayley happened to be free as well, so they agreed to meet up.

In the cafe, Erica noticed Hayley's healthy complexion and how the latter was dressed in designer clothes again. Not only that, but the latter was carrying a new purse. She asked with a smile, "Seems like you've been doing fine recently! Did you get yourself a sugar daddy or something?"

Hayley averted her eyes guiltily for a moment. "Nope, I didn't. It's just that someone's been nice to me."

Erica looked at her face, which had successfully undergone plastic surgery. One had to say that the plastic surgery did produce nice results; Hayley had thrown money at it, after all. However, nobody knew the price she paid for this. She had now lost both her sense of smell and sense of

taste, which made her life extremely difficult. However, life had to continue, so she had no choice but to wangle money from Alex for her medical treatment.

"You do look a little like Anastasia with your makeup on," Erica said.

Hayley's eyes flickered with displeasure. "Who says that I have to look like her? I just want to be myself now."

Erica was rendered speechless for a moment. She felt that Hayley was obviously imitating Anastasia in every aspect. Not only that, but she even purposely wore light makeup like the latter. However, she lied through her teeth about it.

"How is Anastasia now? And how is your dad?" Hayley asked.

Erica couldn't help but ask in surprise, "How did you know what happened to my dad? When did I tell you about it?"

Hayley's face paled slightly with fright. She hurriedly said, "You didn't tell me about it? Then where did I hear that? Oh, right, I accidentally heard it from someone when I went to your place to visit you last time. I forgot about it."

Erica didn't think much about it either. She said with a sigh, "My dad's comatose, and my mom... She was set up by Anastasia-that b*tch-and locked up."

Hayley deliberately feigned shock. "What? What did Anastasia do to your mom?"

"She said it was my mom who made my dad comatose. That's bullsh*t," Erica said through clenched teeth.

Hayley sneered inwardly. Weren't you guys in this together? How could you speak so self-righteously as though you have justice on your side? "Anastasia is indeed scheming and vicious. Neither of us is a match for her. You've got to watch out for her in the future," she said, comforting Erica.

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"That's of course. I won't let her have an easy time," Erica said resentfully.

"Well, then, let's go shopping," Hayley suggested before getting up to pay the bill.

She went to the counter as Erica waited for her in her seat. The card she was using right now was Alex's, so she naturally handed it to the waitress, who then swiped the card. However, the card was declined.

"Sorry, miss, but this card of yours is declined," the waitress said to Hayley.

Hayley took the card and glanced at it. "How is that possible? I just used it this morning. Swipe it again."

The waitress tried a few more times, but the payment was still declined.

Hayley had no choice but to take the card back and pay the bill in cash. As she walked toward Erica, she was inwardly puzzled. Did Alex cancel the card he had given me?

When Erica suggested that they go shopping, Hayley excused herself, saying that she had something to deal with. As a result, Erica had no choice but to drive her somewhere and drop her off.

After parting from Erica, she hurried to a bank to find out what was wrong with her card. She was sitting at the counter when the bank officer said to her in surprise, "Miss, this card of yours has been frozen, so it can't be used."

"What? It's frozen? Who froze it?"

"Are you the owner of this card? If not, you should ask the owner what's going

on.”

“Under what circumstances will a debit card be frozen?” Hayley asked curiously.

“There are many circumstances that can cause this. You should ask the card’s owner to find out what happened in particular.”

As Hayley left the bank with the card in her hand, she had a bad feeling in her gut. She took out her phone and dialed Alex’s number.

“Hey, Hayley.”

“Alex, why is your card frozen? I couldn’t buy what I wanted.”

“What? Wait a minute.” Alex was checking his phone’s messages; he hadn’t had time to check his cell phone because he was too busy with the meeting. And sure enough, his phone registered a notification from the bank saying that all the bank cards under his name had been frozen. “Hayley, I’ll call you back in a minute. The card isn’t usable for the time being.” Inwardly, he was anxious as well, for he knew whose doing it was. It’s Anastasia. After hanging up on Hayley, he anxiously stepped out of his office.

Anastasia didn’t come to the finance department today, so the only ones working here were her

subordinates. Alex went to Gregory Lewinsky, the group leader in charge of the department’s affairs. “Mr. Lewinsky, why did you have my cards frozen? Who gave you the right to do so?” he questioned angrily.

“President Hunter, this is done on Miss Tillman’s orders. You can call her to ask her about it,” Gregory replied immediately.

However, Alex dared not call Anastasia, mainly because he was the one in the wrong and that it’d be difficult to talk about his misappropriation of the company’s funds. “Mr. Lewinsky, how about you unfreeze my cards first? I’ll explain the matter to Miss Tillman later,” he said.

“Sorry, but we only obey Miss Tillman’s orders here,” Gregory replied coldly while snubbing Alex.

Alex had no choice but to leave the finance department. Standing before the French window, he took out his cell phone and pondered for a moment. Still, he dialed Anastasia’s number.

“Hello?” Anastasia’s voice was chilly.

“Anastasia, could you inform me before freezing my debit cards? My life is affected now that all my debit cards are completely unusable,” Alex said in a polite tone.

Anastasia had no intention of letting him off, though. “President Hunter, you should know why I have your debit cards frozen. There are problems with several

accounts, so your cards will be unusable until the money is recovered.”

“Anastasia, I’m Erica’s husband and your brother-in-law. Could you unfreeze my debit cards first for the sake of our relationship? I’ll solve the rest of the issues as quickly as possible,” Alex implored humbly.

“Sorry, but let’s follow the company’s rules,” Anastasia replied before hanging up. At once, Alex pounded the wall as if he had gone crazy. He had been under tremendous pressure recently. There were always problems with running the company; he often had to deal with either a lack of materials or a bunch of customer complaints. Not only that, but he had to source for new clients. In other words, being the president of Tillman Constructions was far from being as glamorous as he had imagined.

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Alex’s eyes were bloodshot; he had no choice but to take out his cell phone and dial Erica’s number.

“Hello?”

“Erica, Anastasia froze my bank cards. Could you lend me yours for a moment? I need it now for an emergency.”

“What? Why would Anastasia freeze your bank cards?”

“She found out about the money I embezzled last time and used it as a reason to have my bank cards frozen,” Alex explained somewhat indignantly. .

“Alright, I’ll give you a card later,” Erica replied.

Alex then hung up on her. Still, he was finding a way to unfreeze his cards. Meanwhile, in the hospital, the female nurse in charge of Francis’ fluids was replacing his cannula when she suddenly sensed a movement in his arm as she was holding it. Startled, she stopped putting in his cannula and hurried outside to report it to the doctors.

Soon after that, Anastasia learned that Francis had shown a response. Seeing the few specialists who were checking on Francis’ condition before his sickbed, she stood outside the window with a flicker of surprise in her eyes. Dad finally made a movement, which means that he’s getting closer and closer to regaining consciousness.

Just then, the nurse in charge of replacing Francis' cannula just now came over to her, saying, "Miss Tillman, I'm sure that your father moved."

mo

"Thank you. I believe that my dad's recovering," Anastasia replied thankfully. After that, she took out her cell phone and dialed Elliot's number. She said to him in surprise, "My dad showed a response just now. He moved."

She didn't realize that it was strangely quiet on the other end of the line. Elliot's voice sounded especially deep and clear as if it were played in stereo; he was happy for her. "Is that so? Well, that means our efforts aren't in vain."

Realizing that it was too quiet on the other end, Anastasia asked with embarrassment, "Are you in a meeting?"

"Mm-hm," Elliot replied with a chuckle.

"In that case, just go ahead with your meeting. I won't bother you any longer."

"Alright, I'll call you back when the meeting is over," Elliot said to her.

Anastasia hung up. She really wanted to share with him immediately what had just happened to Francis, but she somewhat blamed herself upon recalling how she had interrupted him while he was in a meeting. As for Erica, she had no intention of sharing the matter with her. She didn't feel like telling Erica about it. After all, all the latter cared about was the company, not her father.

Meanwhile, Naomi was still being detained. The evidence submitted by Anastasia was sufficient for her to be charged with attempted murder. At this moment, she experienced how distressing it was to be imprisoned. Only two weeks had passed since she was put behind bars, but she was already feeling miserable. To her, life in prison was utterly inhumane.

At this moment, she found herself hoping that Francis could regain consciousness and get her out of prison. Even if he hated her and divorced her, she was fine with it as long as she didn't have to go to prison. And besides, Erica couldn't be of much help to her while she was here; all the former could do was bring her clothes. Other than that, all she had here was a bed surrounded by ice-cold walls. She yearned for life outside the prison, but she also dreaded what Anastasia would do to her.

If Francis were to remain comatose for life, Anastasia would probably hate her so much as to have her locked up in here forever. She felt like crying. To think that I'd forsake my comfortable life out there and let myself come to such a bad end, she thought. She hoped day after day that Erica and Alex would get her out of here, only to get disappointed every single day. Still, she knew how much Erica was capable of; the latter was essentially terribly spoiled and had no ability to

speak of. She also regretted not having raised Erica to be like Anastasia, who could put everything aside first to save her father.

In the afternoon, Erica brought Alex a bank card, wanting to ask him out to dinner in the evening before spending some quality time together. After all, now that they were husband and wife, she also wanted to sleep with him.

However, Alex declined her dinner invitation, saying that he had to work until late tonight because he was too busy with work at his office.

Erica was a person who could hardly stay idle. And besides, she'd rather go home and binge on TV dramas in bed than keep Alex company while he worked extra hours. Moreover, Alex also persuaded her to go home, so she had no choice but to leave reluctantly.

Just when she was halfway to her home, she heard the beep of a text message. She picked up her cell phone and took a look, only to see a message saying that 40,000 had been withdrawn from her card.

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Erica was stunned. For whom did Alex withdraw the 40,000? Not only that, but it pained her that he had withdrawn such a large amount at one go. However, recalling that he needed the money urgently to feast the clients or something, she had no choice but to suppress her displeasure.

Unbeknownst to her, however, the 40,000 was delivered to Hayley's hands as soon as it was withdrawn by Alex. Seeing the stack of notes on the desk, she hugged Alex happily. "Alex, thank you for always having me on your mind." Alex replied, "I can't let you suffer, after all." He was really in love with Hayley, whose gentleness and adoration for him made him feel needed. Furthermore, he liked her pretty looks. Her features, which somewhat resembled Anastasia's, often fascinated him.

Meanwhile, Erica drove back to her home when she suddenly saw the man from last time-her biological father-standing by the wall next to the gate. Startled, she immediately got out of her car. "What are you doing here? Who gave you the permission to show up here?" She showed no respect for him, as if chasing a beggar away.

However, the man asked her for money right away as her father. "Erica, I need more money. Your dad is short of cash here."

Erica was filled with disgust. She replied with a sneer, "Who told you that you're my dad? Get out of my face! I don't want to see you at all! How could you ask me for money again after I gave you over 10,000 just a few days ago? Are you taking me for an ATM machine?"

However, the man had found out about the Tillman Family's background. "How could you have no money? Francis Tillman is rich; he's got a big company and owns assets of over a billion! What about your mom?"

At this very moment, Erica hated Naomi somewhat. Why would the latter choose such a low class man to be her father? He was nothing but a useless good-for-nothing. "That's the Tillman Family's money. What does it have to do with you?"

IC

"You're the Tillman Family's second daughter, so you definitely have money. I don't need much, Erica. Just give me another 20,000, and I promise I won't show up again!"

Upon hearing that, Erica immediately believed him. "Really? You won't show up again?"

"You're my daughter. Now that you're doing well, I'm glad about it. I won't show up and disturb you and your mother."

Erica happened to have 20,000 in her bag, which she had just withdrawn from her bank account. Upon hearing his words, she took out her bag and produced a stack of notes from it before handing it to him. "Hide as far away as possible, and don't let me see you again."

The man's face lit up with pleasure as he took the money. "Sure."

Upon seeing this, however, Erica felt even more disgusted. She even found herself dirty for having the man's blood running in her veins. How she wished she were Francis' daughter, just like Anastasia! However, as long as no one uncovered her parentage, she would still be Francis second daughter and the second young lady of the Tillman Family. Inwardly, she was determined to keep this a secret for life.

However, she didn't know that her parentage was no longer a secret. Mrs. Garner, the servant of her home, had learned about it.

Meanwhile, at the Presgrave Hospital, Anastasia learned of another piece of good news that night. Francis' brain waves had begun to show a response. The response wasn't strong, but this was nonetheless a piece of great news. It meant that Francis might regain consciousness.

As a result, the boulder weighing on her chest began to come loose. She believed that Francis would definitely wake up, upon which the story about his will would fall apart. All of those who attempted to steal the Tillman Family's wealth would never get away with it.

It was already well past midnight, but Anastasia was sleepless with excitement, so she came outside Francis' ward again and sat down. After sitting there for a while, she saw Elliot coming over with a jacket in his arms and a glass of water in his hand.

Both the glass of water and the jacket were intended for her. Her heart warmed as she held the glass of water with both hands and smiled with the jacket that was full of his scent draped over her shoulders. "Why are you still awake?"

Elliot sat beside her, keeping her company. "I'm sleepless like you. I'm very happy, too."

"But you've got tons of work awaiting you tomorrow, whereas I can be lazy and sleep," Anastasia replied, feeling sorry for him.

Elliot leaned slightly closer to her with an intense look in his eyes. "I can't sleep unless you're sleeping with me in my arms."