

## **The Ex and Her Riches Chapter 21 - 30**

### **Chapter 21 A Fight Without Weapons**

Gwendolyn was so close to suffocating in such an atmosphere. The whole day of work had her feeling worn out, and at that moment, she wanted nothing more than to end the silent fight between the two

men.

After loudly clearing her throat twice, she said, "It's late now, and tomorrow is still a weekday. You two should leave."

When Maverick saw Gwendolyn was about to leave, he immediately stepped forward to stop her.

However, Treyton shuffled ahead and stood in his way. A glint of coldness flashed across the former's eyes—he was warning Maverick to stay back.

Maverick could not overstep the mark since he was not in his own territory. All he did was put on a smile as he looked at Gwendolyn. "You haven't eaten your dinner, have you? How about we dine together and talk things out?"

Without hesitation, she turned down his suggestion. "I'm not hungry, nor do I want to talk with you."

Maverick's face was as black as thunder while Treyton chuckled in amusement.

*As expected of the princess of our household!*

Feeling as though he had gained the upper hand, Treyton stared Maverick in the eye provocatively. “Kiddo, it’s getting dark. Shall I send you home?” he asked Gwendolyn, though his gaze was fixed on the other man.

Gwendolyn turned around and saw the two men engaged in another round of staredown.

That discovery rendered her speechless. *They are at it again... How I wish God could take them away so that I could give my ears a rest.*

A tired sigh escaped her lips. “It’s okay. I can use this chance to familiarize myself with the route home.”

With that, she got into her Volkswagen Santana in a hurry and fled the scene.

Even though she was no longer present, the two men in the parking lot were still at loggerheads with

each other.

Since Gwendolyn did not accept Treyton’s offer, Maverick felt that he had turned the tables. “It seems like you still don’t understand my ex–wife well, Mr. Harris.”

Treyton flashed him a cold look. “I grew up with her; I know her better than you.”

At that, Maverick’s expression changed slightly.

When Treyton saw the change in his expression, he was delighted. “I advise you to pay more attention to the person close to you. Stop pining for someone you can never be with again.”

As soon as Treyton finished speaking, he followed Elisha into the elevator.

*It's fortunate that I saw them through the surveillance cameras as soon as they met and ordered the lowest level of the parking lot to be locked, as well as prohibited the employees from going there. Otherwise, our princess is going to get into troubled waters again.*

Meanwhile, Maverick stood still in the parking lot. The dim lights cast a shadow over his face, making it hard to read his expression.

Noah became more displeased as he watched his boss from afar.

Boss actually went against *Treyton* for Gwendolyn's sake. *Is he not* aware that he still cares a lot about Gwendolyn? But is this *fair to Ms. Mossey*? *Ms. Mossey is* such a fine lady. Because of *Boss*, *she* was chased out of the country by Old *Mr. Wright*. It wasn't easy for her. Moreover, *Boss* said he would marry *Ms. Mossey* and care for her, but now, he's giving her the cold shoulder. This is so saddening.

As those thoughts crossed his mind, the disgruntled assistant sent a text message to Natasha, giving her a brief account of the earlier incident.

*I sure hope Ms. Mossey can win Mr. Wright's heart back after seeing my text!*

"Noah, let's go!"

A thought seemed to have struck Maverick. After calling out to Noah, he got into the car speedily and waited for the latter to come over and drive.

With that, Noah collected his thoughts and trotted to the driver's seat.

Gwendolyn had gotten lost.

Something was wrong with her navigation application. It kept alerting her that the signal was weak, and on top of that, she happened to be driving on the most complicated road in Fairlake. The navigation application was not leading her in the right direction.

She had driven on the same route twice.

Right then, she inadvertently noticed that the car behind hers seemed familiar. It suddenly occurred to her that it had been tailing her since a while ago.

Through the rearview mirror, she saw the familiar license plate.

Maverick's *car*? Gwendolyn flew into a rage at that instant. *Why is that jerk still following me?*

She wanted to get out of her car and give that man a good beating before sending him flying to somewhere she could not see.

However, it was just a mere wish. After what had happened in the parking lot earlier, she knew that his combat prowess was superior to hers.

*Since I can't win against him, I'll run, then!*

Gwendolyn picked up speed, planning to switch to a more complicated path to get rid of him.

In Maverick's car, Noah said, "Boss, our men have interfered with Ms. Shalders' navigation application, but she has obviously noticed us, seeing that she's no longer following the route we set for her. She's trying to shake us off."

Maverick stared fixedly at the green Volkswagen Santana ahead of them. Rage was kindling within him.

*That green color is so gaudy and attention-grabbing!*

Without Treyton obstructing him, he was going to have things his way that time around.

He swore he would change his last name if he did not teach the woman a lesson for offending him.

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“Speed up. Find a chance to drive past her car and force her to come to a stop. But only do so when it’s safe.”

“Noted.”

The two cars sped on the road.

Alas, Gwendolyn’s Volkswagen Santana was not a match for Maverick’s Lamborghini Huracán. Their speeds were not on the same par.

Maverick’s car was getting closer, and it was about to pass hers.

Gritting her teeth, Gwendolyn focused on the road. There was a traffic light at the junction not far ahead.

Having a plan in mind, she quirked her lips slyly.

Just as she was a meter away from the junction, she abruptly turned her steering wheel and changed lanes. A second before the yellow light switched to the next color, she floored the accelerator and swerved left.

The traffic light had already turned red by the time Maverick realized her plan.

Glancing at the rearview mirror, Gwendolyn was overjoyed to see that the Lamborghini Huracán was forced *to* come to a stop. It was getting further away from her.

*Trying to challenge my driving skills? You're too green for that, Maverick!*

While she was immersed in the joy of her victory, two black cars suddenly emerged from the roads on both sides of her. Judging from how they were speeding toward her, she had a hunch that she was going to be forcibly stopped. D

To her disbelief, it seemed like someone else had their eye on her. (2

## **Chapter 22 Never Understood Her**

Gwendolyn clenched her jaw. Instead of slowing down, she floored the accelerator and picked up speed. Her eyes glimmered with a fiery resolve as if she was ready to take them on.

Both black car drivers were taken aback as she drove towards them without hesitation.

Two seconds before they were about to bump into each other, the black cars retreated in unison, allowing Gwendolyn's Volkswagen Santana to slip away through the small gap between them.

Before she could heave a sigh of relief, the black cars immediately came after her.

Gwendolyn wanted to go around in circles to shake them off, but her Volkswagen Santana wasn't quick enough to do so.

She bit her lip, but her heart was unusually calm.

Through the rearview mirror, she roughly estimated the number of occupants in the black cars.

There were five people in each black car including the driver.

There were ten strong, burly men in total.

*I'll be at a disadvantage if the fight continues for too long. If I use my abilities wisely, however, I may have a sixty percent chance of emerging victorious. I'll have to confront them no matter what. I'm feeling grumpy today, so it'll feel nice to have a good fight! F\*ck it!*

After making up her mind, she drove her car toward an abandoned building on the outskirts. Her face showed a steely determination as she pulled into the parking lot.

The black cars skidded to a halt behind her, and ten intimidating burly men armed with batons got down.

Gwendolyn leaned on her car casually with her arms folded.

The thugs' faces lit up with excitement when they saw her voluptuous figure clothed in a snug white dress.

They were convinced they had struck gold by accepting this deal.

Without fear, Gwendolyn swept her gaze over them and parted her lips to ask, "Tell me. Who sent you here?"

The thug leader leered at her. "Beautiful, don't blame us for what's about to happen. Blame yourself for crossing someone you shouldn't have."

Gwendolyn saw no point in asking who hired them, as they obviously wouldn't reveal their employer's identity.

Right before them, she kicked off her high heels as her lips curled. A cold gleam filled her eyes as she challenged, “Bring it on!”

As soon as she said her piece, the ten thugs raised their batons and charged at her.

*Honk, honk, honk!*

Not far away, a car started honking loudly.

A silver–grey Lamborghini Huracan drifted seamlessly and appeared in their sight.

The driver was no longer Noah.

A while ago, Maverick threw Noah out of the car for his poor driving skills and deducted a month of his salary as punishment.

Maverick stepped out of the car with a cold expression after it screeched to a halt.

His one hundred and eighty–eight centimeters stature exuded an intimidating aura, making him seem like he had ten men behind him even though he was alone.

The thugs jaws dropped wide open at the sight of him.

Maverick’s dark gaze was blazing with fury as he strode past Gwendolyn and aimed a swift kick at one thug. His kick sent the thug flying.

The other thugs instantly raised their batons and charged at him.

As he was here to save a damsel in distress, Gwendolyn put on her high heels and leaned back against her car to witness the heroic battle that was about to unfold.

Naturally, she was thrilled that someone was here to help her.



Maverick was swift and merciless. In just a few minutes, he managed to take down most of the thugs. The only man left standing was the leader who glared at Maverick warily.

He cracked his hands, his gaze as dark and foreboding as the night sky.

The leader felt a chill go down his spine being the target of Maverick's frosty gaze. His legs trembled profusely as he fell to his knees and begged, "Please spare me. I'll leave right away! I promise I won't bother the lady anymore. Please spare me..."

Maverick was about to ask questions when Gwendolyn strutted over in her high heels. Grabbing the leader's collar, she shot him a vicious glare and demanded, "Who sent you here?"

"I-I don't know. We usually accept any job as long as the client is willing to pay well. I don't know who the person is."

"You refuse to spill, huh?" Gwendolyn raised her arm to give him a tight slap.

The leader was shocked senseless by Gwendolyn's harsh slap. He took one look at Maverick's murderous glare and wailed, "Gorgeous! No, Goddess! I swear I don't know anything! The client paid us handsomely to sexually assault you before posting the video of our deed online... Ah!"

Suddenly, a kick sent him flying straight into a pole.

Crack! A cracking sound echoed as the man coughed up blood and lost consciousness.

Gwendolyn scowled as she turned over her shoulder to glance at Maverick as he was the one who had delivered the kick. "Why didn't you wait for him to finish his words?"

Maverick's expression was grim. "Seriously? These thugs are unbelievably nasty. Don't tell me you're planning to let the matter slip."

What is wrong with me? When I found out what they intended to do to Gwendolyn, I couldn't control my rage. Despite our separation, she's still my ex-wife, and I won't allow anyone else to lay a finger on her. That man deserves death, right? She's a fool for being too kind.

Gwendolyn gave him a frustrated look. "He fainted right after you kicked him, so he didn't experience any pain at all. You should've tortured him while he was conscious. The agony will make him long for death. Kicking him was too light a punishment."

Maverick was speechless. *It turns out I was wrong. She isn't kind at all, for she is a vindictive person.*

"I'll ask Noah to look into the matter. There's no need to worry or be afraid," he assured her.

Gwendolyn rolled her eyes. *Did he see me getting scared?*

As Gwendolyn was a person of principle, she decided not to mock him if he didn't pester her. After all, he had helped her to take down the thugs.

Glancing at the men lying on the ground, she suddenly had a thought and turned to Maverick. "I suggest you find out if your family has anything to do with this. If they're responsible, I won't let them get away with it."

Maverick nodded. "Don't worry. I won't be partial to them." He paused and regarded Gwendolyn with amusement. "Shouldn't we talk about us now?"

"Us?" Gwendolyn didn't understand what he was getting at, "Our relationship came to an end the day we got our divorce certificate. I have nothing to discuss with you."

With that, she spun on her heels to get into her car.

“Be careful!” Maverick hollered.

He watched in horror as the thug closest to Gwendolyn rose silently, his baton raised and ready to strike her head.

Alas, he was too far away to stop that from happening.

As a result, he panicked for the first time ever in his life.

The next-second, he saw Gwendolyn snatch the baton that the thug had brandished before delivering a kick and throwing him over her shoulder. The thug crashed to the ground with a resounding thud and passed out before he could yell in agony. D

After taking care of the attacker, Gwendolyn turned over her shoulder to realize that Maverick still looked flustered. Her lips promptly curled into a provoking smirk.

At once, Maverick’s flustered expression turned into one of surprise.

He watched as Gwendolyn’s green Volkswagen Santana drove out of sight. His mind kept replaying Gwendolyn’s attack and the smirk that had crossed her face before her departure.

They had been married for three years, but he thought his wife was a vulnerable puppet without any skills or strength.

After their divorce, she kept blowing his mind with all kinds of surprises.

It turns out I *don’t* know her at all.

His gaze turned dark as he stared in the direction Gwendolyn left.

Through her impressive display of physical prowess, it is clear *that she* has had extensive training in jiu-jitsu. The arrogance she exudes speaks *to* her level *of* expertise, leading *me* to believe *she* is *far from* an ordinary orphan from Fairlake Orphanage.

## **Chapter 23 Devil Incarnate or Brat**

There is more to her story than meets *the eye*.

He was deep in thought when Noah arrived in a taxi. The latter exhaled sharply when he realized there were a number of men passed out on the ground.

Boss didn't hold back, huh?

Maverick glanced at him. "Perfect timing. Bring these men back and find out who sent them here."

"Got it." Noah nodded.

"Also, send someone to investigate Gwendolyn. I want a detailed report on her background."

"Got it, Boss."

It was late at night when Gwendolyn finally pulled up outside the mansion.

Treyton was sitting on the couch, waiting for her patiently.

After she relayed the events to Treyton, he erupted in anger and dispatched his men to look into the incident.

On the way back home, Gwendolyn pondered over the matter.

She didn't have other foes except for the Harris family member who tried to harm her, but that wouldn't have just sent a few thugs to record a video of her being sexually assaulted.

person

Thus, she concluded that the Wright family was behind this. As she was afraid that Maverick would act partially after finding out about the truth, she got Treyton to investigate the matter, too.

Gwendolyn then went upstairs to take a quick shower before going to sleep.

The following morning, she arrived early at the company. After getting familiar with the details yesterday, she was able to arrange the celebrities' schedules today.

Suzanna was taken aback by Gwendolyn's quick learning and didn't dare to give her any more trouble.

The entire morning was uneventful. Feeling content, Gwendolyn stretched lazily.

Right after she had lunch, Suzanna barged into her office abruptly.

Gwendolyn frowned. "Ms. Kleppen, don't you know you should knock before entering the room?"

Instead of answering her question, Suzanna threw an iPad on her desk. "Look at what you have done!"

Gwendolyn retrieved the iPad and realized it was a photo of a celebrity under her management, Joaquin Zipper. The photo showed him flying into a rage at the film set. Fortunately, his manager stopped the photo from getting published. Otherwise, Joaquin would be accused of acting like a prima

donna.

Seeing that, Gwendolyn was speechless. *Did he throw a tantrum just because I refused to let him fool around and told him to go to the film set to work instead?*

“He’s a popular idol, and all he did was ask for a day off. However, you denied his leave, and now he’s mad. You’ve offended the devil incarnate. I’m not going to clean up after this mess you’ve made!” Suzanna sneered with her arms folded.

Gwendolyn closed the lid of the iPad with a click. She grabbed her car keys and strode out of the office.

Suzanna ran after her. “Where are you going?”

“To the film set.”

Hearing that, Suzanna quickly went after her.

*The devil incarnate has a fearsome temper and enjoys playing pranks on others. I can't wait to see him mess with Gwendolyn. I'll bring it up in the meeting and see how long she lasts as director.*

Angle invested in the TV drama Joaquin was filming which only commenced shooting a few days ago at Fairlake Film Studios.

It only took Gwendolyn and Suzanna around half an hour to reach their destination.

Upon arrival, both women heard the commotion of someone overturning a chair.

They went nearer to see an eighteen-year-old young man throwing a tantrum.

His manager and assistant cowered aside silently. Even the film crew stayed away from him.

The only person who stood out to stop him was the cleaner, as she couldn't stand to see the mess on the ground.

“Young man, how could you do this? Even if you're rich, you shouldn't destroy things as you like!”

The furious young man didn't stop as told. Instead, he grabbed a vase and declared angrily, “Yes, I'm rich! I can afford to compensate for the losses. You have no right to speak to me like that!”

“You can't break this!” the director protested in distress from his hiding spot far away. His heart was filled with anguish.

*It's not about the compensation money if he breaks it. The vintage vase was borrowed to enhance the gravitas of the set and it's extremely valuable!*

Fear crossed everyone's faces when they saw Joaquin raising his hand.

Joaquin let out an icy snort. Before he could smash the vase, someone seized his arm.

He whirled over in shock and saw Gwendolyn gazing at him frostily.

“Put that down and apologize!”

Joaquin snorted in disbelief. “Who are you to tell me to apologize?”

Suzanna put on an ingratiating smile and explained, “Mr. Joaquin, this is the company's new talent director, Ms. Shalders. Yesterday was her first day at work, but she

immediately denied your leave of absence today. I tried to talk some sense into her, but she claimed you were slacking and denied your leave.”

Hearing that, Joaquin went cold in fury and glowered at Gwendolyn. “Oh, so it was you. I filmed for two days in a row. Can’t I ask for one day off? How dare you deny my leave on your second day of work?”

Deep down, Suzanna was pleased to see Joaquin lashing out at Gwendolyn. She stepped back and waited giddily to see an altercation.

Gwendolyn wasn’t about to waste her time talking to the young man. “I shall ask one last time. Are you going to apologize or not?”

Flames of anger licked through Joaquin. His eyes burned with rage as he clenched his fists and bellowed, “I don’t usually hit women, but you asked for it!”

Everyone had already anticipated Gwendolyn’s dreadful destiny a minute later. They hung their heads as they couldn’t bear to watch her suffer.

Before the fight even started, it was over.

Instead of hearing Gwendolyn’s screams, everyone heard Joaquin yelling in anguish.

“Ow, it hurts! Let me go! I think my arm is dislocating!”

Everyone was shocked as they whipped their heads up to see Joaquin being held face down on the ground. His arms were held securely behind his back, and he was awkwardly kneeling on the floor. Despite wearing high heels, Gwendolyn stepped on his butt forcefully.



The sight of him yelling at the top of his lungs was really amusing.

On the contrary, Gwendolyn remained cool and composed. The crowd couldn't help but praise her action inwardly.

Even Joaquin's manager was so impressed with Gwendolyn's actions that he momentarily forgot to intervene.

Joaquin desperately wished for the ground to swallow him up when he realized everyone had witnessed him getting humiliated. His hatred for Gwendolyn intensified.

"Don't you know who I am? How dare you beat me up? You must have a death wish!" he snarled.

Suzanna bore a terrified expression as she stepped forward to intervene. "Hurry up and release him! He's Mr. Joaquin from the Zipper family! How could you beat him up?"

The Zipper family may have been related to the Harris family, but they were far from influential in Salinsburgh. As a result, their arrogance was only tolerated in Fairlake.

Instead of releasing Joaquin, Gwendolyn gave Joaquin's butt another forceful kick.

Joaquin promptly wailed in pain.

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As she didn't pay heed to Suzanna's words, the latter stomp her feet and flashed a smug grin. "Ms. Shalders, you're doomed! Don't say I didn't warn you beforehand."

Gwendolyn ignored her and glared down at Joaquin. She kept one foot planted firmly on his butt. "Well? Do you admit defeat? I can't believe you have the nerve to try and act

like a tyrant after all these years.” Her voice was cold and hard, leaving no room for argument.

Her tone sounded familiar to Joaquin, so he did his best to turn around and observe her face seriously.

At once, his anguished expression turned into one of surprise.

“Are you Gwendolyn?”

Gwendolyn snorted. “You remember me now?”

Joaquin nodded fervently, his face etched with contrition. “I’m so sorry, Gwendolyn! I wouldn’t have acted that way if I knew it was you. Please, let me go. It’s really painful!”

Hearing that, Gwendolyn finally released him.

Joaquin scrambled to his feet and brushed the dirt off his face. Holding his butt, he presented Gwendolyn with a charming smile and gestured for her to take a seat.

Everyone else was dumbstruck by the turn of events.

*What’s happening? Why isn’t he lashing out at Gwendolyn? Is this bootlicking guy the notorious Mr. Joaquin Zipper, also known as the devil incarnate?*

## **Chapter 24 Who Is the Unlucky Person**

Suzanna could barely hide her shock.

*Who exactly is Gwendolyn? Sh\*t! I thought she was done for, but now it seems I’m the one in trouble. How did she get to know the infamous Mr. Joaquin? I’ve read her background, and she’s just an orphan who grew up in an orphanage.*

Suzanna suspected there was more to it, so she stealthily stepped back and made a phone call.

The spectators were now staring at Gwendolyn in awe.

Joaquin was the focus of everyone's gaze, but he ignored it and knelt down beside Gwendolyn to knead her legs. He kept his gaze fixed on her as an adorable smile lit up his face.

"It has been a while since we last met! I must say, you're looking more and more beautiful. Now, don't be mad at me, or it'll ruin your looks!"

Gwendolyn gently prodded Joaquin's head with her fingertips. She leaned in close and whispered sternly, "Don't do anything rash. Stick to the filming schedule, and do as you're told. I won't hesitate to tell Old Mr. Zipper if you cause any trouble." The veiled threat was unmistakable, as Patrick Zipper was Joaquin's grandfather.

"Please don't! He'll punish me severely!" Joaquin felt a chill go down his spine. Trying to appeal to her, he put on a pitiful expression and pleaded, "Don't worry, Gwendolyn. I've always listened to you, haven't I?"

A smile nudged Gwendolyn's lips. "Apologize to the cleaner now."

"Huh?" Joaquin blanched. "I'm Joaquin Zipper! Are you seriously asking me to apologize to a cleaner? What about my pride, Gwendolyn..."

Gwendolyn's smile vanished. She told him sternly, "We're civilized people, aren't we? You threw a tantrum and created a mess. The cleaner didn't do anything wrong but had to clear up your mess. Besides, you yelled at her when she tried to stop you. Shouldn't you bear responsibility for what you did?"

Joaquin slumped his shoulders in defeat,

He turned over his shoulders to see the cleaner clearing up the mess he created earlier. Feeling bad, he trudged up to her and offered her a sincere apology. To make amends, he even gave her some money.

Overjoyed, the cleaner accepted his apology and compensation readily.

Gwendolyn then made arrangements so that Joaquin's manager would compensate the film crew for the ruined props.

Gwendolyn's presence on the film set that afternoon had a positive effect on Joaquin as he managed to nail all his scenes in only a few takes, much to the delight of the director. Thus, the director kept thanking Gwendolyn for her efforts.

She pursed her lips. "He's young and too full of himself, so a few smacks should do the trick

The director's respect for Gwendolyn increased as he nodded in agreement.

When it was time to get off work, Joaquin grabbed Gwendolyn's hand and acted sweetly by offering to buy her dinner to make up for his lack of respect earlier that day.

As he was persistent, Gwendolyn agreed to his invitation.

To avoid getting hounded by the obsessive fans and have dinner in peace, Joaquin put on a thorough disguise. His transformation was so successful that only the most observant fans could identify him.

Dinner was at Douglaf's, the most opulent restaurant in Fairlake boasting seven stars.

The moment Gwendolyn entered the restaurant, the dark interior immediately caught her eye as she preferred dining in dimly lit environments for a better dining experience.

Joaquin kept shooting looks at Gwendolyn after they ordered their food. He leaned over and asked in a low voice. “Do you recognize that man over there? He’s been looking in our direction a few times.”

Gwendolyn turned over her shoulder to see Maverick and Natasha having dinner at the next table.

Upon spotting Gwendolyn, Natasha gave her a smug and provoking look, indicating that she saw herself as the victor.

Gwendolyn looked away calmly. “That’s the CEO of Wright Construction Group.”

Joaquin bobbed his head. “Ah, then the woman sitting next to him must be his fiancée whom he announced he would be engaged to next month.”

Gwendolyn faltered slightly, but her face was devoid of expression as she focused on her dinner.

Joaquin was intrigued. “I heard he married someone and had the marriage kept a secret for three years before filing for divorce. I can’t help but wonder who the unlucky person was.”

Gwendolyn shot him a look. “It was me.”

Joaquin initially couldn’t understand her reply. It took him a few seconds to comprehend her words, and he slammed the table in shock. “You’re his ex–wife?” he exclaimed.

His voice was so loud that the adjoining few tables turned to look at them.

Maverick, who was sitting at the table right next to theirs, furrowed his brows and glowered darkly.

Gwendolyn gave Joaquin a reproachful glance, and he immediately covered his mouth. In a harsh whisper, he snapped, “Well done! He may be attractive, but he’s nothing but a liar and a cheat. You deserve someone better than that, Gwendolyn!”

She snickered. “So I’m the unlucky woman, huh?”

Joaquin waved quickly and said earnestly, “No, definitely not. He’s the unlucky one. He made a mistake in letting you go. That’s for sure!”

“But...” He paused and chuckled twice. “Gwendolyn, now that you’re single, why not give me a chance? I’m pretty charming, I know how to make people laugh.”

Gwendolyn almost coughed up her fruit juice upon hearing his proposal. As a result, she spilled the fruit juice she was drinking all over her white, pristine form-fitting dress.

“Gwendolyn, are you okay?”

“It’s fine. I’ll deal with the stain in the restroom. I won’t be long.”

With that, she got up and hurried to the restroom.

Maverick overheard their entire conversation loud and clear from the table next to theirs.

*We have only been divorced for a few days, but she has already moved on with someone else. Is she sure about her decision?*

Maverick's anger grew with each passing thought. He acknowledged that her choice of partner was not his concern, and he had no right to question her. However, he was irate and resentful.

Noticing his expression, Natasha asked softly, "Mave, are you all right?"

"I'm fine. I was just thinking about work."

Natasha sighed in relief and said coyly, "We haven't had a proper meal together since I traveled abroad. Can you put work aside and give me your undivided attention today?"

Maverick's expression was unreadable, His eyes were intense, leaving everyone wondering what thoughts were running through his head.

Instead of responding to Natasha's query, he rose gracefully and adjusted his collar nonchalantly. "You should finish your meal. I need to go, but I promise to return shortly."

"Mave!"

In the restroom, Gwendolyn dealt with the stain on her dress and also reapplied her lipstick.

She gazed at her reflection in the mirror and fell into deep thought.

*For three years after marrying into the Wright family, I have never put on makeup. Devoting myself to household tasks such as doing laundry and cooking. These daily grinds exhausted me so much that I didn't have the time or energy to groom myself. Moving forward, my career is my focus. I will go back to Harris Group and reclaim my former confident self as a princess. Men will only slow me down. D*

She was still deep in thought when a tall figure stepped into the restroom.

Gwendolyn didn't bother looking at the newcomer and focused on washing her hands.

She was caught off guard by the sound of the door being locked.

Curious, she looked up to see a handsome man she recognized standing right before her.

Maverick marched up to her with an expressionless face, but he gave off an intimidating air.

Gwendolyn gazed at him incredulously. She wondered if she was seeing things. "Mr. Wright, you're an esteemed man in Fairlake. Did you seriously just enter the ladies' restroom and lock the door behind

you? Are you a pervert?"

## **Chapter 25 Calm**

Thankfully, Gwendolyn was the only person in the restroom, but there was no guarantee no one else wouldn't come in.

She wanted to walk around Maverick to open the door, but her wrists were immediately restrained by

him.

"What are you afraid of?" Upon putting on a fake smile, he continued, "I told you I only wanted to chat with you. You may have successfully slipped away from me last night, but I won't give you another chance to escape today." CD

What's there for us to talk about? The matter between *us is ds* clear *as* day. Flinging his hand away, she caressed her wrist and spat, "I'm not afraid of anything. I just think it's



unbelievable that the famous Mr. Wright would prevent someone from leaving the female restroom.”

As he gazed at her, he lit a cigarette.

In response to inhaling that pungent tobacco smell, she frowned with disgust.

The smoke made his expression appear darker as he interrogated, “Who’s the man sitting with you?”

His question confused her for a moment before she rolled her eyes at him pridefully. “It’s none of your business.”

Instead of being enraged by her reply, Maverick continued, “He seems to be interested in pursuing you. What about you? Do you like him?”

Hmm? I think I *get* what *he’s doing* now. Upon lifting her head, she stared at him with an odd look. “You came here to block my path because you’re jealous?”

Maverick was rendered speechless by her remark.

Unable to hold back her laughter, Gwendolyn cackled.

Irritated by her mockery, he scowled. “No matter what, you’re still my ex–wife. So, this kind of hanky- panky behavior will only tarnish my family’s reputation. I’m warning you! Stay away from those men!”

“Are you that bored, Mr. Wright? I’ll repeat myself—who I spend time with has nothing to do with you!”

His scowl intensified, but he couldn’t muster anything to retort.

Gwendolyn was delighted to see how infuriated he was and had the urge to tease him further. “Does your fiancée know you’re preventing your ex–wife from leaving the female restroom? If she learns about this, I bet her expression will be priceless. I’m curious to see her reaction!”

As she spoke, she pulled out her phone, but Maverick immediately grabbed her wrist. Then, he used his other hand to pin her to the corner of the wall by her shoulder.

She tried resisting him, but he speedily secured both of her hands on the wall above her head.

His face was so close to hers that she could feel his breath on her cheeks. As he gazed at her at such a close distance with his black eyes, she blushed.

The décor in the restroom also had dark colors.

As the dim light enveloped the two, the atmosphere grew amorous.

It was as though what happened in the parking lot last night was playing out the same way again, but the car was a wall instead.

Gwendolyn was livid. “You pestering b\*stard! Are you crazy?” *In the past, he loved to ignore me. But ever since our divorce, he’s been badgering me! Did he hit his head or something?*

As Maverick stared at her quivering eyelashes, he abruptly remembered the smile he had seen on her face before she left last night. The recollection of that moment ticked him off.

When his line of sight landed on her soft, red lips, he felt the urge to bite them.

While he didn’t know what it would taste like, he was certain it would piss her off.

Gwendolyn noticed his line of sight and panicked because she knew something bad was going to happen.

Peering at him with intense disdain, she gritted her teeth and barked arrogantly, “One day, I’ll make you grovel at my feet and pay the price for everything you did.”

“I’ll be waiting, then.” Maverick smiled. Clearly, he didn’t think she was capable of challenging him.

“However, right now, you must pay the price for enraging me!” As he spoke, he leaned even closer to

her.

While staring at his approaching lips, she gritted her teeth again, preparing to bite him as hard as she could. The bloodier her attack, the better.

Suddenly, the sound of someone attempting to enter the restroom by turning the knob was heard.

An idea struck Gwendolyn as she glared at Maverick,

Just as she was about to shout, he covered her mouth tight.

Still failing to open the door after dozens of tries, the person outside opted to knock on it instead and ask, “Is anyone inside? Can you open the door right now?”

The woman’s voice sounded gentle and familiar.

Both Gwendolyn and Maverick recognized the owner of the voice—Natasha.

*What a coincidence!* When Gwendolyn noticed Maverick grimacing, she thought, *I bet he's panicking hard right now. If his fiancée sees him interacting with his ex-wife in the female restroom... Boy, this is going to make for an exciting drama! I want to see how he's going to explain himself!*

As though she had forgotten she was embroiled in the situation, she grinned maliciously before struggling to escape his restraint. At the same time, she started making muffled noises with her mouth.

In response, he pressed his hand on her mouth even more forcefully and growled at a small volume, "Do you want to die? Shut up!"

Outside the door, Natasha happened to be listening closely to the noises inside the restroom. *I think I heard a man's voice. Why does he sound a bit like Mave? And if he is Mave, does this mean the woman's muffled voice is... Gwendolyn? No! This is impossible!*

She raised her head and saw the sign hanging above her, confirming to herself that she was standing in front of the female restroom. There's no way *Mave* will *enter the female restroom!*

Despite her disbelief, she still called Maverick's number just in case she was wrong.

Two seconds passed before an urgent ringtone was heard from inside the restroom.

Upon realizing what was going on, Natasha immediately conjured an image of Maverick and Gwendolyn acting intimately with each other in her mind.

As she became more emotional, the scowl on her countenance grew more intense. She began slapping the door harder. "Are you inside, Gwendolyn? Open the door and come out now!"

As they were in a public area, she called out Gwendolyn's name instead of Maverick's because she didn't want to ruin his reputation.

The phone call still hadn't disconnected. Thus, the ringing continued.

However, no one in the restroom made a peep.

Natasha felt her sanity was about to be burned to ashes by her blazing rage. The quieter it was inside, the more she was convinced something shameful was happening.

"Come out, Gwendolyn! Why aren't you saying anything? Are you afraid others will find out that you're seducing my fiancé? Do you think I won't know it's you just because you're hiding inside?" she shouted very loudly.

Initially, Gwendolyn thought she was getting a good seat to an entertaining drama. She didn't expect Natasha would yell only her name. *If this continues, everyone in the restaurant will know I'm stuck in the female restroom with Maverick!*

As she thought about her situation, she glimpsed at Maverick's exceptionally calm expression. *Why does he, the perpetrator, look so composed as though this has nothing to do with him while I'm panicking?*

Then, a thought entered her mind as she glared at him and smirked. "I don't think I should be the one panicking here. I want to see if you're still able to keep your calm when you have to explain this situation to your fiancée later!"

Forcefully, she removed her hands from his restriction and opened the door. Strangely, Maverick didn't stop her.

Natasha was still screaming with fury outside. “So, you don’t want to open the door, eh? Fine! I’ll ask someone to tear the door down right now! I’ll expose your shameless act of seducing my fiancé to everyone!” D

Just as she ended her sentence, she saw the knob turning.

The door was finally opened, albeit slightly, revealing a gap. Through that gap, Gwendolyn beamed at

her.

“It is you!” Natasha’s eyes were red with resentment as she questioned with gritted teeth, “Why didn’t you open the door earlier? Who are you talking to inside? Is it Mave?”

## **Chapter 26 Take Care of Your Man**

The more Natasha spoke, the less confident she became. While she was still glaring at Gwendolyn with fierce hatred, she didn’t have the courage to open the door and confirm her guess.

“Why don’t you come in and find out yourself?” Gwendolyn shrugged, unperturbed, and opened the door.

Then she pointed at the spot Maverick was previously standing at. “He’s right there!”

Natasha felt her heart clenching, but when she looked in the direction Gwendolyn was pointing it, she saw only an empty wall.

“Are you toying with me?” Furiously, she glowered at Gwendolyn.

Gwendolyn was stunned, too. *He was just standing there! Does he have superpowers or something?*

Upon observing Gwendolyn's expression, Natasha realized something was fishy. Hence, she exasperatedly pushed Gwendolyn aside and searched through every stall in the restroom.

Gwendolyn stood behind her, wondering where Maverick was hiding.

After the two women went through almost all of the stalls, their lines of sight landed on the last one, its door left ajar.

Natasha took in a deep breath and pushed the door open.

Like the other stalls, there was nothing inside.

The realization of what had unfolded dawned on Gwendolyn when she noticed an opened window to the right of the stall. *I didn't expect the person in charge of Wright Construction Group would one day be forced to escape through a window. I can barely hold back my laughter.*

Natasha was dumbfounded and started suspecting Gwendolyn again when she saw the grin on the latter's face. "If you're the only person in the restroom, how do you explain the ringtone from earlier?"

In response, Gwendolyn waved her hand instead of answering the question as though she was saying, "Figure the answer out yourself."

Lividly, Natasha threatened Gwendolyn with gritted teeth. "You no longer have any ties with Mave, Gwendolyn! I'm warning you, stay as far away from him as possible! If I find out you still want to seduce him, I won't let you off!"

Gwendolyn smiled and replied, undeterred, “I’m not the type of person who’ll get back with an ex. However, if you piss me off, I don’t mind snatching everything you want away, including the man.”

“You!” For a moment, Natasha couldn’t come up with a retort because she was stunned by the cold look in Gwendolyn’s eyes.

Before Gwendolyn left, she spared one more glance at Natasha and scorned, “One last thing. Keep that man of yours under control, and don’t let him bother me again because both of you disgust me.”

“You b\*tch!” While that irritated Natasha immensely, she had no idea what she could do. *Why* didn’t those thugs from last night succeed? *Godd mit!*

After she washed her hands, she stomped out of the restroom angrily.

She only took two steps away from the restroom when she heard a familiar voice calling out from behind. “Tasha.”

When Natasha twirled back, she saw Maverick sauntering out of the male restroom calmly, which put her worries to rest. Maybe *I* was too anxious *earlier*. *It’s* possible that *the* ringtone *came* from *the* male restroom. “Did you hear what I said in the restroom corridor earlier, Mave?”

“I did.” He nodded.

She blushed instantly. *I* hope my *shouting carlier* didn’t leave a bad *impression on him!* “I’m sorry, it’s my fault. I thought you were in the female restroom earlier, so I lost my cool. I promise I won’t ever suspect you or yell again.”

Silently, Maverick gazed at her with an unfathomable look.



When he noticed the bruised look in her eyes, he suddenly recalled her late-night visit yesterday. He didn't see her, so she spent a huge chunk of the night standing in front of the mansion's entrance and talking about the past.

While he felt somewhat threatened, he was compelled to keep his word and agreed to her request for them to get engaged.

However, at some point, Natasha started to look more and more unfamiliar to him, so much so that he sometimes wondered if she was the bright-eyed girl he had met years ago.

"You seem to have changed a lot after staying overseas for a few years," Maverick uttered expressionlessly before stepping past Natasha and toward the restaurant.

Upon hearing that, Natasha was stunned, as though she had been struck by lightning. *Why did he look at me like that? Did he figure something out?*

Joaquin was about to search for Gwendolyn when she returned to her seat.

In response, he released a sigh of relief and inquired, "Why were you gone for so long, Gwendolyn?" "What's the matter?" she answered with a question of her own after noticing his expression.

"Mr. Harris sent someone to relay a message to you. The messenger said that he found something regarding the matter you asked him to investigate yesterday and that you should visit him when you have the time."

"All right, I'll visit him now."

"Hey, wait! At least finish your food first!" As he shouted begrudgingly, Gwendolyn had already left in a

car.

Meanwhile, Maverick sent Natasha back to the hotel once their meal ended.

Staring at the cold, sterile room, Natasha somewhat unhappily pulled his hand and acted coyly. “We’re already engaged, Mave. Can’t I return to the mansion with you and stay there instead?”

Reflexively, Maverick frowned. *I told her I couldn’t bring her back to that mansion. Why is she bringing it up again?*

Even though he was not pleased he still comforted, “Just wait a little longer, all right? I’ll ask someone to arrange a suitable residence for you as quickly as possible.”

Upon detecting his dissatisfaction, she felt even more aggrieved. *Why does Gwendolyn have the right to live in that mansion as the lady of the house for three years while I can’t even step foot into the building?*

As much as she wanted to ask him that question, she knew he disliked women who complained and had jealous fits.

“It’s fine if I can’t go to the mansion, but can you stay and keep me company in the hotel for a night? I don’t like how desolate the hotel feels.” Most men would find it impossible not to be moved by her delicate, submissive voice and sympathetic, aggrieved demeanor.

However, Maverick didn’t even spare a glance at her. It was rather hard to tell what he was thinking by looking at his surreptitious expression.

“I still have matters to take care of in the company. You should rest early.” Then he forcefully pulled his hand away from hers and left.

After the door closed, she slid onto the carpet and sat, her eyes wet with tears.

Why did *everything change after I returned to the country? He's not as dotting and caring to me as he once was. Is it because he has found out the truth?* Fear crept onto her countenance.

Just as she thought about it dejectedly, the door was opened again, and a pair of men's black leather shoes entered her vision.

"Mave! I knew you wouldn't-" Before Natasha could finish her sentence, she raised her head and saw that Noah had entered the room, not Maverick.

Her excitement was swiftly replaced with sorrow once more.

It pained him slightly to see how lonely she appeared. However, he had no choice but to ignore her feelings for the moment. "I'm sorry for disturbing you, Ms. Mossey. However, there's something urgent I need to ask you about."

"Ask away. I'll answer your question seriously." Natasha squeezed out a smile, which wounded him emotionally even more.

Softly, he inquired, "Did you know Ms. Shalders was surrounded by a bunch of thugs when she left work last night?"

She responded in bewilderment, "What? Is Gwendolyn fine?"

"She's fine. Luckily, Boss was there last night and took care of the thugs. However, he wanted me to investigate the mastermind behind the assault." As Noah explained, he studied her expression.

In response, she seemed to release a sigh of relief. "That's good to know."

Then, she acted as though she suddenly understood what Noah really meant and gazed at him in disbelief. “Did you come here to ask me that question because you think I was the one who sent those thugs to hurt Gwendolyn?”

## **Chapter 27 Collection**

While Noah remained silent, the look in his eyes was an obvious answer to her question. *I absolutely wouldn't have suspected Natasha if not for these special circumstances. However, yesterday, after I told Natasha that Boss went to Angle's parking lot to meet up with Gwendolyn, Gwendolyn was attacked on her way there. That's too much of a coincidence for me to rule out Natasha's involvement in this matter completely.*

With a heartbroken expression, Natasha spoke. “I've always seen you as my best friend, Noah, yet you suspect me? How could I have sent people to harm Gwendolyn when I didn't even know which route.

she took?”

Her answer melted his heart immediately. “I believe you're kind and may not necessarily be the one behind this incident. However, did you tell anyone about their meeting?”

That stunned her. Since he suspects *me already, he'll look into my calls if I don't* provide him with any valuable information. *If that happens, the image I spent so much effort building to show him will crumble. It seems like I have no other option but to sacrifice someone.*

Then, she pretended to be deep in thought before revealing, “I was very sad that day. When Sheralyn called me to ask how I was doing, I told her about it...”

She paused before hastily waving her hands. “No, no! There's no way Sheralyn would do something like that! I believe her.”

Upon sighing in relief, Noah replied, “You’re a good woman, Ms. Mossey. However, not everyone is as pure and kind as you.”

He comforted her a little longer before leaving the hotel speedily. As he did, he asked people on the phone to investigate the Wright residence as well as erase the connection between the incident and Natasha quietly.

After he left, Natasha stomped angrily. *No wonder none of them reported the situation to me last night! It turns out Mave saved that b\*tch!*

*I had no choice but to sacrifice Sheralyn, but once Mave learns of this, he’ll undoubtedly be even warier of his family! It’s unlikely that I’ll be able to use Sheralyn as my pawn again in the near future. All my efforts to get someone absurdly useful like her to befriend me are now for naught! As she dug her nails into her palm, a vicious, wicked look swirled in her eyes. But I won’t let that b\*tch Gwendolyn off the hook! Never!*

After Gwendolyn returned to Treyton’s mansion, she received detailed information from him.

*So, Frida’s the one who hired those thugs, and Sheralyn instigated it.* Her expression remained indifferent after she finished reading the evidence. *I knew this had something to do with the Wright family, but...* “Did what happened last night truly have nothing to do with Natasha?”

Treyton thought about it and answered, “I’ll send someone to investigate Natasha in detail.”

“Okay.”

“Well, now that you know who’s responsible, what are you going to do?”

Gwendolyn's lips curved upward as a plan hatched in her mind. "Please lend me a few burly bodyguards, Treyton."

He was enamored by her foxy, sly demeanor and tapped her nose lovingly. "I wouldn't dare to deny anything my dear princess wants. You're free to borrow as many bodyguards as you want."

With a sweet voice and grin, she thanked, "I knew you dote on me the most, Treyton. Thank you."

During the evening, in the Wright residence, Frida was sitting on a recliner inside the garden and enjoying the facial spa a beautician was giving her.

Out of nowhere, she heard a loud bang from the metal gate, which startled her so much that she sat straight up.

Not only did the spa fail to remove her wrinkles, but the shock also added a few more to her face.

Upon turning around, she saw a limited edition Rolls-Royce smashing through the residence's gate and heading straight toward the garden without slowing down.

The nearby housekeepers were almost scared to death by that sudden turn of events. Frida was equally dumbstruck.

Then, the car mercilessly zoomed past a blooming field of roses in the garden before drifting stylishly and parking next to the gate.

The roses that were still beautiful just a second ago were instantly and horribly crushed by the tires.

Frida almost fainted from anger when she saw that. *Those are my favorite flowers! I don't give a d\*mn how powerful or influential the driver is. I'm going to sue them until they go bankrupt!*

Furiously, she strode toward the Rolls–Royce and saw the door opening.

A pair of high–heels first exited the vehicle before a woman, as beautiful and elegant as a female celebrity, stepped out.

Frida was so astonished that she was rooted to the spot. While she couldn't recall who that woman was, she found her appearance familiar.

It was until Sheralyn came downstairs after hearing the commotion, and she roared at the woman. “Gwendolyn, you b\*tch! How dare you show your face here! I'm going to tear you apart!”

As Frida prevented her daughter from charging toward Gwendolyn, she gazed at the uninvited haughty guest with disbelief. She was so taken aback that she felt her jaw had almost dropped to the ground. *It's only been a few days, so why did this little b\*tch seem like she has transformed? I have never realized she looked this beautiful before.*

Amused, Gwendolyn stared at Frida and mocked, “What's the matter? Did you forget what I look like so quickly?”

Frida's rage burned even brighter upon realizing Gwendolyn was the one who destroyed her roses.

Folding her hands arrogantly, she growled, “You better not think you can do whatever you want just because you have a complete makeover and a sugar daddy! I'm going to make you pay ten

thousandfold for your destruction of my garden!”

Nonchalantly, Gwendolyn inquired, “And then what?”

The older woman glanced at her daughter and sneered, “Since you delivered yourself to my doorstep, I want you to kneel and apologize for bullying Sheralyn! Then, I want you to repay everything you owe Sheralyn!”

As she spoke, she shot a look at the nearby housekeepers.

The housekeepers understood what she meant and promptly approached Gwendolyn with intent.

stares.

Gwendolyn leaned against the car door and played with her fingernails. “Fine, I’ll keep that in mind. Later, I’ll give you all a taste of payback because I’m here today to collect my debt.”

*Debt? When did we owe her anything?* Just as Frida was confounded by the younger woman’s statement, Gwendolyn clapped her hands. Ten burly bodyguards in black clothing suddenly appeared and stood behind Gwendolyn in a well-trained manner.

Their presence was so intimidating that they scared off the housekeepers who were approaching Gwendolyn.

Panicked, Frida inquired, “What are you trying to do?”

“As I said, I’m here to collect my debt.” The look in Gwendolyn’s eyes turned frigid as she relayed an order to the bodyguards. “Aside from Old Mr. Wright’s old room on the



third floor, the study, and the ancestral hall on the first floor, I want you all to smash every single valuable object in the building, including plates.”

“You wouldn’t dare!” Frida and Sheralyn exclaimed in unison.

The older woman’s face and eyes reddened with unbridled wrath as she threatened, “Trespassing is against the law! If you smash even a single plate, I’ll call the cops right away and throw you into prison!”

Narrowing her eyes, Gwendolyn casually removed a photocopy of evidence from her bag with a grin. “Sure. I’m interested to see whether those police officers will cuff me or you two when they arrive.”

## **Chapter 28 Torture**

When Frida and Sheralyn scanned through the contents of the paper, they instantly paled. In fact, they felt so guilty that they couldn’t even muster a word.

They didn’t expect their attempt to harm Gwendolyn had become the latter’s dirt on them.

Gwendolyn shook her head scornfully upon seeing their reaction. *And I thought they were going to put up more of a fight.*

With a grin, she urged, “Go smash everything inside before we continue with the next step.”

In a flash, the bodyguards went in to complete their tasks.

Four bodyguards rounded up all the housekeepers inside the garden while the other six started destroying the various objects in the mansion.

Soon, sounds of devastation rang inside the entire building.

The housekeepers huddled together, unwilling to turn their attention toward the sharp, breaking noises.

The noises made Frida apprehensive too.

Sheralyn was cowering in her mother's embrace when she abruptly recalled something and widened her eyes. "Wait! You can't destroy the limited LC cosmetics I shipped from Moranta last month!"

Hurriedly, she leaped away from Frida's embrace and sprinted upstairs to prevent the destruction of her precious cosmetics.

From a distance, the screams and noises of objects breaking apart sounded like an unnerving symphony when mixed together.

Frida dug her fingernails into her palm as she glared at Gwendolyn with resentment, looking as though she wanted to chop the younger woman into thousands of pieces.

For every shattering noise she heard, she felt a cut in her heart because it was the sound of money vanishing into thin air.

However, after decades of living as a rich wife, she refused to bow before Gwendolyn.

Upon stifling her agony, she glowered at Gwendolyn. "You're a vicious b\*tch! Just wait and see! One day, you'll receive your karmic retribution! I'll never forgive you!"

Gwendolyn chuckled. "If I'm considered vicious, what do you call the things you did to me in those three years? Unbelievably despicable?"

Disdainfully, Frida spat, “You’re just a woman with an unknown background who never deserves to be with my son! All I did was teach you the rules you must abide by after marrying into an affluent family! You were the one who couldn’t handle the pain and wanted a divorce! What does that have anything to do with me? What did I do wrong?”

In response, Gwendolyn laughed. I’m *done*. *No matter how much I explain myself, someone as narcissistic as her won’t ever think she’s in the wrong.* It’ll just be a *waste of my time*.

Frida wanted to keep scolding her when she heard Sheralyn cursing at two bodyguards carrying her out of the building.

Sheralyn was disobedient, and the bodyguards were very strong. Thus, it was inevitable that patches of purple and red appeared on her wrist and arms.

Frida’s heart ached as she attempted to snatch her daughter back from the bodyguards’ grasp. However, another bodyguard restricted her.

As she couldn’t move, she could only turn to Gwendolyn, terrified. “What are you doing *to* Sheralyn? I was the one who dispatched those thugs! It has nothing to do with Sheralyn! Kill me if you dare!”

“I much prefer torturing someone rather than killing him.” Gwendolyn pursed her lips, grinning. “I told you I’ll make you pay for everything you did twofold if you mess with me again, and yet...”

As she paused, a bodyguard brought her a chair. Then, she sat in the middle of the entrance instead of entering the building.

She kept her word that she would never step foot into the Wright residence, even if Frida begged her

1. to.

“Since you were once my mother-in-law and elder, I’ll let her pay your debt instead.”

While speaking, Gwendolyn turned her sharp gaze toward Sheralyn.

Sheralyn knew how ruthless Gwendolyn could be from her experience at the banquet.

Thus, as a chill ran down her spine, she dropped her arrogance and cried out to Frida for help. “Save me, Mom! She’s going to kill me!”

While Frida was restrained by a bodyguard, she could still speak, so she relentlessly cursed at and threatened Gwendolyn.

The scene was made even noisier by Sheralyn’s wailing.

Gwendolyn frowned. “Shut the both of them up.”

The bodyguards proceeded to stuff the two women’s mouths with cleaning cloths the housekeepers used.

All that was left in the courtyard were their tiny, muffled voices.

The end of their shouting signaled the beginning of Gwendolyn’s torture.

“Do you remember when you accused me of stealing jewelry and robbing the share of Wright Construction Group in my possession? Well, since everything in the courtyard has been smashed to pieces by my bodyguards, I’ll let those matters go. However, don’t you think I should get some payback for forcing me to kneel in the rain?” She shot a glance at the bodyguard behind Sheralyn.

In response, the bodyguard kicked the back of Sheralyn’s knees.

She promptly collapsed to the ground, which was covered with tiny pebbles. As a result of the

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immense pain, she fell forward.

Her head didn't fall to the ground as the bodyguard restrained her. However, from a distance, it appeared as though she was lowering her head before Gwendolyn. Sheralyn's expression was twisted from the pain as she experienced an immeasurable humiliation.

Watching her daughter's suffering broke Frida's heart so much that she teared up. Despite the cloth in her mouth, she was still cursing at Gwendolyn, though it sounded like muffled gibberish.

"It hurts you to watch your daughter suffer, doesn't it? Gwendolyn smirked coldly.

"While I was your daughter-in-law during those three years, I was once a daughter to a mother, too. Have you ever thought how much it would've broken my mother's heart when you mistreated me?"

Upon mentioning her mother, she reflexively clenched her fists to the point of hurting herself as nasty memories flooded her mind.

Moments later, she suppressed those surging emotions and gazed at the sunset on the horizon.

"It's such a shame that there's no rain today. Because of that, I can't say my revenge is complete." She fell into deep thought before her eyes suddenly glinted. "I got an idea. Go and grab some water from the pond."

The bodyguards executed her request immediately.

The housekeepers, still cowering in the corner of the garden, took in a deep breath when they heard the torture Gwendolyn was planning. However, none of them dared to protest against her.

After all, many saw how terribly Gwendolyn was mistreated back then, while those who didn't witness it personally also heard of Frida's cruel acts against her.

Not only that, they also knew Sheralyn bullied Gwendolyn often in the past.

Hence, they thought it was fair for that pair of mother and daughter to be punished like that.

Soon, the bodyguards returned with five buckets of water. There were fishes living in the pool, so when they poured the water into those buckets, they accidentally included a few shrimps and aquatic plants.

Sheralyn's eyes widened in fear when she saw that. She was sobbing and shaking her head at Gwendolyn, begging for mercy. The arrogant demeanor she usually possessed was nowhere to be found.

"Pour it on her," Gwendolyn commanded coldly, which despaired the mother and daughter.

*Splash!*

A bucket of pool water mercilessly spilled onto Sheralyn's head.

Her countenance turned pale as she shivered from the cold. Aquatic plants could be seen on her cheeks as the shrimps flailed on her head.

When she raised her head in that wretched state, she saw her mother weeping helplessly and Gwendolyn peering at her with ridicule.

The housekeepers she often reprimanded were also glimpsing at her in secret.

Sheralyn's pride and dignity were shattered as her heart was filled with embarrassment and humiliation.

In the end, she broke down crying.

Before the bodyguard could pour the second bucket of pool water on her, she fainted.

Upon seeing that, Gwendolyn asked the bodyguards to release her and Frida.

Frida was so worried about her daughter that she immediately rushed toward Sheralyn to check the latter's condition and even forgot to curse at Gwendolyn.

"This is just a lesson. If there's a next time, I won't stop here," Gwendolyn warned.

Then she summoned the bodyguards, preparing to head back home, as she had been mostly satisfied with her revenge.

Just as she turned around, she saw a pair of dark, gloomy eyes trained on her.

Maverick was gazing intently at her with pursed lips.

## **Chapter 29 Like A Man**

Upon noticing his expression, Gwendolyn guessed Maverick had also figured out who hired the thugs. Did he rush over here *to confront them*?

Silently, he stared at her.

Surprisingly, Noah was the first to speak. "Don't you think your methods are too cruel, Ms. Shalders?"

Yes, she's divorced now, and they did mistreat her, *but* does *she have* to torture her ex-mother- and sister-in-law like this? As he thought about that, Natasha's kind image was lifted to an even higher position in his mind. 1

Instead of retorting, she merely glanced at him before shifting her sight toward Maverick. "Do you think the same, too?"

Maverick knitted his eyebrows and was about to speak when Frida pounced toward him upon hearing the commotion at the entrance.

Then, she grumbled about Gwendolyn indignantly. "Look at what that vicious b\*tch did to your sister, Maverick! She also smashed everything in the house! You must send her to prison! I want her locked there and regret her actions for the rest of her life!"

Maverick frowned even more intensely.

Everyone was waiting for him to make a decision, including Gwendolyn.

Gwendolyn appeared composed because she had a backup plan to deal with him if he decided to protect Frida and Sheralyn.

Meanwhile, Frida was getting smug again. *Now that Maverick's back, he'll definitely help me out! I want to see that b\*tch die a horrible death!*

As everyone gazed at Maverick with their own thoughts, he strode closer to Gwendolyn.

The bodyguards were about to block his path when she gestured for them to step down.

She wanted to see what he was going to do.



With half a meter of distance left between them, he stopped, sighed, and lowered his head at her slightly. “They were the ones who attempted to harm you first, so you deserve to take revenge against them. They didn’t know any better. I apologize on their behalf.”

His response stunned everyone.

Even Gwendolyn was rendered speechless. *I thought he would get angry or try to protect them. I certainly didn’t expect him to approve my revenge and apologize to me on their behalf. This is the first time I’ve seen him acting like a rational, responsible man.*

Frida had enough of the situation as she grabbed onto Maverick and clamored, “You are my son! How can you help that b\*tch instead of me? Are you really willing to watch her kill your sister and me? How can you be so cruel? I don’t care! You must account for this mess! Otherwise, I’ll disown you!”

1/3

However, Maverick remained unmoved as he allowed his mother to roar at him and tug his blue, premium suit.

It wasn’t until Frida was so enraged by his inaction and tried to assault Gwendolyn that he glared at the housekeepers, who were all hiding in the corner and watching the drama unfold.

He requested. “Mrs. Wright has become delirious. Take her back to her room and call the family doctor to take a look at them.”

Upon receiving his order, Noah swiftly organized the housekeepers and commanded them to drag Frida who was still yelling back into the mansion.

The housekeepers also carried Sheralyn back to her room.

The rest of the housekeepers began cleaning up the place.

The only people left outside the mansion were Maverick, Gwendolyn, and her ten bodyguards.

When Gwendolyn noticed he was staring at her for unknown reasons, she turned her countenance away in discomfort.

“I only punished them lightly because you helped me out that day. Otherwise, I would’ve handed the evidence to the police and sent both of them to jail.” As she spoke, she pulled out the evidence and glimpsed at it. “However, I’ll keep the evidence. If they piss me off again, I’ll use it to put them down.”

Maverick couldn’t help but curve the edges of his mouth upward slightly as he stared at her sly smile. She’s like *a cunning little fox, devious and ruthless*.

It confounded her to see him grinning.

Moments later, she put on a cold expression and warned, “You better keep a close eye on them and make sure they don’t do anything irritating again. Otherwise, I’ll drag you down with them next time.”

Then she left with her bodyguards.

Maverick ambled past the ground, blanketed with broken porcelain pieces, to check up on Sheralyn’s condition.

The family doctor had arrived and was examining her.

Frida’s mood had stabilized significantly, though she was still sobbing quietly beside her daughter’s bed.

When she saw her son stepping into the room, she pulled the edge of his shirt and pointed at Sheralyn's kneecap in anguish.

Sheralyn's knee which used to be fair had turned purple with black, bruising spots. As for the swelling, it had reached the height of a finger.

“Look at how injured your sister is! Don't you feel heartbroken at all to see this? I never stopped treating her as my beloved, precious baby from childhood to adulthood. How will she endure this humiliation brought on by that b\*tch's torture? If you don't avenge her, she'll die from a mental breakdown! Are you truly willing to watch your sister die?” the older woman rambled aggrievedly as

tears streamed down her cheeks. As his *mother*, I know *the last thing he wants to see is me feeling aggrieved*. Gwendolyn has *gone way overboard this time!* I must punish that *b\*tch!* I refuse to let *this* slide!

Still keeping his silence, Maverick pursed his lips and gazed at his sister's damaged knee as though he was thinking about something through her.

Before he arrived, he asked the housekeepers about the jewelry theft and learned that Frida intentionally framed Gwendolyn for the crime.

He was unaware of the details when he first learned the story because he was busy working overtime at the office.

Discovering the truth afflicted him emotionally. *Is that why she had been so unhappy in the Wright family that she ultimately chose to divorce me?*

The scene of Gwendolyn's petite and stubborn figure kneeling in the rain suddenly emerged in his mind. *If Sheralyn's knee became as swollen as this after only kneeling for*

*a short while, I wonder what Gwendolyn's knees looked like that day. Yet, she never once complained about the mistreatment she had received since she married me.*

“Did you hear what I said, Maverick?” Frida shook his arm, pulling him out of his thoughts.

“Don't forget that your father entrusted your sister and me to you back then! Now that your grandfather is gone, and you've become the head of the Wright family, you can't just leave the both of us to our fates!” Since acting pitifully didn't work for her son, she decided to remind him of his responsibility and promise. *I refuse to believe he'll still try to protect that b\*tch after this!*

Maverick turned to her and questioned, “How about you tell me a few instances of when and how both of

you bullied Gwendolyn?”

That response stunned Frida because she didn't expect he would care about that.

“Those are in the past! Besides, you've divorced her already. Why does it matter to you? Additionally, as her mother-in-law, there's nothing wrong with me lecturing her! I can't believe that b\*tch had the gall to complain about it to you! She's truly an incompetent and useless w\*nch who doesn't deserve to be part of this family!”

Just as she finished speaking, she noticed the scowl on his face and changed the topic guiltily. “My good son, look at how badly bruised my arm and your delicate sister are! Does it not pain you to see us getting bullied?”

“Fine.” The edges of Maverick's lips curved upward, though the look in his eyes remained cold. “I know what I should do now.”

Joyously, Frida held onto his arm tight. “Really?”

### **Chapter 30 A Poor Choice**

Maverick summoned the butler and said, “Starting today, Mrs. Wright and Ms. Wright are not allowed to leave this house without my permission. If anyone dares to disobey my instructions, he or she will be punished with the strictest penalties enforced in the Wright residence.”

“Huh?”

Aren’t we supposed to teach *Gwendolyn* that w“nch a lesson?

Frida was infuriated. She pointed angrily at Maverick and went off on a tangent about how ungrateful and heartless he was to his flesh and blood.

Maverick did not say anything and left the room in a dour mood.

Then, he called for Noah and instructed, “Have someone replace the broken items in the household immediately. Put someone else in charge of monitoring every call that goes through to the Wright residence and report the details to me ASAP.”

“Yes,” Noah shot his employer a hesitant glance and asked, “But Boss, isn’t that too harsh on Mrs. Wright and Ms. Wright? After all, Ms. Shalders was too insensitive in handling the situation.”

His heart softened as he remembered how pitiful Frida and Sheralyn looked when he first walked in. Why is *Boss* so *protective of Gwendolyn*? He’s even allowing her to turn the Wright residence upside down.

To his surprise, Noah's question did not enrage Maverick, who merely asked, "If someone tried to ruin your life several times and made your life a living hell, would you forgive that person?"

"Of course not!" answered Noah resolutely. "I'd find a way to give him a taste of his own medicine."

Realization suddenly dawned upon him, and he froze in shock.

Having sent across his point, Maverick turned and left without a backward glance.

After emerging victorious amid the fiasco at the Wright residence, Gwendolyn returned home in high spirits.

To her delight, Asher and Kieran's presents had arrived as well.

She impatiently tore open Asher's present, only to find a small, custom-made model airplane from the National Aviation Agency.

*D\*mn it! Has Asher conveniently forgotten that I'm no longer a fifteen-year-old kid? I can't believe I was so excited about his present.*

Treyton guffawed, thoroughly amused by Gwendolyn's fuming expression. He cleared his throat loudly and teased, "Kiddo, Asher personally made this limited-edition model airplane for you. You can't buy this anywhere at all! Aren't you touched by his efforts?"

Gwendolyn rolled her eyes at him in response.

Thankfully, Kieran's present was decent and soothed her anger over Asher's childish gift.

It was an intricately designed emerald ring. The ring had an in-built secret compartment from which a silver needle would spring, making it both an accessory and a weapon.

She wore the ring carefully and relegated the model airplane to a corner of her room.

Then, she promptly showered and went to bed.

The next day, Gwendolyn arrived punctually at her office.

When she opened the door to her office, she saw a thin, unfamiliar figure standing in front of her desk.

The stranger turned around when she heard someone opening the door and met Gwendolyn's gaze.

The uninvited visitor was a woman with a dainty face and almond-shaped eyes. Her originally contemptuous gaze slowly changed to one of jealousy the longer she stared at Gwendolyn.

*She seems to be quite hostile toward me.*

Before Gwendolyn could say a word, the woman declared, "Jade at the reception was just telling me about you. I didn't believe her at first, but now that I've gotten a good look, you really do look like a minx."

That comment merely added to Gwendolyn's confusion.

Gwendolyn swiftly walked over to her chair and invited the woman to leave. "Miss, I need to work. Please leave my office."

The woman ignored her words and warned her coldly, “I have no issues with you earning a pretty penny at Angle, but you better stay away from Treyton Harris. If I find out you were seducing or fooling around with him, I’ll make you wish you were dead!”

“Treyton?” The threat piqued Gwendolyn’s interest, and she asked, “Do you like him?”

The woman crossed her arms arrogantly and harrumphed. “I’m his fiancée.”

*Fiancée? She must be the woman who was engaged to Treyton two years ago. Eloise Ferguson! That’s her name. She’s the second daughter of the prolific Ferguson family from Salinsburgh. Why hasn’t Treyton mentioned her before? I guess she’s really not his type. Well, that’s fine with me. I wouldn’t appreciate such a haughty sister-in-*

*law.*

Gwendolyn shot Eloise a shallow smile and retorted, “Oh, just a fiancée? He can simply replace you before you’ve signed anything at City Hall, yet here you are exerting your unfounded claims, Ms. Ferguson? I’m sorry, my office is too small to accommodate your delusions of marriage. Please see yourself out.”

“You!” Eloise sputtered with fury.

Meanwhile, Gwendolyn poured her attention into her work and ignored Eloise completely. Nothing the woman said could draw her attention again.

Alas, Eloise stomped out of the office miserably after failing spectacularly to warn off Gwendolyn.

As she left Gwendolyn’s office, Eloise shot Suzanna a knowing look.

Suzanna wisely followed Eloise to a deserted corridor without any surveillance cameras.



Eloise cut to the chase. “How’s the new talent director at your company? Does she know her own place?”

Suzanna checked her surroundings to make sure they were alone before leaning closer to Eloise to whisper in her ear. She exaggerated, “Did you know that Mr. Harris personally brought her into the company? He even emphasized that we should all take extra care of her. I bet she was already fooling around with Mr. Harris before she started working here. She’s too proud to mix with the rest of us, and she even bullies the most promising artists at our company. The audacity!”

“Oh my God, did that really happen?” Eloise thundered, “In that case, she can’t be allowed to stay in this company.”

She waved Suzanna closer to her and murmured a few words to the latter.

Suzanna appeared disconcerted after hearing Eloise’s words. She stammered, “C–Can we r–really do that? Isn’t that too much?”

Eloise patted her shoulder gently and said, “Don’t worry. I’ll put in some good words about you with Trey once everything is done so you can replace her as the new talent director.”

Ethics and the desire for a promotion warred in Suzanna’s heart, though Suzanna’s hesitation only lasted a few seconds.

She promptly decided to prioritize her career and wealth.

Later that afternoon, as Suzanna was busy assigning upcoming events to the company’s artists, Suzanna visited her office with a bright smile and an unusually courteous demeanor.

“Ms. Shalders, have you heard about Grandeur Group’s hefty investment in an upcoming male protagonist drama?”

Without lifting her head from the forms she was scrutinizing, Gwendolyn asked, “Why?”

Suzanna tittered and placed some documents about the drama on Gwendolyn’s desk, explaining, “I’ve locked in an opportunity to discuss casting opportunities with Grandeur Group’s representative for our company’s artists. However, they only want to discuss the casting with you, Ms. Shalders.”

Only then did Gwendolyn raise her head to shoot Suzanna a cool glance.

Her piercing, seemingly all-knowing gaze stunned Suzanna, who faltered and almost lost her resolve.

Gwendolyn smirked and replied, “This is a great chance to rake in some extra commission from the company. Whoever snagged the deal should go.”

Suzanna—smiled awkwardly and lamented, “I’d love to go, but Grandeur Group thinks my rank is too low to discuss the casting with them. They will only speak to someone who’s in a directorial position or higher. To be honest, earning extra commission isn’t a big deal. I’m happy to help our artists gain better opportunities and contribute to the company’s reputation. It’s still a success no matter who wins the business for our company.”

amazement, “Ms. Kleppen, this is the first time you’re being so civil to me.”

Her comment surprised Suzanna, whose smile widened.

“Well, I’ve finally seen your talents, Ms. Shalders, and I will never disrespect you again. That said, I do think a meeting with Grandeur Group’s representative is an excellent opportunity for our company. Won’t you reconsider attending it?”

Gwendolyn bit back her smile and replied, “Of course, I’ll go.”

*How else would I know what tricks you’re hiding up your sleeve?*

Once they clocked off work that evening, Suzanna enthusiastically brought Gwendolyn to the dinner meeting with Grandeur Group.

The two women entered a luxurious private dining room, where three middle-aged men with beer bellies stood politely to greet them. The men’s eyes lit up gleefully as their gazes landed on Gwendolyn.

Suzanna smiled at them and made the introductions. This is our beautiful talent director at Angle, Ms. Shalders. Ms. Shalders, these three men are the directors at Grandeur Group—Mr. Tom Ward, Mr. Harry Ulmer, and Mr. Peter Zinn, respectively.”

“They’re all directors?” Gwendolyn blinked innocently and added, “Why isn’t the project representative meeting us in this discussion?”