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Chapter 2

The House of Royals.

At 20,000 square meters, the House of Royals was the most luxurious villa in all of Cansington.

It had everything from a garden, swimming pool, and golf course.

At the foyer of the villa.

Thea sat on the soft couch, looking around at the villa in disbelief. It resembled a palace more than anything.

When her grandfather chose a husband for her, she knew that anyone with a backbone would never agree to marry her, much less into the Callahan family.

She did not know who her husband would be at all.

However, she guessed that he would be greedy and lazy. Someone who coveted her family's wealth.



Yet, he brought her to this paradise.

James knelt and lifted her veil.

“Don’t...”

Thea panicked and shied away. With scars crisscrossing her face and entire body, she was a fearful sight. What if she scared her new husband away? They had not even been properly introduced yet!

James removed her veil anyway.

Thea was extremely scared, her heart beating out a nervous rhythm in her chest. She felt so ashamed, wanting nothing more than to disappear and hide.

James tilted her face up gently.

It was a shocking latticework of scars.

James traced his fingers over them.

His heart ached for her, knowing that it was all his fault. If she had not saved him, Thea would not be in this situation.

He had a tender expression on his face, an unusual look for him. Almost in tears, he said, “Oh Thea, you’ve suffered too much.”

Thea did not have the courage to look at James directly. She fidgeted with her shirt instead.

Gently, James told her, “Trust me. I’ll help you recover.”

Thea panicked again, still not looking at him.

“Get the medicine.”

James stood up and barked out a command.



Immediately, the doors of the villa burst open. A few men in black suits walked in, carrying a few boxes.

Inside the boxes were expensive pills, tablets, and other types of valuable medicine.

James got to work, fiddling with items inside the boxes and mixing some of them to form a salve.

Once he was done, he crouched down by Thea. She was still playing with a corner of her shirt. He took her scarred hands in his, but she pulled away and hid them behind her back. Looking at the floor, she asked quietly, "What... are you doing?"

"Relax, Thea. Take off your clothes."

Thea started crying at once and pulled at her clothes. With tears in her eyes, she said, "Yes, I know I'm ugly. I have scars everywhere. Are you happy now?"

She knew that anyone her grandfather chose for her would mock her and humiliate her.

She had gotten used to it over the years.

Ever since the incident, she had been plagued with nightmares. She cried every day, and she could barely remember what it was like to be happy.

Looking at James, she bit her lip, still crying. Tears pooled in her eyes and spilled down her cheeks.

James felt his cold heart thaw looking at her.

He hugged Thea to him, solemnly vowing, "I will never cast you aside. No matter what you look like, you're my wife, now and forever."

Thea was stunned.

Was he not going to mock her?



She could not dredge up a response.

James released her and carefully applied the salve he concocted onto her scars.

Then, he wrapped her up with gauze entirely, even her face. When he was done, Thea looked just like a mummy.

James guided Thea to sit down with him.

“Thea, trust me. Ten days is all it takes. I promise that you’ll be a different person after ten days.”

“R-really?” Thea finally managed to respond, though she did not quite believe it.

“Of course. I would never lie to you.”

Even though she could not see James’ face, she could hear his voice. Magnetic and gentle, it warmed her heart.

In the blink of an eye, ten days had gone by.

They were the happiest ten days Thea had experienced in the past ten years.

She still did not know who her husband was, but he cared for her attentively and stayed with her around the clock.

Every night, he told her stories and jokes, lulling her to sleep.

Every time she woke up, his strong hands were there, holding her.

For the past ten years, she had forgotten what care was, not to mention love.

Now, she felt like she was in love.

In the villa, in front of the mirror.

Thea was wrapped in white gauze from head to toe, including her face.



She could not help but feel nervous.

For ten days, she had applied the salve religiously, feeling her skin burn.

James had told her that as long as she did it regularly, she would be able to recover her looks.

“Is... is this really happening?” She was holding onto a pair of strong hands.

“Yes.” James slowly removed the gauze from her face and body.

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Thea knew it was bright, but she was afraid of opening her eyes.

“Go on, open your eyes and take a look.”

Only then did Thea open her eyes. She was standing naked in front of the mirror.



The girl in the mirror still had the remnants of the salve all over her body, but it was obvious that her skin was smooth and unblemished.

In the mirror, her face was almost perfect. Thea was shocked. Her jaw dropped.

After a few seconds, she wiped away the salve on her face, touching it disbelievingly.

“What...”

She was shocked beyond belief. How could the girl in the mirror with smooth, unblemished skin be her?

Ten years ago, she suffered burns and disfigurement.

No matter how advanced medicine was back then, there was no coming back from that.

But now...

Over the past ten years, she had not even looked in the mirror once.

Now, looking at her perfect face in the mirror, she cried tears of joy.

She fell into James' arms and bawled, feeling the weight of grief and suffering of the past ten years lift.

James hugged Thea tightly. “I’ll never let you get hurt again,” he promised.

Thea was excited and overjoyed at first, then she realized that she was stark naked. Her exuberance turned into embarrassment.

She freed herself from the embrace, looking away helplessly.

James pointed to the bathroom, saying, “I’ve prepared some hot water and clothes for you, but I don’t know your size, so the bras are of different sizes. Just wear whichever is suitable for you.”

Shyly, Thea ran to the bathroom.



James made his way to the foyer, sinking down onto the couch and lighting a cigarette.

“General.”

A man about 40 years of age entered, wearing a black suit. He held a thick stack of documents, passing it to James with his head bowed. “This is all the information we have on The Great Four. Everything we could find about the deaths of the Cadens is here. Please take a look.”

James pointed at the table. “Just leave it there.”

“General, they’re low-class families. Say the word, and we’ll take care of them...”

James waved his hand.

The man stopped talking immediately.

James lifted his head and looked at the man in front of him, whose head was still bowed. “I’m no longer the general. From now on, there will be no more Dragon General. Investigating The Great Four will be the last time I use my privilege as well. You don’t have to stay with me. Take the men with you. You’re needed at the border.”

The man fell to his knees. “Sir, we’ll follow you to the ends of the earth. The border at the Southern Plains is stable. The enemy will not invade. General, don’t make us leave. Let us stay and help.”

James stood and pulled the man up, saying, “Henry, this is a personal matter. I’ll take care of it myself. Once it’s done, all I want is to enjoy a peaceful, quiet life without war and violence. I want to stay with Thea and love her the best I can.”

“General...”

“Leave. Take the men back to the Southern Plains!” James roared.

Henry knelt again. Loudly, he declared, “Take care, General. The Black Dragon Army will be waiting for your return.”



“Go.” James sat down again and waved his hand.

Only then did Henry turn and leave.

Thea emerged from her shower in a while.

She had chosen a white slip dress which showed off her smooth neck and arms.

She would have never worn something like this in the past.

She was in a rather good mood, humming a tune under her breath. Touching her smooth skin, she grinned widely.

She stopped when she saw James smoking moodily on the couch.

She walked over and sat down next to him. Her face was flushed, though she did not know if it was because she had just finished her shower or because she was shy.

“Um...” She opened her mouth without knowing what to say.

Even though she had spent ten days with James, it was different as she was blindfolded. Now that she was actually seeing him, she was a little shy. She did not know what to say at all.

Pulled from his thoughts, James looked at Thea, his eyes sparkling. “Darling, when are we getting our marriage license?”

“What?”

Thea was stunned, her mouth slightly open. She looked adorable when she was confused.

James smiled. “I’m part of the Callahans now. I’m your husband according to your grandfather’s orders. Are you regretting it? Don’t you want to marry me?”

“I do.”



Once Thea caught up, there was nothing to say except those two words.

James had shown her so much care for the past ten days that he had wormed his way into her heart.

How could she not marry a man like him?

She snuck a glance at James.

He was tall, strong, and confident. Even just looking at him made her blush and her heart beat faster.

One hour later.

Hand in hand, a man and a woman emerged from the Department of Civil Affairs.

Thea looked at the red certificate and it finally dawned on her.

She was officially married now?

Fantasizing about her future before this, she had hoped that she would one day have a passionate love affair.

However, things rarely went according to plan or imagination. Her grandfather had arranged her fate. James, who married into her family, stole her away to a palace-like paradise where she stayed for ten days.

In those ten days, she had recovered. She was beautiful once again.

Even though she still did not know who her husband was exactly, warmth spread through her entire body, and she held onto James' hand tightly.

