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Emmeline tugged at her little hand, but Abel had a death grip on it and wouldn't let go. It was starting to hurt, and she winced, "Abel, ease up! You're going to bruise me!"

Abel finally loosened his grip a bit, but Emmeline still couldn't free her hand. She huffed in frustration and gave up, resigning herself to being held captive.

Without missing a beat, Abel wrapped his arm around her and pulled her close, enclosing her in a tight embrace.

"It's so good to have Emma back," Ethan chimed in, trying to diffuse the tension. "Let's celebrate with lunch today. My treat, everyone's invited."

"I'm in," Abel spoke up first. "Ethan's right, it makes sense. Count me in."

Benjamin and Janie exchanged a glance, thinking to themselves,

What's Ethan meddling in now? Everything was going fine.

But could they really argue with his proposal now?

"Mr. Benjamin, Janie," Ethan turned to them. "Do you think it's a bad idea?"

Benjamin reluctantly nodded, "It's fine, I agree."

Janie raised her hand, "I'm in too."

"I knew it," Ethan grinned. "Emma's back and it's definitely worth celebrating!"

The question remained, could this show go on smoothly?

"Which hotel should we choose?" Abel eagerly offered, "I'll take care of booking the private room."

"I'll cover all the expenses," Benjamin chimed in. "Let's go with the Struyria Banquet, after all, it's Ademar's place."

"That settles it then, Struyria Banquet it is," Ethan agreed. "Why let someone else reap the benefits?"

Abel nodded in agreement, thinking to himself that the Struyria Banquet was the perfect choice. The last thing he wanted was to run into Adrien at a Ryker Group hotel. Having Benjamin on one side and Adrien on the other would only lead to trouble, and he didn't want to be caught in the middle.

Just the thought of it made him feel jealous and insecure. He didn't want to be a ticking time bomb, ready to explode at any moment.

It was already past 10 am, and it would take an hour to drive to the Struyria Banquet. They all left the CEO's office and made their way to the underground parking garage.

Ethan drove his Lexus, while Janie joined Benjamin in his Bentley. Emmeline didn't drive, so she had to sit in Abel's Rolls-Royce.

As Abel got into the driver's seat, he leaned over to fasten Emmeline's seatbelt. But just as he was about to reach for her small hand, she withdrew it.

Abel reluctantly started the car, feeling frustrated. Luca followed behind with his bodyguards, unwilling to leave them alone. Benjamin's bodyguard car also kept up with them.

By the time they arrived at the Struyria Banquet, it was already past eleven o'clock. They took the elevator up to the designated floor and entered the private room.

Benjamin pulled out a chair for Emmeline, while Abel took her purse from her hands. Ethan looked on, dumbfounded.

What are these two men competing for?

The two men were trying to outdo each other in showing their attentiveness to Emmeline.

But Abel was the one who should have been the most attentive.

What was Benjamin trying to achieve by meddling in this situation?

"Emma," Ethan tested Emmeline, "where did Mr. Benjamin take you last time? I've been wondering."

"I was injured," Emmeline explained, "so Ben took me to get treatment."

"Why didn't Abel go with you?" Ethan asked, intentionally provoking.

Emmeline glanced at Abel when Ethan mentioned his name. "Him?" she said, "He doesn't know the place."

"Oh," Ethan felt uncertain and probed further, "I remember you and Abel picked a wedding date, so when is the big day? I need to prepare myself."

"Don't bother about that," Emmeline replied, "I suddenly don't want to get married anymore."

This statement left Ethan completely dumbfounded, and he looked towards Abel for some answers.

"Emma," Abel spoke urgently, "marriage is not a game, you can't just decide not to get married."

"But that's what you said," Emmeline retorted, "you said you didn't want to get married."

"Emma," Abel said in a low voice, "that was all in the past, it's all over now, don't hold onto it."

"I'm not holding onto anything," Emmeline said. "It's just that I've come to this point again. How can I marry you when I'm like this?"

Ethan widened his eyes, looking left and right.

What's wrong with his sister? Was she falling for Benjamin and breaking up with Abel?

"Mr. Benjamin," Ethan said coldly, tugging at Benjamin's sleeve. "Can I have a word with you?"

Benjamin, confused, followed him out of the private room.

"What's going on, Ethan?"

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Ethan glared at Benjamin. "Let me ask you something," he said sternly. "Did you try to come between Emma and Abel?"

Benjamin looked confused. "What are you talking about?"

"Don't forget that Emma and Abel have four kids together!" Ethan exclaimed. "I know you've had feelings for Emma for a long time, but they're a family and they've been through so much. How could you even think about interfering like that? Don't you think it's immoral?"

Benjamin let out a bitter laugh and whispered, "Ethan, where did you get the idea that I'm trying to come between Abel and Emma?"

"I saw it just now," Ethan replied. "Emma was snuggled up to you and acting all cute. And before that, when she got hurt, you took her away and when she came back, you two were acting like that. Don't you see that you're getting in between Emma and Abel?"

"I..." Benjamin began but trailed off. "I don't think I can explain it to you."

"Then don't bother," Ethan said firmly. "Even though you're my boss and I receive a hefty paycheck from you, when it comes to Emma, I stand with Abel. After all, he's the father of my four nephews. If you were their father, I would stand with you too. But there's a first come, first served rule here, and Abel came first. So, my dear brother-in-law, I only recognize Abel. I hope Mr. Benjamin, you stay away from our family."

"Ethan," Benjamin protested. "Things are not what you think. I'm not that despicable!"

"I hope not," Ethan said. "But when it comes to Emma, I'll also advise her to reconcile with Abel."

"Ethan, you should stay out of this," Benjamin said. "It will only make things worse."

"How can it get worse?" Ethan asked. "I'm just urging Emma to marry Abel as soon as possible. Is that going to make things worse?"

"Marriage is not a bad idea," Benjamin said, "just make it happen, and I'll double your bonus."

"A bonus for this?" Ethan was surprised and curious.

"Yeah," Benjamin nodded, "as long as Emma and Abel get married happily, I'll keep my promise."

"Then leave it to me," Ethan said confidently, patting his chest.

After Ethan left the room, Benjamin took a deep breath and rubbed his chest.

He was afraid that Ethan's good intentions would only make things worse, but he had no way to explain the truth.

Back in the room, Ethan leaned in close to Abel's ear and whispered, "Abel, I'm on your side. The matter is settled now. Benjamin supports you and Emma getting married."

Abel thought to himself that the issue at hand was not about who supported him or not. Even if the whole world did not support him, he would still marry Emmeline. But the problem now was whether Emmeline would fall in love with him again.

What troubled him was how to make Emmeline fall in love with him again.

“Ethan,” Abel said, “if you really want to help me and Emma, then create more opportunities for Emma to be with me. Like last night, she moved back to Nightfall Cafe to live.”

“That’s easy,” Ethan said. “You’re so stubborn. Just move to Nightfall Cafe too. Wherever Emma goes, you go!”

Abel thought for a moment. Although Ethan’s method was simple and crude, it was the only good solution.

Soon the food and drinks arrived, and Abel deliberately drank a few more glasses.

After finishing the meal, he was feeling a bit “tipsy”.

Since he had been drinking, Abel couldn’t possibly drive.

Luca drove the Rolls-Royce and followed Abel’s instructions to quickly return to Nightfall Cafe.

As the bodyguards helped Abel stumble towards the café, Emmeline exclaimed, “Abel, who told you to come here?!”

But Abel was already passed out on the shoulder of one of the bodyguards.

“Ms. Louise,” the bodyguard said, “with Mr. Abel in this state, there’s only so much we can do. We’ll have to trouble you.”

Emmeline stomped her foot and angrily exclaimed, “Abel, are you doing this on purpose?!”

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Abel opened his eyes slightly and glanced at his bodyguard.

“Babe, I did it on purpose. What are you gonna do about it?”

He kept the words to himself though. If he said it out loud, he knew Emmeline would probably throw him out on the highway.

They made their way up to the second floor, and the bodyguards helped Abel into Emmeline’s bedroom.

“He can’t stay here,” Emmeline said anxiously. “Put him in the guest room!”

The bodyguards hesitated.

“I always stay in the guest room at the Precipice,” Emmeline said with a frown. “Why should he get to stay with me?”

The bodyguard thought Emmeline had a point and turned to help Abel to the guest room.

But as he did, Abel reached out and twisted the bodyguard’s arm hard.

The bodyguard was taken aback, but then he realized that he had to listen to Abel, not Emmeline.

"Ms. Louise, Mr. Abel's had too much to drink," the bodyguard said. "You know his stomach can't handle it. It's better if he stays with you. You can take care of him."

The bodyguards tossed Abel onto Emmeline's big bed and quickly made their escape, closing the door behind them.

As the last one out, he made sure to lock the door.

Abel was thrown onto the bed so hard that he nearly threw up. He had to endure the discomfort and lay there, sprawled out and pretending to be asleep with his eyes shut.

Emmeline glared at him for a few seconds, realizing that this wasn't a long-term solution.

She reluctantly helped him take off his shoes, then his suit jacket, and loosened his tie. She then carefully positioned him on the bed and covered him with a blanket.

"Emma," Abel slurred. "I'm so thirsty. I need water..."

"Thirsty my ass!" Emmeline snapped. "Remember when you kicked me out earlier?"

"I'm so thirsty, please," Abel groaned.

Emmeline pouted and scowled, then finally caved and poured him a glass of warm water.

Emmeline helped Abel sit up and held the glass of water to his lips. He closed his eyes and leaned into her, drinking the water slowly until the glass was empty.

"Damn, you're heavy," Emmeline complained as she put the glass down and tucked Abel back into the covers.

Just as she was about to get up, Abel suddenly grabbed her waist and pulled her into his embrace.

"Emma, don't leave me. Stay with me, Emma. I love you, I really do..." Abel slurred, tears forming in the corners of his eyes.

Although it was just drunken rambling, Abel couldn't help but shed a tear as he held Emmeline tightly.

Emmeline felt a pang of sorrow in her heart, and her vision became blurry.

She couldn't help but snuggle into Abel's embrace, tucking her little head under his neck.

Abel felt a secret joy in his heart, holding her like this and not daring to move.

It was unclear how much time had passed, but Emmeline had fallen asleep in his arms, her warm breath gently blowing into his neck.

Abel gently leaned in and looked at the little woman in his arms with a fond gaze.

His big hand caressed her delicate face, and his thumb stroked her soft lips.

Finally, he lowered his head and gently kissed her alluring lips.

Emmeline's dreamy state was interrupted by Abel's kiss and his words of love. She couldn't help but open her mouth to receive the deepening kiss.

As Abel continued to kiss her, he whispered, "Emma, I love you. I've fallen in love with you again, even deeper and stronger than before. But with you taking Worryfree, can you still love me back? I'm so worried, Emma. Please, love me back."

Tears welled up in Emmeline's eyes, but the memory of Abel's rejection still stung.

No, this wasn't enough.

"But I don't love you anymore," Emmeline murmured in her dream.

She wanted to see how it felt for Abel to hear those words.

With a pouty mouth, Emmeline snuggled in Abel's embrace and drifted off to sleep.

"Emma," Abel choked out with a husky voice, "I'll give you time, I'll wait for you, I believe you'll fall in love with me again, even deeper and stronger than before. Please, Emma, don't be heartless..."

Abel held the little woman tightly, tears welling up in his eyes.

Under the influence of alcohol, he slowly drifted off to sleep...

Emmeline heard him emit a slight snore and called out softly, "Abel, Abel?"

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Abel didn't react at all.

Emmeline knew that he had really fallen asleep this time.

His embrace was warm and safe, and she was addicted to it.

She didn't want to get up, just curled up in his arms and let him hold her while she slept.

They slept for almost two hours, and Abel woke up.

Emmeline was no longer by his side, and the bedding beside him was cold.

Abel thought that Emmeline must have gone downstairs.

After all, it was still early evening and the cafe downstairs should have customers.

With a strong smell of alcohol all over him, Abel wanted to take a shower.

He took off all his clothes and walked naked toward the bathroom.

As he reached out to open the bathroom door, what he saw in front of him immediately froze him in his tracks.

The bathroom was filled with steam, and Emmeline was in the shower.

In the midst of the steam, her smooth body was luscious and sensuous, her skin as white as snow, and her curves shrouded in the mist.

Abel was suddenly transported back to a scene from five years ago.

That day, under the influence of drugs, he had pushed open the bathroom door and found himself faced with this alluring scene.

He had pressed her down like that...

"Emma..." Abel whispered.

Emmeline suddenly turned around and saw a tall, strong, naked man at the door.

"Emma!"

Abel rushed forward in one step and pulled her into his arms.

Abel lifted Emmeline up by the waist and took a few large steps back to the bed.

He threw her onto the bedding.

"Abel..." Emmeline whispered.

"Emma," Abel kissed her passionately. "I love you, I love you, let me love you, okay?"

"I..."

"I know you don't love me anymore, but I still love you, Emma, please let me love you, okay?"

Emmeline remained silent.

"Emma, I can't resist anymore, I can't control myself, I'm going to make a mistake, but if you don't love me, will you blame me for bullying you?"

"Ugh," Emmeline couldn't hold it anymore, tears streamed down her face.

She couldn't pretend anymore, she reached out and hugged Abel's head. "You fool, I love you too, I always have..."

"Emma," Abel suddenly looked up, "are you telling the truth? You didn't drink Worryfree?"

"I was just teasing you," Emmeline blushed and chuckled. "I drank smoked paprika."

"...You're so daring! How could you lie to me!"

"You forced me to do it," the little woman pouted beneath him.

"Damn it! I'm going to make you taste the flavor of lying to me right now!"

After what seemed like a long time, the night had fallen.

Abel held her contentedly, his handsome face buried in the warmth of her shoulder.

"Have you changed now? Will you dare to deceive me again in the future?" he asked.

"I can't change, I like this kind of punishment," Emmeline replied lazily, her voice husky.

"Then let's do it again!" Abel exclaimed, rolling over.

“No, please,” Emmeline protested, “Don’t you remember that tomorrow is Lizbeth and Adrien’s engagement party? Do you want me to go out like this?”

Abel suddenly remembered the party and reluctantly gave up the idea.

“Let’s spare you for now,” he pinched Emmeline’s rosy cheeks with desire in his eyes. “But when we get back to the Precipice tomorrow, you won’t be able to leave the house for three days! This is the price you pay for deceiving me!”

It was already eight o’clock at night, and they had unknowingly spent nearly three hours in bed, missing dinner time.

Emmeline’s stomach growled.

“I’ll go tell Sam to cook you some nourishing soup,” Abel said, kissing her little face.

“I’ll just do it myself,” Emmeline yawned and got up. “Sam is still downstairs in the kitchen.”

“I can make soup too, you know,” Abel offered.

“Are you not tired?” Emmeline was curious about this man’s stamina.

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Even after being at it for so long, the man was still brimming with vigor.

“I can go for another round,” Abel said as he gently nipped her ear.

The young lady was too embarrassed to speak.

“Just lie in bed. I’ll make you a bowl of soup,” Abel said as he placed Emmeline softly on the mattress and tucked her under the blanket. After which, he got up and got dressed.

Feeling restless on the bed, Emmeline wanted to go help him in the kitchen. However, just as she put on some clothes and got down from the bed, her legs went limp and she could feel a searing pain.

With a loud shriek, she fell back down onto the bed.

Abel had just entered the kitchen when he heard the commotion, so he immediately rushed back.

“Are you okay, Emma?” He asked nervously.

Emmeline grimaced, “You went too hard. Now I really can’t get out of bed.”

“...Are you in pain?” Abel crouched down and asked in a gentle tone.

“What do you think?” Emmeline pouted as she continued, “Don’t you have an idea of your own stamina?”

“...” Abel pondered silently for a moment. He had gone through special forces training, so naturally he had more stamina than most people.

Realizing he may have overdone it a little, he quickly took out his phone.

“Who are you calling?” Emmeline asked.

Abel replied, "The Ryker Hospital gynecology department. I'll have a nurse come here and give you some medicine."

Emmeline shrieked, "Ah! No way! That's too embarrassing!"

Abel said, "This is not up for discussion. How else are you going to attend tomorrow's banquet? You can't expect me to carry you the entire time."

Emmeline continued to shake her head in refusal, "Why would you do that? That's even more embarrassing!"

"Also, tomorrow night..." Abel got down to her ear and whispered, "Once the nurse gives you your medicine, you'll recover quickly. That way, it won't get in the way of us tomorrow night..."

"Ah!" Emmeline screamed as she covered herself under the blanket and curled up inside.

"Abel, you're such a meanie!" she said.

Abel then called the gynecology department.

The department administrator quickly picked up his call.

Abel didn't beat around the bush and told her the entirety of what had happened.

"I think you should have medication for that, right? Like something that stops the pain, promotes recovery and prevents infection," he said.

The administrator's face flushed red with embarrassment as she answered, "Yes we do, Mr. Abel. We have a suppository gel that covers all of that."

"Great, send over a good nurse with the medicine immediately. I don't want my wife to be in discomfort for too long," he instructed.

"Understood, Mr. Abel. I will send a nurse over right now. Please provide me with your address," the administrator requested.

Abel replied, "Ok. I'm at Gold Street's Nightfall Cafe. You can have her come here directly."

After he ended the call, Abel pulled open the blanket and kissed Emmeline's reddened cheeks.

"Be a good girl and lie here. The nurse will be arriving soon enough. I'm going to make you some soup."

"..." Emmeline could only nod her head in embarrassment. She didn't know what else to say.

In a little over 30 minutes, the nurse had arrived with the medicine.

The glass door opened and Sam noticed a nurse in her thirties rushing inside.

"Would you like some coffee?" she asked.

Sam was in the middle of a conversation with Luca, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say they were flirting.

Visibly anxious, the nurse replied, "That's not it. I'm a nurse from the Ryker Hospital gynecology department. Mr. Abel sent for me, saying that Ms. Louise is in need of medicine..."

Sam was shocked, "Medicine? Is Ms. Louise in pain?"

The nurse tried to explain, "It's not that type of pain. It's... THAT type of pain."

Sam grew anxious as she asked, "What pain are you talking about? Anyway, the point is Ms. Louise is hurt!"

Just as she was about to rush upstairs, Luca stopped her.

"Sam, don't go," he said.

"Ms. Louise is hurt. Why are you stopping me?!" She argued.

The nurse was just as anxious as she said, "Miss, it's not what you're thinking. It's because Mr. Abel... Can you just tell me which floor Ms. Louise is on? I need to give her the medicine as soon as possible."

Sam answered, "Ms. Louise is on the second floor. I'll go with you."

Luca pulled her back again and said, "Sam, you shouldn't go. You'll just make Ms. Louise even more embarrassed!"

Sam was furious as she said, "Why are you still stopping me? Your Mr. Abel hurt my Ms. Louise. I'm going to give him a piece of my mind!"

Meanwhile, the nurse had rushed upstairs with the medicine.

Luca continued to hold Sam back and prevent her from going upstairs.

"How should I explain this to you?" he remarked.

Sam brushed his hand off and said, "There's no point explaining. Let me go. I'm going upstairs!"

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Luca couldn't take it any more and mumbled something beside Sam's ear.

When she heard it, Sam instantly froze. Her face was flushed all the way to her ears as she hastily hid herself behind the counter.

As soon as the nurse stepped into the bedroom, Emmeline pulled the blanket over her head again.

This is too embarrassing! I can't see anyone like this!

Abel came out wearing an apron. With a gentle tone, he instructed, "Make sure you don't go too hard on the medicine. I don't want my wife to be in pain."

With flushed cheeks, the nurse nodded and replied softly, "Absolutely, Mr. Abel. Rest assured that I will be very careful."

"I'll leave you to it then," Abel said as he closed the door, making his way back to the kitchen and his soup.

Seeing how nervous Emmeline was, the nurse reassured her, "Mr. Abel is very kind. You're a lucky woman, Ms. Louise."

"Yeah," Emmeline mumbled from under the blanket.

"Where do you even find a man like that? He's even being so meticulous with your aftercare."

"Yeah," Emmeline made another short response. She was blushing even harder under the blanket.

"I'll apply the medicine for you now, Ms. Louise. Don't worry and just try to relax."

"Yeah," It seemed like this was the only word left in Emmeline's vocabulary.

The nurse gently lifted the blanket up and applied the medicine on Emmeline.

The cold sensation was very soothing and reduced a lot of the pain.

Pulling the blanket back onto Emmeline, the nurse left some extra medicine to the side and went to the kitchen to report to Abel.

"Mr. Abel, sir, I've helped apply the medicine on Ms. Louise."

"Great. Thanks for the help," Abel said as he scooped up the herbal tonic soup.

The nurse lowered her head and gave her prognosis, "Ms. Louise's body is a bit frail. You should be... gentler next time. That would make it easier for her to recover too."

"..." Abel was also a little taken aback before acknowledging, "Yeah, I got it."

The nurse added, "I've also left some extra medicine. You can call me tomorrow afternoon and I'll come over again to reapply the medicine for Ms. Louise."

"Alright," Abel nodded.

With flushed cheeks, the nurse then took her leave.

With his soup done, Abel scooped some into a small bowl and brought it over to Emmeline.

Just then, Sam rushed upstairs.

She asked, "Ms. Louise, are you okay?"

The redness had just receded from Emmeline's face before returning once more.

Sam also felt a little awkward. She grabbed the bowl from Abel and said, "Move aside. I'll take care of Ms. Louise."

Abel gently touched Emmeline's cheek and said, "Be a good girl and finish the soup. Your dear husband is going downstairs for a smoke."

"Okay," Emmeline nodded.

Given her current state, there was little else she could do.

As Abel turned around, he noticed the suppositories the nurse had left behind on the bedside drawer.

He picked them up and placed them in his suit pockets in the closet.

Once Abel was out, Sam picked up the spoon and started feeding Emmeline the soup.

“I was so scared when I saw the Ryker Hospital nurse come in!”

Emmeline was a little embarrassed and didn't know how to respond. She simply opened her mouth and gulped up the soup.

Sam continued cheerfully, “Mr. Abel called himself your husband. Ms. Louise, does that mean you're both okay now?”

Emmeline nodded as a sense of bliss covered her reddened face.

“Oh, but didn't you take the Worryfree, Ms. Louise?” Sam feigned ignorance as she said, “That means that Mr. Adelmars medicine wasn't as effective as it was supposed to be.”

Emmeline almost choked on her soup.

She hadn't told Sam that what she had taken was the cafe's smoked paprika.

That stuff tastes horrible!

However, they still needed to buy a new bottle now that they were out.

Otherwise, they wouldn't be able to make delicious ravioli anymore.

The next day at Cloud Hotel.

A striking red banner was written with the equally eye-catching message: Congratulations to Mr. Adrien Ryker and Ms. Lizbeth Murphy on their wedding engagement!

Thousands of roses decorated the mini plaza in front of the hotel's entrance, filling the air with a powerful fragrance.

It was obvious from a single glance that this was all Abel's doing.

The mood was festive, with its bright colors and a rowdy atmosphere.

The guests drove their cars to the underground parking lot.

Abel also pulled up in his Rolls-Royce, along with Emmeline.

Emmeline was feeling a lot better after taking the medicine yesterday.

However, she was still walking a little awkwardly.

The love bites on her neck, ears and collarbone were also still vivid.

As though they were Abel's way of laying claim to her.

Fortunately, Emmeline had donned a Chanel-style shawl which just barely covered these bold declarations of love.

They both got down from the Rolls-Royce, with Abel half-supporting Emmeline as she exited the vehicle...

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Emmeline frowned as she tried her best to move as naturally as she could.

However, it was evident that every step was uncomfortable for her.

“This is all your fault. I can’t even walk properly now!”

Revealing a playful smile, Abel leaned next to her ear and said, “This is punishment for trying to trick me. If you do it again, I’ll make it even worse next time!”

“...” Emmeline pouted as she glared back at him, rebuking, “How can you be this happy about my misery when you’re the reason behind it?!”

“Oh, but...” Abel continued to whisper soft nothings by her ear, “I still want to go on.”

Emmeline’s cheeks reddened instantly and she gave Abel a hard pinch.

“Ouch!” Abel yelled.

His voice attracted the attention of the two guests in front.

It was the Murphy siblings from Altney, Flynn and Evelyn.

Realizing it was Abel and Emmeline, the two of them came to a halt.

“Mr. Abel, it’s been a while,” Flynn said as he reached for a handshake.

Abel let go of Emmeline’s hand and reciprocated the gesture out of courtesy.

“Mr. Flynn, long time no see.”

Without Abel’s support, Emmeline found it difficult to keep her balance.

Evelyn quickly went over and helped her up.

“I was wondering why Mr. Abel was supporting you the whole time. It seems like you’re hurt?”

“Yeah,” Emmeline awkwardly nodded her head before she corrected herself, “No, that’s not exactly it.”

“If that’s not the case, then I can’t imagine Mr. Abel wanting to help you.” Evelyn lowered her voice and said, “He told me that he doesn’t love you anymore.”

Emmeline smiled softly, “Is that so? I couldn’t tell.”

Evelyn replied, “That’s because he doesn’t want to hurt you. Mr. Abel is such a gentleman.”

Emmeline pretended to be hurt, “So that’s why. I’m so sad.”

Evelyn’s tone was gentle, but her gaze carried malice as she said, “Don’t be. The heart is a fickle thing, after all.”

Emmeline said, "But he told me that he was going to marry me yesterday."

Evelyn said, "How is that even possible? Liz told me that you didn't even know what to do with your wedding dress."

Emmeline smiled, "Well, who knows? Let's just see where it goes."

Just as the two of them were talking, Abel turned around and pulled Emmeline in. Lowering his head, he asked softly, "Are you alright?"

Emmeline leaned into his embrace and said in a flirty tone, "It still hurts a lot. It's too difficult to walk."

Without another word, Abel reached around her waist and lifted her up.

Holding on to his shoulders, Emmeline turned around and winked at Evelyn.

"Sorry, Ms. Evelyn. My husband is going to take me away now."

Evelyn stood there in a daze as her face quickly paled.

By the time the two of them reached the banquet hall on the second floor, it was already swarming with guests.

Adrien was accompanied by the lavishly dressed Lizbeth, and the two of them were busy greeting their guests.

Landen and Julianna were also merrily going about greeting guests.

Abel gently let Emmeline down, then held her hand as they walked in.

Lizbeth and Adrien noticed they were here and quickly ran up to greet them.

"Emmeline, you're here!"

"Emma, Abel, welcome!"

Emmeline smiled at Lizbeth, "You look so beautiful today. Absolutely dazzling. I can barely keep my eyes open."

Abel was also speaking to Adrien, "Congratulations Adrien. You've finally found your missing piece."

Adrien pulled Abel in and turned him around as he whispered, "Abel, you and Emma are both okay now?"

Abel gestured with his eyes and smiled, "What do you think?"

Adrien replied, "You two look close. I just hope you're not putting up appearances."

Abel sighed, "I don't have the energy for that sort of thing."

Adrien was ecstatic, "That means you two have gotten back together? I'm happy for you."

Just as they were speaking, another guest came in, so Adrien and Lizbeth had to leave to greet them.

Abel brought Emmeline over to a sofa and sat down.

“Rest here for the time being. I’ll go say hi to Mom and Dad.”

Emmeline noticed Rosaline and Lewis were busy speaking to some of the guests.

She smiled, “Yeah, sure. Don’t mind me. Go ahead. Give Lewis and Rosaline my regards.”

“Okay, be a good girl,” Abel said before finally leaving.

Just as he left, Evelyn came over.

She asked, “Are you feeling alright, Emmeline? It looks like you’re having trouble walking.”

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Emmeline smiled and nodded, “Yes, it’s a little uncomfortable.”

Evelyn said, “I knew it. Mr. Abel is just taking care of you because he has no choice.”

Emmeline chuckled, “Hehe. You’re right that he has no choice. After all, if he doesn’t take care of me, who else could?”

The reason she was in pain was because he had gone too hard in bed. Naturally, he had to bear the responsibility.

Evelyn reassured herself, “Mr. Abel is a sentimental man. Even though he doesn’t love you anymore, he still takes care of you. That’s the kind of man I like.”

Emmeline narrowed her eyes and asked, “Then what of you and Abel? Have you two finally developed feelings after so long?”

“...” Evelyn’s expression turned gloomy for a moment before replying, “I like our relationship now. There’s plenty of time for feelings later on.”

“Is that so?”

Evelyn had a haughty expression as she said, “Yes, it is. At least he’s not just being nice to me out of obligation like he does you. Since he doesn’t love you anymore, why shouldn’t he be able to love me? Not to mention, we have an arranged marriage, so our relationship will only get better with time.”

Emmeline smiled, “Well, aren’t you the confident one? I’m quite impressed really.”

“If I were you, I would have already realized my presence is unwanted here. Why be a thorn in someone else’s eyes?”

Emmeline sighed, “Oh, you’re absolutely right. Just look at all the wounds Abel has given me. I really should be staying far away from him.”

She casually pulled her shawl down as she said this.

The little reddish marks on her neck, shoulder and collarbone immediately caught Evelyn’s attention.

Evelyn was stupefied.

No matter how ignorant she was, she knew what exactly these ‘reddish marks’ were.

Evelyn couldn't contain her surprise as she asked, "How did you get so many love bites? And they're so red. Who did it?"

Emmeline smiled, "I just said it was Abel. Can't you see that I can barely even walk because of him? He's not just being nice to me out of obligation. He's also... very enthusiastic and strong... Oh, I can hardly take it."

Evelyn was shocked, "Abel... did this? So the reason walking is painful for you is because he..."

Emmeline said playfully, "Why else? That dear husband of mine had almost sucked the life out of me last night."

"But I thought he no longer had feelings for you?"

Emmeline clicked her tongue and said, "How can you believe such nonsense? If he had no feelings for me, would he lust after me for hours on end? Afterwards, he even got a nurse from the gynecology department to take care of me. That's the only reason why I'm even able to come out here. Sadly, walking is still a tad painful for me, so I need him to support me. Oh, being his woman is so difficult."

Evelyn's face paled completely, "That means... You and Abel... were alright to begin with?"

Emmeline lowered her voice and said, "Well, I wouldn't say that. He told me that starting tonight, he's going to make it so that... I won't be able to get out of bed for three days. Can you believe that man? How can he be so rough on me?"

Evelyn's expression darkened as her vision became blurry. She supported herself on the chair and took a deep breath before hastily departing.

"Pfft. Try and mess with me, will you?"

Emmeline sneered and took a cherry from the fruit platter in front of her, then tossed it into her mouth.

Evelyn quickly moved across the hall and sat down in a chair in the corner.

She realized that she must have seemed like such a fool to Emmeline with all her bold accusations and wishful thinking.

Unable to stop herself from crying, Evelyn covered her mouth to stifle herself.

On the other side, Julianna was speaking with Adam.

Noticing the distressed Evelyn, she said to Adam, "Adam, did you see what happened with Ms. Evelyn Murphy?"

Adam hadn't noticed the person in question at all. He looked around his surroundings, then asked, "Why? What's wrong with her?"

"It looks like she started crying after speaking to Emmeline," Julianna said as she gestured to the corner with her lips.

Adam finally noticed Evelyn huddled up in the corner.

He asked, "What's that got to do with us? Lizbeth is the one who's engaged to Adrien, not her."

Julianna rebuked, "Are you stupid? She's the cherished daughter of the Murphy family. Lizbeth had only just entered the picture and doesn't have a lot of support."

"I still don't see how that concerns us?"

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Julianna said, "How do you still not understand? The Murphy family of Altney is still a highly prestigious family. If you can establish a connection with them, they will be a powerful ally when you go against Abel in the future!"

Hearing this, Adam finally understood what his mother meant.

He said, "But I don't like her. She's pretty, but she's not my type."

Julianna rolled her eyes and said, "Mother knows best. I'm aware you have feelings for Emmeline, but it's best you give up on that pipe dream. Even if you could court her, she will never reciprocate your affection."

Adam put a fist up to his mouth and coughed.

Julianna added, "Don't be mad. You know it's true. I'm telling you you have an opportunity here. Don't miss it!"

Adam narrowed his eyes at Evelyn.

Julianna lowered her voice and said, "Why are you still standing around? Women are no more than tools. I didn't tell you to like her. Just make sure you can use her!"

Adam finally nodded, "Alright. It's not like I have anything better to do. Let's see what we have here."

Julianna slapped Adam on the back and said, "That's my boy! Good luck!"

Adam cleaned up his suit a little, then took two glasses of wine and walked over to where Evelyn was.

Meanwhile, the guests had begun dancing in the hall.

As it was difficult for Emmeline to move about, Abel had invited his mother over to the dance floor.

Adrien and Lizbeth had begun dancing as well.

"Ms. Evelyn," Adam said as he approached Evelyn. He asked softly in his deep voice, "Are you unwell? Do you need any assistance?"

Hearing someone speak to her, Evelyn lifted her head and met Adam with her reddened eyes.

"Mr. Adam?"

"Yes," Adam responded as he sat down next to her. Offering her a handkerchief, he asked, "Are you alright?"

Evelyn was momentarily taken aback before shaking her head, "Yes, I'm fine."

"Why are you crying?" Adam acted like a caring gentleman.

Evelyn smiled wryly, "I... just thought of something in the past. I'm better now."

Adam smiled, "Have a drink. It'll cheer you up."

Evelyn took the drink from Adam and lightly sipped on it.

Adam asked, "Would you care to dance? It would be an absolute shame to hide such beauty in a dark corner like this."

Evelyn mulled it over and decided that she couldn't let Emmeline just look down on her like this.

There were still plenty of other men vying for her.

After all, the firstborn of the Ryker family was here, was he not?

Evelyn nodded, "Yes, I would."

Adam took her hand like a gentleman and led her to the dance floor.

As her dress swayed to the rhythm of the music, Evelyn shot Emmeline a cold glance.

It just so happened that Emmeline also met her gaze.

Emmeline was a little shocked, thinking, Oh my, Evelyn is bold. Of all the people in the room, she chose to go with Adam?

Does she not know the type of person he is?

Evelyn was delighted to see the surprise on Emmeline's face.

She assumed that it was because Emmeline was shocked to see her matched up with Adam so quickly.

Little did she know that Emmeline was just being concerned for her wellbeing.

Filled with self-satisfaction, Evelyn started leaning closer into Adam's embrace.

Adam looked down at her and smiled, "What plans do you have after this, Ms. Evelyn? Will you be returning to Altney?"

"I originally planned to head back after Liz's engagement party." Evelyn lowered her gaze and continued, "But now I'm not so sure."

Adam suggested, "Then you're welcome to stay in Struyria a little longer. There are plenty of places to explore here, and I can be your guide."

"That's..."

Evelyn knew that Adam was testing her.

If she agreed to him, it would mean that she consented to the idea of the two of them dating.

However, she didn't harbor such feelings towards Adam, and was at a loss on how to respond.

Adam smiled gently, "If you need some time to think about it, you don't need to answer me now. I'm a very patient man."

“Then I shall tell you once I have made up my mind.”

“Sure.”

Evelyn leaned her head onto Adam’s broad shoulders, and the two of them gradually danced their way to the center of the hall.

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After the song was over, Adrien thanked the guests then started reciting his very lengthy marriage vows.

“I, Adrien Ryker, will only love Lizbeth Murphy for as long as I die. No matter what happens, I will never leave her side.”

Lizbeth sheepishly lowered her head, but her expression was full of bliss.

The guests gave a sounding applause as they congratulated the lucky couple.

They were all happy that the once promiscuous playboy had now found his soulmate.

Adrien held onto Lizbeth’s hand and said, “To ensure this happiness lives on, Liz will toss the bouquet of flowers in her hand to the crowd. We hope that the person who catches it will be able to find happiness the way we have!”

“Wow!” The crowd clapped excitedly.

“Throw it here. I’m ready!”

“I’ll be the one to catch it!”

Even Evelyn and Adam were restlessly waiting, eager to catch Lizbeth’s bouquet.

As the music reached a crescendo, Lizbeth turned around and tossed her bouquet backwards.

The hall was in an uproar as all the guests watched with widened eyes and reached out their arms in hopes of catching the bouquet.

The flowers spun several times in the air, before ultimately landing with a soft poof.

The bouquet had dropped right on Abel’s lap.

Adrien was the first to start clapping. He exclaimed, “Wow! Abel got the bouquet!”

“That’s wonderful! Congratulations, Mr. Abel!” Lizbeth shared his enthusiasm as well.

Abel was also holding onto the bouquet with excitement.

He never imagined he could be this lucky.

Rosaline chuckled, “My son, you’re quite the lucky man!”

Emmeline also got to her feet, clapping wildly as she cheered, “You did great, Abel!”

Abel raised the bouquet towards her and said, “WE did great! Happiness comes when you and I are together!”

Emmeline's cheeks were flushed red at his declaration, her expression full of bliss.

In contrast, Adam and Evelyn had gloom written all over.

Adam cursed to himself, Damn you, Abel. Why are you always the lucky one? Even for a simple bouquet toss, I can't compare to you! Damn it all!

Evelyn stared daggers at Emmeline as well, her eyes filled with an envious fury.

Why does she get to be the one to be with a good man like Abel?!

Adrien asked, "So Abel, tell us. When are you and Emma planning to get married? Share some of your happiness with the crowd as well!"

Abel replied, "We've already set the date one and a half months ago, but we just haven't announced it yet."

Rosaline smiled, "Abel is right. Around a month ago, I helped my son and Emma look for the perfect date and finalized their wedding plans. It'll happen very soon now!"

Someone from the crowd prompted, "When are you getting married, Mr. Abel? Tell us sooner so we can prepare our gifts!"

"Yes, that's right. We will have to put extra care in our gifts for Mr. Ryker's wedding!"

Abel walked over to where Emmeline was sitting and handed her the bouquet.

He bent over and lifted her up, spinning around twice before declaring, "I officially announce that me and Emmeline's wedding will be held next month on the 9th!"

"Wow! On the 9th? That's wonderful!" Adrien was the first one to clap yet again.

Lizbeth was also joyously celebrating, "Congratulations Mr. Abel! Congratulations Emmeline! Don't forget to invite us for the reception!"

"Of course we will!" Emmeline replied as she waved her bouquet at Lizbeth.

The crowd was also cheering.

"Mr. Abel is getting married next month. Isn't that just around the corner?"

"Oh I'll have to think really hard on what gift to prepare for Mr. Abel."

"Mr. Abel is the head of the Ryker family. We have to make sure our gifts are fitting!"

"..."

The reporters who were invited to the party all turned their cameras from Adrien and Lizbeth over to Abel and Emmeline.

With the incessant clicking of the shutter, the picture of the two lovebirds would be captured on film and spread across all major media channels.

Evelyn was full of despair as she fell lifelessly onto her seat, realizing in the end, that her love had always been one-sided.

Abel was now soon to be married, but not once did he even look at her!

Adam took advantage of this situation and asked, "Ms. Evelyn, do you now have an answer for my question?"