



My Bossy CEO Husband

Chapter 1: The Eighth Month Of Her

Pregnancy Slap! Wendy Finch was smacked in the face.

Her skin tingled with pain and her head buzzed. She staggered a few steps back, one hand instinctively covering her bulging belly while the other one held her swollen cheek.

"Wendy, you heartless bitch! How dare you do this to Eris?! You've always been against us ever since my daughter and I became part of this family. To think that you would resort to hurting Eris with a knife... If anything bad happens to my daughter, I will never forgive you, Wendy Finch!"

Cacia Brown turned away then and walked to the living room.

She crouched to the floor and held her bleeding daughter.

"It's not my fault! I didn't do anything!"

Wendy clutched at Brian Oliver's sleeve as though it were her last lifeline.

"Brian, trust me, please! I really didn't do it!"

"Didn't you?"

Brian asked, shaking her off and glaring at her with burning eyes.

"There was nobody else in here besides the two of you! Are you saying that Eris hurt herself on purpose?"

"But she did! She stabbed herself!"

"You bitch! Go to hell!"

Brian was livid.

He couldn't stand it anymore.

He raised a leg and landed a solid kick on Wendy's belly, sending her sprawling backwards.

Her belly hit the corner of the table, sending sharp pain shooting all over her body.

"Ahl"

She screamed in pain and fell to the floor, her arms cradling her belly.

She could feel something hot and wet trickle down her legs.

It frightened her desperately.

"Brian..."

"I was so blind to refuse your kind-hearted sister in order to be with a vicious woman like you, Wendy!" Wendy's heart sank.

Her entire world had just crumbled.

An hour ago, she was waiting for Brian to take her to the hospital for her prenatal checkup.

Eris had gotten in her way, stopping her and showing a photo of herself and Brian in the act of making love.

"Brian and I have been in love for a long time!"

Eris had mocked her.

"He doesn't love you anymore! Do you want to know why he hasn't broken up with you yet? Are you thinking it's because you are carrying his baby? Ha ha! Stop daydreaming! Did you really think I would let you have Brian's baby? The baby in your belly is not his at all! I'm the only one who loves him the most in the world! And I am willing to pay any price in order to be with him!"

Nothing could have prepared Wendy for what had happened next, but she eventually learned what Eris had meant by "any price." The doorbell had rung, and Eris had grabbed a knife from the kitchen and plunged it into her own abdomen.

It had all happened so fast, with Cacia rushing into the scene screaming and Brian kicking the front door open to get inside.

And here they were now.

Wendy turned to look at Eris.

The other woman was lying in her mother's arms, weak and bloody.

But then she smirked at Wendy.

Horrified disbelief was added into the maelstrom of emotions Wendy was feeling.

How could a person bear to hurt themselves just to get what they wanted? Another bout of pain burst from Wendy's belly.

She was bleeding! She had lost a considerable amount of blood at this point, and she could feel that her face had gone pale.

She reached out a hand toward Brian in a desperate plea.

"Brian, our baby, our baby..."

"It's not ours! It's just yours!"

"What? What did you say?"

"I might as well tell you the truth right now!"

He strode over to Eris and held her in his arms, his face full of concern.

"Eight months ago, on the night of your cousin's wedding, I'm not the one who had sex with you!"

Wendy Finch widened her eyes in horror.

"What? Is that true?"

"I was with Eris that night. She was young and impulsive back then. She laced your drink and found you a gigolo. Didn't you retire to the mountainside villa after the wedding? I arrived the next day, and Eris told me everything. I was afraid that if you learned the truth, you would report her to the police. I can't let Eris have a crime record. That's why I decided to let you believe that it was me you slept with that night. But all of it is a lie!"

"Eris was young...and impulsive?"

Wendy muttered incredulously, her voice trembling.

And then she started yelling.

"What about me then?! I deserved a choice with whom to lose my virginity and whose baby to carry! How could you trap me like that?"

Holding Eris tighter, Brian shot Wendy a look of disdain.

"I Wanted to break up with you after that night! I only hesitated because of the three years we've shared. I always thought you were an innocent and kind girl, and I couldn't bring myself to hurt you back then. But I know now that your gentle facade is fake! You actually tried to kill Eris today! I've been so foolish for not seeing your true colors sooner! Let's end everything here. From now on, we have nothing to do with each other!"

After saying that, he rose, Eris still in his arms. He strode out of the house without a single backward glance at Wendy.

The pain in her abdomen was only growing by the minute.

Her bleeding had not stopped, and she was already feeling dizzy.

She lay back on the cold hard floor and ran a hand over her round belly, tears streaming down her face.

The hatred she felt in that moment was overwhelming.

She hated them so much! How happy she had been when she had found out that she was pregnant, because she had thought it to be the fruit of her love with her destined man.

She had been looking forward to giving birth, too, and had even imagined what the baby would look like countless times.

Would it look like her, or Brian? But he now told her that all she had known was a lie.

Those people... How could they cheat on her like this! Bang! The door was slammed shut.

Wendy closed her eyes in despair, but a shadow loomed above her.

She opened her eyes and found Cacia sneering at her.

"Are you in a lot of pain? This is just the beginning!"

"What are you going to do? No!"

"What am I going to do? Of course I'm going to get rid of you for my daughter's sake!"

Wendy was filled with cold dread, and she tried to wriggle away from the older woman.

"Are you planning on killing me? That would be murder!" "Murder? Ha ha! You fell down and hit the corner of the table all by yourself, resulting in a miscarriage and massive bleeding.

Your eventual death would have nothing to do with me!"

With that, Cacia put a foot down on Wendy's belly, exerting force on her heel.

"Ah! Stop!"

"Stop!"

"Don't blame me, Wendy Finch! After all, you are the daughter of Cassie Smith. Both you and your mother are just bitches who made the mistake of going against Eris and me! Cassie Smith stood in my way, so I killed her. And now that you're standing in my daughter's way, I will kill you as well!" Despite her panic, shock still came over Wendy.

"You killed my mother?"

"So what?"

Cacia kicked her again, grinning with satisfaction as Wendy screamed.

"I threw your pathetic mother into the sea to be shark food! Didn't you love each other so deeply? I will send you to accompany her in hell shortly!"

Cacia kicked again, and again, and again. Wendy could feel her body grow cold, and she was slowly losing consciousness.

She had become numb to the pain.

The strong, metallic smell of blood permeated the air, and her white dress was now dyed in dark red.

Her eyes were filled with hatred as her sight soon got swallowed up by darkness.

Chapter 2: Back With Her Son

Three years later, at the airport of Ywood...

Passengers, who had just arrived from their trip, were queuing to pick up their luggage.

Amongst the crowd was a beautiful woman who stood quietly.

She was particularly eye-catching, like a shining crystal who would turn heads upon sighting.

Men were ogling her with burning and infatuated eyes, while women's eyes glinted with envy and jealousy.

The skimpy red dress that hugged her body highlighted her white, porcelain skin.

Her well-sculpted face bore her luscious lips, deep eyes, and perfectly-shaped brows.

Round on her front was her well-gifted chest.

Her waist was slender, something that most women could only hope for.

And much like any other models, her legs were lean and long.

They could conquer any runway! She was inexplicably sexy, enchanting, and daring--a more lethal combination than drugs.

But although the woman caught the attention of almost every man in the airport, no one dared to approach her because of the stern, cold expression on her face.

"Mommy!" the little boy next to her called.

Instantly, her face changed, like snow meeting the warm sun, melting in an instant.

The woman bent down and held up the boy.

Looking at his cute face, she couldn't help but plant a kiss on his face.

The little boy's ears turned red in an instant.

Seeing this, Wendy was amused by the boy's reaction.

"Uncle Roger sent us a message on WeChat.

He said that he's waiting for us at the parking lot and asked us to go there as soon we landed,"

the boy informed seriously.

"Okay!"

Facing the crowd who watched him and his mother, the little boy sported a frown, as if saying that no one was allowed to come near him.

However, how could such a cute little face not attract the attention of the people around? The women, in particular, were bewildered by this little boy's charm.

Oh my God! Such a cute boy he is!' some of them thought to themselves.He looked only three or four years old, but others could

imagine how attractive he would be once he grew up. He had jet black hair with thin bangs covering his full forehead.

Under his dashing eyebrows, he had bright eyes, a straight nose, lips red like cherries.

The kid looked like a model walking out of the cover of a magazine.

All women covered their chests with their hands.

They gasped in awe as they watched the kid strut towards the exit.

How could he be so cute?! Everyone really wanted to take him back! The woman was Wendy.

She left Ywood three years ago with her son—the cute little boy.

Three years ago, Wendy suffered a massive hemorrhage after being severely beaten by Brian.

And because Cacia stomped on her even more, Wendy lost a lot of blood, eventually sending her into a severe state of coma.

Cacia later threw her into the sea--the very same thing she did to her mother.

Perhaps it was because of luck, but as soon as Cacia and her companions left, the sea began to surge.

Wendy was washed to the shore, where a kind-hearted gentleman found her and brought her to a hospital.

She didn't wake up until half a month later.

And when she did, a scar of cesarean birth was on her belly! After undergoing a prenatal check-up, she learned she was pregnant with fraternal twins.

When she was sent to the hospital, the situation was very bad.

The doctor gave her a cesarean section, but only one of the two babies survived.

According to the doctor, it was an external force that eventually killed the baby girl.

And although the baby boy survived, his condition was no better.

The poor baby was born with multiple fractures and bruises all over his body. Fortunately, he survived after being in the incubator for half a month.

Before Wendy could even see the boy, she was bent on not keeping it because it served as a reminder of how stupid she was!

But when she saw the baby at first sight, her heart softened.

His body was red and wrinkled, like that of an old man's.

He was not cute at all! But when her finger grazed his tiny mouth, he began to suck it.

At that moment, there seemed to be a line, instantly connecting both their hearts.

Since then, Wendy had decided that she would keep this baby no matter how hard it would be.

After she was discharged from the hospital, she went home at once.

Her family had apparently held a funeral for her. Because she knew many of Cacia's dirty secrets, Wendy was killed to keep her mouth shut.

If she continued to stay in Ywood, she might cross paths with those people.

So, she immediately fled to the US with her baby boy for their safety.

When she first arrived in the foreign land, everything was difficult.

As a woman, she had neither an educational background and nor special skills.

She could only work in a Chinese restaurant where she juggled washing the dishes and taking care of a new-born baby.

It was hell, and Wendy thought of giving up.

But, with her determination and guts, she survived.

Fortunately, her son was easy to look after.

When he turned half a year old, Wendy hired a nurse to babysit him.

She went on with her dream and became a student of New York Acting College.

With her eagerness to learn, she swore to become stronger and successful!

She wanted to be strong enough to bring her murderers to justice!

"Mommy..."the young boy called, sending Wendy back to her senses in an instant.

She gazed at him only to see the concerned look on his face.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Uncle Roger has called us several times, but you didn't hear him!"

"I'm sorry, honey.Mommy was thinking of something else just now."

As soon as she raised her head, Wendy saw Roger Johnson by the exit, waving at them with a smile.He then strode over and took the suitcase from Wendy.

"It's alright.I can carry it myself."

"Come on, Wendy.This is no big deal!"

Roger Johnson uttered, He then turned to the little boy, ruffled his head, and asked, "Ray, did you miss me?"

"Uncle Roger!"

The little boy frowned and protested, "You can't touch a man's head!"

A man? Wendy saw how her son shook off Roger Johnson's big hand from his head.

"I've celebrated my third birthday in the US.I am grown up now.Uncle Roger, you can't ruffle my head like that from now on," the little boy commanded, sporting a pout.

"Okay, I got it. You're a man now, Ray.So, can I hold you? Your mommy is not strong enough.Look, she is already tired of carrying you."

"Sure!"

The little boy extended his little arms to Roger, who held him in his arms with a smile.

Let's go! I've booked a VIP room in Riverside Restaurant for you.

Now, I'll take you to eat some real Chinese food!"

"Let's go!"

And the three of them strode towards the car.

Meanwhile...

"Brian? Brian!"

"What? What's wrong?"

Eris followed Brian's gaze suspiciously, only to see passengers coming in and out of the airport.

She held his arm and asked, "Brian, who are you looking for?"

"No one. I think my eyes made a mistake..."

Brian answered as his thoughts lingered on what he saw.

No! It must be his illusion! How could he see Wendy Finch here? That woman should have died three years ago.

He saw the bleeding himself! In the past three years, Brian had always been consumed with his guilt.

Back then, when Wendy stabbed Eris with a fruit knife and told him that Eris purposely hurt herself with the knife, he kicked Wendy in her pregnant belly out of anger.

At that time, he saw blood rushed out of Wendy's body.

He was so worried about Eris that he took her to the hospital without hesitation.

When he returned from the hospital, he heard the news that Wendy died of a massive hemorrhage.

A massive hemorrhage!

And he had kicked her heavily...

"Brian?"

"Yeah?"

Brian took a deep breath and held Eris's waist, trying to stir his thoughts away from the past.

"How was the shooting abroad?"

"It's alright. I've missed you!"

"Silly girl!" He smile gently.

"I know you haven't been eating well these days, so I booked a VIP room for us in Riverside Restaurant. Let's go!"

"Oh, Brian! You really are the best!"

Chapter 3: Are You Obsessed With My Beauty

"I've rented a house for you and Ray. After dinner, I'll drive you there right away. Don't worry about other stuff. I have prepared everything for you. But if there's anything else you need, there is a supermarket downstairs," Roger informed.

His hands were on the steering wheel while his eyes were glued on the road.

Wendy held Raymond in her arms while seated in the back seat. And after hearing what Roger said, she squinted and sighed.

"Ah, Roger! Why are you so sweet and considerate? I might as well marry you!"

A teasing smile was etched on her lips as she joked that.

"Hmm... That's a good idea. I don't mind having a son."

Raymond gazed up at her mother and uttered, "Mommy, please think about it carefully!"

"Sweetie, listen. Uncle Roger is just a friend of mine."

Roger laughed and responded, "What kind of friends are we talking about?"

Upon hearing that, Wendy was utterly speechless.

"It's just you deserve someone better."

She managed to say after a while. Wendy met Roger in the US two and a half years ago.

At that time, she had just enrolled in New York Acting College where she suffered from so much discrimination because of her inability to communicate well in English.

Apparently, racial discrimination was common too! And female students, who spoke broken English, were the center of prejudice.

However, for some reason, Wendy glowed up after giving birth to Raymond.

That was when a lot of college guys began chasing after her—much to the jealousy of other girls.

They began making trouble for her in and out of the campus.

It was Roger who helped her again and again. Even when he dropped out of school, Roger didn't cut off contact with Wendy.

He knew that she needed money to take care of the child, so he often introduced her to some jobs.

Most of those he offered her was in some TV series, such as playing as an extra.

She could not only hone her acting skills but also gain some experience in the industry. Without any doubt, Roger was definitely her savior.

"Roger, I will pay you the rent..."

"You can pay me when you get the paycheck for your job!"

"Do you really trust me that much?"

"As your agent, of course, I have confidence in my own actress!"

Half a year ago, Roger came back to the country.

And immediately, he called her to say that there was a local TV series called "The Story of Concubine Ivanka"

under production.

It cost three hundred million dollars, and the entire crew was really competent.

The TV series was adapted from a web novel of the same title.

It was very popular online, and the scriptwriter of the series was the author himself.

More than that, it will be directed by Carter Williams, one of the country's top directors.

Because it was a series about an imperial-harem, many A- list actresses were needed.

One of the supporting roles was in line with Wendy's image, so Roger quickly advised her to come back and audition for the part.

This was a great opportunity for her! In addition to that, Wendy had been really deciding to return.

With Roger as her very supportive agent, it was the perfect chance for her to make a big break in the entertainment industry.

Thinking about it now, Wendy was really grateful for all the help he had given her.

"Well...are you obsessed with my beauty? Is that why you help me again and again? Tell me the truth. I won't laugh at you. After all, I'm as beautiful as a flower. It's reasonable for you to fall in love with me,"

Wendy teased as she leaned over the driver's seat with Raymond still in her hands.

How narcissistic she was! Roger and Raymond Finch exchanged a meaningful look, and the two made an unbearable retching expression in unison.

"Ha-ha!"

They both broke into a burst of laughter—much to Wendy's confusion.

Meanwhile, the Riverside Restaurant was a famous high-class Chinese restaurant in Ywood.

Both its exterior and interiors boasted an antique vibe.

When customers entered, they seemed to be transported into an ancient gateway.

Inside were pavilions, terraces, bridges, and man-made rivers.

A waiter in traditional Chinese clothes led the patrons through the vermilion gallery to the innermost building for dining.

Open seating was on the first floor, while private rooms were on the second floor.

The decorations were in Chinese style all throughout, elegant and charming.

It was still too early for dinner time, but the open seat area on the first floor was already full of guests.

"There are so many rich people!" Wendy exclaimed.

She had heard of this restaurant before. It was very popular, especially among wealthy patrons.

Wendy could only wonder how great the food must be.

Because it was patronized by many people, private rooms on the second floor needed to be booked three months in advance.

And even with that, it was still hard to get a reservation.

"Roger, who the hell are you?"

It seemed that nothing was impossible for him to do.

"Don't worry. I'm not connected with any illegal business. This restaurant is owned by one of my friends. I don't need to book it like the others do," he said with a smile, holding the little boy in his arms.

Now Wendy understood how Roger managed to get them a room! The waiter led them to a private room on the second floor.

Because Raymond was practically a new-born when they left this country, it was his first time to such a place.

So, when he saw the traditional culture embedded in the restaurant, he leaned on Roger's shoulder and stared intently at it.

In Wendy's memory, it had been three years since she last came to such a high-class restaurant for dinner.

And because it had been that long, she was a little nervous.

"Roger, I want to wash my hands."

"Turn right and walk towards the end. You can find the restroom there."

"Alright. I'll be right back."

After washing her hands, Wendy walked back along the corridor.

But before she could even reach the door of their private room, a gust of wind blew over.

"Mommy!"

Suddenly a voice resounded.

The next second, she felt soft arms wrapping around her lower right leg.

When Wendy gazed down, she was stupefied to see who it was.

The girl who was holding her legs was about three or four years old.

She looked so tender, in a non-mainstream style, and her unique afro hair was like instant noodles.

She was wearing a leather top with rivets, partnered with a gauze skirt exaggeratedly covered with bright rhinestones.

Under the light, the rhinestones shone brightly, which was simply blinding! "Little girl, you must have mistaken me for someone else."

The little girl shook her head and said proudly, "I'm not a three-year-old child. How can I mistake you for someone else? You are my mommy!"

"How old are you then?"

The little girl stretched out four fingers and emphasized, "Four! I am FOUR years old! I just celebrated my third birthday two days ago. Now I'm four years old!"

"Sure enough, she is not a three-year-old kid." Wendy's mouth twitched wildly as she thought of that.

To be honest, she didn't like children other than Raymond, but somehow, she didn't feel disgusted when held by this little girl.

Had Raymond's twin sister survived, she would have been this cute.

Wendy's eyes softened as the thought of her dead child popped into her mind.

"Little girl..."

"Mommy, come on in!"

"Well..."

Before Wendy could finish her words, the little girl grabbed her hand and dragged her into one of the private rooms. "Come in, Mommy!"

After passing the arched door and entering the private room, Wendy found two people there.

A man and a woman were wearing formal clothes, enjoying dinner across one another.

From Wendy's perspective, she could only see the man's back and the woman's face.

"Auntie, this is my mommy. Isn't she beautiful? She is much prettier than you! Let me tell you, you are not beautiful in my daddy's eyes. I don't want my future brother or sister to grow as ugly as you!" the stranger little girl muttered, sticking her tongue out at the woman.

"You, you..."

The woman was so angry that her face turned red.

The little girl shook her head and continued, "My daddy loves my mommy so much! You so-called beauties can't seduce him, so you'd better give up now!"

Chapter 4: Do You Have Any Problem With The Way I Spoil My Daughter

Wendy immediately understood what was happening in the room.

The man and the woman were probably on a blind date, and the little girl holding her hand was the man's daughter.

She did not like her father's date, so she pulled her over to ruin their lovely dinner.

Now that Wendy had finally made sense of everything, she felt a surge of headache.

She obviously wasn't expecting to be in this kind of situation right now.

Squatting down to level with the kid, Wendy uttered, "Little girl..."

"Mommy, I know you are wronged," the young girl interrupted, evidently too involved in the story she made up.

Then suddenly, her eyes turned red, and she threw herself into Wendy's arms.

"Grandpa and grandma don't like you, and they won't allow you to marry daddy. So, you and daddy can only be together in secret. Don't worry. They may not like you, but I love you, and so does daddy! You are the only one he loves. I promise the three of us will never be separated. We are a family."

The poor girl cried against Wendy's chest as she spoke, damping her clothes with the warmth of tears.

Undeniably, her heart ached as she listened to the child's sentiments.

What a poor girl! Her father wanted to find her a stepmother, but she was afraid he would treat her differently once he found a woman.

That was why she was this indifferent to her father's date.

Realizing this, Wendy held the little girl in her arms lovingly, patting her back for comfort.

"Honey, don't cry."

"Waah...Waah..."

Meanwhile, at the table, the woman's pale face was contorted into a grimace of displeasure. That was reasonable. No one would be happy to be called ugly by a little girl.

"Ryan...I know your daughter doesn't like me, but she is too impolite," the woman uttered, grazing the man's hand with her palm.

Hearing this, the girl cried even louder. But Wendy didn't mind this. What bothered her was the drastic drop in the temperature of the room.

On such a hot day, she felt chills down her spine.

"What did you just say?"

The man finally started to talk.

His low and baritone voice was unexpectedly pleasant.

Yet, it dripped with such an intimidating aura.

With evident fear in her face, the woman swallowed before saying, "I...I mean, Precious is too impolite. Ryan, your daughter is already four. It's time you start disciplining her."

The man pulled out his hand from the woman's grip.

Then, in a stern voice, he uttered, "This is how I spoil my daughter. Do you have a problem with that?"

The woman was rendered speechless.

"Ryan..."

"You can leave now!"

The woman was stunned.

It took her a lot just to get a blind date with Ryan Oliver.

The man was just too elusive around women.

But now he was kicking her out just because she said his daughter was impolite! "Ryan..."

"Get out of here!"

Seeing how angry he was, the woman immediately trembled.

She didn't dare to say anything more and instead quickly grabbed her belongings before walking out of the VIP room.

As the woman passed by Wendy, she glared at her fiercely.

Although Wendy saw it, she ignored it and instead just rubbed her nose innocently.

Bang! A blaring sound echoed in the entire room, signaling that the door had been shut.

Wendy was about to comfort the little girl when the man suddenly turned around, revealing his face.

Instantly, Wendy's heart skipped a beat! What a handsome man! He sported a jet-black suit, emphasizing his wide shoulders and narrow waist.

By Wendy's estimate, he was around 6 foot tall.

He towered over her so easily that Wendy suddenly felt small.

His sharp jaws, thick black eyebrows, and dark eyes all highlighted his well-sculpted face.

The moment his brows furrowed, Wendy realized how authoritative and domineering he was.

But more than that, she thought he seemed oddly familiar! If she had seen such a handsome man before, surely, she should not have forgotten him.

While she was disrupted with those thoughts, the man suddenly spoke.

His voice was low and full of warning. "Precious Oliver."

"Yes, daddy. I am coming!"

The little girl happily answered and jumped out of Wendy's arms. Meanwhile, Wendy looked down and saw that tears were still on the little girl's face.

And although she was supposed to be sad, the kid plastered a smile on her lips.

"Was she just acting?" Wendy thought to herself, quite stunned at how fast the girl changed her expression.

"Come here," the man commanded emotionlessly.

The little girl ran over and held the man's leg fawningly.

"Daddy, don't be angry. I didn't mean to ruin your date. But you said that you would ask for my opinion before finding a mommy for me. That woman is so ugly! She didn't deserve you at all! Look at her! It was her only first date with you, and yet she already dared to scold me for being impolite. If she really becomes my stepmother, do you think she will treat me well judging from her behavior just now?"

"Then what do you want?"

"I like this lady!"

The little girl suddenly pointed at Wendy, making Ryan shift his entire focus on the latter.

The moment he saw her, a glimmer of amusement flashed through his deep eyes.

But it only lingered for a few seconds as his eyebrows twisted tightly.

Why did he seem to be so hostile towards her? "My friend is waiting for me. I won't disturb you. Goodbye, "

Wendy said, preparing to leave as she sensed that he was not very welcoming. The man was silent, but his daughter was reluctant to let Wendy leave.

"Good-bye, beautiful auntie!" the girl eagerly said, waving her tiny hands.

"Bye!"

As soon as Wendy left, Ryan's eyes became colder.

The little girl had long been used to her father's cold face, so she was not frightened at all.

"Who brought you here?!"

Ryan asked, wondering how the hell his daughter got there.

"Uncle Luke!"

The little girl answered without any hesitation.

Outside the VIP room, Luke Oliver couldn't help but push the door open as soon as he was revealed.

"Precious Oliver! Do you have a conscience? Didn't you say that you were the closest to me and loved me the most? Why did you tell on me to your daddy? You bad girl! I will never take you out for fun again!"

"Uncle Luke, don't be like this..."

"Humph!"

Luke Oliver turned his head arrogantly and ignored her.

But then, Precious climbed up along Luke's thigh.

Afraid that she would fall, Luke hurriedly grabbed her buttocks while she wrapped her arms around his neck and gave him a kiss.

"Humph! Don't think that a kiss can make up for what you did!"

The little girl rolled her eyes, turned her head, and kissed him again and again on his cheeks. Not being able to resist her cuteness anymore, Luke grinned widely.

"That's my good girl!"

With that, they all resumed their dinner in the VIP room.

Precious, a typical lazy girl that she was, fell asleep right after her meal.

Ryan quickly took off his jacket and wrapped her in his arms, looking at his daughter with soft eyes - much different from his usual expression.

However, when he shifted his gaze to Luke, his eyes had returned to cold as usual. Luke's heart sank instantly.

"Damn it! How could he treat us differently? I'm his brother!" Luke thought to himself.

"Luke!"

"Yeah?"

"Get some information about that woman! I need it within an hour!"

"The woman who was pulled into this room just now?"

Luke asked, confused as to why his brother wanted to know who that woman was.

But after realizing something, he added: "Do you suspect that she deliberately approached your daughter and used her to get involved with you?"

Chapter 5: I Only Love You

"Do you think she's trying to get close to you by using Precious?"

Luke assumed his brother would have a pretty good reason to think so.

After all, he was the CEO of Oliver Group, and the company engaged in real estate, hospitality management, jewelry lines, department stores, entertainment networks, and a host of other industries.

In addition, all of Oliver Group's subsidiaries had secured positions in being the best in their respective fields.

Just how much money did the man possess? It was a ridiculous thought to even ponder.

Suffice it to say that a single strange move from his brother would send the global financial circle scrambling on their feet.

Over the years, a lot of people had attempted to establish a connection with his brother by getting close to his daughter, Precious.

A lot of women had come and gone, but this was the first time that the man in question had actually wanted someone's background investigated. "Ryan, what is going on?"

"Precious likes her very much."

Well, the reason made perfect sense for Luke.

The little girl was the prized treasure of the Oliver family.

That much was evident by her name, and it had been intentional from the start.

Ryan was turning thirty this year, and not once had he ever been interested in a woman.

But three years ago, a baby had been left at the gate of their villa, along with a note saying that the child was his.

The poor baby had been in a terrible condition when they had found her, crumpled into herself like a little monkey.

A doctor's examination had revealed that the little girl's bones had been broken.

Her body had been full of bruises, too. She had been almost dead at that point.

The Oliver family had immediately sent her to intensive care, and had had a paternity test done to ascertain the baby's identity.

And it had turned out that she really was Ryan's daughter.

Since his parents had always been looking forward to news of their sons eventually getting married and having children, the news had made them both happy.

But there had been sadness and regret as well.

Perhaps it was because she had no mother to call her own that the elders lavished the little girl with all the love and attention they could give.

It reached the point where she began to act willful and arrogant, especially toward people who were not part of the family.

In particular, she had been rejecting all the women who had showed interest on her father.

Even those who had been discreet about their intentions had not escaped her wrath.

And while Precious' actions seemed to have pissed off Ryan's blind date, this was indeed the first time that Luke had seen the girl throw herself at a woman, and a stranger at that.

She had even declared something he had never imagined would come out of her mouth—

"I like her".

If someone were to use Precious on purpose...Luke got to his feet.

"I'll go check on it right away!"

Back at the VIP room Roger had booked, Wendy had barely stepped inside when Raymond pounced at her and clutched her legs.

"What's wrong, baby?"

"Mommy, what took you so long?"the boy whined.

"I thought something bad happened to you."

His words brought warmth to her heart.

She picked up the boy and patted his butt before walking into the room.

"What can possibly happen to Mommy? I just happened to meet this very cute girl outside who needed my help."

A very cute girl? A girl? Raymond had never heard his mother praising other children before! An alarm was ringing inside the boy's mind.

"What's wrong?"

Wendy asked, noticing the small frown he sported.

He hesitated for a couple of seconds before finally asking, "Mommy, do you like girls more? Why wasn't I born a girl?"

He looked genuinely upset by this.

Amused, Wendy planted a big, sound kiss on his cheek.

"Mommy likes Ray.I love Ray the most!"

The little boy's ears turned red and he wriggled in his mother's arms.

"I'm a man of four years old," he announced proudly.

"You can't kiss me like that from now on."

"No matter how old you are, you are still Mommy's good boy!"
Raymond grinned despite himself.

Roger smiled as he watched them, pulling out chairs to accommodate them at the table.

"All right, all right. Come and eat!"

"Here we are!"

An hour later...

"Wow! It's hot! It's so hot!"

Luke was panting, his shirt drenched in sweat.

He burst into the VIP room and made a beeline for the pot of cold tea at the corner.

He hurriedly poured himself a cup and drank it in two big gulps, grateful when the drink helped him cool down a little.

He plopped down on the chair nearest the air conditioner.

"Ahh, that's better. I finally feel alive again!"

"Did you accomplish your mission?"

"Yes!" Luke replied, mockingly hiding the folder behind his back.

"Hey Ryan, guess what I found out."

"Just tell me!"

"Gosh, you're so boring!"

Luke threw the file over to his brother.

"That woman is called Wendy Finch, and she's only twenty-three years old. She is actually connected to us. In a way, anyway. She is Rosie Finch's cousin."

"Rosie Finch?"

"Yes, the wife of our good friend, Kane Evans. We were invited to their wedding four years ago. This is where things get interesting. Do you remember that funeral service we attended with Kane three years ago? That was supposed to be Rosie Finch's cousin's funeral! This very same cousin!"

Ryan's eyes glinted with a sharp edge as he opened the folder and began to peruse the documents. Luke continued to talk.

"Wendy Finch is truly unfortunate and pitiful. Her mother died when she was only six years old, and her father remarried shortly after. The stepmother had a daughter of her own called Eris. Wendy has another sister, though, who shared the same parents as her. This other sister is six years older, and was married off by their father to a rich old man when she turned eighteen. And another important fact—Wendy Finch apparently fell in love with Brian Oliver at the age of sixteen!"

"Brian Oliver?"

"Yes! The Brian Oliver, our nephew!"

Luke shrugged his shoulders and carried on.

"They were supposed to have been in a relationship, but all of a sudden Brian fell in love and got together with Wendy's stepsister three years later. And then... Well nobody really knew for sure what happened, but news came out that Wendy just "died." Her family held a funeral for her and everything. It turns out she's alive and had left Ywood for the US."

Ryan flipped through the pages and got to the section of her relocation to the US.

The paper was blank. He looked up at his brother.

"Don't ask me. I don't know either! There wasn't any information available about her life in the US, as if that part of her life was completely wiped out from public knowledge. Even with all our resources, we couldn't find anything at all." Ryan frowned.

"Nevertheless, I can say for sure that she had no intentions to get close to Precious whatsoever."

"Why do you think so?"

"Because she just returned to the city today. She got off the plane roughly two hours ago," Luke explained.

"She couldn't have perpetrated such a lucky encounter."

Ryan said nothing and looked back at the file.

"Don't worry. She isn't going to do anything to Precious."

This earned him a glance from his brother.

"Are you absolutely certain?"

"Yes!"

"Why?"

"Wendy Finch is an actress, and the purpose of her return is to audition for the play of The Story of Concubine Ivanka."

"And this is enough to convince you that she is not a threat to my daughter?"

"Of course not!"

Luke said, visibly affronted.

He leaned over Ryan's desk and said in a teasing tone, "Guess who her agent is."

"Okay, stop trying to play games with me!"

"Humph! So boring! Her agent is Roger Johnson. He probably also has something to do with the data blackout on her time in the US. They must have been acquainted there given that Roger also went to the

US three years ago. Besides, didn't he asked us for an opening at the addition just a few days ago? Same audition, same play. It must have been for Wendy Finch!"

Ryan's fingers paused mid-air.

Roger Johnson! He was not the kind of person who would treat people well for no reason.

So what could the relationship be between Roger and that woman?

Chapter 6: Eris Finch Is The Leading Actress

In the private room that Brian booked, various dishes carpeted the table.

But even with those mind-numbing meals, Eris didn't have the appetite even for just a single bite.

"Are you not feeling well?"

Brian looked at her with concern.

She had been absent-minded since she came back from the bathroom.

"No, no! Maybe it's because of the jet lag that I don't have any appetite right now."

"Then, all the more that you have to eat something. You look thinner these days."

Brian picked up some food for Eris and added with concern, "Even if you want to keep your figure, you have to eat! If you want to succeed and take your career even higher, you have to be in your best health all the time. But really, you don't have to try hard in the entertainment industry. I can provide for you."

"I want you to feel proud of me!"

Eris held Brian's arm and continued coquettishly, "

"I want everyone to know that Brian's girlfriend is a successful woman." Heaving a deep sigh, Brian helplessly answered,

"Well...If that's what you want, then I can't really do something."

Eris smiled sweetly in his arms, yet her thoughts were lingering on something else at the same time.

Just now, when she went to the bathroom, she accidentally saw a woman who looked exactly like Wendy! The resemblance was uncanny! Her features and voice were exactly the same, but her temperament and build were totally different.

The Wendy she knew wasn't much into dressing up fancily, and she had always been thin.

But the woman Eris met in the corridor was undeniably elegant and eloquent---much like any A-list celebrities.

She must be mistaken! It couldn't be Wendy! She was already dead.

Her mother threw that woman into the sea three years ago! Her remains would probably have been decayed already! 'What the hell?! Why am I thinking of Wendy Finch?' Eris cursed in her heart.

Meanwhile, it was already completely dark when Wendy's group finished their dinner.

Roger drove her and Raymond to the house he rented for "Mommy, is this the city where you have lived for twenty years?"

"Yes, baby."

Holding the little boy in her arms, Wendy gazed out of the window at the flashing neon lights and asked Raymond, "Do you like this city?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Oh? Why?"

"Because this is where mommy grew up."

Wendy hugged the little boy and planted several kisses on his chubby cheeks.

: How could her son be so cute and caring?! She must be so really blessed! Half an hour later and the car finally halted to a stop at a high-end residential area.

Roger drove directly into it as he had the pass card.

As the car slowly progressed inside, Wendy saw several guards patrolling the area with newly-built houses.

For a moment, she was relieved to know that they were to stay in a secured community.

The whole thing made Wendy realize how reliable Roger really was.

In three days, she would go for an audition, and if successful, she would immediately start working, leaving Raymond home alone.

As the community was so safe, she could rest assured that nothing terrible would happen to her son.

After getting out of the car, Roger helped carry the luggage and led Wendy and Raymond into the elevator.

"The transportation here is very accessible. There is a bus station by the gate, and the shopping malls, supermarkets, and a hospital are very near. You won't really have anything to worry about." Right after Roger said that, the elevator stopped on the 16th floor.

The door opened, and he led the two to one of the units.

He took out the key and opened the door.

As soon as Roger switched on the lights, the interior was revealed.

Wendy couldn't be any more pleased.

The apartment, which had two bedrooms and a living room, was simply draped with beige wallpaper.

A chandelier, hanging by the living room, shed bright lights on the grey sofa.

At the center was a white dining wooden table.

Several shopping bags were stop on it, all of which were living necessities Roger bought for their stay.

Everything they needed seemed to be there.

At the vestibule were several pairs of new slippers neatly placed on the shoe rack.

Wendy, who was holding Raymond in her arms, slowly stepped foot inside, surveying the unit's entirety with evident contentment in her eyes. "Do you like it?"

"Yes, I like it so much!"

Feeling so thankful and touched, Wendy turned to face Roger and uttered, "Roger, thank you so much for this. I don't know how to repay you! Will marrying you be enough?"

"Wendy!"

"What?"

"If you could only sound any more sincere, then perhaps I'd believe you,"

Roger sneered, rolling his eyes ather. Wendy immediately raised a sheepish smile and asked, "Am I not sincere?"

"Why don't you ask your son that question?"

Roger turned to Raymond, who now struggled out of his mother's hands, and ran towards the sofa.

After slumping on the soft couch, the young boy looked up at his mother and said, "Mommy, your smile is so fake. Instantly, Wendy was rendered speechless. And as the smile dissipated from her lips, she grabbed a pair of house slippers from the vestibules before walking into the living room. Wow! Even the size of the slippers fitted her feet perfectly! "I bought some food and drinks for you. There are also fruits in here. See if there is anything else you want. I'll take you to the supermarket,"

Roger said, following her to the living room.

"No. No. You've done enough already."

Wendy sat down on the comfortable sofa, casually grabbing a pillow.

Squinting her eyes, she sighed happily and expressed, "It's really nice to be so rich, isn't it?"

"So, you have to make money and repay me as soon as you can!"

Roger teased with a grin.

Then, he threw a book at Wendy, who caught it quickly.

"What's this?" she asked, looking at it, her brows furrowed.

"You are not part of the crew yet, so you can't get the script for now. According to some internal sources, this series plays close homage to the original work, so the script is almost exactly the same. You should read the original book first and get familiar with the character you are going to play. It will definitely help you with the audition later on."

As soon as they started talking about acting, Wendy's eyes instantly turned serious.

Over the years, acting had not been only her hobby but also what she considered a livelihood.

If she hadn't made a living in the US, she wouldn't have been able to support herself and Raymond.

Wendy quickly scanned through the Story of Concubine Ivanka the book.

The character she was going to audition for was the third heroine and the second villain in the play, Lady Faye.

She was a beautiful imperial concubine.

When she became a member of the imperial harem, she performed the pavane, which deeply attracted the emperor.

Since then, she had been favored by him.

And as if the character was really meant for Wendy, Lady Faye's character description was so much like Wendy's image.

The more she read the story, the more fascinated she became.

"Mommy? Mommy!"

"What?"

The little boy, who had been trying to get his mother's attention, looked helpless as he added, "Uncle Roger has called you several times."

"Ah, I'm sorry. This book is too addicting."

Sitting between Wendy and the little guy, Roger sighed.

He then patted Raymond on the shoulder and said, "It's getting late. Go and take a shower. There are pajamas for you in the wardrobe of the second bedroom."

The little boy looked at Wendy and then at Roger before leaving them in the living room to take a shower.

"Do you have something to say to me?" Wendy suddenly asked.

Roger nodded and replied seriously, "You should be mentally prepared. The main heroine of this TV play has been decided."

"Oh, okay."

That had nothing to do with her actually.

Wendy wasn't auditioning for that role anyway.

"The leading actress of this play...It's Eris Finch."

Upon hearing that name, Wendy's face suddenly froze.

Chapter 7: The Audition

Wendy seldom went out of her room in the next three days.

Except for meals and sleep, she spent the rest of her time reading and immersing herself in *The Story of Concubine Ivanka*.

The pages of the script, which had been new and crisp when she had received it, were now dog-eared with abuse.

The narrative of *Concubine Ivanka* started at the lowest places inside the palace.

Within the span of 10 years, she managed to rise above her station and got to the top, outranking even the queen herself.

She then became the dowager empress after the emperor's death, having supported her son's claim to the throne.

She had grown from a young and innocent girl to the most powerful woman of her time.

The most exciting part of the story circled around the multitude of women in the imperial palace who fought against each other both openly and in secret.

The twists and turns set the readers on edge in anticipation of what would happen next.

Needless to say, Lady Ivanka was the leading role.

Next came the role of the queen, but aside from being the second heroine, she was also going to be the most significant villain in the entire play.

And then there was Lady Faye—the role that had been assigned to Wendy for the audition.

Despite not appearing until the middle of the plot, Lady Faye's character played a key role.

It could even be said that she was the third heroine of the story.

It had taken her three whole days, but Wendy finally understood her character and memorized all her lines.

Soon it was the day of the audition.

It was set for ten o'clock in the morning at Studio City.

It was a relatively remote area, and was a considerable distance from where Wendy resided.

And so, she especially started her day earlier than usual.

Her chosen outfit was a simple white T-shirt, skinny jeans, and a pair of white canvas shoes.

She tied her curly hair up into a high ponytail. With her beautiful face bare of any makeup, she looked like an ordinary college student.

"Baby, does Mommy look good?"she asked with expectation as she swung her ponytail from side to side.

"Yes, you look gorgeous!"

the boy exclaimed, only for his words to be followed by a frown.

"But Mommy, didn't you say that the role you're going to play is similar to a tramp? ! Shouldn't she dress up more provocatively to match the character profile? Wendy was at a loss for words.

A tramp! Did Raymond learn this word from her? She ran a hand over her temple consciously and hurriedly changed the subject.

"Well, you wouldn't understand how it works.I will gain more attention if I deviate from the judges' initial preconceptions."

The little boy cocked his head to the side, confusion evident on his face.

Wendy proceeded to prepare a simple breakfast.

They had just finished eating when Roger arrived to pick her up.

"Good morning!"

"Good morning!"

He walked into the living room with a smile and picked up Raymond.

"Have you gotten used to the life here?"

He had noticed that mother and son were in good spirits recently.

The little boy answered seriously, "I will be fine anywhere as long as Mommy is with me."

"That's good then."

Roger turned to look at Wendy and nodded.

"It looks like you're ready for the audition."

"Of course! I'm sure I'll get the role of Lady Faye!"

She had not minded much before, but after learning that Eris was going to be the main heroine of the play, Wendy had become determined to bag this role.

Lady Ivanka and Lady Faye had a lot of scenes together, and she intended to show the audience exactly who was the better actress between her and Eris.

Wendy was going to make this show a living nightmare for her stepsister! Roger glanced at his watch.

"It's getting late. We should probably get a move on."

"Let's go!"

"Let's go!"

Studio City was the biggest of its kind in the country.

Numerous classic movies had been shot in within its site.

That being the case, famous stars were often spotted in the area, and fans naturally flocked there as well.

Over time, Studio City had become something of a tourist destination, with a lot of people coming and going at all times of the day.

It was a very busy place.

On this particular day, people crowded at the gates as well, and Roger wasn't able to drive past them.

He ended up parking in front of the nearest KFC.

"Here we are!"

"Okay!"

Roger handed Wendy a pass card.

"Take this with you. Show it to the staff and they will let you in. The number indicated your place in queue for the audition. A lot of big shots have invested on The Story of Concubine Ivanka, and they have a lot of expectations for this project. The biggest sponsors are the Glory Media under Oliver Group and the Starlight Media, under which Eris is signed. The presidents of these two companies will be present at the audition. You need to seize this opportunity, Wendy. More importantly, the show's director, Carter holds the right to choose all of the actors and actresses. The most important thing is that you convince him that you are qualified for the job. Do you understand?"

Of course she understood.

She was an actress who didn't have any company's backing, which meant that she had no network and resources in the industry.

This was indeed a perfect opportunity to establish connections.

If she performed well and impressed the heads of two entertainment giants, she just might land a contract with either company.

"Won't you be going in with me?"

Roger didn't answer, and his eyes took on a faraway look.

"Roger?"

He came to his senses almost instantly, and his usual warm demeanor returned.

"No, I will stay here. Ray and I will be waiting for you and your good news."

"Okay!"

Wendy entered Studio City and headed to the audition room for the Story of Concubine Ivanka.

Just as Roger had said, she wasn't blocked by the staff after flashing her card.

"You're here for an audition?" the employee asked as he inspected the card.

He then raised his head to look at Wendy, and his eyes widened at her beauty.

His tone softened.

"Right this way then."

"Yes, thank you."

Wendy followed him to an area somewhat similar to the back of a stage.

It was already crowded with young girls, each one beautiful and graceful with their movements.

Their nervousness was obvious, however, as they waited for their names to be called.

The moment she stepped into the vicinity, Wendy was immediately met with unfriendly gazes of the other aspiring actresses.

The employee tried to explain the situation to her in a low voice.

"Almost all of the female roles in the play have already been decided. Only Lady Faye's role is vacant, and everyone here is auditioning for that single role."

Ah, so they were all competing for the same thing. Of course they would be hostile to each other.

"Thank you for your information,"

Wendy said, meeting the staff's eyes as she smiled.

Being a young man in his twenties, his face and ears promptly turned red.

He scratched the back of his head and stammered.

"Uhm...Well...You're welcome! I, uh, I believe in you. You will definitely succeed! So I...I still have work to do. I'm leaving now!"

Wendy had to chuckle at his reaction. She looked at the card in her hand. It said number thirty.

Really? Thirty? That was definitely toward the end of the audition.

Everyone in the industry knew how this kind of audition worked.

The more participants there were, the more interesting the performances would be.

After all, they needed to stand out among the rest and make sure the judges would remember them.

In most cases, the first ones to audition are easily forgotten since the performances are amped up as they move down the line.

Roger had truly done her good.

Not only had he secured her a chance to audition, he had also made arrangements that would prove advantageous to her.

"The audition begins!"

The announcement seemed to make the girls even more nervous, but Wendy remained calm.

She sat and leaned against the wall, closing her eyes as she waited leisurely for her turn.

The number of girls in the room dwindled one by one, and after a long while

"Number thirty! It's your turn!"

Wendy opened her eyes and raised a hand.

"That's me!"

Meanwhile, in an office located within the recesses of Studio City, a huge monitor was displaying the whole affair from the point of view of the judges.

In that moment, it showed as Wendy emerged from a side door and walked to the center of the room.

A little girl with messy hair, who had been dozing off mere seconds ago, jumped at the sight.

She sat up straight and grabbed Ryan's hand.

"Ah! She's here! The beautiful auntie has come!"

Chapter 8: You Got The Job

"Aaah! She's coming! The beautiful auntie is finally here!"

Luke was inside the office, sitting comfortably on the reclining chair with his legs crossed.

He sported a floral shirt, which was embroidered with red peony and green leaves.

Pairing his summer shirt was a knee-length khaki short and a pair of flip flops.

He looked as if he had just come back from a vacation at the seaside. Not a lot of people could pull off this look, but for Luke, he made it seem so natural and effortless.

"Precious, do you really like that aunt that much?"

"Yes, I do!"

Hearing what his niece said, Luke sat straight and moved his chair next to her.

When he saw her staring at the computer screen, he felt jealous and said sourly, "You bad girl! I love you so much, but you have never been so happy to see me!"

"It's different!"

Furrowing his brows, Luke queried, "What's the difference? Is it just a whim for this aunt, but you really love me?"

Precious continued staring at the screen with her hands cupped in front of her chest. The little girl didn't even mind giving him a glance.

"Well...Uncle Luke, let me put it this way. If one eats chicken bones every day and suddenly gets chicken drumsticks one day for a change, do you think she will still like chicken bones?"

Luke, who was hinted to be the chicken bones, was rendered speechless.

'How could she say that?!' Luke thought as tears welled up on the corners of his eyes.

He turned his head, trying to look for an alliance.

"Brother, "he called.

Much to his dismay, Ryan merely glanced at him with cold eyes.

Luke trembled.

It was him who told his brother about Wendy's audition, and Precious accidentally heard it.

And when his niece learned that Wendy was coming, she immediately proposed to be at the audition too! Of course, Ryan, cold-hearted as he was, did not agree, causing the little girl to break into tears.

Although everyone knew she just wanted to get her way, Ryan still took her with him.

"Precious..."

"Sssh! The beautiful auntie is about to speak. Stop talking, Uncle Luke,"

Precious warned, pressing her tiny index finger against her lips. Instantly, Luke was rendered speechless, his mouth hanging agape in disbelief.

He looked at Precious and bore an obsessed expression as she gazed at Wendy.

Then, Luke shifted his gaze at Ryan, whose eyes were glued on the screen.

The next moment, Wendy entered the audition room.

The entire space was massive, filled with cameras and other filming apparatus while electric wires carpeted the floor.

Staff were also present, carrying some of the equipment.

At the center was where Wendy was meant to stand.

All cameras and eyes of the staff and crew were focused on her.

At that moment, she was undeniably the center of all the attention.

Taking a deep breath, Wendy slowly rose her head.

A row of tables was paraded in front.

Four people were sitting behind the tables.

Among them were three familiar faces.

Carter, the director, sat upright in the middle, with a pen and a notebook in front of him.

He had his eyes focused on the notebook, writing something.

Next to him was Mason Thomas, who would be playing the hero in the series.

He had maintained his fame over the years, often playing roles in several historical dramas.

He was even dubbed the prince of period dramas by his followers of over forty million people.

But it did not come easy for him.

He had been in the industry for a decade when he finally managed to get a break.

Yet, even after becoming famous, Mason Thomas stayed down to earth, keeping a low profile and not letting the hype get to him.

With successful works one after another, he managed to establish his position through his talent and persistence.

Mason Thomas was managed by Glory Media.

Next to him seated Kane Evans, the president of Glory Media.

Wendy met him once four years ago.

She was invited as a bridesmaid in his wedding with her cousin Rosie Finch.

She could still clearly remember her first impression of Kane--cold and aloof! It hadn't been long since that day, and yet he seemed to be even colder now.

There was no emotion in his eyes, and his face was utterly stern.

The middle-aged man among the group must be the president of the Starlight Media.

"Miss Finch, you only have five minutes to prepare. Please make do with that time in reading the script."

"Okay, thank you!"

The audition piece was the first night when Lady Faye was bedded by the emperor.

Faye was not the woman's real name.

She actually came from a highly-reputed family with her father as an army general.

Her brother, who basically grew up in the military camp, took over their father's position when the latter retired.

Her father only married once, so she and her brother were the only Miller family children.

As the only girl in the family, she was loved by her parents and brother very much.

Later, the emperor appointed her as one of his concubines, but both her father and her brother were worried that she would not be able to cope with the women from the imperial harem.

So, they declined the emperor's proposal.

This was also one of the reasons why the Miller family was exterminated.

The emperor didn't allow her brother to gain power anymore, even asking Concubine Ivanka's father to fabricate evidence in a conspiracy against the Miller family.

As a result, their entire household was charged with treason and eventually killed.

Fortunately, she happened to avoid the death penalty.

To conceal the truth, the emperor sent troops to chase after her.

She ran and ran until she fell off the cliff.

Lucky for her, she survived the fall, after which she came to a nearby town.

By chance, she met a young couple eloping.

The woman was also on the list of concubines being hunted by the emperor.

Like her, the woman refused her entrance to the Imperial Palace, as her heart already belonged to someone else.

So, to escape from her doomed royal destiny, the woman decided to elope with her lover, her childhood sweetheart.

Unexpectedly, the woman asked her to replace her in to the Imperial Palace.

Since she had always wanted to avenge her family, she immediately agreed with the woman's proposal to assume the latter's identity, starting by taking her name Faye Miller. Upon her entrance, she performed a pavane dance.

So, she was immediately conferred the title of Lady Faye, which was unprecedented in the Imperial Palace.

While it took other concubines years to achieve such a high position, Lady Faye managed to grab her title overnight.

Heaven must be really in her favor! On the day she entered the Imperial Palace, she was immediately summoned to spend the night with the emperor.

And this scene was what Wendy wanted to audition for mainly because it was challenging.

From the moment Lady Faye entered the Imperial Palace, she was no longer the daughter of a general nor a willful and unrestrained girl.

At that moment, she had thoroughly transformed into a poisonous Mandragora who only had one agenda to seek revenge for her ruined family.

The most difficult part of the audition was how to convey the change in Faye's character through the actress' eyes and physical movements.

"Five minutes is over!"

"Okay."

Wendy took a deep breath and slowly walked up the stage.

The setting had already been arranged by the staff, and it was perfect for Wendy to get into character.

Standing in the center of the room, she bowed and introduced herself, "Hello, everyone. I'm Wendy Finch, number thirty."

Carter, who wore a pair of old-fashioned eyeglasses, raised his eyebrows slightly when he saw her plain, bare face.

Since they were aiming for an evilly beautiful concubine role, most of the girls who came to audition today wore heavy makeup.

Wendy was the first one to set foot inside without any makeup.

"Are you ready?"

Carter asked with his deep, baritone voice.

"Yes, I am!"

Wendy answered enthusiastically.

And just like that, in a blink of an eye, she completely transformed into Lady Faye.

She leaned sideways on the big carved bed, stroking a red sachet embroidered with mandarin ducks, which symbolized a couple.

Under the shadow of the bed, her face bore sheer loneliness.

Suddenly, several footsteps resounded.

"His Majesty has arrived!"

As that voice rang, Lady Faye's eyes seemed to be infused with darkness, instantly turning cold and piercing! She put away the sachet, and the door creaked open.

Slowly, she raised her eyes, and her aura instantly changed.

With her eyebrows raised and her lips pursed, she seemed so full of amorous feelings.

She leaned her head against the edge of the bed, revealing her slender neck.

Under the candlelight, her flesh was covered with a layer of mist-like luster, seductively inviting! It was beyond all doubt! At that moment, Wendy was Concubine Faye--an enchantress about to seduce the head of the entire empire.

Crack! Something clapped, signaling that the audition was over.

Immediately, everyone fell into a deafening silence.

Wendy fixed herself up without saying anything.

Little to her knowledge, all the men present blushed and even drooled for her! Even Carter, who was extremely distant, was so excited that his face turned red! This was the woman he was looking for! That was exactly what he wanted! No need for peacocking skills, but just pure talent that could silence everyone in the room.

Wendy didn't show any part of her skin except for her neck, but her eyes and movements were enough to turn on any man! Without wasting any more time, Carter made his decision.

Clearing his throat, he fixed his eyeglass and announce

"You! You got the job!"

Chapter 9: She Is Going To Be My Mommy

"You! You're perfect!" Carter was shouting as he got to his feet, fearing that Wendy might slip out of his hands.

"What was your name again?"

"Wendy Finch."

"That's right. Wendy Finch, come here." He waved his assistant over.

"Bring me the contract as soon as possible!"

His face was flushed with undeniable excitement.

Mason and Carter had collaborated several times in the past, and they were quite attuned to each other's minds.

Seeing his friend practically jumping in joy, Mason couldn't stop himself from teasing him.

"There are still other girls waiting for their turn to audition. Aren't you afraid of missing out on a better actress?"

"There won't be a better actress than her!"

The truth was that shooting had already begun, and every role had already been cast.

But Carter was not satisfied with the actress playing Lady Faye.

He had searched through the roster of actresses the entertainment circle could provide, but all the women either had good looks with no skills, or passable skills with unacceptable looks.

Even today, he had almost given up after seeing a horde of annoying performances.

He had actually been considering holding another audition if today's event had proven to be fruitless.

Well, he was fortunate to have found a gem among the aspiring participants.

Wendy walked up to Carter and he looked her up and down.

The more he saw, the more satisfied he became with his decision.

He hadn't looked carefully before, but he was slowly recognizing just how beautiful this woman was.

Her eyes, in particular, had a quality that hinted at temptation. Wasn't this exactly the Lady Faye he had been looking for?

They chatted for a bit before the assistant returned with the contract and a pen.

"Wendy Finch, please review the contract we offer and see if you are okay with the terms. If there are no problems then we will proceed with signing you into the project. You will join the crew and start to shoot tomorrow." That gave Wendy pause.

Did he mean to say that he had already made up his mind to give her the role just like that? Hadn't Roger said that there was supposed to be two rounds of audition? And she had been ready for the second round, too.

When a moment passed without her response, Carter stepped forward and placed the contract directly on her hands.

"Look it over now!"

"Uh...Yes, thank you!"

The document had been prepared in advance, and only then did Wendy realize how big of a project the TV show actually was.

The contract was quite good and generous, especially in terms of her commission.

Considering that she was basically a newcomer, it was astounding to learn that she could earn nearly a million from this one show alone.

She kept staring in disbelief at the numbers printed on the paper.

So engrossed was she that it slipped her mind to actually sign the contract.

Carter could only watch and grow anxious by the minute.

"Miss Finch, are you perhaps dissatisfied with our offer? If there is anything wrong with the stipulations, we are very much open to negotiations!"

"Oh, that's not necessary at all! I'm very pleased with the terms."

Without any further ado, Wendy grabbed the pen and signed her name.

Then Carter took out the seal and stamped it on the document.

The contract was official.

Carter found himself sighing in relief.

"I've read your information. You graduated from the New York Acting College, didn't you?"

"Yes." He nodded.

"All right, give me your contact details. If nothing else comes up, we will start shooting tomorrow. Do you think you have some time to spare? We're actually producing *The Story of Concubine Ivanka* here in Studio City. I was thinking we could ask the staff to take you to the site so you could familiarize the environment beforehand."

The director was so straightforward with his approach that even if Wendy didn't have time, she didn't think she could refuse at all.

"Okay."

When the deal was finally settled, employee took Wendy and facilitated her early payment.

She was well-acquainted with the salary setup in the country; she would get 30% of her fee at the start of filming, and the rest would be paid after the shoot was over.

While 30% may not be a significant portion, this time it was equivalent to more than three hundred thousand, and it was more than enough to help her deal with her most pressing problems. Back at the office, Luke held a handkerchief to his bleeding nose, still staring in amazement at Wendy through the screen.

Oh, God! He was the sort of man who enjoyed female company all year round.

He had seen many beautiful women in his time.

But when he had watched Wendy Finch perform, he had been reduced to a simpering young boy who had been struck with love for the first time.

"Oh my God!" He had had to plug his nose almost immediately.

"Uncle Luke, you're disgusting!"

Precious curled her lip at him in disdain.

"I'm warning you though, don't even think about seducing this beautiful auntie!"

She gave him a little push to emphasize her words.

"Precious, surely you know I don't fall for a woman so easily."

"Humph! You say that but you were all over the tabloids last time with a sexy star. And then there was the time you traveled with a model. And before that. In any case! You are not allowed to get close to the beautiful aunt. She's going to be my mommy!"

"Mommy?" Luke wiped his nose.

"Precious, are you serious about that?"

The little girl shook her head and sniffed.

"Did I ever joke about it?"

Luke's head shot up to look at Ryan.

His brother's eyes were still on the screen, his face devoid of expression. To Luke, however, that alone was a reaction in itself.

"Ryan..."

"Tell Kane to sign a contract with Wendy Finch."

"Uh..."

"Tell him to draw up a contract that would remain valid for at least ten years."

"Okay!"

"Make sure there's a condition forbidding her to get romantically involved with any man within the time period. If this isn't met, she will have to pay a penalty of one billion."

Luke's jaw hung open in shock.

Wendy was ushered to the shooting site by an employee, the very same that had befriended her prior to the audition.

He was obviously in a good mood, and he was blushing constantly.

"Miss Finch," he said excitedly.

"I knew you would definitely ace the audition!"

"Thank you."

The young man smiled shyly.

They didn't have to walk very far, and when they arrived, the camera was rolling with the assistant director at the helm.

They presented their cards and were let in.

The shooting was going on.

The setting of the scene was in a palace bedroom, and Eris was the one in action.

Wendy and the young man looked on from a distance.

"That is Eris Finch," he whispered.

"She is the leading actress in the play. She has a beautiful face and good acting skills, but more importantly, she has a gentle character. She's rather soft-spoken as well, and is renowned for her amicable temper. You'll see this for yourself once you get to know her."

Eris had a gentle character? She was amicable? She was gentle? 'Ha!' Wendy sneered inwardly as she stared at Eris through a prop window.

She had been prepared to meet her stepsister on the way to the site, but despite that, Wendy found all her dark hatred bubbling to the surface when she finally saw Eris.

Tragedy had struck her one after another all because of this woman! Eris had drugged her.

Eris had stolen her boyfriend.

Eris was responsible for the death of one of her children, and the fact that Wendy and Ray had been forced to stay abroad for three years.

Wendy's hands clenched into tight fists.

Eris Finch! Weren't you always fond of acting innocent victim? You're such an expert after all.

Just wait for me to reveal your true face in front of everyone!' ° Her gaze must have been too sharp that Eris' senses picked up on it.

While in the middle of the shoot, she suddenly turned to the direction of the piercing glare.

Their eyes met.

Wendy gave her a slow smile.

Eris paled in an instant, as though she had seen a ghost.

She got to her feet in one sudden motion, knocking over the teacup she was holding.

The hot liquid splashed onto her hand, She gasped in pain. And just like that, the shoot was suspended, and everyone scrambled all over the place in a mess.

Eris' assistant rushed over with the ice bag to apply on her scalded skin.

"Are you okay, Eris?"

The actress' heart was pounding furiously inside her chest.

She looked back out of the prop window.

No one was there now.

'Wendy Finch!' Eris was certain that the woman just now was none other than Wendy Finch.

Chapter 10: Held Her In His Arms

Because Eris was injured, the shooting was immediately suspended.

She was then advised to go back to her motor tent and take a rest.

With ice bag on her hand, Eris leaned against the seat and asked her assistant Ana, "Did you see someone standing outside the window when we were shooting just now?"

"No, I didn't notice anyone."

"Go and find out who it is!"

Without asking why, Ana immediately got out of the tent and ran to inquire about it.

After a while, she came back panting and all sweaty.

"Eris, I've asked around. Director Williams said that he found the actress who will play Lady Faye. Some employee showed her around the set just now. She's probably who you saw."

"What's the name of that actress?"

A hint of anxiousness could be extracted from Eris' tone.

"Well, I uh...

didn't ask about that."

"Is she still here?"

Ana didn't understand why Eris paid so much attention to that actress.

But she didn't dare ask her about it.

Instead, she uttered in a low voice, "She was said to leave after the quick tour. But don't worry. I heard from the crew that she will officially join the team tomorrow. We should be able to see her by then."

Would they see her tomorrow? Eris's right brow arched while the corners of her lips pursed.

She couldn't wait anymore! She needed to know if that woman... Was she really Wendy Finch or not!

"By the way, Eris, didn't the president of our Starlight Media attend the audition for Lady Faye today? You can ask him about her,"

Ana reminded Eris, seeing as how the latter was still engrossed with the mysterious actress.

That was right! How could she forget this? Three years ago, Eris and Brian's relationship went public, and because Brian was a rising star in Ywood, the issue immediately became the talk of the town.

What was more, Eris purposely had rumormongers publicize their relationship, attracting the media's attention even more.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, she entered the entertainment industry, signing a five-year contract with Starlight Media.

With the investment that Brian helped Eris to obtain, together with the fact that she had been studying acting, she rose to fame in no time.

In just three years, she became the top-earning actress of Starlight Media, eventually forming a good relationship with the company president, Wesley Davies.

After thinking for a while, Eris immediately dialed his number.

"Hello, Mr.Davies..."

"Eris, why do you call me all of a sudden? Shouldn't you be filming the play now?"

"I happen to have something to ask you.Mr.Davies, you also attended Director Williams's audition today, right? I want to ask the actress's name chosen to play Lady Faye.While speaking, Eris held her cell phone tightly and waited nervously for Wesley's response.

Tug! Tug! Tug! She could almost hear her own heartbeat while anticipating the answer.

It seemed as if she had waited a century when she finally heard the excited voice of Wesley.

"Do you mean Wendy Finch?"

"Wendy Finch!"

At the very moment, Eris froze to her seat.

Her eyes widened, and her mouth hung agape in utter shock.

It was indeed Wendy Finch! Wesley was still going on about something on the phone, but Eris couldn't hear it at all.

The only thing in her mind right now was the fact the Wendy was alive! She was still alive! And Eris bet that Wendy clearly knew she was playing the heroine in the series, yet she still came to audition! Then that only meant one thing...

Did she come back to revenge?

"Eris? Eris?"

Ana gave her a nudge to remind her in a low voice, "Eris, President Davies is talking to you!"

Instantly, she came to herself.

"Ah, yes, Mr. Davies?"

"Why are you not say anything?"

"I'm sorry, I was thinking. Did you just say that you wanted to sign Wendy Finch?"

"Yes!"

Speaking of this, Wesley became excited again.

"I've managed Starlight Media for so many years, but I've never seen such a good young actress with so much potential! She is not only good at acting, but she is also flawlessly beautiful! More importantly, she's still young.

I bet that young girl will have a bright future ahead! Can you believe that she had only started out acting and yet already won Director Williams's approval? She has a really good start playing a third leading role like Lady Faye! I must find a way to recruit her before she gets stolen by other agencies!" The eagerness in Wesley's voice made Eris frown tightly.

Did Wesley want to sign a contract with Wendy? If she and Wendy were in the same company, then that could only mean one thing...

They would meet each other more often than she could think of! Eris was trying to figure out a way to persuade Wesley to give up this thought.

But suddenly, an idea came to her mind...

It would be good for her to have Wendy in the same company! That way, she could keep a close eye on her! If Eris could make Wendy lose everything three years ago, then there was nothing she couldn't do now that the latter was back again! Especially when the president of their agency was Wesley Davies! Over these years of being close to him, Eris learned that he was a typical lecher.

Because she had Brian's support, Wesley didn't dare to hurt or lay a finger on her.

But the brute had been involved with almost all the other young actresses in his agency! Although Eris hated to admit it, she was not gonna lie.

Wendy really inherited her mother's beauty and grace.

If Eris was to let her sign with Starlight Media then, there was no way that woman could escape Wesley! Thinking of this, Eris immediately calmed down.

She leaned against the seat with her phone in her hand and said with a devious grin, "Mr.Davies, please hurry up.If the news gets out, other agencies will flood her with offers.You better not waste this opportunity!"

After hanging up the phone, Eris sneered.

"You're really brave to come back to this city! And since you dare to show your face to me now, I will show you how ruthless I am! You were no match for me before, Wendy.

Let's see how history will repeat itself!" "Beautiful Auntie!"

Meanwhile, as Wendy left the set, she heard a familiar voice.

Turning around, she saw the little girl with Afro she met at the restaurant.

The chubby kid sported a beautiful princess dress, which was still exaggeratedly covered with rhinestones like the one she wore that night.

She waved her chubby arm and ran towards her with a big smile.

At the sight of this, Wendy felt a tinge of warmth embracing her heart. The little girl was so focused on running towards her when suddenly...

A horse on the loose galloped over! Shocked, Wendy couldn't think straight.

Luckily, one of the staff screamed, "Watch out! The horse is acting up! Run!"

At the horse's speed, the girl would be trampled under its hooves in a few seconds! There was a "buzz" in Wendy's head.

Without thinking too much, she rushed over, grabbed the girl in her arms, and rolled on the ground! Bang! She rolled with too much momentum, causing her head to hit the wall heavily.

With the immense impact, she passed out.

Before she lost her consciousness, a thought quickly flashed through her mind—she hadn't had the chance to take revenge yet.

She didn't want to die just like that! "Oh my God! She's bleeding!"

When Precious raised her head, she saw a patch of blood on Wendy's forehead.

The little girl was so frightened that she burst into tears, "Auntie! Auntie, don't die! Please! I still want you to be my mommy!"

A large crowd immediately flocked around them.

"She's bleeding. Find a doctor!"

"What are you waiting for? Call an ambulance!"

Someone wanted to hold her, but the little girl shoved them all away with red eyes.

"Don't touch my mommy! No one is allowed to touch my mommy!"

At this moment, Luke suddenly pushed through the crowd and made a path.

Behind him was Ryan Oliver, who strode over while emanating a stern, cold aura.

At the sight of Ryan, the little girl's eyes immediately turned even redder.

"Daddy..."

"Don't worry. She will be fine."

Ryan looked at Wendy with his brows furrowed.

Then, he bent down and effortlessly scooped her up from the ground.

At the sight of this, Luke's eyes widened! His brother held a woman in his arms! How could a neat freak like him hug a person with blood on her body?!

And a woman no less! Oh my god!

"Is my big brother, who had never fallen in love with a woman, finally going to have a girlfriend?" Luke thought as he watched Ryan carry Wendy away from the crew.

The Novel will be updated daily. Come back and continue reading tomorrow, everyone! Here: <https://ebookscat.com/my-bossy-ceo-husband-by-i-malcom-pdf-downlaod/>

Inside the Hopewell Hospital...

Precious stood beside Wendy's hospital bed, clutching her hand as she stared at the woman's bandaged head.

Tears were streaming down the girl's face, and her sorrow was real this time.

Her eyes had turned red and blotch as she choked in her sobs.

"Don't cry, Precious."

"Uncle Luke," she sniffed and looked up at him.

"Beautiful Auntie will be fine, won't she?" Luke ached for his niece.

He reached out to hold her and spoke in a gentle voice.

"Everything will be okay. Didn't you hear what your Uncle Leo just said? Beautiful Auntie just suffered some minor bruising and a slight concussion. She will be fine after resting for a couple of days." His words did not stop her from crying though.

"But still! She bled a lot."

"Don't worry. Hasn't she stopped bleeding now?" Precious bawled harder.

"You're lying! My pet Snow died because it hit the wall and bled a lot! You all told me it was just sleeping but it never woke up! Waah... Beautiful Auntie was hurt only because she was trying to save me."

The girl shook free from her uncle and sobbed harder at Wendy's bedside. Luke turned to his brother helplessly.

"I can't do it, Ryan. You comfort your own daughter!" Ryan was standing on the other side of the bed, and he now frowned at the unconscious woman occupying it.

His expression was cold.

"Luke."

"Yes?"

"Change all the bodyguards around Precious."

Luke's face instantly became serious.

"Right away!"

His daughter had sneaked out of the office sometime after the audition without him or his brother knowing.

Since she always had bodyguards tailing her wherever she went, both Ryan and Luke had not worried much about Precious.

Little had they expected that this minor negligence on their part would bring heavy consequences. If it hadn't been for Wendy Finch, the little girl would have died.

"Daddy!"

"Come here."

Still sobbing, Precious walked into Ryan's open arms.

"Daddy, Auntie will be fine, won't she?"

"Yes. She will be waking up soon, I promise."

The girl's tears lessened at her father's assurance.

Luke could only gape at them, speechless.

What the hell? He had laid on thick with his charm and tried to cajole his niece, all to no avail.

His brother, on the other hand, only said a few words and she had quieted already! Luke suddenly felt like he wanted to cry, too.

The difference was just too much! Wendy woke up in pain.

Her head was pounding, as if someone was hitting it rhythmically with a large hammer.

She opened her eyes and started to reach out to touch her head.

"Don't move!"

Her hand had been pinned back down on the bed, and Wendy turned to see the person sitting on the chair beside the bed.

He was tall and...he seemed familiar in some way...Oh.

She remembered now. This man was that little girl's father.

"Where is that little girl? Is she okay?"

"She's fine!"

Luke interjected from the middle of the room and pointed at the sofa next to the hospital bed.

"She exhausted herself by crying so hard for so long; she's fast asleep now."

Following the direction of his finger, Wendy found the girl curled up in the sofa and sleeping soundly. A man's suit jacket was draped over her, and her tiny eyebrows were wrinkled into a tight frown.

If she had been able to look more closely, she would have seen beads of tears still nestled in the corner of the girl's eyes. As it was, Wendy sighed in relief before trying to sit up.

"Don't move!" Ryan said again, pressing against her shoulder.

"Uh..." Sensing the tension between the two, Luke rushed over, anxious.

"Miss Finch, the doctor said that you have a slight concussion. You need to stay in bed and rest properly."

"Oh.Okay then." No wonder she felt dizzy.

"What are the conditions?" Ryan asked out of the blue.

Wendy frowned at his expressionless face, not comprehending what he had said.

Once again, Luke stepped in.This time, he acted as an interpreter.

"What my brother is trying to say, Miss Finch, is that you saved our Precious. If you have any conditions as payment for this favor, please don't hesitate to tell us."

The corners of Wendy's mouth twitched. The girl's father sure didn't beat around the bush.

Well, for now, she had a splitting headache.

"Please pay the medical fees for me," she said calmly.

"Of course, that's to be expected," Luke replied.

"What else?"

"That's all." Luke looked from the woman to his brother, then back at her again.

"That's all?"

After all, Ryan was not the type to easily offer favors to other people.This would be a most advantageous opportunity, but why

wasn't this woman asking for anything? Was she stupid? If so, then she was apparently among the stupidest.

"Miss Finch, why don't you think it over some more?" Wendy finally touched the gauze wrapped around her head, her movements slow.

"There's no need to repay me," she said, smiling bitterly.

"I don't know why I did it either. All I knew at that moment was I couldn't let the little girl get hurt. If it were to happen again, I doubt I would have the courage to do the same thing. Besides, I've grown fond of that little girl. We might have been destined to meet from the start. Saving her life is no big deal."

But then she sighed after speaking.

She was injured, and on the head, no less! How would she be able to join the shoot tomorrow? More importantly, how was she supposed to explain all of this to her son? Alas! This whole situation was just too depressing.

Oh, yes! Her son! She didn't know how long she had been in a coma.

Ray and Roger were probably still waiting for her news back at Studio City! Wendy sat up abruptly and immediately felt dizzy.

She clutched at the hospital bed guard and asked, "Where's my phone?"

"Here." Ryan handed her the device.

Wendy unlocked the screen, but it was all black.

The damned thing didn't have any power! How could this happen? What was she to do now? "What time is it?"

she asked Ryan, worry evident in her face.

"Twenty minutes past three in the afternoon."

She had gone to the audition at ten in the morning.

More than five hours had passed since then! Ray hadn't heard from her in so long; how anxious her boy must be right now.

Noticing her anxiety, Ryan leaned over.

"They will be here soon," he said in a low voice.

"What?" Luke sighed and interpreted his brother's words again.

"He means that he has informed your friend of the circumstances just before your phone died. He should be on his way here and you will be seeing him soon."

Wendy glanced at Ryan, feeling at a loss.

Was this man incapable of speaking clearly? Nevertheless, she supposed she should be relieved.

There was only one person on her phone's contact list, so she was sure that it was Roger they had spoken with.

She decided to stay put as she waited for Roger and Ray to come.

She did just that, in addition to saying nothing.

The ward fell into an awkward silence.

But not everyone was feeling awkward, as a matter of fact.

Wendy was troubled by the prospect of explaining everything to her son, but Ryan personally thought it was nothing to fret over.

Luke, meanwhile, felt embarrassed by the whole setup.

Shortly after, Precious woke up.

She rubbed her eyes in daze before something occurred to her.

She jumped down from the sofa and looked up to see Wendy sitting up against the pillows on the hospital bed.

The little girl promptly burst into tears.

"Waah!! Auntie, you're finally awake!" She rushed over to the bedside and grabbed Wendy's hand.

"Auntie, you really scared me!" In spite of herself, Wendy's heart ached at the sight.

She patted the top of Precious' head.

"Don't cry.I'm fine.Look."

"But you're not!"

Precious wailed and pointed at Wendy's head.

"You have stitches up there! You will have scars! You will be disfigured and ugly."

Wendy couldn't say anything to that, but her lips twitched again.

Who had taught this little girl about such talk? > Whatever she might have thought then was drowned out anyway, since Precious had decided to start bawling again.

"Auntie, it's all because you saved me.Don't worry! I will make my father take responsibility for it!"

"Uh...Huh?"

"You saved me, so in gratitude, I will make my father marry you!"

Chapter 12: The Motto Of The Oliver Family

"You saved me, so I will make my daddy marry you!" Marry her? Marry her? Marry her? A second ticked by.

Then another one. Then three more seconds passed. There was dead silence inside the ward as the adults looked at each other.

When they finally recovered themselves...

"Pfft!" Luke spat out the mouthful of water he had been drinking.

He covered his mouth, trying to catch his breath in the middle of his violent coughing.

"Precious, what did you just say?" The little girl only shook her head and delivered her reply casually.

"Well, Beautiful Auntie has been disfigured. She's no longer as pretty as before! Uncle Luke, didn't you tell me that men are the most superficial visual animals that value appearance above all else? Since Beautiful Auntie is now disfigured, she would have difficulty finding someone to marry her in the future. But then she became like this in order to save me. Even though I want to, I'm still too young to take responsibility. And since Daddy is my sole guardian anyway, of course it's only right that he would assume responsibility for Beautiful Auntie!"

Luke gaped at his niece.

She had effectively rendered him speechless.

It took him a moment to collect himself then he finally said, "You say that your Beautiful Auntie has been disfigured, and still you want your Daddy to marry her?"

His point was that Precious should have been worried her father might not like her Beautiful Auntie.

The child rolled her eyes.

"Uncle Luke, do you honestly think that my Daddy is as superficial as you?" Luke's jaw hung wide open yet again.

"Ha ha," Wendy laughed awkwardly.

"Precious, stop joking around."

"I am not joking!"

The little girl took Wendy's hand and looked up at her with bright, hopeful eyes.

"Auntie, I've liked you a lot since the first time I saw you. Won't you be my Mommy?"

Wendy's lips tightened into a line.

How was she supposed to answer that question? "The thing, Miss Finch, is we do not like being indebted to other people. It would be best that you make a request."

Wendy was in an utter loss.

'What the hell?' She had never encountered anyone who was so earnest in making others demand a favor from them.

Though she had only met Precious twice, it was perfectly clear that the girl came from an extraordinary family.

The same could be said of her father.

If she was not mistaken, the white shirt he was wearing today was something handmade from Italy.

His high-end apparel aside, the man also exuded such a powerful aura, which was easy to tell that he was far from the ordinary, common folk.

He was subjecting her to that same powerful gaze at the moment, and Wendy found herself unable to think coherently, let alone make any sort of request.

"Well," she said with a frown.

"Can you give me a few days to think it over?"

Ryan's face shifted almost instantly, and it felt like the temperature inside the ward had suddenly dropped by several degrees.

Wendy's fingers trembled under the pressure.

Wow! A single reaction from this man and her arms were now filled with goose bumps.

She had asked for an extension on the request because she honestly couldn't come up with anything today.

Was she being unreasonable? It was obvious from the man's expression that he was extremely unhappy about it.

Frightened and helpless, Wendy thought she might cry right there and then.

She looked to Luke for help, and the younger man grinned.

"What's this, Miss Finch? Do you have a crush on my brother and want to buy some time to seduce him?"

Wendy's eyes widened in stunned horror!!! What the hell?

"Is that what his brother was thinking, too? Is that why he was suddenly scowling at me? Oh my God!"

What a total misunderstanding this was turning out to be.

Wendy felt a shiver run down her spine.

She racked her brains trying to come up with something to ask this scary man.

She was scrambling with her thoughts for a good while before Ryan spoke again.

"Become my daughter's mother!"

"What?"

Wendy choked on the air she was breathing, and she started to cough, so hard that tears came to her eyes. She must have misheard him.

"What did you say?"

"Precious needs a mother!" Ryan answered impatiently.

Wendy turned to Luke again, but this time even he was looking stunned at his brother's words.

"Oh my God!" he exclaimed.

"Exactly what do you mean, brother? Do you intend to marry Miss Finch? You're really going to make her Precious' mother? You actually fell in love with a woman! Oh my, this is all too sudden."

Only Precious seemed to be happy with how things were turning out. She jumped up and down and applauded her father.

"Daddy! You made the right decision!"

Ryan ignored her and frowned at Wendy as he waited for her reply. Wendy was flabbergasted.

Wasn't he asking her to make a request just a while ago? Why was he suddenly demanding something different from her? Or perhaps, did he think that letting her be Precious' mother was the most sincere reward he could offer? It was very confusing.

But she realized one thing—Ryan was definitely full of himself!

"Why?" she asked softly, afraid of antagonizing him any further.

Ryan's expression changed slightly, and his cold demeanor receded.

"Because you saved her."

So what? Was that all? She had saved his daughter, and in return, he had to marry her? 'Oh my God!' Precious was still young and did not understand everything, and that was why she had made such a ridiculous request.

But what about Ryan? He barely knew anything about her, and here he was, asking her to marry him! Luke was right.

This was happening too fast. Like father, like daughter.

Wendy finally saw where Precious got her willfulness from!

This man might be gifted with good looks, and his face and figure might be totally her type, but she could not bear his aura at all.

"Sir"

"Ryan Oliver."

"What?"

"My name."

His frown was deeper now, and he was slowly running out of patience.

Ryan Oliver?! Why did that name sound somewhat familiar to her? Deciding not to think too much on it, Wendy proceeded with caution.

"Mr. Oliver, you might feel obligated to do this because I saved your daughter. But... Well... You don't have to so sacrifice yourself like this."

"I am only abiding to the Oliver Family motto," Ryan said in a monotonous tone.

"The motto says we need to repay every favor bestowed upon us." Luke stared back and forth between them while nibbling at his fingertips.

Did the Oliver Family have such a motto? Why had he never known about it? Wendy pressed at her temple.

"Please don't joke with me, Mr. Oliver. Like I said, it was all pure coincidence. I'm just another actress trying to make a name for myself. My life's dream is to act, earn a lot of money, and enjoy male company when I have time. In contrast, a man like yourself is the cream of the crop in the market. I don't dare attach myself to you in such a way. Or in any way, for that matter."

Ryan scowled again.

He looked like he was about to say something, but the door of the ward suddenly burst open and a small figure rushed into the room.

"Mommy!"

"Honey!"

Wendy opened her arms to Ray, but the little boy suddenly stopped just beside the bed.

He stared at her bandaged head and asked in a weak voice, "Does it hurt?"

"Yes, it hurts very much!"

Wendy put both hands over her head and pretended to be in pain.

"Stop doing that! Lower your head."

Wendy did as the boy said and leaned toward him.

Raymond stood on his tiptoes and blew on her injury.

ULF Ve im bine "Swoosh! It shouldn't hurt anymore since I swooshed it. Are you feeling better now?"

"Yes, yes, I feel much better now. It doesn't hurt at all!"

The little boy heaved a dramatic sigh of relief before realizing belatedly that there were strangers in his mother's ward.

The moment his eyes drifted over to Ryan, he frowned.

"It's you?"

Ryan's expression shifted again.

Except for Precious, he had always had an aversion to children.

He thought them noisy and detestable.

But this small boy before him didn't seem annoying at all.

In fact, after seeing the way he frowned just now, trying to act all serious...

Ryan found himself thinking how the boy actually looked cute.

"Do you know me?"

"I see you in the news all the time!" Ryan raised his eyebrows at that.

Roger had been leaning against the door, observing the room.

He straightened now, and walked inside with a smile.

"Ryan, Luke! How have you been? What a coincidence this is, the girl Wendy saved was actually Precious!"

Wendy looked from one man to another.

"Do you know each other?" she asked.

"Yes, we've been best friends since we were very young."

Roger walked to the bedside and poured a cup of warm water for Wendy.

"Are you all right?"

"I'm okay now."

"That's good then."

Luke was silent the entire time, his eyes flitting back and forth between Wendy Finch and the little boy who had barged in.

All sorts of probable backstories had been sprouting inside his head.

He leaned toward Roger and asked, "Roger, is this little boy really Miss Finch's son?"

Chapter 13: Born On The Same Day

"Roger, is this little boy really Miss Finch's son?"

His doubts were reasonable.

Wendy looked like she was only about twenty years old.

If the boy was truly her son, then how old had she been when she had given birth? More to the point, his brother had finally set his eyes on a woman! If the said woman turned out to have a son of her own, then Ryan's romance would be dead before it could even develop.

But then another more frightening thought came to Luke's mind.

He pointed at Roger, his finger shaking slightly.

"This boy...Is he yours?"

"Nonsense!"

Roger glared at him.

"How could I possibly have a son this old?"

"Well...This little guy looks to be three or four years old.And you've been abroad for just three years!"

Roger glanced at Ryan before chiding Luke.

"Stop talking like an idiot.I'll tell you all about Ray later."

Meanwhile, as the adults dealt with their business, the two kids began to chat with each other.

"Wow! Little one, how old are you? You are so lucky to be Beautiful Auntie's son.I heard Auntie call you honey just now.Is 'honey' your nickname? Mine is also that one.What is your real name? My name is Precious, by the way."

Ray looked Precious up and down.

"I'm older than you, so you should call me big brother instead!"

Precious cocked her head stubbornly.

"Are you really older than me? I just celebrated my third birthday.I was born on the seventh day of the seventh month of the Chinese lunar calendar.It's Chinese Valentine's Day.Uncle Luke said that I am the best gift Daddy could ever have.How about you, when were you born?"

Ray was visibly surprised.

"My birthday is also on that day."

The little girl jumped up in excitement.

"Wow! What a coincidence indeed! We were born on the same day! Our names sound the same, and we were born on the same day! In the future, Beautiful Auntie will be my mommy and she can celebrate our birthday together!"

Ray's eyes immediately sharpened at her words.

Why was she saying that his mother was going to be her Mommy?! He rushed back to Wendy's side and grabbed her hand.

"Mommy is mine! I'm her only baby!"

"Oh, don't be so stingy! I will call you brother so you should share Mommy with me!"

"My mommy is not a thing,"

Ray declared, frowning

Wendy watched, unsure whether to laugh or cry.

The children's conversation sounded so weird! Nevertheless, Wendy felt much relieved now that Roger was here dealing with the brothers.

Roger helped Wendy settle on the bed.

She was still feeling a little dizzy.

When she finally looked better, Roger ushered Ryan and Luke outside to have a talk.

When they were gone, Precious ran over to the bed and looked at Wendy eagerly.

"Auntie! My dad proposed to you just now! You don't know this, but my grandparents have been forcing him to get married for so many years. My Daddy has never given in, but today he proposed to you! Let me tell you something, Auntie. My Daddy might seem cold, but he's very nice and very good to the people he loves!"

The little girl went on and on about her father's good points, counting with her fingers as she went.

"My Daddy is handsome and makes a lot of money. He is very reliable, unlike Uncle Luke, who changes girlfriends every day.

Auntie, if you are with my Daddy, he will definitely love you with all his heart!" Wendy didn't know what to say. How could this child be so stubborn? Wendy sighed and was about to say something when Ray interjected.

"You should just give up. My Mommy doesn't love your father!"

"Ah!"

Precious exclaimed, perplexed.

"But why?"

"My Mommy will only love me!"

The girl cocked her head to the side and proceeded to speak in a sweet voice.

"But you will grow up in the future. Uncle Luke told me that I would have my own home when I grew up, and I would have to leave my Daddy then. That's why they keep telling me to stop disturbing Daddy's blind dates. If I leave Daddy one day, he would have no one around him and he would be very pitiful. You will grow up and leave Beautiful Auntie, too. When you do, Beautiful Auntie will be very pitiful without anyone around her."

Ray's face darkened.

"What's wrong with you?"

"Nothing."

"Liar! You're obviously upset!"

The little girl curled her lips and snorted.

"Duplicity!" Meanwhile, on the corridor outside...

"What's going on, Roger?" Luke asked for the ninth time.

"Is that boy really Wendy Finch's son?"

Then he glanced at Ryan, who stood to the side with an expression of indifference "Brother, don't you want to know?"

"Does it matter?"

To Ryan, the truth of the situation was clear.

Wendy wasn't seeing anyone, nor did she have a husband.

Otherwise there wouldn't have been just one single contact in her phone book.

And it was impossible for her to be in a relationship with Roger as well.

Well, Ryan didn't give a damn whether the woman he liked had a child or not as long as she was not seeing someone else.

Luke gaped at him.

"Brother, are you serious?"

Ryan only looked at him in response.

But Luke understood what that look meant when did I ever make a joke? 'Oh my God!' Luke was practically senseless at this point, what with all the shocking developments.

Roger himself was a little surprised as well, but then he smiled.

He looked at the floor for a long while before finally deciding to conceal the truth.

"That boy is not Wendy's biological son. She found him in US, an abandoned child, and adopted him." Luke heaved a long sigh of relief and patted his chest.

"That's good! If my parents find out that my brother proposed to a woman who has a child out of wedlock...well they wouldn't dare do anything to him, but they will definitely lash out at me. If they learn that I hadn't stopped him, they will surely break my legs!"

Roger's eyes were lit up and he shouted,

"Hey!"

Ryan turned to look at him.

When Roger next spoke, his voice was low and serious.

"I know we all grew up together and are the best of friends, but Wendy is also my best friend. If this is just because of your daughter, there's no need for you to go so far. The past few years hasn't been easy on her. I don't want Wendy to get hurt." Ryan put a hand inside his trouser pocket and cocked his head.

"I thought you hated all the members of the Finch family?" That gave Roger a pause, and he smiled bitterly.

"I'm not that stupid. What happened between me and... It has nothing to do with Wendy. It was my own fault."

After that, the three men fell silent. Wendy listened to the children's chatter and time passed quickly.

Soon enough, the door to the room opened again.

Roger walked inside, but the other two did not follow.

Instead, Luke peeked through the door and waved at his niece.

"Precious, let's go!"

"Are we leaving now?"

"It's getting late. We have to go home."

Precious's shoulders slumped as _ she said _ her goodbyes to Wendy with undeniable reluctance.

"Beautiful Auntie, I'm going home now. I'll come to see you tomorrow."

Wendy didn't even get a chance to reply before the girl hurried over to Ray and gave him a hug.

"Although you don't want to share Beautiful Auntie with me, I still like you very much. You're lucky I'm so open-minded! I'll come see you again when I have the time. I'm leaving now!"

Ray had never been this close to another kid, but he realized that the hug from that chubby little girl didn't feel so bad at all.

Chapter 14: Tantrum

Wendy stayed in the hospital for three days after making a call to Carter Williams to ask for a leave.

The director was a little unhappy about it, but after learning that it had been her who had saved the little girl during the incident onsite, he had immediately changed his tune and told her to get a proper rest.

As it turned out, the horse that had gone out of control that day belonged to the crew of The Story of Concubine Ivanka.

The animal had almost trampled the child to death, and the whole situation had caused extreme distress to everyone involved in the project.

Such news would be disadvantageous to the show's publicity.

Worst of all was that the child happened to be the CEO of Oliver International Group's daughter.

To say that Carter had been terrified of the implications would be an understatement.

It was the little princess of the Oliver family! Everyone in the industry was aware that the girl was the apple of the eye of the conglomerate, especially among the elders of the family.

If even a single hair on her head had been damaged, Ryan's parents would definitely raze the whole site until it turned to dust.

How much more if she had actually died that day? : Wendy Finch had practically saved the crew and the show itself.

With that in mind, Carter had decided to give her the whole week off, as well as a big, fat red envelope, telling her to buy some tonics to strengthen her body.

And so it was that three days passed.

Ryan and Precious had never shown up to the hospital again.

Wendy was relieved by that, but she noticed that Ray was a little disappointed.

Whenever the door to the ward opened, her son would immediately look up to see who had come.

And every time he found that it was just the doctor or the nurses, his face would immediately fall.

She could tell that the little boy was waiting for Precious, even though Ray did not express himself with words.

He had always been a quiet child.

He was used to being by himself and was never comfortable with making friends.

Which was why Wendy had never expected him to take a liking to the little girl.

Meanwhile, in the Ensfield...

The place had been built by Oliver Group, and it was considered as the most luxurious villa district in Ywood.

There were only eighteen villas in total within the area, and each one cost an astronomical amount of money.

Of course, Ryan's residence was the most expensive of all.

At this moment, his villa was in a turmoil.

Precious was at the landing of the second floor, smashing everything she could get her hands on, including a few antiques porcelain.

Pieces of broken china were littered all over the floor, and the servants were running back and forth in alarm.

"Young Lady, be careful not to hurt yourself!"

"Don't come closer, all of you!"

The staff had no choice but to remain downstairs, helpless with their anxiety.

"Precious, won't you come down first?"

"No"

"How about grabbing a bite to eat? I asked the kitchen staff to prepare your favorite braised pork, some braised spareribs, and your favorite scallop. They even made your favorite porridge."

Precious stomach growled at his words, but she stubbornly held her ground.

"I don't want to eat!"

"Don't be like this. You haven't eaten for the entire day!"

"I won't eat!"

Luke had no choice but to call his brother.

"Ryan, come back quickly. There's really nothing I can do! Precious has been throwing a tantrum ever since you left, and it's different from all those times in the past. She's not joking this time around. She's practically destroying the house! You need to get here right now!"

Ryan did just that, and he returned to a house that was indeed in shambles.

"Precious Oliver!"

He yelled with a formidable frown.

The girl was not fazed at all.

The moment she saw her father, she clung to the second floor bannister and cried even louder, pointing at him and stamping her feet.

"You are a tyrant! Daddy, you are a tyrant! I promised Beautiful Auntie that I will go to the hospital to see her, and I also promised Raymond Finch that I will play with him! How can you not let me go out?"

She bawled as the words slipped out of her mouth.

"Why are you such a bully?! I even praised you in front of Beautiful Auntie! And I have human rights! You may be my guardian, but you can't restrict my freedom like this!"

Ryan's expression turned icy.

"Get down here!"

"No"

"Precious Oliver!" Precious trembled at his command, but she still refused to give in.

She took off her shoes and climbed over the bannister.

"Precious! That's dangerous! Just use the stairs, the stairs!" Luke's head was swirling in panic.

"No" The girl closed her eyes dramatically.

"If you don't allow me to see Beautiful Auntie, I will jump down from here!"

Her declaration was met with silence. Luke had gone pale. The second floor was so high up, and there were shards of glass and porcelain everywhere.

He knew that his niece was terrified of pain, and a part of him was anticipating the possibility that she might relinquish her hold on the bannister out of fear.

His heart was caught in his throat and he turned to look at Ryan desperately.

"Brother! Brother, please do something!"

Ryan's expression remained cold and unrelenting.

"For the last time, Precious Oliver, come down from there!"

"No!"

Ryan sneered at his daughter.

"Then keep crying and threatening us. It's not like you can do much else."

"I can jump off from here!"

Her father said nothing.

The father and the daughter were now in a stalemate.

A minute passed in quiet tension, before Ryan sighed.

He loosened his tie with irritation and looked up at the trembling girl.

He then looked at his brother and ordered, "Give Leo a call and asked if Wendy has been discharged from the hospital."

Meaning...

Precious's threats worked! Wendy had, in fact, already been discharged.

Roger had come to pick her and Raymond up, but they did not drive back to the apartment building.

Instead, the car took a turn and stopped at a small park near the area.

"Eh? Roger, where are we?"

"Just some park." He killed the engine and produced two grocery bags from the trunk.

"What's this?" Roger just smiled.

"You've been in the hospital for three days, and I'm sure it hasn't been easy. Now that you're out, of course we have to celebrate. Don't you like barbecue the most? Let's have an open-air barbecue right here."

"Ah, is that okay though? This is a public park after all."

Roger took out a grill and settled it on the lawn.

"The park is on the early stages of renovation, so this should be fine. Besides, I've seen many people coming here and doing the exact same thing recently."

"Oh, that's great then. I'm quite fed up with all the hospital food I've had to consume lately. I can finally eat something scrumptious!"

They happily unpacked all the ingredients.

Roger had it all taken care of.

Not only had he brought food for cooking, but he had also made sure to bring all the supplies they might need, including two barrels of fresh water.

They were just starting to light up the grill when two figures approached from a distance.

Ryan was still in his black business suit, but the little girl in his arms was holding a bunch of colorful flowers.

They painted such a contrasting sight that Wendy found herself staring at them.

What was going on? She was confused.

Roger rushed to explain.

"Ryan sent me a message a few minutes ago, saying that Precious wanted to see you, but he didn't find you in the hospital or back in your home. He asked where you were and I just told him without thinking...Wendy, do you mind?"

She was at a loss for words.

Regardless of whether she minded or not, it was pretty useless at this point.

She didn't know if she should cry in frustration or laugh at the absurdity of it all.

She had thought she would never see Ryan or his daughter again.

"I heard Precious has been bawling and was adamant to see you."

"Well, I guess it's fine then."

"Beautiful Auntie!"

Precious wriggled her way out of her father's arms and trotted over to Wendy, offering her the flowers.

"Beautiful Auntie, congratulations on getting discharged from the hospital! I miss you so much. Didn't you miss me?"

Wendy took the flowers and ruffled the little girl's hair.

"Yes, I did."

Precious grinned brightly.

The truth was that Wendy had truly grown fond of the girl.

But that greeting was the extent of their conversation, and it was followed by an awkward silence as they looked at each other.

Fortunately, it was time to prepare dinner.

Wendy proceeded to skewer the vegetables.

"Mr.Oliver, "she said in a polite tone.

"Have you and your daughter had dinner yet? We're about to make some barbecue.How about having some together with us?"

"Okay," Ryan replied.

Chapter 15: You Always Walk Away After Flirting With A Man

Wendy continued her business with the bamboo skewer.

"Hi, Precious!"

"Hello, Uncle Roger."

Roger smiled at her and asked, "Can you eat spicy food? If you can't, then I won't put any pepper in it."

"Of course, I can!"

Starving, the little girl stared at the red charcoal fire on the grill, swallowing a few big mouthfuls, and uttered, "Uncle Roger, I love spicy food.

"Okay, give me a second.I'll grill some for you."

"Okay!"

Meanwhile, sensing the strong, intimidating aura emanating from Ryan, Wendy moved a little far away to wash the vegetables and placed them on bamboo skewers.

Halfway through, Roger came over and said apologetically, "Wendy, I can't stay that long. Something came up with one of my friends, and I have to leave."

'What? He's leaving?! Then, I will be left alone with Ryan! What are we going to talk about during dinner?' Wendy thought, slightly panicking in her head.

"Are you in a hurry? Is there something I can help you with?"

"It's okay. I can handle it myself."

"Oh, alright. Then, you should go now."

"Okay, I'll leave everything here to you. Thanks!"

Wendy did not reply.

How could she say no?! She felt like weeping but felt it was too useless now.

Ryan would not do the grilling, and the two kids couldn't be trusted with fire.

So, after seeing Roger off, Wendy had to take charge of the barbecue.

When she turned to check on the kids, she saw them sitting close to each other on the grass, whispering something.

Precious's laughter resounded from a distance, and even Raymond had a smile on his face.

Wendy seldom saw her son this happy.

It seemed that it would be good for Ryan and Precious to stay.

A smile crept on her lips as she thought of this.

Suddenly, an oppressive gaze fell on her face.

As soon as Wendy turned her head, she saw Ryan intently looking at her from a distance, making the smile on her face freeze instantly.

"Uhm..."

Feeling the heat slowly rising to her cheeks, Wendy immediately diverted her gaze.

And only when she lowered her face had she realized what happened! It should not be like this! This day was meant to celebrate her discharge from the hospital.

She was the host of this little party while Ryan was the guest! How could she be so nervous as the host?! "Do you need any help?"

A baritone voice suddenly penetrated her ears, causing her to raise her head again at once.

"Ah " Startled, Wendy screamed and almost threw the roasted mushroom out! She turned her head with lingering fear and saw that Ryan had already walked towards her without his blazer.

He was now wearing a pure white shirt with its sleeves rolled up to his elbows, revealing his strong wheat-colored arms.

Wow! Wendy swallowed at the sight of that.

"Are you afraid of me?" asked Ryan, raising his eyebrows.

The air was stuffy, and a thin layer of cold sweat formed on Wendy's head.

The faint smile on Ryan's face seemed more dangerous than before.

'Damn it! Don't you have any idea how gorgeous you look like?' Wendy cursed in her head.

This man's aura was just too strong! Even if his well-sculpted, attractive face was only inches away from her, she did not dare to flirt with him!

"Ha-ha, you are not my boss. Why would I be afraid of you?"

As soon as those words escaped from her mouth, a strange expression flashed through Ryan's eyes.

"What's wrong?" Wendy asked, tilting her head to one side.

"Nothing! Do you need any help?"

"No, no. I can do it myself."

She didn't dare to let such a big man cook, or worse, let him be closer to her.

Otherwise, she would be out of breath the whole time! Wendy hurriedly moved aside, grabbed a few chicken wings, and settled them on the grill, causing rifles of smoke to rise to the air.

Ryan stood next to Wendy for a while before suddenly asked, "Why don't you want to marry me?"

Bang! The question blared like a bomb with a heavy impact.

As Wendy was caught off-guard, the chicken wings fell from her hands to the ground! And right there and then, she could feel her heart frantically beating, as if wanting to break free from her chest.

She was not nervous about being proposed on, but more like frightened.

Yes - she was terrified, to the extreme.

Why hadn't he given up on such an idea? After trying to calm herself-- quite unsuccessfully--Wendy swallowed hard and responded,

"Mr.Oliver, you don't have to do this just because Precious likes me.You do not have to sacrifice yourself like this.Maybe she clings so much to me because you're too busy to spend time with your daughter, and I happened to save her a few days ago, but I'm sure it wouldn't last long."

"I Know my daughter."

Although Precious usually cared about nothing, she was also very arrogant and paranoid.

Except for her blood relatives, she had never been so close to others in her life.

Nothing would change her stubborn little mind! "So, the premise of your marriage is that Precious must like the woman? You don't mind whether you love her or not, and you don't care whether the woman loves you or not?"

"Do you love me?"

There was this question again.

Wendy felt like her head was about to explode.

How could she persuade this man to give up this crazy idea?

"Mr.Oliver, I have told you before that I don't have great ambitions.I just want to live an ordinary life.I might flirt with men once in a while, but I don't ever want to get married."

"So, you always walk away after flirting with a man? You don't feel bad about it?"

"Well, right...Ah! No! Not like that.I mean..."

Seeing that Wendy was too anxious to explain, Ryan grinned.

He then stopped teasing her and kindly pointed at the grill, reminding her,

"It's scorched."

Wendy did not know what to say.

She hurriedly flipped the chicken and wiped its roasted skin with a knife remorsefully.

Then, she quickly brushed seasonings on it.

Instantly, an alluring fragrance reeked out in the air, causing the two kids to trot over their direction.

"Wow! It smells good! Auntie, can we have dinner now? I'm so hungry!"

"Well, you can just wait. It's almost done."

Actually, it was Roger who had prepared everything so well.

He had really done an amazing job, from pre- setting the food to arranging a huge picnic cloth and table.

The two kids helped in setting the picnic cloth and table on the lawn.

Already drooling at the sight of the barbecue, Precious ran and sat on a chair, waiting for her dinner to be served.

Placing the barbecue on a plate, Wendy settled it on the table.

Then, she grabbed an ice, cold beer prepared by Roger and exclaimed.

"Barbecue with beer! Such a perfect match!"

As soon as she lowered her head, she saw Precious staring at her with bright eyes.

Laughing, Wendy reminded, "You can't drink that. There's alcohol in it."

"Oh, okay."

Precious pouted in disappointment.

Wendy rubbed her Afro and replied, "Eat while the food's still hot. I'll grill more for you."

"Okay!"

The little girl began munching on her food while wearing a complicated expression on her face.

Holding the chicken wings in one hand, she gobbled them down and mumbled, "Daddy, didn't you say that barbecue is junk food and not clean?"

Uh! Embarrassed, Wendy raised her head and saw Ryan holding mushrooms flatly.

"The barbecue is cooked with fire. The temperature of the fire is very high, and it can kill bacteria."

Precious was speechless.

Her cheeks were flushed, and her forehead was sweating.

Well, her father was smart, and she could never defeat him in an argument! But even then, the little girl didn't mind and just continued gobbling her food that even Raymond, who usually didn't eat much, was influenced and boned a couple of chicken wings too.

Not an hour later, all the food was consumed.

It was already eight o'clock in the evening, and the weather was unusually hot.

While cleaning and packing up the grill, Wendy was in a dilemma.

Although she lived not far from the park, all the things they had used tonight were too heavy to bring back home all at once.

"I'm driving you home,"

Ryan proposed, much to Wendy's gratitude.

"Ah! That's great! Thank you so much!"

Before they could even get into the car, a gust of strong wind blew, followed by a flash of lightning and rumbling of thunder.

"Oh! No!"

Wendy widened her eyes as she suddenly remembered,

"I checked the weather forecast yesterday. They said it might rain hail tonight. Is it true?"

As if in response to her words, the wind continued howling for a while, and not long after, it really began to rain hail! Ryan ordered decisively,

"Get in the car!"

The hail hit Wendy's head so hard that she didn't have time to care about other things.

She quickly protected Raymond and stepped inside the car, and so did Ryan and Precious.

The hail was as big as a quail's egg, hitting the windshield with loud bangs.

It was utterly frightening.

Even Wendy was utterly worried at that moment.

"I've checked the weather forecast recently, but it's almost never accurate..."

Glancing at her indifferently, Ryan responded, "Today is quite accurate."

Wendy was rendered speechless.

All she could do was stare outside as they traverse through the wet road.

The hail soon turned into heavy rain, and the wind blew so strong that it almost knocked down the trees on the roadside.

It was not safe for them to stay in the car like this.

After hesitating for a while, Wendy suggested, "My apartment is in the next neighborhood. How about...you and Precious stay there for a while until the weather calms down?"

As soon as Precious heard this, her eyes instantly lit up.

"Okay! Daddy, I'm so scared. Let's stay at Beautiful Auntie's apartment for now!" the little girl exclaimed with sheer excitement.

Meanwhile, Wendy did not know what to say.

Although Precious claimed she was afraid, her face said otherwise.

There was no sign of fear and just mere excitement on her cute, little face! Looking at her, Wendy's mouth twitched.

'Such a naughty little girl!' she thought.

Soon, they arrived at the underground parking area of her apartment complex.

It was still raining heavily outside, so Wendy invited him and Precious to stay in her apartment for a while.

As soon as Wendy finished speaking, Ryan and his daughter followed her into the elevator, and in no time, they stepped foot inside the comfort of her living room.

She had planned to ask them to go back after the storm, but she didn't expect that it would rain endlessly and the wind would not stop.

The clock hit ten in the evening, and it was still raging.

Wendy did not know what to do.

She had to sit in the living room awkwardly, accompanying Ryan and Precious even though her eyelids were already failing.

"Daddy, I'm sleepy!" the little girl uttered, yawning.

Looking out of the window, Ryan grabbed his coat and stood up.

"It's time for us to go home!"

"Oh, okay."

A frown immediately registered on Precious's face as soon as her father announced that.

Wendy didn't insist on letting them stay anymore.

If it was just the little girl, it would be okay.

But what about Ryan? She couldn't let a strange man stay in her house, could she? Holding his daughter's hand, Ryan was about to leave when the girl suddenly turned pale.

She bent down and pressing against her stomach while a grimace of pain was etched on her face.

Shocked, Wendy called, "Precious!"

Chapter 16: Staying Overnight

Precious had a stomachache.

And she refused to go to the hospital even when her face showed she was aching all over.

"I don't want to go to the hospital! They're going to give me a shot!"

Wendy did not know what to say as she watched Precious.

She felt remorseful, seeing how pale the little girl was.

Fortunately, she had all kinds of medication for kids in her house. After drinking a syrup, Precious felt better, which relieved Wendy and Ryan.

"Sorry, I didn't know Precious couldn't eat barbecue."

"It's not your fault."

It was her first time to eat barbecue, and Ryan didn't expect this to happen.

It was already past twelve o'clock in the morning when the little girl finally felt better.

Although the storm had calmed down, it was too heartless to let Ryan and Precious drive home at midnight.

So, rubbing her eyes, Wendy suggested, "It's too late. Why don't you stay here tonight?"

"Okay," answered Ryan, taking a look at her deeply.

Wendy prepared Raymond's room and changed the new bed sheet, quilt, and pillows.

After a while, she walked out of the room and placed a pajama beside Ryan.

"Ray can sleep in my room tonight. You and Precious can sleep in his room. This is Ray's pajamas. Precious is about the same height as him, so it should fit her just right. But I don't have men's clothes here..."

It would be really strange for her to have men's clothes in her apartment!

"I'll ask my assistant to bring me something tomorrow."

"Okay!"

Precious, who was still lying weakly on the sofa, pulled the hem of Wendy's shirt and asked expectantly, "Auntie, can I sleep in your room as well?"

"Sleep in my room?"

Confused, Wendy glanced at Ryan and asked, "Don't you sleep with your daddy?"

"I don't want daddy! I want auntie!"

The little girl seemed to be too dependent on her, but looking at her pale face and expectant eyes, Wendy couldn't get herself to refuse.

"Why do you ask your father first?"

Precious immediately turned around and pouted her lips for pity.

"Daddy..."

"Fine, whatever."

"Oh, yeah!"

Precious grinned as if she was afraid that her father would go back on his words.

Not minding her stomachache, she rushed into Wendy's room, holding her pajamas in her hand.

Looking at her receding figure, Wendy did not say anything.

Instead, she searched for a new set of toiletries and handed it to Ryan.

"Mr.Oliver, have a good rest after washing up.Call me if you need anything."

Ryan took the toiletries, and his fingertips inadvertently swept across her palm like a string of sparks, causing her hand to tremble and instantly heat up.

Feeling a series of electric shock, Wendy withdrew her hand as fast as lightning.

"I...uh...I'm going to my room now!"

As soon as she finished her words, she hurriedly walked away without waiting for his response.

Ryan was left alone.

His eyes darkened while his insides surged with a burning sensation, much like a volcano about to erupt.

The kids had already taken a shower and changed into their pajamas.

At the same time, Wendy also took a shower and changed into her silky nightwear.

Then, she checked herself in the mirror before walking out of the bathroom.

When she opened the door of her bedroom, she saw the kids playing on the bed.

Raymond sat cross-legged in front of Precious and asked, "How are you feeling now?"

Afraid of being driven away, the little girl rolled her eyes cunningly, rubbed her belly, and pouted.

"It still hurts."

"You need to get better quickly. I'll ask mommy to cook something delicious for you tomorrow."

"Yey! Thank you, Ray!" Precious clapped her tiny hands, feeling overjoyed.

Undeniably and shocking for some reason, Raymond was so nice to her.

He spared his room to her daddy and let her sleep in Wendy's room.

Realizing this, tears welled up in Precious's eyes.

"Ray, you are so kind!"

"Of course!"

The wind was still billowing outside, but it was warm inside the room.

Looking at Precious's happy face, Wendy couldn't help but walk over them with a smile.

"What are you two talking about? Why are you so happy?"

"Nothing, nothing!"

The little girl rubbed her belly and pretended to be very uncomfortable, but Wendy knew Precious was only pretending.

Then, she switched off the light, leaving only a dim lamp on the bedside table.

Taking off her shoes before climbing to the bed, Wendy reminded, "Stop playing. It's late now. Let's go to sleep."

"Mommy, you sleep in the middle!"

"Auntie, please sleep in the middle!" the two kids said in unison.

After saying that, the two looked at each other and laughed at the same time. "Okay, I'll sleep in the middle!"

Wendy laid down in the middle of the bed and stretched out her arms to hold the two kids closer.

"Auntie, can you tell me a bedtime story?"

Oh, right! Children always liked to listen to stories before they went to sleep.

Wendy had never read Raymond a story to bed.

When she was in the US, she was busy with her career and often left the house early and returned late.

Often when she woke up to get ready, Raymond was still sleeping.

And when she came back at night, he was already fast asleep. Thinking of this, Wendy suddenly felt a little guilty.

Raymond's nanny probably had spent more time with him than she had.

"Okay, I'll tell you a story. Let me tell a story about John smashing a vat."

"Okay."

"Upon a time, there was a child named John. One day, he played with other kids in a garden filled with flowers, trees, and rockeries. Everyone happily ran and chased each other. Suddenly, a little boy fell into the big water tank under the rockery. The poor boy shouted for help while his companions were all in a panic. Only John was fearless in the face of danger. When he saw the stones on the rockery, he picked a big one and smashed the vat, saving the little boy..."

The two kids listened with keen pleasure and had no intention of sleeping at all.

Seeing this, Wendy chuckled and rubbed their tiny heads.

"Tell me, what did you learn from this story?"

"We learned that it's important to learn how to swim!" the two kids yelled in unison.

Hearing this, Wendy laughed aloud. She finally knew why they could get along well with each other.

Raymond and Precious thought alike! More than that, they resembled each other so much! And knowing how rigorous and silly the little girl was in contrast to her father, Wendy couldn't help but think what kind of woman her mother was.

Why was she not together with Ryan? Was she dead? Or was she forced to separate with Ryan because his parents didn't approve of her as their daughter-in-law?

"Auntie, I still want to listen to more stories."

"Okay!"

Wendy patted the two kids and told them several other stories in a soft voice until their breathing evened out in her arms. Looking at their angelic faces, Wendy was surprised to find their resemblance to be really uncanny! Precious had a round and chubby face at first glance, while Ray was a little thin and not at all fat.

But as Wendy stared more, she found that the two had almost the same mouth and nose.

"If Ray's sister is still alive..."

This thought lingered on Wendy's head as a tinge of pain crept on her heart.

Instantly, her hatred floated out like a ghost.

She took a deep breath, closed her eyes, and forced herself not to think about it anymore, but she just couldn't.

Three days ago, she met with Eris on the set.

It had been years since she last saw her, but Wendy swore it was just a beginning.

Those people owed her, her mother, and her sister! She would let them pay back little by little.

She would give them a taste of their own medicine! An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth! Thinking of her sister, Reese Finch, Wendy bit her lips.

After returning home, the first person she wanted to contact was Reese Finch, her biological sister, who was six years older than her.

Her sister was undeniably a beauty, taking after their mother.

When Reese was eighteen, their father, Ruben Finch, lost all their money and family asset in gambling.

He then forced his daughter to drop out of school and tried to marry her off to a middle-aged man.

Of course, Reese was totally against it.

But their father, Ruben, threatened her that he would beat her, break her legs, and kicked her out of the house if she would not marry the man.

In the end, Reese gave in and succumbed to their father's crazy idea.

When Wendy lived in the USA, she didn't dare to contact her Reese.

She was afraid that Cacia, Eris's mother, would find out her whereabouts and come to kill her to keep her mouth shut.

Even after returning back, she was still so anxious that she never called.

But tonight, while the kids slept in her arms, Wendy thought it was finally time to give Reese a call.

Wendy finally fell asleep with that idea in her head.

However, in the middle of the night, she was awakened by a sound from the living room!

Chapter 17: Did Something Bad Happen

Wendy glanced at the clock and saw that it was two o'clock in the morning. It hadn't been that long since she fell asleep, but here she was, already wide awake.

Turning at the window, she learned that the wind and rain had finally stopped.

Careful not to wake the kids, Wendy tiptoed out of bed to check what the noise was. Slowly, she opened the bedroom door.

The living room was lit, and the air-conditioning was switched off, making the atmosphere slightly stuffy.

Ryan was talking to someone on the phone while pouring himself a glass of water.

His voice was very low and stern, sounding like he was talking about work.

Hearing the creaking sound of a door, Ryan turned his head and saw Wendy.

His eyes darkened in an instant.

He knew she was deliberately avoiding staying alone with him.

It was summer, but she was wearing a nightgown with long sleeves and trousers to sleep, concealing all of her.

But maybe she just woke up that her eyes were muddled, her long hair was a little messy, and her cheeks were slightly red.

It was more tempting than deliberately seducing.

Initially, Ryan didn't feel hot without the air conditioner, but now it was as if he needed lots of water to cool him down.

And true to that, he felt the dryness and heat subside a little after gulping down a glass of cold water.

Then, he put away his phone and asked, "Did I wake you up?"

How could Wendy, as the host, admit that her guest had woken her up? So instead, she just rubbed her eyes and humbly answered, "No. I just can't fall asleep..."

"Well, I can't fall asleep either. Come and sit here!"

"What?"

Wendy asked with her brows shot up.

She put her arms around her chest subconsciously and stared at him as if he was a bad man about to do something terrible to her.

Ryan raised his eyebrows and pointed at the sofa, "I said have a seat. What are you thinking of?"

"Ha-ha!"

Utterly embarrassed, Wendy wished the ground could swallow her at that moment.

"N-Nothing ..I just feel that it's quite hot today. Isn't it hotter to sit on the sofa?" she reasoned out.

Then, hoping to change the topic, she added, "Anyway, it's kinda late, and you haven't gone to bed yet. Are you not comfortable sleeping in someone else's bed?"

Ryan didn't answer her question.

In fact, he had severe insomnia, and he didn't want to admit this to her.

He had tried different sleeping pills several times.

And he also drank a lot of alcohol before going to bed.

All of these he tried just to put himself to sleep, but they were no use at all.

Leo Roberts of Hopewell Hospital was his good friend who grew up with him.

With all their members in the medical field, the Roberts family had been running the hospital for years.

Leo specially studied hypnosis to cure Ryan's insomnia and even obtained a certificate for it, but it still didn't work.

Ryan couldn't remember the last time he slept soundly for a whole night.

"Come here!"

"Oh, okay!"

Afraid of causing any more misunderstandings, Wendy walked quietly to the sofa and settled herself against its soft foam.

Seeing this, Ryan came over with two glasses of water, handed one to her, and sat down next to her.

The distance between the two was at most twenty centimeters.

Wendy felt uneasy and moved aside.

Then she tried to move a little farther from him again until she was satisfied.

Turning to face Ryan, she saw his deep, brooding eyes, seemingly amused about something.

"What...What's wrong?"

"You will fall down on the floor if you keep moving."

"Ha-ha!"

Wendy burst into another laughter out of embarrassment.

Then she sat still and didn't dare to move anymore.

Not far away, Ryan could smell the fragrance of her body.

It was not an expensive perfume, but a fresh and natural smell, with a sense of relief.

"You saved my daughter before, and I still haven't thanked you."

"No, no. There's no need for that. Precious and I seem to be destined to meet. I don't know why, but I like it when I see her."

"Oh, I see..."

Holding her glass of water, Wendy asked, "Mr. Oliver, may I ask you a question? Where is Precious's mother?"

"I don't know."

"What?"

"I don't know who her mother is."

Wendy was rendered speechless.

After a while, the corners of her mouth twitched when she realized something.

Did this man have a one-night stand with a woman and got her pregnant?

"Don't get me wrong. I was really drunk that night. When I woke up, I didn't see anyone." Only ghosts would believe what he said! But that was not the point Wendy was interested in.

"In other words, Precious has never seen her mother?"

"Yeah..."

No wonder Precious liked her so much! "Mr. Oliver, I have thought about it, and I think you should listen to me. The reason why Precious relies on me is that she lacks motherly love and affection. Aside from that, your last date made her feel unwanted, so she had a sense of rebelliousness. Coincidentally, I happened to appear that night. In addition, I also have Ray, who is the same age, so she likes me so much."

Ryan leaned against the sofa with his eyes shut and uttered, "Maybe you are right!"

"In fact, this kind of problem is easy to solve. Since she's longing for a mother's affection, you can find her a woman she likes."

Opening his deep eyes, Ryan pierced Wendy with a meaningful look and agreed, "I think so too."

Receiving his intense gaze, Wendy was lost for words to say.

She felt like she had just taken a rock to throw at herself.

Chuckling awkwardly, she picked up the glass and took a few sips, trying to conceal her feelings.

Her mind spun quickly, attempting to find a way to dispel this terrible idea from his head.

For a moment, a deafening silence fell on them.

Only the sound of the hustling wind outside the window could be heard.

Even after a while of rummaging her head, Wendy couldn't think of a way.

Her sleepy eyes were starting to droop, and her mind was in a mess.

She yawned and prepared to find an excuse to go back to her room and sleep.

However, she suddenly felt a heavy weight pressed against her body.

"Ah!"

Wendy's face changed dramatically, and the sleepiness instantly left her system.

"What are you doing, Ryan Oliver?" she exclaimed, dumbfounded at the man's unexpected behavior.

She tried pushing him away, but the man was just too heavy and strong! "Ryan Oliver, you pervert! I asked you and your daughter to stay here out of kindness, and this is how you repay me? Get out of here right now, or I'll scream! Let's just see how Precious will see you after that!"

Wendy cursed with all her might.

However, much to her annoyance, Ryan didn't seem affected by her threat at all.

Instead, he remained on top of her, not moving at all.

Suddenly, Wendy realized something was wrong! As she struggled to raise her head, she saw Ryan lying on her, with his now feebly arms down and eyes closed.

Eyes widened, Wendy was thrown in utter disbelief.

'What's wrong with him?' she thought, slightly worried.

She tried to push him on the shoulder and asked, "Ryan Oliver? Ryan Oliver?"

There was still no response from him.

Did something bad happen to him? Was he dead? Wendy swallowed hard and put her fingers under his nose.

When she felt his evened breathing, her tense body finally relaxed.

'Did he...Did he faint? How could he faint for no reason?' All those thoughts ran wildly in her head.

Wendy tried her best to turn Ryan over on the side of the sofa.

She wanted to go back to her room and phone Roger, but the hem of her clothes tightened.

It turned out that Ryan tightly grabbed onto her pajamas and didn't let her go.

Wendy tried to break away from his grip, but his hands were like stones, restricting all her strength.

"Damn it!"

After a few attempts, beads of sweat began to form on her forehead.

Left with no other better ideas, Wendy had to take out Ryan's phone from his pocket.

She bent down and fumbled in his pants' pocket, but it was too deep for her to find anything.

While she was searching thoroughly for his phone, Wendy accidentally touched something she shouldn't.

Instantly, her hands froze while heat began to surge to her cheeks.

Damn it! Why was she blushing? As if electrified, Wendy quickly pulled out her hand and stared at Ryan with her mouth agape.

Now, she really suspected that this jerk was just pretending to faint to take advantage of her! But after staring at him for long, he was still lying immobile on the couch with his eyes shut.

"Ryan Oliver? Ryan Oliver?"

Wendy tried shaking his shoulders, but there was still no response! Damn it! Was he really just pretending or not? How could a man sustain such pretension for so long? If he really fainted, she would be responsible for this! After all, it happened in her apartment.

Gritting her teeth, Wendy made up her mind and exclaimed, "Ah! Forget it!"

She couldn't take responsibility if something bad really happened! Shrugging her shoulders, she buried her hand again in his pocket.

With her eyes tightly shut, she fumbled deep down and finally grabbed hold of his phone.

When she extracted the device out of his pants, she was sweating all over.

Wendy didn't have time to think too much and immediately pressed the screen only to find that his phone had a fingerprint lock.

She pressed Ryan's finger to unlock it, and voila! The screen opened, revealing a terrain of contact numbers.

Roger grew up with Ryan, and the two were really good friends.

Ryan must have Roger's number on his contacts.

Fortunately, there were not many people on the list, so Wendy soon found his name.

Immediately, she dialed the number, but no one answered after a long while.

She tried a few more times again, only to be disappointed with the same result.

"He's probably sleeping,"

Wendy uttered, staring at the phone screen.

At this point, she felt really helpless, but she couldn't just leave Ryan like this on her couch.

By accident, Wendy saw Luke's name on the contact list.

Luke Oliver! Wasn't that Precious's uncle? Oh! He was Ryan Oliver's younger brother! Although Wendy had only met him once, she didn't think about it too much and immediately dialed his number.

After two rings, the line got connected.

On the other end was Luke, fast asleep.

When his phone rang, he cursed impatiently.

Damn it! Who was so evil to disturb his good dreams in the middle of the night?! He was about to lash out on the phone when he saw the caller's name.

"Brother, why are you calling at this ungodly hour?"

"Luke?"

"Ouch!"

It was not his brother's voice, but a woman's! Luke rubbed his eyes and glanced again at the name registered on the screen.

He wasn't mistaken! It was really his brother's number! But why was a woman answering using his phone?! At the thought of this, he

shivered and woke up at once! His brother had never allowed anyone to get close to his private phone.

Who was this woman? Still in utter disbelief, Luke quickly got out of bed and checked the time.

Oh, god! It was two eighteen in the morning! His brother was with a woman at this hour?! This was shocking news! No! In fact, it wasn't just shocking-it was mind-blowing!

But the voice sounded so familiar.He seemed to have heard her somewhere.Luke furrowed his brows as he tried to rummage his memory.

When he realized who it was, his eyes widened in disbelief.

It was Wendy Finch! He remembered Ryan asking him for her apartment's address.

'Did he stay there overnight?' Luke asked himself, feeling utterly excited.

Oh, god! Did this mean he was gonna have a sister-in-law soon? If only Wendy knew what was going on in Luke's head, she would definitely be disturbed.

"Luke, it's Wendy, the one who saved Precious on the set the other day."

Wendy's voice sounded so gentle from the other end of the line.

"Oh, I know.I know it's you.My sister-in...Ah, I mean, Miss Finch! Why are you calling me on my brother's phone? Where is he?"

"Your brother fainted in my house!"

"What?!"

"I don't know what's going on. I just want to ask you if this usually happens to him. And also, I'm trapped beneath him, so I can't move. Anyway, please come here and help me."

"Okay, okay. Don't worry. I'll be right there!"

Wendy immediately told her the address before hanging up the phone.

She then waited on the sofa, eyes feeling droopy.

And after a few minutes, she fell asleep.

The sound of a door being unlocked woke her up again.

Wendy was refreshed and immediately opened her eyes, finding that her and Ryan's position had strangely changed.

Before she fell asleep, Ryan grasped her clothes as he laid on her side while she sat next to his head.

Now, he was lying flat on his back, with his head resting on her thighs.

No wonder she felt her legs were so heavy when she was asleep.

But...Would one still move when he fainted? While this thought sent Wendy in a daze, Luke successfully opened the door with a locksmith and Leo.

After handing some cash to the locksmith, he strode into the living room with Leo tailing behind.

When he saw his brother's head resting on Wendy's legs, his eyes almost popped out of his head.

Oh, god! Was it really his brother who didn't like any physical contact with others?! The last time his brother held Wendy, it was because the lady was injured after saving Precious.

But now, what happened? Sure enough, there was something between him and Wendy! Luke had long known that his brother treated her differently.

Well, it really seemed that he would have a sister-in-law this time!

"Dr.Roberts?"

Wendy called, recognizing Leo from the hospital.

Leo sported a plain short sleeve and pants, and rimless glasses highlighted his gentle and handsome face.

"Miss Finch, hi!"

Leo nodded and flashed her a smile.It was not until then that Luke came to his senses.

"Go and check on my brother," he uttered, pushing Leo on his shoulders.

Without hesitation, the latter strode to the sofa and squatted to check Ryan's vitals.

Although Ryan's eyes were closed, his breathing was even, and his face looked completely normal.

Leo's eyes flashed as he gazed up at Wendy.

"Miss Finch, can you tell me how he fainted?"

"We were just talking when he suddenly lost consciousness.I couldn't wake him up no matter how hard I tried."

As Wendy recalled what happened earlier, a slight fear lingered on her.

She looked at Leo nervously and asked, "Dr.Roberts, is there something wrong with Mr.Oliver?"

"Yeah, what's wrong with my brother? He has never fainted like this before. Just check on him quickly. If need be, we'll send him to your hospital for a detailed examination."

Leo pushed his glasses and stared at Wendy in surprise.

Feeling uneasy, the latter moved her buttocks. Her body was starting to get a little numb. Luke frowned.

He raised his arm to nudge Leo and whispered, "My brother likes Wendy. Don't even think about it!"

"What are you talking about?"

After a long while, Leo stood up from the sofa and concluded, "He is just asleep!"

'What?! What did he say?! Wendy asked herself, utterly bewildered! She thought something wrong might have happened to Ryan and was so frightened nearly to have a heart attack.

After she called Luke and bothered so many people, it turned out that Ryan was just asleep? A mixture of shock and anger boiled within Wendy.

And out of frustration, she tried to push Ryan's head aggressively to wake him up.

But when she was about to raise her hand, someone stopped her.

"No! Wendy Finch, please!"

Luke strode over and grabbed her wrist in a hurry.

"My dear goddess, my brother has only slept less than five hours in the past three days. Please show mercy and let him sleep a little longer!" As if he was pleading to a god, Luke pressed his palms together, even almost kneeling down to Wendy.

His brother had been suffering from severe insomnia! Thankfully, he had finally fallen asleep.

If he woke up, he would definitely not be able to fall asleep again! A question suddenly popped in Luke's head at that moment.

His brother had always struggled to sleep soundly.

More than that, he was also a light sleeper, so his room needed to have neither sound nor light seeping through.

The curtains were light-proof, and the glass and door were also soundproof.

With just a little light and sound, his brother would immediately wake up.

But now? The living room was lit brightly, and the wind was billowing outside the window.

Even with all these, his brother was fast asleep! Moreover, he was sleeping so soundly that even their conversation did not disturb him! Was he too tired, or was it because of...Wendy Finch?

Chapter 19: His Son

Luke gazed at Wendy with pleading eyes as if he was looking at God. Meanwhile, the latter did not know what to do.

"So, we'll just let him sleep like this?"

Luke nodded crazily and uttered, "Please, Miss Finch, let him sleep a little longer."

But Wendy's legs were sore and numb! And when she tried moving them, Ryan instantly winced in his sleep.

"Don't move. Don't move, please!"

"But my legs are numb..."

Hearing this, Luke immediately squatted down beside Wendy and massaged her calves.

Shocked by that unexpected gesture, Wendy hurriedly said, "Stop. I am fine!"

"Okay!"

Luke stood up quickly and surveyed the living room. Wendy made up her mind and exclaimed, "Ah! Forget it!"

She couldn't take responsibility if something bad really happened! Shrugging her shoulders, she buried her hand again in his pocket.

With her eyes tightly shut, she fumbled deep down and finally grabbed hold of his phone.

When she extracted the device out of his pants, she was sweating all over.

Wendy didn't have time to think too much and immediately pressed the screen only to find that his phone had a fingerprint lock.

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"He's probably sleeping,"

Wendy uttered, staring at the phone screen.

At this point, she felt really helpless, but she couldn't just leave Ryan like this on her couch.

ed in utter fear, sending her out of her sleep.

When she opened her eyes, the sun had already seeped through the slits of the curtain, making the living room a little hot on a summer morning.

Rubbing her eyes, Wendy turned around and saw Luke and Leo sitting on the dining chairs beside the table.

Seeing that she had woken up, Luke immediately stood up and trotted over.

Meanwhile, Ryan still had his head rested on her legs, breathing steadily in his dream.

Gazing down at his peaceful face, Wendy did not know what to say.

"What time is it now?" Luke smiled awkwardly and answered,

"It's eight o'clock in the morning!"

What?! Eight o'clock? Ryan had been sleeping for six hours! Didn't Luke say that he would sleep for at most two or three hours? Realizing that she was fooled, Wendy glared at the man.

"I didn't lie to you. I swear! My brother used to only sleep for three or four hours a day. If you don't believe me, you can ask Leo!"

Wendy then shifted her gaze at Leo, who nodded with a gentle smile.

"What about now? Can you wake him up?"

"Please. It's not easy for my brother to have a good sleep. I hope you can be kind enough to let him sleep a little longer."

To let Ryan sleep more comfortably, Luke switched the central air conditioner in the living room and then found a quilt to cover him.

The only thing Wendy could do was watch him while she was still stuck on the couch.

At half-past eight, Ray and Precious, who sported the same pajamas, had gotten out of bed.

Seeing the group of people in the living room, Raymond frowned.

He wanted to say something to make their presence known, but Precious quickly covered his mouth.

"Hmm..."

Confused, Ray furrowed his brows at her and questioned her with his eyes.

"Ray! My daddy is asleep. Don't speak. You will wake him up."

Precious spoke in a very low voice, careful as to not make any noise.

Then, she pulled Raymond back to the corner and explained her father's insomnia to him.

Ray nodded to show his understanding.

Suddenly, Wendy's stomach growled, stealing the attention of everyone in the living room.

Embarrassed, she immediately covered it and gave out a wry smile.

Luke patted his head and declared, "Oh, my bad! I was too careless. Wait a moment!"

Then, he ran to the balcony to make a phone call.

In less than twenty minutes, the doorbell rang, signaling that their sumptuous breakfast had been delivered.

In no time, Luke opened the door and walked back into the living room holding several containers of food.

"Dear Wendy, I don't know what you and Ray like for breakfast, so I ordered some myself."

Was this the breakfast Luke ordered for them? It was quite too much! As Wendy watched him arranged all the food on the table, her mouth suddenly watered.

That certainly didn't look like a simple breakfast! It clearly a buffet for the wealthy! The smell of Chinese and Western cuisines reeked in the air.

Various kinds of dumplings, paired with tea eggs, fried dough sticks, soy milk, sandwiches, bread, yogurt, and milk carpeted the table.

There was even a huge seafood pizza! Not minding the extravagance of this morning meal, Wendy began munching on those foods.

The people in the room didn't want to disturb Ryan.

And when his phone rang a few times, Luke took the liberty to answer it on the balcony.

And when he came back, he instantly switched off the phone.

Perhaps to avoid disturbing his brother's sleep.

Leo had always reminded Luke that if Ryan's insomnia persisted, he might die at such a young age.

After all, he always overworked himself, even with just a few hours of sleep every day.

So, there was nothing more important for Luke right now than to let his brother sleep longer.

Shaking his hair and flashing a grin, Luke thought proudly that he was probably the best younger brother in the world! He was kind-hearted

and very caring of his brother! After their breakfast, Luke sat next to Leo, while Precious and Ray played in one corner.

Leo kept quietly staring at Ray for some reason.

"Hey, what are you looking at?" Luke asked in a low voice.

Raising his chin, Leo answered, "That little guy. I noticed him when he was in the hospital with Miss Finch. Don't you think he looked familiar?" Familiar?

Luke didn't notice that.

He then followed Leo's gaze and saw the little boy sitting upright.

Unlike Precious, who was arranging the blocks quickly and, in a mess, the little boy was making the blocks into various shapes in his hands, and all of them were extremely complicated.

Seeing his work, Precious's eyes lit up and stared at Ray with admiration.

The little boy was neither arrogant nor impatient, and his calm and collected appearance was very charming.

The more Luke's gaze lingered on the kids, the more he was surprised to learn that the features were somewhat similar.

"Oh?! Don't you think Ray looks like Precious? Look at his nose and mouth! Oh, that's probably why he looked familiar to us! I wouldn't have noticed it hadn't you tell me!"

Leo looked at him speechlessly.

"Why are you looking at me like that?"

Luke asked, obviously still clueless.

"Whom does Precious resemble?"

"Of course, my brother..."

As soon as those words left Luke's mouth, his eyes widened exaggeratingly while his mouth hung agape.

"Oh, my God!" he exclaimed as he stole a gaze at the young boy one more time.

It was true.

This little boy really looked like his brother when the latter was still a child.

But then, his brother was naughty as a kid, and this boy looked more serious... Yet, looking at his face right now, Ray undeniably resembled Ryan! Oh, dear God! This was mind-blowing!

"Leo, are you saying that this little boy is my brother's son?"

Luke asked after coming back to his senses.

Chapter 20: Did She Dislike My Brother So Much

Luke was speechless.

"Hey Leo, what are you thinking? Are you saying any child who even remotely resembles my brother is his illegitimate child? If so, then my parents won't have to worry about his marriage."

Leo's face darkened.

"It's just that... Well, I'm saying there's this possibility..."

"No way!"

Luke patted the other man's shoulder.

"It's impossible for my brother to have another child."

"Why do you think so?"

"Do you really not know? We all grew up together. Don't you know what kind of person Ryan is? Besides, fifteen years ago... You know what happened to my family that year when he was just fifteen years old. From then on, he hasn't had any interest in women at all. My parents even had to spend a lot of time and effort in order to coax him into falling in love like a normal person. It was all useless in the end! He hated the idea of talking to women, let alone engage in intimate relation. My parents are still of the belief that he prefers men." Leo fell silent at that.

VElot) ibs Im bie: Luke sighed and continued.

"I've been so worried about Ryan, too.

I thought that if my parents were right, then I'd have to introduce him to a man.

But when I did, all I got in return was a sound beating.

I wasn't able to get out of bed for three whole days after that!"

Leo knew about that time, and he laughed now that Luke brought up the incident.

"How dare you laugh! You and your friends were the ones who came up with that in the first place! You didn't even do anything to defend me while I was getting beaten up!"

Luke rolled his eyes and scoffed.

"It was fortunate that I never gave up on this mission. My brother is a smart man, though, and all my attempts to drug him all failed. Then Kane Evans got married. Ryan was bound to imbibe on alcohol at the event. Ha ha, I especially brought some aphrodisiac with me that day. He got well and truly tricked! That was the first time he ever had sex. And that's how Precious came to be. By all rights, my brother should be eternally grateful to me. If it hadn't been for my efforts, he would never have had such a lovely little girl."

"Are you absolutely sure that was the only time Ryan had sex with anyone?"

"Of course!"

Leo was still doubtful.

He pushed his glasses up against the bridge of his nose.

"It's not like he can't sleep with a woman and not tell you about it."

"Hey! Haven't I told you? Since that last time I drugged laeste" VW1.b im bine him, he hasn't been able to stand physical contact with other people, regardless if it's a man or a woman. Except for his daughter, he hasn't really touched another person in the past few years. That being said, there's no way he would have had sex again!"

'And that little guy can't be my brother's son.' Luke was sure about it.

Leo clicked his tongue.

"What a pity!" He seemed to be engrossed in his thoughts for a while before asking another question.

"Have you never really found Precious' mother all these years?"

"Where should we even start?"

Luke replied, shrugging.

"My brother was under the influence at the time. I originally hired an experienced woman to serve him that night, but when I called her the next day she insisted that she hadn't met Ryan at all. What a stupid girl. I told her the room number and even gave her the key, and she says she couldn't find him! I was terrified my brother might be somewhere suffering the effects of the drugs. He could have died, you know! So I ran to his room to see what was happening. And you know the rest of the story."

Leo nodded.

They had been there, too.

Four years ago, they rushed into Ryan's room to find him unconscious in bed.

They had no clue as to what had happened, except for a small blood stain on the sheets.

Kane's wedding had been held in a villa on the mountain side, around which were several other villas owned by Oliver Group.

Construction had only been finished then, however, and the units hadn't even been open to the market yet.

As it was, there were no surveillance cameras installed the area, and they had not been able to trace any evidence regarding the woman Ryan had spent the night with. In addition to that, the event had a good number of female guests in attendance, and it was impossible to go through each one and search for the woman in question.

Before they knew it, the whole affair was over, and they were packing to go home.

And nobody ever discovered whom Ryan had slept with.

Eight months later, Precious was left at the gates of the Oliver family house. "When Precious first came to us, we believed that her mother had purposely given birth to the girl secretly so she could have something to tie Ryan down with. She could have pursued a marriage into the Oliver family. So we were prepared for her to show up with some sort of negotiation in mind. But she never came. To this day, she has never once contacted us." Luke shook his head as he talked.

"I just don't understand. If that woman didn't want the baby, why didn't she just get an abortion? Instead, she chose to give birth to the child, but decided not to keep it anyway. Most importantly, she knew for a fact that Ryan is the father, but she obviously didn't want him to take responsibility for herself. Did she dislike my brother that much?"

"Well, we'll never know what sort of man suits her taste. Maybe Ryan was just not her type."

"Nonsense! Regardless of anything else, she'd have to be blind or stupid if she thinks my brother is unworthy. Well, Leo had nothing to say to that. Wendy wasn't expecting Ryan to sleep for so long. She had been waiting for him to wake up since eight o'clock in the morning.

He was still sleeping even after she finished her breakfast, and now she was done with her lunch, too.

It was almost two in the afternoon. She couldn't feel her legs at this point. Having the meals by herself were not the problem. Luke had ordered takeaways to be sent to her, but there just some things that she could not do now that Ryan was using her thighs as a pillow.

Wendy was trying to stand up.

"My goodness! What now?"

"Oh come on! I need to go to the bathroom! !"

She all but roared.

Poor Luke was hopeless.

Well, a person had to attend to their bladder when necessary.

Luke was debating against himself when Leo came over.

He yawned and patted Luke on the shoulder.

The two hadn't slept all night.

"It's almost twelve hours from two o'clock in the morning to two o'clock in the afternoon."

"Well...All right, fine! You can go to the bathroom."

Luke went to wake Ryan, but his brother beat him to it, rolling over and opening his eyes on his own.

He looked rather normal and boyish when he just woke up, but soon his eyes cleared and his indifferent expression was back in place.

"Ryan."

Ryan sat up from the sofa.

He had had a good sleep and was feeling refreshed, and the others felt that his demeanor had slightly softened.

"Why are you here?" he asked.

Luke's words caught at his throat.

Listen to Ryan! Listen to him! Luke had worked so hard to ensure Ryan had a good night's sleep, but now that he was awake, he was being mean to him again! "Can you stop chatting now?"

Wendy's legs were trembling like those of a newly-born lamb.

She had tried standing up on her own, but had to sit back down quickly.

"Ahi" She was just too weak to move.

"Dear Wendy, are you all right?"

"How can you ask me such a question?"

She didn't dare to offend Ryan, so she directed her stern look to his brother instead.

It was all Luke's fault! If Luke hadn't begged her, she would have woken Ryan up a long time ago.

Luke chuckled and rubbed his nose with embarrassment.

"Just rest. The blood in your legs will slowly circulate, then you will be fine."

She wanted to do as Leo said, too, but she really couldn't wait anymore. Her bladder was about to burst.

"Do you want to go to the bathroom?"

"Of course I do!"

Wendy had been holding in her pee for so long, she had lost any fear she harbored toward Ryan. Then all of a sudden, she was picked up from the sofa and lifted into the air.

"Ah! What are you doing?" Ryan frowned at her.

"Aren't you going to the bathroom?"

But he was already making a beeline to the bathroom, Wendy snug inside his arms.

When he put her down, her legs immediately shook and she clutched at him.

"Do you need any help?"

"No!"

Wendy blushed and let go, leaning against the wall for support.

"You, get out!"

"Call me when you're done."

Ryan walked out of the bathroom, closed the door carefully behind him, and waited.

Five minutes later, a scream came from the bathroom, followed by a muffled sound of a body making contact with the floor.

Ryan's face changed and without any further thought, he pushed the door open and rushed inside.

Chapter 21: Let Me Help You Take Off Your Pants

"Ah!" Wendy exclaimed.

"Get out!" Ryan did nothing of the sort, and instead strode over to her and helped her up.

A few seconds later, Ray and Precious were also rushing into the bathroom.

"Mommy!"

"Auntie!"

Then, they asked in unison, "Are you all right?" Wendy forced a tight smile.

"I'm fine."

= The children eyed her with obvious doubt.

"You two go out first,"

Ryan said.

Ray didn't budge or say anything, but he did look up at the towering man.

Precious also hesitated, whining, "Daddy..."

"Your auntie needs to pee. You shouldn't be here."

The little boy's frown deepened.

He knew Ryan was right.

He might only be three years old, but he understood the concept of privacy well.

His mother could indeed not relieve herself with himself and Precious in the bathroom, but what about Ryan? Why did it seem like the man intended to stay in the bathroom with his Mommy?! As if reading the boy's mind, Ryan raised a brow and shot him a challenging look.

"Are you able to support and assist your Mommy?"

Ray finally understood then, even as he glanced at his short limbs with chagrin.

He silently stepped out of the bathroom, and Precious followed behind him.

When the kids were gone, Wendy finally let go of her calm expression and rubbed her buttocks with a grimace.

They hurt.

They really hurt! Just now, she supported herself against the wall.

After Ryan got out of the bathroom, she slowly let go of her hand.

Then she sat down on the toilet cover.

She didn't stand up until she could feel her two legs.

Well, first and foremost, she needed to take off her pants.

But she discovered to her dismay that she had been overestimating her two legs.

She had barely stood upright when her legs became jelly, wobbling under her weight until she had no choice but to drop to the floor, landing on her bum.

The pain from the impact was enough to make her cry, and her face twisted in frustration since she was still unable to attend to her needs.

She tried to pull her weight with her hands braced on the wall again, shaking off Ryan's arm when he offered it.

"You get out of here, too!"

"Stop pushing yourself too hard!"

His face darkened as he reached for her again, not letting go this time.

With his other hand, he opened the toilet cover, then his eyes went to Wendy's pajama bottoms.

His internal conflict was evident in his gaze.

This was a much more difficult decision to make compared to all the business deals he had ever handled in the board room.

A second passed.

Then another one.

Then another three.

After what felt like a century, Ryan finally made up his mind.

His eyes steeled as his hand reached for her waistband.

Wendy's face turned pale with alarm.

"Ryan Oliver! What do you think you're doing?"

"Either I help you with your clothes, or you do it by yourself while holding me to keep yourself standing straight, pick a choice!"

"There's no way I'm letting you do that!"

"Fine," Ryan grumbled.

"Then you can just pee on your pants."

Wendy's jaw dropped.

She glared at him, but given her struggle with her bladder, her face didn't look as intimidating as she had intended.

She bent over her trembling legs, her tone bitter.

"I'll have you know that this is all happening because I let you sleep peacefully.

Why are you being so ungrateful?"

"That's why I'm trying to repay the favor!"

Indeed, if it had been someone else, he wouldn't have cared even if they died holding in their pee.

"Ryan Oliver..."

"I did fall asleep last night, but it wasn't like I was in a deep slumber. And I do acknowledge what you've done to me."

His words were so out of the blue, Wendy was confused and didn't understand what he was trying to say.

Ryan patted his pocket in his pants slowly.

In an instant, a warm stream rushed over Wendy's head, and her face was as red as blood.

"You, you, you...I...I..I was looking for your phone. I thought you fainted and wanted to call someone to come to save you. I...I didn't mean to touch your penis!"

Ryan smirked, the look in his face saying something along the lines of, "Whatever you say."

Wendy was at a loss.

He meant to tell her that she had already touched his penis.

So she should not feel too shy now.

"All right, you win!"she shouted.

All of her bravado from a while back had disappeared.

"Close your eyes!"she ordered.

He complied.

Wendy held on to his arm with one hand and took off her pajamas bottoms with the other.

She stared at him the whole time, afraid he might peek at some point.

He didn't, but she felt humiliated nonetheless.

When the trousers business was dealt with, she quickly sat on the toilet.

The moment her skin touched the bowl, everything she held in just burst forth.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! The sound was practically deafening, especially since there were only the two of them in the small space.

Wendy was mortified, and she swore under her breath.

She had never experienced such shame in all her life! When she was done, she quickly cleaned herself and pulled her pants up.

"Are you done?"She said nothing.

Ryan opened his eyes and glanced at her red face.

She looked like a rabid wild cat that could attack at any time, what with the fierce glare she was shooting in his direction.

Mirth flashed across his eyes.

Well, finally! Ryan picked her up again and carried her out of the bathroom.

Back in the living room area, Luke was squirming giddily on his seat, both of his hands pressed against his heart.

When he saw his brother and Wendy approach, he leaned over to Leo and whispered excitedly, "Look, he's holding her again! Leo, this is the third time Ryan has ever embraced that woman. I told you, didn't I? In my brother's eyes, she's different from any other women. No, wait. It's not just my brother, but even Precious as well. Wendy is special to my niece, too. Wow, at this rate, I really might have a sister-in-law soon."

No sooner had Ryan put Wendy down on the sofa that she was scrambling away from him.

She didn't even bother with niceties or excuses and directly told the guests to leave.

"You should go now!"

If she had known beforehand about the events of the previous night, she would never have had let Ryan and his daughter stay.

"Dear Wendy"

"You should leave, too!"

Luke was about to protest, but a glance from his brother stopped him.

Then Ryan took the clothes his people had brought for him and headed into Ray's bedroom to change.

He called out to his daughter when he was done.

"Precious!"

"Are we leaving, Daddy?"

The girl didn't want to go, but her father nodded.

She pouted and lowered her head, then turned to Raymond.

"Ray, I'm leaving."

"Okay."

"I'll come to play with you again next time."

The boy looked up at Ryan and stared for a while before nodding.

"All right!"

"I will miss you.

You must miss me, too."

"Yes, fine."

Then Precious walked over to Wendy, and her reluctance was evident in her tone when she spoke.

"Auntie, I have to go with Daddy..."

Wendy's face softened a little.

"All right."

"Then...bye, Auntie."

"Bye!"

Ryan picked up his daughter and took the elevator downstairs with Luke and Leo in tow.

"Brother!"

Luke kept rambling.

"Tell me the truth. Tell me! Do you like Wendy? Do you have a crush on her? You do, don't you?"

His pesky questions were met with cold silence, and Luke stamped his foot.

"Oh, come on! Just tell me! Tell me quickly! I'm dying to know!"

Well, it wasn't just him Leo and Precious were also waiting with bated breaths for Ryan's answer.

Still, the man maintained his silence.

When they exited the elevator, Ryan pulled out his phone and turned it on.

He scrolled through his contacts and pressed on Kane's number. : His call was immediately answered.

"Yes, Ryan?"

Ryan went straight to the point.

"Hello, Kane.I want you to prepare the contract with Wendy Finch and e -mail it to me within three days.I want to go over it and check the terms myself."

Chapter 22: Destroy Her

Two days had passed, and Wendy couldn't stay at home any longer.

So, she called their director, Carter Williams, and informed that she wanted to go back to work.

However, Carter didn't agree.

He insisted that Wendy should rest at least for a week at home.

Even after she repeatedly said that she was completely fine, Carter just had his assistant send the script to Wendy's apartment.

"Don't worry about your work.I heard you had a concussion and needed to stitch your head.You must have a good rest.Besides, it's

summer now, and the weather's really hot. If we proceed with the shoot, you would have to wear thick clothes and headpieces. I'm afraid your wound will be infected if it is not fully healed yet. Anyway, there's no need to rush. If you are really bored at home, I suggest you read the script and practice your lines. So that once you come back to the set, you won't have any problems with the shoot."

Carter advised like any great and concerned director.

"Well, I guess that will do,"

Wendy answered helplessly.

When afternoon came, Carter's assistant arrived at her apartment with the script.

However, Wendy was surprised to be handed a thick document.

She knew that only a few people had access to the complete script.

Even the actors' copy only had their own lines in it.

This was because it was crucial that none would be leaked before the series got broadcasted.

Since Wendy played Lady Faye, who just appeared in the middle of the series, she only needed that part for her script.

But Carter was so nice to give her the complete version of it! Utterly delighted, Wendy began to familiarize herself with the script.

There were 73 episodes for the Story of Concubine Ivanka series, and her character--Lady Faye- appeared in more than 40 episodes.

So, it was only right that she got paid nearly a million for this project.

Upon scanning through the pages, Wendy realized that the series' storyline was slightly different from the original novel.

In the book, the part before Lady Faye entered the imperial palace was only briefly mentioned, but the script revised it and added quite a few back stories through flashbacks.

As a result, Lady Faye's character was more emphasized vividly.

Knowing this, Wendy became even more excited to read and practice her lines.

Lady Faye was a villain, but the woman was more complicated than that.

So, this was a very challenging role to play.

And if Wendy managed to bring that character into life, she would definitely get noticed in the industry.

It took her two days to read the entire script repeatedly to completely familiarize herself with it.

Soon, she had to go back to the set and resume shooting her scenes.

The morning of her first day back, Wendy woke up early to prepare breakfast.

While eating the porridge, Raymond looked at her from time to time, wanting to say something but hesitating.

And this did not escape Wendy's gaze.

She knew that her son had been wearing that same expression for the last two days.

So, settling down the spoon, she looked at him and asked seriously, "Baby, is there something you want to say to me? "Mommy, you...Do you like Uncle Roger?"

"Why are you suddenly asking me this question?"asked Wendy in astonishment.

The little boy lowered his head and replied, "I want to know. Will he become my father?"

"No!"

"Uh..."

Surprised, Ray didn't know what to say.

Wendy pushed the steamed bun in front of him and said helplessly, "What have you been thinking lately? Mommy and Uncle Roger have known each other for three years, and we're just really good friends. We are not getting married, baby."

"But why, mommy?"

"Uncle Roger is really great, honey. But I can't trap him into a loveless marriage. Mommy is just really grateful to him for all his help. Besides, he loves someone else. So, don't ever bring out that topic again, okay?"

Surprised at what Wendy said, Raymond widened his eyes and asked, "Uncle Roger loves someone else?"

"Yes!"

That was why his mother and Uncle Roger couldn't be together! Lucky for Raymond! He didn't have to pick sides between his Uncle Roger and Precious's father! Thinking of this, the little boy grinned as his brows --which had been furrowed tightly for the last two days-- finally softened and straightened out.

As he continued to eat his porridge with a sheepish smile, Wendy was stunned.

Alas! Children nowadays were so complicated that she, even as a mother, couldn't understand what ran on her son's little head.

After breakfast, Wendy was ready to leave.

"Ray, are you sure I can leave you here alone?"

The little boy didn't even raise his head and just made and gestured that he was fine.

Still worried, Wendy told him, "Don't open the door when strangers knock and don't run around outside. You can't turn on the air conditioner at a too low temperature alone at home, and...If anything happens, call mommy immediately with your telephone watch!"

"Don't worry, mommy. I'm not a three-year-old child anymore!"

Wendy wanted to say something more, but she just decided to trust Raymond with his words.

But even after she left the house, a flurry of worry still resided in her.

No matter how smart her son was, he was still just a kid.

If she were to work and leave him alone like this, she'd better find a full-time nanny to babysit him.

When Wendy arrived at the set, the staff had already begun with their work.

They were currently shooting a scene of Lady Ivanka's entrance to the imperial palace.

The actress wore a white, plain dress, looking young and beautiful.

As she strolled in the garden, Lady Ivanka happened to meet the emperor, who had a crush on the pretty newcomer.

Unfortunately, her heart already belonged to someone else.

Although she did not love the emperor, she didn't dare show her true feelings in front of him.

She had to hold back all the time.

"Okay, cut!"

Carter waved his hand and declared, "It's done!"

"Thank you, director!"

The actors and actresses immediately relaxed and breathed a sigh of relief.

Although it was early summer, the sun was hanging high in the sky.

Everyone was wearing heavy and thick costumes, nearly suffocating most of them.

The assistant of the leading actress and actor rushed to their aides with bottles of water and fans.

In the middle of this, Wendy met Eris's eyes.

The two of them stared at each other, causing the atmosphere to instantly intensify.

Wendy pursed her mouth as she equalled her gaze.

The feud between the two had officially been ignited! Meanwhile, Carter was surprised to see Wendy so early in the set.

"It's only eight o'clock. Why are you so early?"

he asked, glancing at his watch.

"I have nothing to do at home."

"Are you okay now?"

"Yeah, I'm completely fine now."

Carter sighed in relief and responded, "I've been too busy these days to spare time to see you in the hospital. Thank you for what you did that day. I was shocked when I heard it from the others."

Wendy answered with a smile and said nothing.

"Alright! Since we are here, let's get back to work! How about this? Let's take the photos first.

You change into your costume and have your make up done."

Carter then looked at the schedule and added, "There happens to be a scene of you and Concubine Ivanka today, but the scene will be shot in the afternoon."

"It doesn't matter. I can just watch the others. Maybe I'll learn a thing or two."

Wendy flashed him a sweet smile, much to Carter's pleasure.

He nodded and immediately asked someone to assist her.

At the same time, Eris and her assistant Ana found sanctuary under a shade to take quick rest.

Ana immediately brought a chair, which Eris sat on while the former was fanning her.

A hint of coldness flashed through Eris's eyes as she saw Wendy enter the dressing room.

"Have you done what I asked you to do?" she asked Ana in a low voice.

Patting her chest, the latter answered, "Eris, don't worry.

There is absolutely no mistake! I've put it in the cosmetics.

As long as Wendy puts on her makeup, her face will be ruined in less than an hour! "

In the Story of Concubine Ivanka, the leading actor Mason and the leading actress Eris were both a listers.

As such, they had their own separate dressing rooms.

The supporting actress playing the queen was also under Glory Media like Mason, and her name was Daisy Thompson.

She was thirty-five years old and had acted in many classic TV series.

She was an outstanding actress by her own right.

And so, she also had her own separate dressing room.

In contrast, Wendy was a newcomer, and had been assigned to share a dressing room with other important supporting actresses.

Nevertheless, the conditions of the space was quite good.

It was small, yes, but clean and tidy.

There were a total of six seats inside, and two stylists were taking charge of the celebrities under this roof.

When Wendy came in, there was only one stylist present, and one other actress had not shown up yet.

"This is Ellie Herb.Ellie, and this is Wendy Finch.She will be playing Lady Faye."

The two women shook each other's hands and exchanged greetings.

Shortly after, someone came over to bring Wendy's costume.

It was a rose-red palace dress.

Period costumes were usually difficult to put on, and an actor or actress was always assisted by the staff.

Wendy inspected the ensemble first, carefully checking everything from the inner garments to the outside coat.

She observed every nook and stitch before asking the staff to help her put it on.

She had not done this because she had a meticulous streak or anything.

It was just that, the moment that she had joined the crew on site, the war between her and Eris had officially begun.

It was no secret that stars, female ones in particular, were constantly plotting against each other, whether openly or behind the scenes.

There were those who brought up their conflicts to the public, but most did in stealth.

And the easiest way to ruin an actress was to tamper with her clothing, makeup, or other props.

For example, a few needles tucked through the fabric of the costume.

Once the actress moved in sudden violent motions, the needles would sink into her flesh, causing not only pain but possibly irreversible injuries.

Others were creative about their schemes.

When news broke out that some actress was allergic to a particular substance, her enemies would deliberately sprinkle the irritant on her clothes, causing a reaction that could sometimes even endanger the victim's life.

Another example was that costumes would be deliberately made loose, the goal being that the articles of clothing would fall apart like rags at some point during filming.

Wendy knew Eris very well.

That woman never gave up until she reached her ultimate goal.

Wendy had been straightforward with her appearance it would be strange if Eris wouldn't antagonize her. Well, fortunately enough, there was nothing wrong with the costumes.

When she was done putting them on, Wendy sat on the makeup chair, ready for Ellie to apply her makeup.

Ellie was a slick and well-dressed woman in her thirties, and the moment Wendy had sat down, she hadn't stopped praising the actress' beauty and clear skin.

"Ellie," Wendy began.

No one else was around at that point, and she handed the stylist a red envelope with a smile.

"I don't like to use other people's cosmetics. Do you think you can do me a favor, Ellie?"

The cosmetics for the cast were all prepared by the crew, and it was natural that a single tube of lipstick would end up getting used by several actresses.

Of course, there would be some celebrities who felt uncomfortable with this setup.

In fact, a good number of women in the entertainment circle detested this practice.

So Ellie didn't find anything strange about Wendy's request.

The actress carried her own cosmetics, and she had a big, fat red envelope for her, so why wouldn't she do the favor? Ellie tucked the envelope inside her pocket and her tone turned even friendlier.

"Of course, it's all up to you anyway."

At that, Wendy took out the products she had prepared in advance.

The stylist applied her makeup with skillful fingers.

As the statistics went, actors prefer projects with modern settings, due largely to the fact that ancient settings were trickier and demanded more effort.

The lines were difficult to memorize and deliver, the costumes were heavy and intricate, and the makeup sessions took a long time.

If the story happened to have a fantasy element to its plot, some special makeup had to be done, which were not only time-consuming but were thick and heavy as well.

Wendy was lucky that her role didn't require much makeup, and Ellie was done in half an hour.

When she finally put down her brush, the stylist looked at Wendy in amazement.

"You're stunning!"

Wendy donned a gorgeous headdress, and it complimented her light makeup perfectly.

The corners of her eyes were painted with wings pointing upward, and when she leaned back on her chair, she gave off a languid and charming aura.

Her clothes were excellent, too, tucked neatly against her slim waist while flowing gracefully over the length of her looks.

She was absolutely breathtaking.

Even Ellie found her heart pounding at the sight.

Oh God! The stylist put up her hands over her chest.

As a woman herself, she couldn't help feeling intimidated in the face of such a beauty.

She couldn't imagine how huge the impact would be on the male population.

She finally understood why the director had chosen Wendy to play Lady Faye.

Only such a beauty could bring an enchanting concubine to life.

Wendy rose from the seat and walked around to take pictures with some people.

Then, it was time for lunch.

A packed lunch was handed to her.

It was midday, and the sun was shining brightly in the sky.

Of course, the leading actors and actresses were given better facilities and services.

They had access to fans and didn't have to endure the heat, but the rest of the cast were not so privileged.

All they could do was look for a cool spot to eat their lunch under their heavy costumes.

Wendy herself was sweating profusely by the time she finished her meal.

Meanwhile, inside a van shared by a handful of people...

Eris was eyeing Wendy on her spot under the tree, and she pinched Ana's waist.

"Didn't you say earlier that everything would be fine? Hours has passed without a single reaction from her !"

Ana's face twisted in pain, but she didn't dare pull away to dodge.

With tears in her eyes, she said, "I don't know what's going on. I put the thing in the cosmetics just as you said..."

"How dare you talk back!"

Ana immediately shut her mouth in a panic.

Eris had a reputation within the industry of being kind and gentle, but those who belonged in her closest circle knew that it was all a farce.

The real Eris Finch was self-centered, narrow-minded, petty, and jealous.

"Eris..."

"How dare you cry! Dry your wretched tears this instant!"

And tried to hold back her tears and bit her lips.

Eris was trembling in hatred.

Damn it! She might have underestimated her opponent.

In her memory, Wendy was a naive, brainless idiot.

She hadn't expected that same girl to have grown some smarts and backbone these past three years.

But that would prove useless in the end.

Wendy was still no match for her! "Eris, how about I get something else..."

"Shut up! That's not necessary."

Eris glared at her assistant.

"This kind of trick can only be attempted once. I can't risk being discovered, or it will be the end of me."

"Then, what should we do?"

Eris cocked her head to the side and thought for a while.

Then, an idea came to her.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the shooting site, Ryan was looking out of the window of an air- conditioned room.

He was sporting his usual black suit and looked like he had all the time in the world.

When he saw how Wendy kept wiping at her sweating brow, he couldn't help frowning.

He knew for a fact that she had been waiting on that spot under the tree for two hours! And since she couldn't mess up her costume and hair ornaments, she had been sitting in an awkward and obviously uncomfortable position.

"How long will she wait?"

"I just asked someone for the details. Apparently, they're shooting Eris and Mason's scenes. They're the lead actors of the show, and Wendy is a newcomer in contrast. She has no choice but to wait for the leads to finish filming first."

"And how long will they take?"

"The slot says two hours, but Eris seems to be in a bad state. I'm not sure why either. They've been filming the same scene repeatedly for a good while now. If things go on like this, Wendy may not have a chance to shoot a single scene today."

Ryan's eyes turned cold.

Luke scrambled to appease his brother's temper.

He pointed at the other cast members waiting downstairs.

"Look, this is pretty normal. Newcomers who have just entered show business are all waiting. Such is the process, brother. They have to work slowly toward their future."

"Well, she doesn't need to!"

Luke's lips twitched.

Did Ryan mean that Wendy didn't have to suffer since he was backing her? Luke peeked at his brother.

"Well! Everyone knows it isn't easy to be an actress. It's just fact. It's about thirty seven or thirty eight degree Celsius outside now. If I were there, I would probably get heat stroke with all those clothes and not even a single fan at my disposal."

Ryan's demeanor turned even colder.

Scowling, he took out his phone and called Kane.

"Kane, pay a visit to the crew of the Story of Concubine Ivanka. Immediately!"

Chapter 24: Bitches Are Hypocritical

Wendy was starting to feel sleepy.

Then all of a sudden, Carter's assistant trotted over to where she rested.

"Miss Finch, the director asked you to come to him."

"Okay."

That certainly woke her up.

She stood and followed the man to the shooting site.

Carter was waving at her from a distance.

"Wendy, come over here!"

"Yes, yes. Here I am."

She stopped in front of him.

"Director..."

With a serious expression, he pushed his glasses on the bridge of his nose and pointed at an imposing figure nearby.

"Do you see that person? You've just returned from abroad so you probably don't know who he is. He is the president of the largest agency in the country, Kane Evans from Glory Media. He was present during your audition a few days ago."

Wendy nodded along.

Of course she knew Kane.

"Mr. Evans has especially come today to see your acting."

Carter patted her on the shoulder and leaned close to whisper, "Seize the opportunity!"

It came as a pleasant surprise to her.

She was quite knowledgeable about the layout of the local entertainment industry.

Somewhere in the past, the dominating brokerage company had been Starlight Media.

It was known among specific circles that the head of Starlight Media had relied on the financial resources and connections of his wife's family to turn his business from a small, unknown entity into the largest and most successful one throughout the country.

But Glory Media had later surpassed Starlight Media and emerged stronger.

Despite being registered mere five years ago, Glory Media had the Oliver Group at its helm.

That being the case, they had managed to poach most of the most sought after actors and actresses in the industry within a year.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration now to say that half of the celebrities in the country's show business all came from Glory Media.

With that said, they already had a heap of A-listers stars under their company, so why was the CEO here to see Wendy's performance in particular? : She didn't think it was some special favor because he had recognized her as Rosie's cousin.

No, Wendy's relationship with Rosie had never been anything special. Eris and Rosie were probably more intimate with each other.

Moreover, she had only met Kane once, when she had come to his wedding as a bridesmaid.

Even with that, she doubted he remembered her after all these years.

Then, could it be that he had truly been impressed by her audition? Well, whatever.

Either way, Director Williams was right - this was a rare chance that she couldn't miss.

"Is that okay, Wendy?"

"It's no problem at all."

Carter nodded and asked his assistant to call Eris in.

He gave her instructions to change her makeup and costumes to accommodate a different scene.

The scenes and episodes weren't necessarily shot in order, so the filming process was often adjusted according to the situation.

The setting they were preparing for now was supposed to be the second time that Lady Faye slept with the emperor.

At this point of the story, Lady Ivanka had already been promoted and she was residing in Frangrance Pavilion.

As the day unfolded, Lady Faye did not pay her respects to the queen.

Instead, she went straight to Frangrance Pavilion to visit its lady resident.

Lady Ivanka's father had been the military counselor for General Miller, who was Lady Faye's father.

To put it bluntly, Ivanka's father was General Miller's most trusted confidant.

A new emperor had ascended the throne, and he did not put as much trust in the general as his predecessor had.

And so, Faye's father kept a low profile.

Nevertheless, the emperor sent his spies, and eventually coerced Ivanka's father to file a false report accusing the general of rebellion.

Faye's family had been destroyed in the aftermath.

And the person who had carried out the sentence was none other than the trusted counselor, Lady Ivanka's father.

Given their history, the Concubine Ivanka was the person that Lady Faye hated the most.

The actresses got into position, and when their eyes met, the air crackled with animosity.

"Action!"

The screen showed a shot of Wendy as Lady Faye.

She entered Frangrance Pavilion and lounged at a chair, sipping a cup of tea casually.

From time to time she would look around and eye the decorations in the room, as if she had nothing else better to do but appreciate the view.

Eris' appearance now consisted of a darker dress, and her makeup was a little heavier than before, too.

She walked into the shot as Ivanka, frowning the moment she spotted Faye.

"Faye"

"Wow, it's so beautiful here!"

The other woman interrupted with a smile.

Then Faye slowly stood and walked over to where several pots of expensive plants were on display.

She reached out to touch a flower and stroked its petals lovingly.

"It seems that the rumors were right,"she said, her smile still in place.

"Seeing as there are still such beautiful flowers even in this season.

You are indeed the Emperor's favorite concubine.

Is it how you supposed to enjoy your life when you're favored by the Emperor? By attending to these delicate expensive exotic flowers? Bitches are indeed hypocritical!"

The camera zoomed in on Wendy.

She was still smiling sweetly, but her hand was crushing the flowers it held with unmistakable vitriol.

"Ah. I apologize. I've accidentally damaged your precious plants. Well, I heard that you are the kindest and the most considerate woman in the palace, so you won't blame me for my blunder, will you?"

Wendy raised her eyebrows as she spoke, and her demeanor shifted when she finished talking.

Her eyes narrowed, and she threw a sideways glance at the other actress.

The air around her vibrated with intimidating pressure.

"I...the-the flower...it..."

The rest of the cast and crew who had been watching felt shivers run down their spines as they continued to look.

Then it was Eris's turn to say her lines.

But the moment she met Wendy's malicious gaze, she lost her train of thought and was unable to say a word.

"Cut!"

Carter yelled, so furious he almost spat out blood.

He hadn't expected Eris to lose her focus at such a critical moment in the scene! He was always serious when it came to work, and everyone knew it.

He raised his head from behind the camera screen and turned to the actress.

"Eris! What the hell are you doing?!"

"I'm sorry, Director Williams!"

Eris said, biting her lips.

Carter struggled to suppress his anger and finally said, "One more time!"

Wendy was still in full command of her emotions, and performed even better during the second take.

She said her lines like she was a demon from hell, her eyes cold and horrible.

"It's just...just...a pot of plant...If you like it, just take it."

Despite herself, Eris felt like a giant python had just curled itself around her body and was slowly constricting.

She had gone cold, her mind went blank, and she kept stuttering.

She couldn't deliver her lines at all.

"Cut!"

Carter was livid this time.

"Eris! Lady Ivanka is always calm and composed when dealing with matters at hand. Why are you wearing a frightened expression? Do it again!"

They went for another take.

And another one after that.

And yet another one.

All of their takes failed to pass muster.

Wendy glanced pointedly at Eris before turning to Carter.

"Director, why don't we take a break?"

"Fine, ten-minute break, everyone!"

The staff dispersed at once.

Eris rushed to Wendy with gritted teeth.

"What the hell did you do to me?"

Why had she kept forgetting her lines the moment she met Wendy's eyes?! "Eris, as long as I don't let you go today, you will always be like this. Believe it or not?"

Wendy smirked at the other woman.

"Shut up!"

Noticing that other people had been looking at them, Eris immediately held her tongue and left in a huff.

She proceeded to rehearse her lines over and over with her assistant.

And each time, she managed to say them perfectly.

"Break is over! Let's commence the shoot!"

Eris was confident after acing her rehearsals, but when they resumed filming, she forgot her lines again.

And she just kept making mistakes.

They ended up with eighteen takes of the same scene, and Eris had failed in all of them.

She couldn't even say a word during the last one.

Carter halted the shoot and the whole site fell into silence.

All eyes were on the director, who was obviously on the verge of an angry outburst.

The staff cowered among themselves, not daring to make a single noise.

"Stop! Stop this right now!" Carter had taken off his hat and thrown it on the ground, and was even stomping on it.

"You can't speak a sentence? Do you even know how to act? There's no room in this project for people who can't act, so if you don't know how to, then leave!"

Eris had never been so humiliated in all her years in the entertainment industry.

Her eyes turned red with unshed tears and her jaw tightened.

Beneath the long sleeves of her costume, her hands clenched into tight fists, her long nails biting hard into the skin of her palms.

'Wendy Finch! Wendy Finch!' She swore to herself she would make Wendy pay for this!

Chapter 25: Encourage Someone Else To Fight Against Her

When the sun began to set, the crew decided to stop the shooting for the day.

The entire afternoon was wasted, and no scenes were accomplished.

"Let's pack up and continue shooting tomorrow!"

Soon as that was announced, the staff, who had been tensed throughout the afternoon, finally relaxed.

Then, what followed were sounds of whispers and gossips from the crowd of crew members.

"Woah! I have never seen Director Williams this angry before."

"It's all because of Eris..."

I heard that she's a great actress, but she couldn't even deliver her lines at all! I don't know how she got branded as an A-list star.

She just wasted our time! We have changed our costumes and waited for a whole day.

It's all in vain because of her!"

"Exactly!"

The extras, who were forced to wait under the heat of the sun, complained.

And this did not escape Eris' ears.

She clenched her fists and gritted her teeth out of annoyance.

"Wendy Finch!"

Damn it! That woman was really her nemesis! As long as Wendy Finch appeared in her side, nothing good would happen to her.

"Eris, are you okay?"

Evie, a fellow actress, came over and comforted, "Are you not feeling well?"

Like Eris, Evie was also a female star from Starlight Media.

But the latter had less reputation and popularity than the former.

Eris looked pure, while Evie had a curvaceous figure.

They two had different styles, and they never had any conflict in sharing the company's resources.

So, in hopes of getting into Eris' good side, Evie had been sucking up to her for a while now.

Eris forced a smile and responded, "Yes. I am not feeling well."

"Do you want me to take you to the hospital?"

"No, thanks. I'll go home and have a rest. Let's go and have our makeup taken off together."

Overjoyed, Evie immediately nodded and agreed.

The two walked together to the dressing area when Eris suddenly pretended to mention Wendy accidentally.

Evie was a typical all-beauty-and-no-brain kind of woman.

And because she valued looks more than anything, she was jealous of Wendy's natural beauty and grace. "Eris, don't mind Wendy.

She is just a newcomer.

Even if she is beautiful, so what? There are hundreds of beautiful women entering the entertainment industry every year.

How many can rise to fame in the end? If one wants to be popular, having a beautiful face is not enough.

She must also possess excellent acting skills, right?" Evie made sure her words were flattering, obviously to curry favor.

With a grin etched on her face, Eris shifted her gaze at Ana, making the latter get the cue to utter, "Wendy is really pretty.

In fact, isn't she taking away your role just because of her pretty face?"

"Oh, shut up, Ana! How could you?!"

Eris snapped, rolling her eyes at her assistant.

As if realizing that she said too much, Ana quickly tapped and covered her mouth before panning her eyes at Evie.

"I...I didn't say anything..."

Ana tried to discredit her words. However, the more she tried to cover something, the more Evie wanted to dig deeper.

"Eris, what's going on, actually? Did Wendy take anything from me?"

"No, no...Don't worry about that. Ana was just talking nonsense."

Evie grabbed Eris's wrist and begged, "Eris, I have always regarded you as my friend and idol. More than that, we're under the same company. If you know anything about it, you must tell me!"

Eris opened her mouth and wanted to say something, but stopped on second thought.

"Eris, please!"

Stomping her foot, Eris looked around before dragging Evie into her van.

"Evie, I've always regarded you as a good friend. I'm not supposed to tell anyone about this. But since you're insisting, I'll let you know a little secret that only a few people know. Promise me that you won't tell anyone else."

"I won't tell anyone."

Evie raised her right hand as if she was taking a crucial pledge.

Eris then pulled her to sit and utter in a deep voice, "I heard from Mr. Davies that all the roles of the series "Story of Concubine Ivanka"

had been finalized, and the role of Lady Faye is the only one pending.

As you know, the biggest companies investing in this show are Glory Media and Starlight Media.

The lead actor and supporting actress are all from Glory Media, so Mr. Davies wants another supporting actress from our company to play Lady Faye."

Nodding, Evie asked anxiously, "And then?"

"After careful thought, Mr. Davies thought that you were the most suitable from our company to play Lady Faye, so he recommended you to Director Williams. He went over your previous projects and thought that your image is in line with Lady Faye and your acting skills are pretty good. But as you know, our company is not in a good term with Glory Media, and Director Williams is cautious not to offend anyone from that agency. So, he had to arrange another audition for the role of Lady Faye. But in reality, he had already promised Mr. Davies that he'll give the role to you."

At this point, Evie's heart was beating frantically.

Her eyes were filled with so much anticipation as she asked, "Then... How did the role end up with Wendy Finch?"

"As you can see, Wendy Finch is so beautiful..."

Eris said half a sentence on purpose, leaving room for Evie's imagination to fill in what she meant.

And just as Eris had expected, the latter's face completely changed when she finally realized what that meant.

Without any doubt, Evie immediately believed every word that came out of Erin's mouth.

Evie had actually been Wesley Davies's lover for years now.

The last time they slept together, the old man promised that he would help her win Lady Faye's role.

And a few days ago, he confirmed that she had finally landed the role, only to be disappointed two days later when the part was given to another actress.

In return, Evie had been bestowed the role of another concubine who only appeared in four episodes! Now Evie realized that it was Wendy

who stole her role! Extremely frustrated, Evie stood from her seat and clenched her fist.

"That bitch! Ana was right! She must have struck a deal with someone using her beauty! Otherwise, how could she have landed the role already meant for someone else?! That woman is just a newcomer, and she doesn't even have an agency.

How could she get such a big role in a series directed by someone like Director Williams?! Ugh! She is really a bitch! I hate her! Since she dares to take my role, I will kill her!"

Afraid that someone might hear Evie, Eris hurriedly covered her mouth and reminded, "Keep your voice down. Someone might hear you. I shouldn't have told you about it. Ana spoke too much."

Evie, who felt touched with such honesty, held her hand and uttered, "Eris, don't say that. I know you really regard me as your friend. Thank you for telling me this. If it wasn't for you, I'd definitely still be a fool."

"Well, I just feel a little pity that you have finally gotten a big break only to have the chance taken to by a newcomer."

Hearing this, Evie's face twisted into a grimace of annoyance.

"I won't let her go. Since Wendy Finch dared to steal my role, I will make her suffer!"

Eris patted Evie's hand to comfort her, but a hint of coldness flashed through her eyes while a devious grin slowly crept on her lips.

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