

## Departure with a Belly Chapter 591 - 595

### Chapter 591

How Am I Unsuitable?

Summer marched away with long strides, but just as she was about to enter her room, s

omeone abruptly grabbed her arm.

“Wait.”

Judging by the voice ringing

out from behind her, she could tell it was Erik who grabbed her.

memory

With that man’s grip on her

arm, she stopped walking but did not turn around. Then, she said, “If serves me right, M

r. Ludson, I’ve quit. If you want to rehire me, you should follow the proper procedure inst

ead of visiting and following me all the way up here. Just what do you want?”

There was a moment of silence before he responded. “You have known what I want sin

ce two days ago.” He paused momentarily and continued, “Are you telling me I should r

peat it to you face-to-face?”

Summer understood the meaning of his words, but before Erik could continue, she quic

kly interrupted him. “No, you don’t!”

Then, his frown deepened, and he went over to her side, sensing the source of her conc

ern. “Why are you so against it?” Does she think I’m joking? Why else would she be so

against the idea?

Summer forced a smile and replied helplessly, "Can you truly not tell why I'm so against this, Mr. Ludson?"

"I can't."

She silently stared at Erik. Then, she stated, "We belong to two different worlds."

"Huh?" He raised an eyebrow. "Which planet do you come from?"

As soon as Summer heard this, her head turned to look at him, but she quickly turned a

way when she realized she hadn't washed her face after waking up. "You know what I mean," she said.

"What do you mean?" Erik narrowed his eyes and added, "Since we live on the same pl

anet, how are we from two different worlds?"

"Are you that dumb? There is no way you do not understand what I mean. Your social ci

rcle and mine are not the same. The way we approach work is different as well. We are

polar opposites in every way, including our perspectives on the world."

After she had finished her spiel, she observed that the man was maintaining his silence.

If his silence indicates that he has finally grasped my point, I guess I can stop talking now.

As she turned to leave, he broke the silence and said, "Why don't you look at me when you speak?"

After hearing this, Summer blinked and was confused.

After that, Erik grabbed her by the shoulder, intending to make her turn around and face him.

However, she tensed up and quickly covered her face when she realized what he was about to do. "Let me go."

Nevertheless, the sight of her covering her face prompted a perplexed expression to take over his features. "Why are you covering up your face?"

Even if you refuse to date me, there's no way you will refuse to even look at me, right?"

As she panicked, Summer only cared about hiding her face and blurted out, "That's not it. I don't want you to see my face. I have not washed it since waking up this morning."

When she said that, the hand pressing down on her shoulder loosened, and she heard Erik chuckle. "What are you afraid of? I've seen you in worse states."

She blinked, confused by his statements.

"When you worked overtime, you would occasionally fall asleep in the office and then return to work immediately after waking up."

"How is that the same? Back then, I only thought of you as my boss. Now—" Her words trailed off as she spoke.

"What about now? Do you not think of me as your boss now?" Erik asked. Summer immediately calmed down when she heard that, and her hands, which had been held up to hide her face, fell to hang by her sides as she stared at him blankly. "You're no longer my boss."

The moment those words left her lips, they finally locked gazes.

To him, she appeared unchanged from the days when she routinely reported to work without makeup.

She looked beautiful even without makeup, as the man she met during matchmaking had said.

“You’ve heard everything I’ve said just now. My answer will remain the same no matter how many times you ask me. Please leave,” Summer said.

“You think we belong to different worlds, but who else belongs to the same world you do? The man you just met for a blind date?” Erik rebuked.

She remembered him as a strict boss who never cracked a smile and seemed permanently mired in a gloomy expression. Consequently, she subconsciously assumed that he would always look like that regardless of his actions. Still, she had not expected to hear a hint of scorn in his voice. Nonetheless, she could see a moment of helplessness in his eyes as she looked at him.

“The blind date is an accident. If this man isn’t a good fit, the next candidate might be. I can keep looking until I find the right man.”

“How am I unsuitable?” Erik pursed his lips and stared at Summer unwaveringly, asking,

“Compared to the ideal man in your mind, how am I unsuitable?”

“I’m afraid you’ve misunderstood me, Mr. Ludson. I never said there was anything wrong with you. We are people who live in two different worlds. Look, you are rich while my entire family is poor. Even if my entire family can save up every penny we earn, you will forever earn more than just a simple signature on a contract.”

“Which means?” His face was blank, and he asked again, “How does that affect us getting together? What is your reason? Is it because I’m too rich?” For a moment, Summer did not know how to respond to that.

“I thought that would win me extra points,” Erik added. “I was just sharing a candlelit dinner in an upscale restaurant,” he argued.

Summer blinked and was perplexed by his statements.

“Have you forgotten about that? After the flight, you said you wanted to eat at a roadside barbecue stall,” he reminded.

After hearing this, Summer jogged her memory. How could I have forgotten that? We were heading to our hotel when I noticed a roadside barbecue stall. I had requested that the driver drop me off first and then drive Erik to the hotel. Once I had had my fill of the food, I would return to the hotel by myself. To my surprise, he followed me out of the car while dressed in a formal suit, and he ate with me at the stall without a hint of disdain. I was shocked then and asked why he would dine at such a place. Unexpectedly, his call

m response caught me off guard. He said, “Why not? Do you know what kind of life I had before I started my company?” The answer he gave me now is the same as the answer from back then. “I was not born rich. I have gone through everything you’ve experienced. I’m older than you, so I am more experienced. Hence, why do you completely reject me just because I am now richer than you?”

## Chapter 592

### Planned This For a Long Time

On the other hand, Summer was not as good with words as Erik, and she was at a loss

for words within a few minutes. Eventually, she responded, "I only want to live a normal l

ife with a normal husband by my side."

"Who said you

cannot live a normal life with me?" he shot back, staring at her. "When you're with me, y

ou will have more choices instead. You can

live a normal life when that is what you want. If you get tired of living a normal life, you c

an live a luxurious one. Wouldn't it be great to experience two different lives?"

She finally understood why he could get so far when he started from nothing.

He was a t

errifying man; not only was he great at adapting to whatever was thrown his way, but he

would even cast out a few lures to tempt his opponents into submission.

Then, she bit h

er lips.

"Am I wrong?" Erik continued. "Your life will not change because of my wealth. Everythi

ng depends on your choices and rules. We'll only be dating, right?"

Nonetheless, Summer could no longer muster up any rebuttal. All she could do was sta

nd there

and watch as he leaned closer to her until she was enveloped by the unique scent of his cologne.

“Well? Are you willing to reconsider the offer?”

Summer would step back whenever Erik approached, and they soon began shuffling do

wn the hallway. She stopped moving only when her back hit

the cold wall and couldn't go any further. Then, she stared at him with a bewildered expr

ession, unable to comprehend what was happening. He was my employer before I resig

ned, so why would he suddenly become... My suitor? Is this real? Am I just fantasizing

because my brain glitched out after I quit my job?

After a few moments of pondering,

she smiled awkwardly and replied, “I... Mr. Ludson, are you doing this because you find yourself at a loss after losing an employee out of the blue? Why d

on't you take some time to chill first?”

When Erik

looked at Summer, she was taken aback by the intensity with which his eyes glowed.

“There's no need. I have always known what I am doing,” he said.

He had always known what he wanted

since he was a child. When she was still by his side, he thought his chances of winning

her over were assured, so he thought he could take it slow. Nonetheless, he had never expected her

to resign, and he was naturally worried because she was no longer by his side.



“While I am panicking a little, I must make you understand that what I’m saying and my feelings for not born out of impulse.”

you were

Summer dazedly looked at Erik upon hearing his statements. “W- What then?” Could it be that... he actually likes me?

“I have planned this for a long time.”

His words ringing through the air stunned her, making her stare at him in disbelief.

Has he planned a confession? She struggled for a while before saying, “Why, though?”

“What do you mean?”

“Why would you-

” Summer bit her lip and shook her head. “I don’t understand. What about me is worth your liking?”

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Then, Erik chuckled lightly as soon as she said that. “Summer, just how bad is your self

-esteem? Is it because you can’t see the good in yourself?”

“O-Of course, I know how

good I am, but... Aren’t marriages like business deals for the wealthy? You know, marri

ages of convenience with the support of powerful families for both parties. It would be a

partnership between the strong to make the companies stronger than ever.”

Summer had seen many such instances while working in the corporate world.

That was

because many of those wealthy children didn't have a choice. Since childhood, they were brainwashed into believing they could have fun but never fall in love while dating. Hence, no matter what they did when they were single, they would end up in a marriage of convenience. She had also seen many married couples fooling around with lovers outside of their marriages. They never thought about marital faithfulness because there was no passion between them. Therefore, she had assumed Erik would also end up in a marriage of convenience. However, based on his woman-averse personality, she knew he would likely not cheat on his partner and stay loyal in his marriage. She had even wondered if he was able to accept a disloyal wife. Still, she had never imagined he would want to date her instead.

"It would be beneficial to my career if I married someone who is also influential," he said blandly. "I don't need it, though. I built Ludson Corporation from scratch by myself. I don't need any extra support. That's why I'll only marry a woman I love instead of entering a marriage of convenience."

Summer, who had been lost in her thoughts, froze when she heard Erik say he would only marry a woman he loved. Thus, she stammered, "W-What did you say?" After hearing this, he glanced at her and said, "Ah, you didn't hear me clearly. Do I need

to repeat myself?”

“I–

It’s fine.” Despite her shock, she knew that she did not dare to listen to him repeat himself.

Afterward, Erik watched as Summer’s fair cheeks turned bright pink with a blush that crept across her ears and down her neck. Even though he was cold and dense, he quickly grasped why she blushed. “Aren’t you usually a strong-minded woman? You actually blush when someone confesses their love for you,” he commented.

He was extremely surprised by her reaction. She had never shown him her feminine side during their time together, which had frustrated him for a long time. Even in his oblivious state, he understood that if a woman never felt uncomfortable or embarrassed around a man, she had zero feelings for him and didn’t find him attractive enough to inspire any fantasies. Additionally, he wondered if she had not yet recognized her feelings. Thinking that, Erik tapped Summer’s forehead and said, “Ah, I see you finally discovered your feelings.”

“What? I’m not embarrassed. You’re embarrassed. I–I have to head back to sleep.”

For the sake of the matchmaking date, she had been dragged out of bed early that mor

ning. She needed more rest, as evidenced by the bags under her eyes, but he wouldn't

stop rambling on.

“Okay. Go sleep. Let me know your answer when you wake up.”

“What?”

“You didn't say no just now, so you're considering my proposal, right?”

“I-1 didn't say yes either.”

“I know, but that means you must think about it, right? Sleep first. We can talk after that.

”

Erik's voice had returned to its usual stern and emotionless tone, giving

Summer the im

pression that she had

just received a new work order. However, she nodded unwittingly, likely out of habit built

over the years, before turning around and walking back to her room.

Before closing the door, she glanced back at him and said, “You should...

Head back fir

st?”

“Okay.”

Once she was sure he would leave, she quickly locked the door and dashed to the bathr

oom to check her reflection. She took a full two minutes to frantically examine every asp

ect of her face before she could breathe. a sigh of relief. Phew, no boogers in the

eyes! I'm sure I would have passed out and died right there if I'd been trying to converse

with Erik while my eyes were full of gunk.

## Chapter 593

### Misunderstandings

Summer washed her face before retiring to her bed. She didn't know when, but the anger she had felt after meeting the strange man earlier faded without her noticing during the conversation with Erik.

It jogged her memory of how cool and collected he was. In her eyes, it was essential for her significant other to have a calm presence. After years of working with him, she knew that no matter what problems arose at work, he was calm, was in control of his emotions, and never lost his temper.

When Summer occasionally lost control of her emotions, a simple "calm down" from Erik would relieve her distress, and she could use her problem-solving skills to get through whatever was bothering her. At this moment, she was pondering whether spending the rest of her life with him would be wise. Then, she recalled that he had given her the option to lead a normal life if that was what she desired or a luxurious one if she did not. The more she considered it, the more she liked the idea. After that, Summer began writhing around on the bed in an increasingly frustrated state of mind. A man like Erik would be surrounded by many beautiful women, and being with

him means he may be seduced away from me at some point. Since her anxiety increases

ed as she considered the situation, she gave up sleeping and sat in bed instead. Then,

she headed downstairs with somewhat hurried strides. He must be gone by now, right?

To her surprise, she arrived at the bottom of the stairs to find his familiar figure surrounded by her pack of relatives who were chattering and shoo

ting question after question at him.

As for Erik, he patiently sat there and answered all of their trivial questions. For Summer, this was an extremely unusual scene to witness. She knew that when he

was at the company,

every word seemed worth its weight in gold. He rarely spoke, even in meetings, so ever

y word he said would convey either a piece of information critical to the company's oper

ations or a steadfast decision. Nonetheless, it was the polar opposite of his current beha

avior, in which he answered nonsensical questions from a group of children.

For example...

“Mr. Ludson, is your suit custom tailored? I hear the suits of rich men are all designed b

y famous designers. Is

that true?”

“Mr. Ludson, how big is your company? Was Summer working for you as a secretary?”

At this point, the room was filled with meaningless and thoughtless questions.

Meanwhile, Summer wanted to scoff at the questions, but Erik sat there answering them with a serious face.

While observing him, her heart skipped a beat. This is nothing because anyone could have done it. Still, Erik is not just anyone. Some things are more valuable because they come from particular people, such as when a wealthy person makes a concerted effort to spend time with another individual and then makes those plans in advance. Could he be

serious about me? What is it about me that he finds so appealing?

When it came to this matter, Summer had a lot of reservations. She had never considered the possibility of anything romantic between them because of their vastly different social standings. Hence, she never allowed herself to entertain fantasies about him and

did whatever she pleased whenever she was in his presence. Sometimes, she would abandon all sense of decency and not even bother with makeup. After everything she did, she couldn't understand why he would fall for her.

"You're back, Summer."

One of her younger cousins called out, snapping her out of her wandering mind.

Within a heartbeat, all eyes in the living room had shifted to her, including Erik's.

As Summer had already been noticed, she had no choice but to walk forward. "Where is my mom and Aunt Jenny?"

"Your date this morning was just too awkward. Still, we live in the same village, so we can't just anger that guy. They went to see him off," the other cousin replied. After hearing this, Summer rolled her eyes inwardly as she recalled how Zach had looked at her and revealed a glimpse of his true self. Is it necessary to see him off after the way he acted? Ah... I just recalled shouting at him while Erik was in the room. Would Erik think I'm acting like a harpy? Shoot! I am doomed.

In the past, she had shown absolutely no concern about what he thought of her, but a while ago, she had begun to pay attention to his opinions. When she awkwardly glanced at him, he asked calmly, "Didn't you say you're tired? Do you want to nap for a while more?"

Then, Summer scratched her head in embarrassment upon hearing this. "I do, but the morning has been so eventful that I can't fall asleep anymore." The world inside my head and my heart is in utter disarray because of what you said, so how could I possibly go to sleep now?

However, Erik smiled and suggested, "Shall we stroll around the village?" "Huh?" A stroll around the village? When she recalled how he had been stuck answering meaningless questions among the flock of relatives, she understood his question was a cry for help, so she nodded. "Okay."



Afterward, Erik quickly jumped to his feet and said his goodbyes before exiting the house with Summer.

Before she followed him out, she saw her relatives winking at her.

“Good luck, Summer.”

“With the boss in your grasp, who cares about matchmaking?”

They mistook their soft voices for inaudibility, but Summer caught every word. In that ca

se, there was no need to speculate about what Erik had heard because he was standing

beside her. Hence, he couldn't have missed what was said unless he was profoundly deaf.

On the other hand, her relatives only left when she grabbed a nearby object and threatened to throw it at them.

She waited until everyone had left before placing the object down, and then she awkwardly

smiled at him. “Ignore them. They just love to shoot their mouths.”

Unexpectedly, Erik responded, “Is that so? I think they were right.”

Summer was stunned into silence. She had endured enough embarrassment for one m

orning, and while she feared he would say something cringe-

worthy next, she hurriedly interrupted him, “Let's go. You wanted to take a stroll around

the village, right? Hurry up. Let's go.”

She even dragged him by the hand,

fearing he wouldn't move. Although she was obviously too weak to physically move him,

he complied with her request.

After getting some distance from the house, Summer could heave a sigh of relief. Since

they weren't around any of

her relatives, she assumed they wouldn't be a target of ridicule. As her anxiety began to

subside, a new concern quickly emerged. Her village was not a big city where no one k

new who she was, but every face they saw on their stroll was a familiar face.

Every two steps, she would be greeted by someone she had

to smile at until her muscles twitched in pain, but. her main concern was Erik by her side

. She feared

that if they strolled around the village, word would get. around by this afternoon that she

had brought a boyfriend home and was displaying him by walking around.

Then, in the

evening, the gossip would twist the facts to the point where she was engaged to her boy

friend, and by tomorrow, she would be married and had brought her new husband back

home.

The mere notion of that was enough to make her feel like she would be submerged in fa

lse gossip, so she gradually stopped

walking. Then, she said, "Forget it. Let's stop here."

"What is it?" Erik asked.

"If we go on, it will cause misunderstandings about our relationship."

## Chapter 594

### Illusions

“Misunderstandings?” Erik calmly gazed at Summer.

“They will think we are in that kind of relationship. Have you ever lived in a village?”

She had wanted to say he could not understand how rampant rumors could be unless h

e had lived in a village. before, but just as the words popped into her mind, she was rem

inded that he was a man who came from nothing. As an entrepreneur who started from

scratch, he had nothing to his name. Consequently, she shifted gears and asked him if

he had ever experienced life in a village.

Surprisingly, Erik nodded and replied, “Yes.”

“You should know just how terrifying rumors could be in a village, right?”

Summer said.

Since he has previously stayed in a village, communicating about the situation is much

easier. “If we go on a walk today, the rumors. spreading around tomorrow morning woul

d say that we are married. It would smear your reputation.”

To her astonishment, he did nothing but look at her coolly.

–

“If you want to, I will marry you right now. Do you think I would find this a stain on my re  
putation?”

Summer stared at Erik in stunned silence upon hearing this. She was so shaken by his

proclamation that her cheeks were once again flushed with redness when she finally processed what he had said. Then, she stuttered, “T– That’s nonsense!”

He replied nonchalantly, “It is not. You’ll know in the future. Still, if you’re afraid of what

may happen, let’s head back instead of going on a walk.”

“If we go back... Aren’t you afraid of being influenced by them?”

“It’s fine.”

Consequently, after a brief stroll, they returned to her home.

When they entered the house, Summer’s relatives kept asking her why they had

returned so early, which she

found highly embarrassing.

While it was almost lunchtime, Jane invited Erik to

stay for lunch, and he initially agreed, but he later received a call requiring him to leave

early.

After that, she waited until he had left the house before she called Summer into the kitch

en to question her

while they cooked.

“Have you not cleared things up with him yet?” As soon as Jane said that, she realized t

hat her expectations had been a little too high. After all, she had only spoken to

Summer about it the day before, so expecting her daughter to clear the air with the man

was unrealistic. Hence, she added, “If that is not possible, you should tell him everything

to avoid giving him false hope.”

Meanwhile, Summer ducked her head and said nothing.

“I thought I could clarify everything for you, but that feels like it would be quite disrespect

ful and hurtful, so I decided it was best to leave it to you. Since you’ve decided, you sho

uld clarify everything in the next two

days. Do you understand?” Jane said to her daughter twice, and when she received no

response, she looked at her. “Summer? I’m talking to you. Are you listening?”

Only then did Summer look up and turn to her mother with a conflicted expression. “Mo

m, I-”

Realization slowly dawned on Jane, and she narrowed her eyes and asked, “Did he say

something to you when he followed you upstairs earlier today?”

Not wanting to keep secrets from

her mother, Summer told her everything Erik had said in the morning.

Afterward, there was a long moment of silence in the kitchen.

“No wonder you’re feeling conflicted. His words are quite

touching. It’s very charming, but you-” Jane frowned as she said that.

Then, Summer hurriedly interrupted when she spotted the frown. “I’ll think it through by

myself. Don’t worry.” She then lowered her eyes. “I know I’m not worthy.

There will be n

o happy ending if I am with him.”

However, Jane stared at her daughter for several minutes before sighing and asking, “S

ummer, did my words affect you that badly?”

Summer’s silence was a clear yes.

“Honestly speaking, I said all that for your future consideration. It is best for your future,

but I don’t want to dictate your life. Do you understand?”

With a confused look in her eyes, Summer looked up.

In the meantime, Jane sighed again upon seeing the look on her daughter’s face. “What

I mean is that I am only giving you suggestions. It is up to you to decide what steps you

will take. Your choices are the most important part of this, okay?”

Summer froze and reflexively asked in return, “Do you mean that I can be with him if I want to?”

After hearing this, Jane raised an eyebrow and stated, “It sounds like you’ve made up your mind.”

“N-No-” Summer blushed as she tried to defend herself. “You mentioned it first. I was just asking-”

The sight of her red cheeks tempted Jane to tease her. “Alright now. Do you think I don’t

know what you think? I’m your mother. Don’t be shy. If you genuinely like him, you can give it a try.”

Nevertheless, Summer had not expected her mother’s tune to change so quickly. She was

surprised. “Mom, why

“Curious as to why I suddenly changed my mind? I didn’t. I have always thought this. Th

the most important part about your marriage is what you want, right? When I talked to you before, you seemed to take it so seriously that I thought you felt nothing for him.”

Summer pursed her lips in response. There was a time when I thought I wasn't interested in him. After all, I have not once felt anything u  
ntoward for him.

“Still, based on how you're behaving now, you like him, and I can't stop you. My daught  
er should be free to do  
whatever she wants.”

Summer was moved by Jane's declaration because she had been contemplating what to do about the situation and had not expected her mothe  
r to say yes.

“So, can I try dating him? There's such a large gap between us, though.”

“If you truly like him, it's not that big. You also cannot regret this if something  
we cannot predict happens in the future.”

“That won't happen.”

Summer had always been someone who lived in the moment. Since she liked him now, they should get together. They would break up when  
they did not like each other anymore. If Erik cheated on her or wanted a breakup, she d  
id not think she would stubbornly cling to him either.

“Good. It's your life. You decide.”

Summer had not expected everything to go so smoothly. Soon after returning to her roo

m, she called Victoria to tell her all about what happened.

Nevertheless, Victoria was not shocked to hear this and commented, “He’s not wrong.

With him, you can live two different lives. Although, all marriages will eventually crack and split if

the couple does not try to keep the relationship going. It doesn’t matter how perfect it is.

”

When she said that, she recalled her relationship with Alaric. The memories of their time

together had vanished along with her other memories. Still, she felt like there must have

been a fight between them before. However, he had been working hard to repair the rift between them.

Many people sought perfection in love.

Did a perfect person actually exist in this world? How about an ideal marriage?

What one thought of as perfect would simply be the other person going along and letting

them have their way. Once the person grew tired of clinging to the relationship, all sense

of perfection would be an illusion.



## Chapter 595

### Not Being Herself

After talking for about half an hour, Summer finally asked Victoria when she would be returning.

“I’ll be back in two days,” Victoria replied.

When Summer learned she was returning home, she immediately said, “Then, I’ll pick you, Nicole, and Nathan up.”

“Okay.”

After the call was over, Summer continued browsing on her phone. She had intended to

buy New Year’s gifts for the children but had forgotten to do so when she returned home.

Moreover, the children had gone abroad for the New Year celebrations, so she didn’t make up for it later.

Now that she heard they were coming back and she happened to be going to pick them

up, she could make up for the

gifts. However, when she checked her phone, she realized that many online shops were

closed during the New Year, and even courier deliveries were suspended.

Summer eventually abandoned her plan of buying gifts for children online and decided to

go shopping in town. She had initially planned to go alone, but suddenly she thought of

Erik. Now that I’ve decided to

pursue a romantic relationship with him, I should try integrating myself into his life. Sure!

y, it's not too much to ask him to come along as I shop for the children's presents? If he can't even be bothered with that, there's no point in trying to build anythi

ng serious with him. Having made up her mind, she finally got around to calling him.

The man was somewhat surprised to receive a call from her. "You called me?"

When she heard his deep voice, she flushed slightly. "Um, is it not okay?"

There was a low chuckle from the other end. "Of course, it's okay. If you agree to be wit

h me, you can call me

daily."

The

way

he said it... Suddenly, there was a spark of defiance in Summer, and she instinctively re

torted, "So, if I'm not with you, I can't call you anymore?"

"If you're not with me, why would you want to call me? Aren't you afraid I would take it th

e wrong way?"

However, she shrugged and remained silent.

Then, he asked, "Is that your answer?"

Caught off guard by his words, she queried, "What?"

"By calling me proactively."

After realizing what he meant by his words, Summer quickly denied it.

"No, I just called you on a whim. What does it have to do with my answer?"

"Okay. Then, what do you want to tell me?"

After Erik made this comment, she was immediately mortified at the thought of asking hi

m to go shopping with her for presents for the children. She had only called him on a wh

im, and now he thought it was her answer.

If I take the initiative to ask him to accompany me, will he perceive my request

differently? No, I can't do that. Although I'm willing to give our relationship a shot, I don't

want to make things too easy for him for fear of coming off as cheap. After giving it some

thought, she said, "It's nothing. I just dialed the wrong number."

"The wrong number?"

"Yes, I just dialed the wrong number. Sorry for bothering you."

After saying that, Summer didn't care about his reaction and quickly hung up the phone.

She placed her hand over her chest after the call ended and breathed a sigh of relief. In

this case, I think I'd better do the gift shopping myself. If he does not come looking for

me. I should refrain from looking for him for the time being.

She was engrossed in her thoughts when her phone vibrated, and she glanced at the ca

ller ID on her phone

to see that it was Erik. When she saw his name, her heart raced uncontrollably, and afte

r a brief moment of thought, she decided to answer the call. "W-What?"

Unexpectedly, he said, "Should I come to pick you up now?"

Then, she asked, "Why would you pick me up?"

Erik chuckled softly on the other end and replied, "No reason. I just wanted to see you."

When she heard this, she said nothing.

"Is that okay?"

“Well... Okay then,” she replied. As long as he’s willing to come and look for me, I guess

I can’t say no!

“Okay, wait for me.”

The moment she hung up

the phone, she became acutely aware that she had not changed out of her regular attire

. Hence, she jumped off the bed, quickly changed into

another outfit, and then sat in front of the dressing table to apply her makeup.

While applying

lipstick, she suddenly realized that she was overdressed, so she hurriedly wiped off

the bright red lipstick and replaced it with a light rose color for a more natural look. Once

she

did that, she finally felt like her makeup complemented her rather than overwhelming her

self.

After about half an hour, Erik arrived.

Summer thought for a moment before walking to the back seat. Just as she opened the

car door, she heard him say, “Are you considering me as a driver? Sit in the front.”

Feeling embarrassed by his words, she had no choice but to move to the front seat.

As soon as she sat down, he leaned over and fastened her seatbelt. However, she was

too shaken to take a deep breath from his overwhelming manliness.

Once her seatbelt was securely fastened, he raised his eyes and noticed that she was t

ensely avoiding eye contact. Hence, he teased her, “Are you so nervous about wearing

a seatbelt? Perhaps, are you afraid I’ll do something to you?”

Then, Summer instinctively retorted, “No, how could you do anything to me?”

While sayi

ng this, she laughed nervously and turned her head, bringing her face closer to his.

At this moment, their

breaths seemed to intertwine within the confined space, and the atmosphere became sli

ghtly suggestive.

“Is that so?” Erik, who had always been composed, responded teasingly, “How can you

be so sure that I won’t do anything to you?”

Summer’s whole body stiffened upon hearing this. After maintaining eye contact for a fe

w seconds, she turned her face away and said awkwardly. “C–Can you start driving?”

Her response triggered a low chuckle, and he reassured her, “Don’t worry, until you agr

ee to be with me, I’ll respect you even if I have certain desires. You don’t have to worry.”

Following this, he leaned back and accelerated away.

Once the car left the neighborhood, it quickly merged into the traffic flow.

During this short journey, she was absorbed in her thoughts due to his words.

What did

he mean by saying he would respect me until I agreed to be with him? Did he genuinely

want to do something to me?

Thinking back to when he leaned in earlier, when he was close enough that she could s

ee the pores on his face and the color of his thin lips—pale pink, a healthy shade—

she couldn't help but wonder if he had kissed her at that moment, would she have refused?

It seemed that she wouldn't have.

The possibility of that made Summer's heart race uncontrollably. Her face turned red, a

nd her neck felt hot. She couldn't help but lower the car window, letting the cold wind blo

w in and dissipate the heat around her.

Since he had said those things to her earlier, her mind was filled with various not-at-

all-innocent thoughts, and she could no longer maintain a pure mind.

Nevertheless, the cold breeze she let in lasted only a short while before the car window

went back up.

Summer turned to look at Erik, only seeing his handsome profile. He drove attentively and said softly, "It's cold outside, so opening the window can make you catch a cold."