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Toby frowned and fell silent. A long while later, he suddenly tightened his hug. "No wonder you weren't worried even after the parts went missing for three days. I wouldn't have known that your company was in trouble if my guys didn't find out that Julie went to Dwells. But do you have any idea what it means to mortgage your mansion? It means a lot to you. Are you..."

He didn't finish his sentence, but she knew what he was trying to say. She looked up at him again, smiling. "It's fine. The mansion is just another regular house for me. It means nothing to me."

"What?" Toby was surprised that she would say that. "It doesn't mean anything to you? But it's your home."

Sonia smiled. "It used to be. But some guys corrupted it. The house reeks of them. It's no longer the place I call home, so it might look like the same house I lived in, but it's no longer my home. I don't mind mortgaging it. It's better that way. I think my mom would support me if she was here."

I see. Those women lived in that mansion for twenty years. It's no longer the same house Lina used to stay in. The mansion means nothing to Sonia now. "So you didn't ask Charles to help you out?" He wasn't upset anymore, but he just had to ask her again.

Sonia rolled her eyes. "No. How many times do I have to tell you that? If you still don't believe me, then I have nothing more to say." She shrugged.

Toby held her shoulders. "I trust you, but..."

"But?" The corner of her lips twitched. She was starting to get tired of answering his questions.

Toby said, "You asked Brian for help. He's even more of an outsider than Charles is." So I mean less to you than an outsider?

Sonia was speechless. He just has to make things really clear, huh? Is he gonna throw another tantrum if I work with someone else instead of him in the future? She held her forehead. "If I can't get a loan from him, then who should I get it from? You?"

Toby was about to say yes, but Sonia quickly said, "No way I can do that. At least not back then."

Toby couldn't argue with that.

She looked at him. "And I didn't say you didn't help me out."

"What do you mean?" He squinted at her. "Did you actually ask for my help?" As if. You wouldn't even tell me about it. There's no way you asked for my help.

"Nope." She shook her head. "I didn't do that, but you did help me. Brian told me that. With the situation Paradigm Co. and I are in right now, he wouldn't have even spoken to me, but he did, and he only did it because of you. Because you're my boyfriend. He even wanted to know if we're doing well before he would approve my loan. I got to meet him and get the loan all thanks to you. I couldn't even see Brian if it weren't for you, let alone get that loan. There. Happy now?" She poked his chest.

That did come as a surprise, but it was a welcome one. He wouldn't make his happiness too obvious though, so he said calmly, "Not really."

Sonia shook her head in amusement. "Yeah right. I can see it in your eyes. You're so smug about it."

Toby touched his eyes. That obvious, huh? He coughed. "Alright, stop looking." He covered her eyes, obviously embarrassed she saw through him.

Sonia let him cover her eyes, but she couldn't stop smiling. "See? You did help me. You help me all the time, but you just don't realize it. The dress, the loan, and the parts. You're the key for all the successes in all these cases. I didn't say it out loud, but you've always been the one helping me out."

Toby felt touched, and he was happy too. "But I'd prefer it if I can just show up and help you myself. At least until you can stand on your own two feet. I don't want to just help you indirectly." He brushed his thumb across her forehead.

Sonia smiled. "Well, it's not too late to start now."

Toby froze, and he looked at her in disbelief. "So you're letting me help you out now?"

Sonia shook her head. "You did say I have nothing now. Pushing it would make things worse instead of making it better. I need someone to support me, so who better for that than you? If I keep refusing, that'll only tell everyone that an outsider is more important to me than you are. I don't want that."

That was what he wanted to hear, and he finally smiled. "Glad you finally realized it." I still got my touch. Getting through to her is easier than I thought. I thought this would take a long time, given how stubborn she is. However, what she said next wiped that smile off his face.

She pushed her hair back and whispered, "I realized this thanks to Brian and Charles. They talked to me and made me see things I was blind to. I probably wouldn't realize that not asking you for help would make our relationship and the whole case worse."

"They talked with you?" He frowned.

Sonia nodded and told him about what happened in the hotel room.

Toby wasn't upset anymore after he heard that, and he had an approving look on his face. "Never thought they'd drill that into your head. But they did good. I'll reward them."

"You'll reward them?" Sonia was amused. "You make them sound like your lackeys. Like they got a reward because they made their king happy."

"Well, I am the king of everyone in Seafield." He looked up arrogantly.

Sonia was amused, though she didn't think he was being full of himself. He was rich and powerful enough to be the top dog in Seafield after all.

Toby didn't know what she was thinking. He held her hand and kissed it before saying, "They did help me out here. I should give them something in return. Gotta reward them for this."

They had talked things through with Sonia and saved him a lot of time. He appreciated that, and a reward was in order. He could understand why Brian would persuade Sonia to ask for his help, but Charles doing the same thing was surprising. After all, Charles liked Sonia, and he would love it if their relationship went wrong. Persuading her to accept his help was akin to making their relationship better. I see he's serious about giving her up.

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He wouldn't push the woman he loves away otherwise. I think I should stop being on guard around him now.

"So how are you gonna reward them?" Sonia asked curiously, holding his hand.

He patted her head. "That'll be my business. Don't worry. I'm not gonna be stingy on this."

Sonia rolled her eyes. "Never said you would. You're rich. I don't think you'd be a scrooge about this."

Toby smiled. "I should feel happy that you think so highly of me."

"You should." She grinned.

Toby flicked her forehead. "Right. The rewards are settled, so now's the time for punishment."

"Wait, punishment?" Sonia froze, and she looked at him in confusion. "Who's getting punished?" Toby didn't answer. Instead he gazed at her, and her heart sank. What? "Wait. Are you saying it's me?" She pointed at herself.

Toby didn't give her a straight answer. "I'm upset that you hid things from me, so a punishment is in order. You're spending the night with me," he whispered the last part into her ear and nibbled on her earlobe. Toby made it sound beguiling on purpose.

Sonia shivered. She understood very well what he meant by 'spending the night with me'. Darn it. She blushed. "You really know how to work the system. You just have to get all the rewards you can, huh?"

Toby chuckled. "Let's go then." He bent over and carried her in his arms, then they went to the room.

Sonia gasped in surprise. "Let me go. We haven't finished dinner yet."

"It's fine. We're almost done anyway."

"Hey—" Sonia tried to say something, but Toby pressed his lips against hers, then he closed the door. The living room fell into silence, and the only proof they were here a moment ago was the unfinished food on the table. A moment later, moans could be heard coming from the bedroom. It was clear where the couple was.

Just like what Sonia had said, Toby would try to get all the bonuses and reward every chance he got. He used the punishment as a pretext and finally got Sonia to try out the position she had refused so many times. It was hard to perform, and she could see herself tightening up really hard if she tried them. Toby had been raring to go but she had refused, until tonight.

A few hours later, Sonia fell asleep out of exhaustion, while Toby leaned on the bed, looking down at the sleeping woman gently. He caressed her face, that which was blushing. He could see the exhaustion on her brows, and there were beads of sweat on her forehead. Even her hair was wet. It was obvious he did not go easy on her earlier.

Toby was exhausted, and his face was red as well. Beads of sweat drenched his forehead and hair, but he looked satisfied and annoyingly smug. He emerged victorious from the battle, and he was satisfied by it. Toby didn't stay on the bed for long, though.

Once he had enough rest and started breathing fine again, he let Sonia go and got out of bed to go to the bathroom.

It was already three in the morning when he was done bathing. Toby was in a white robe, and a towel hung around his neck. He came out of the bathroom, his hair sopping wet. Beads of water dripped down as he stepped into the room, but the towel absorbed them. He came to the coffee table and picked his phone up. First he went through his messages to see if his employees had sent him anything. There was none. He then called Tom.

Tom was still working. It was nearly Christmas and almost time to take inventory. The Fuller Group was a juggernaut with hundreds of subsidiaries and companies they had shares in. Taking inventory of so many companies was a grand undertaking. Tom was still in the company, ready to work through the night just to prepare for that enormous process. Fortunately, he wasn't the only one working overtime. There were a lot of people there too, which made him feel a little better.

He had just finished going through a file from a subsidiary and took a sip from his cold, cold coffee. It woke him up a little. He was about to work on the next file when his phone rang. Oh god. It's the president. It was annoying, but he had to take it. "Hello, sir. What do you need?"

Tom sounded weak. Toby realized that he was working overtime, and he fell silent. Hm, I wonder if it's a bit too much if I want him to help me out now. He tossed away that slight bit of consideration a moment later. Nah. He's awake and working anyway. This is just some errand. Nothing bad about it. Yep. I'm not a slave driver. This is what all bosses do. "Still working?" he asked calmly.

Tom looked at the files before him. There weren't many left. He massaged his forehead. "Yeah, I'm working through some files. I think I can finish them by five and tell everyone to start taking inventory tomorrow."

"I see. Stay back at the company once you're done. Get to work in the afternoon tomorrow."

Tom stopped massaging his forehead for a moment. He thought he was hearing things. I can start work in the afternoon? Is he serious? Is he finally starting to care for his poor little assistant? "Thank you very much, sir." Tom's face was red with excitement.

Toby pursed his lips. "But you'll have to do one little errand before that."

Tom's smile froze, and it was replaced by a sneer. I knew it. Well, but I'm used to it. It's not every day I get to start work in the afternoon. I'll take the offer. "Sure, sir. What do you need?" He was smiling, but he was cursing silently too.

Toby sipped some tea. "If I'm right, Bank of Caruna's Seafield branch needs a lot of cash, don't they?"

Tom wondered why he asked, but he nodded. "Yeah. Their main bank took 70% of their liquid assets, so they need a lot of cash now. Brian's trying to get a lot of company bosses to put their money in the Bank of Caruna instead of stashing them overseas. If his branch can't meet its target and starts having cash flow problems, he'll be fired."

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Toby fell silent. He had no idea Brian was in such a precarious situation, and yet he still approved that twenty-nine-million-dollar loan for Sonia. He could imagine how much he had to go through just for the main bank's top brass to approve it. Toby suspected he had something in mind when he did this. He probably wants to get to me through Little Leaf.

Toby knew Brian. Brian didn't major in finance, but in psychology. In other words, he knew how people thought and behaved. He needs to find out if Sonia is getting along with me well before he can approve the loan? Yeah right. He said that to fool her into telling him the truth. He was just trying to find out if we were steady. He wanted to see if he could get what he really wanted.

Of course he'd suspect our relationship was getting rocky if she would rather take a loan to settle her problem instead of asking me to help her out. He had to find out if we're doing well so he can achieve his goal, or all bets are off. He advised her to talk with me and approved her loan after he found out we're getting along well and why Sonia wanted a loan instead of asking for my help. He wants her to be grateful to him, and he also wanted to guilt trip her a little.

He majored in psychology, and he was a man. He would know how Toby would react if he found out his girlfriend asked someone else for help instead of him. That was why he persuaded her to talk with Toby. On top of that, he could see how she would react too. If he could see that she was feeling guilty about upsetting Toby because she asked for an outsider's help instead of him, he could use that chance to convince Sonia to talk with him. If she took his suggestion, she would inevitably bring up the fact that Brian talked her into this, and that was his goal—to gain Toby's gratitude.

Brian knew what made people tick, and he knew Toby well. He was clear Toby hated owing anyone favors. If Toby knew Brian was the one who talked her into spilling everything to him, Toby would owe him a favor and pay him back. The public also knew Toby treated everyone he liked generously. He wouldn't hold back in rewarding those who helped him out either. It was always the very thing they wanted the most.

If Brian wanted to keep his position, he would need a lot of cash in his branch to hit his target. Toby was the only one in Seafield who had enough money for that cause, making him the only person who could help. He had to use Sonia, and through her, have Toby owe him a favor. He would cash in on that favor and keep his position. Huh. Nice plan. Beautifully executed. No wonder he was able to climb his way up from a regular banker to a branch president in just ten years.

His plan, schemes, and masterful level of reading the people around him impressed Toby. Man. I'd love to hire him. Still, Toby was displeased that Brian roped him into his little scheme. Almost nobody had the guts to drag Toby into any of their schemes. However, Toby let it slide, since his scheme did help Sonia and changed their relationship for the better. Toby put his glass down and told Tom, "Citybank's interest rate is lower this year compared to the last, isn't it?"

"Yes." Tom nodded. "They're having a slight financial crisis overseas, so they lowered their interest rate, but it'll bounce back to normal soon. Citybank will give you the money you lost this year. Don't worry about it." Mr. Fuller is one of Citybank's biggest clients. They aren't gonna get on his bad side.

"I see." Toby then ordered, "It's daytime on their side, isn't it? Tell them to transfer a hundred million Euros to Brian's bank. And put it in my savings account."

"Sorry?" Tom was flabbergasted. The order was a bit confusing. "Why are you transferring so much money to a bank in Caruna? The interest isn't that high anyway." And not to the main bank too. Just the Seafield main branch? What is Mr. Fuller thinking? Tom shook his head. He couldn't understand why Toby was doing this. 100 million Euros. Not much for Mr. Fuller, but I can't make that amount of money even if I work my whole life. That's 100 million dollars too. 100 million dollars injected into Brian's bank? Forget keeping his position. He's getting promoted.

"I know." Toby held his phone with one hand and grabbed the towel on his neck with the other. He tilted his head and dried his hair while saying coldly, "I don't care about the difference in the interest rates."

Tom had nothing to say. Wow, he makes it sound like it's nothing. Well, he is rich. The interest rate doesn't bother him. Guess I need to expand my horizons. The corner of Tom's lips twitched. He said nothing except he would do what Toby asked.

Toby continued, "The Lanes are trying to find a partner to work on a commerce port, aren't they? Send someone over to their company tomorrow and offer them the port in the free-trade zone. And give them the bigger part of the profit."

Tom was confused once more. He had no idea what Toby was trying to do. Transferring 100 million Euros into Brian's bank and disregarding the difference in interest rates is weird enough. Now he wants to work with the Lanes on the commerce port in the free-trade zone and give them a bigger part of the profit? Why is he helping Brian and the

Lanes? What did they do for the boss to reward them with this? He had questions, but Tom was smart enough not to probe. It's not like the boss is going to tell me anything even if I asked. I should just keep quiet and do my job. "I understand, sir. I'll deal with the transfer shortly, and I'll handle the case with the Lanes before I get off work. I'll try my best to get someone to talk to them in the morning." Tom adjusted his glasses.

Toby grunted his acknowledgement and hung up.

Oh. He's not talking anymore. Call ended. He put his phone down and looked at the screen. Tom heaved a sigh and made an international call.

It was nearly four in the morning, but Bank of Caruna's Seafield main branch's conference room was packed. Everyone was silent, but they were all looking at Brian, who was in the main seat. Some had expectations in their eyes, some had suspicion, some disdain, and some mockery.

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The conference room's air was fraught with tension. Brian was in the main seat, staring at his laptop calmly. He ignored the people in the room and the looks they were giving him, as if they didn't exist, but that was just a façade. Brian was a lot more nervous than he let on. He was just pretending to be calm. In reality, he was more anxious than anyone in the room.

A middle-aged man in a suit suddenly stood up and broke the eerie silence in the room. "President."

Everyone looked at him in surprise, including Brian. He knew he had to finally face the music when the guy called out to him. Silence was not a solution. Brian sighed silently and held his mouse, then he looked up at the man calmly. "What is it?"

"Sir, you told us Mr. Fuller will help us out because we helped Miss Reed. You promised he'd make sure we can stay. We trusted you, so we agreed to the loan even though the reserves are drying up. What now? We've been waiting since morning, but the Fuller Group isn't doing anything to help." The man pointed at Brian angrily, demanding an explanation.

Everyone nodded. They agreed with what the man was saying.

"Yeah, president. You promised that Mr. Fuller is going to help us, but his company is doing nothing until now. How are we supposed to trust you?"

"Yeah," someone else agreed as well. "If the Fuller Group isn't helping us, that loan we approved is gonna be the last straw that breaks the camel's back. Can you handle the repercussions then, sir? You wanted to loan the money out in the first place."

Everyone gave Brian sharp looks of interrogation.

Brian had many years of working experience under his belt, but even he felt nervous when everyone was looking at him that way. He wondered if he had miscalculated. The main bank had taken a lot of their liquid assets lately, and since they were the main branch, their target for all savings amounts was at least ten times higher than the other branches. He had to hit that target to keep working as the president. Everyone had to make sure the target was hit, or they would be demoted into the other branches. The problem was all the rich guys were disinclined to put their money in local banks. They preferred overseas banks. Because of that, they still hadn't hit their target for the year.

It was nearly Christmas, but they were still a long way away from their target. He could feel a mountain of pressure on his shoulders. He would talk to Seafield's entrepreneurs every day, trying to convince them to put their money in the Bank of Caruna, but they adamantly refused. He was getting bald from the stress. Just when he was starting to run out of ideas, he got a call from Sonia, the boss of Paradigm Co. as well as Toby's girlfriend.

When he found out that Sonia was taking out a big loan, he realized Paradigm Co. must be in trouble. That was his chance, so he agreed to see her. He only did that just to confirm if he had a chance to turn things around. He majored in psychology back in college. All he had to do was meet her, and he could confirm his chances of success.

So, he had met with Sonia one fine afternoon, and thanks to his professional knowledge, he could see the kind of woman Sonia was. She was egotistical and stubborn, but she had no self-awareness and was naive. Someone like her was easy to convince and use. The moment he saw her, he knew his plan had mostly succeeded.

Sonia was egotistical and cared too much about what the public thought of her. She was worried the public might call her a useless woman who relied on men for her success. She had self-esteem issues in the first place, and she hid that behind a stubborn façade. She wanted to deal with everything herself, but she forgot she lacked the ability to do that. In the end, she had to take out a loan. She could have asked Toby for help and everything would be settled, but she didn't and instead, asked someone else for help. She was practically begging me to use her. She's a fool for not using the resources available to her.

It was bad for her, but great for him. He wouldn't have gotten this chance if she hadn't stubbornly refused to ask Toby for any help. Brian was a guy. He knew how Toby would feel if he found out his girlfriend would rather ask someone else for help instead of him. He wasn't sure if their relationship was going swimmingly, but men loved their ego.

As long as they were still together, Toby would be upset if Sonia asked someone else for help and neglected him, even if they were fighting. So, he persuaded Sonia to talk with Toby, pretending that he was doing it for the good of their relationship. He was betting it on the chance that Sonia would tell Toby everything, including the fact that he helped her. And Toby will owe me one.

He knew Toby would never owe any favors. He would repay his debt almost right away every time, and his return favor was always generous. What Brian did was a bet. If his plan worked, he could keep his position as president, but if it didn't...

Brian hadn't thought about the possibility of his plan failing. He had a good eye for people, after all. He never did fail before either. His plan was perfect, or so he thought. He was starting to doubt himself at this point. Am I going to finally fail this time?

Did Sonia brush my advice off and didn't talk it out with Toby? If that's the case, then Toby wouldn't have known what I did. Or maybe she did tell him, and he knows I helped him out, but he didn't think it was important enough. He might get mad that I roped him into this. Heck, he might be on his way to destroy me. I did use his girlfriend to get to him just so I can keep my position.

Toby was a smart man. He could see through Brian's plan easily, and Brian knew that. Brian did think about the possibility of Toby getting mad after finding out about his plan and getting back at him for this. Nobody liked being roped into someone else's schemes, after all. He had no choice, however. This was his only chance. He had to throw caution to the wind and see if Toby would get mad about it.

If he did get mad about what Brian did, then Brian would accept his fate. However, if he would brush it aside and take it as a favor, then that would be for the best. The problem was that he had no idea what Toby was thinking. So is he mad about what I did? Or is he gonna repay the favor?

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Such an unpredictable situation was indeed distressing.

Brian removed the glasses from his nose and kneaded his sore eyes to smother the anxiety in him. Next, he responded to their questions. "Okay, I understand that you're worried, but it's useless to say these right now. Silence."

He raised his hands to display a palm-down. After long years of being the bank governor, he carried immense prestige; the crowd dared not act recklessly upon hearing

his words and hence the obedient silence. Even the midge man, who first voiced out the doubts, reseated himself.

Watching their reactions, Brian heaved a silent sigh of relief before continuing, "Ladies and gentlemen, do not worry. Since I've approved the thirty million loan to Miss Reed, President Fuller will definitely help us. I'm not lying. However, it is still early for that. Perhaps, he doesn't know that the loan has been approved yet."

That was the only explanation he could give in order to appease the throng, yet some of them were unsatisfied.

"Mr. Smith, you've said that we will be able to hear good news from President Fuller by tonight. That's why we've been waiting in the conference room. Otherwise, we must have gone mad to spend the white night here."

"Yeah! Mr. Smith, are you really sure that President Fuller will help us? What if he doesn't—"

"Enough!" Brian slammed the table to interrupt the person as his patience wore thin. "Since I've proposed it and I am the one approving the loan, I will bear the responsibility if President Fuller doesn't help. Are you satisfied with this answer?"

Every one of them hung their head low without a word and the ire in him was slightly doused. Propping his hands on the edge of the table, he sat down again.

Even so, instead of feeling relief upon repressing his subordinates, he was on tenterhooks. Every step of his was taken as planned and not even once had they fallen through.

Now that Toby was his opponent, he was not that confident in winning the game. At this moment, he was rue to make the decision of setting Toby up just to retain his position.

If Toby decides to settle this score with me, I'll be done for this lifetime. A bitter smile appeared across his lips.

He recalled what happened this afternoon. As much as he was happy to relay the news to everyone at that time, he felt silly. How could he blurt something that was not confirmed yet?

Right when Brian dwelled on his foolishness, the door was pushed open with a loud thud. A young man in a suit dashed into the conference room with a phone in his hand.

Due to the fast pace, he kept huffing and puffing when he arrived beside Brian. He tried to catch his breath while speaking, "Greetings... Mister.... Mr. Smith..."

After a while, he failed to explain the reason for his arrival and a displeasure frown appeared on Brian's forehead. "Anything can wait. Let's wait until you catch your breath."

Brian handed a glass of water to the youngster, who was so thirsty that he gulped it down in one-go without thanking Brian. After polishing it off, he breathed a long sigh and his body relaxed at last. Although his breathing was still heavy, he could at least speak.

"Mr. Smith, there's good news," stated the excited man loudly while he looked at Brian.

"Good news?" Brian was stunned momentarily. When something flashed across his mind, his eyes widened and his countenance brightened up in excitement. "Are you saying—"

The young man nodded vigorously. "Yes. The Fuller Group contacted us to say that President Fuller is willing to transfer one billion euro from Citybank to our bank. Mr. Smith, we're saved! We don't have to dismiss our core members!"

His face turned crimson due to excitement as he spoke. Even the others in the room stood up merrily in ones and twos.

"Is it true?" they asked hurriedly while gazing at him.

He nodded repeatedly. "It is. The money is in our bank now."

"Mr. Smith, hurry and check it!" One of them urged, for the bank governor was the only person with the right to check the transfer for such a massive sum of money.

It was not until then did Brian, who was so giddy with joy, pull back his senses and nodded. "Alright, alright. No rushing. I'll check it right now."

He tapped his keyboard to check Toby's account. The overly-vehement emotions rendered his tapping fingers tremble, so he made a few wrong entries for the master password.

The surrounding onlookers were like cats on hot bricks. If he was not the governor, they would have pulled him away and taken his seat to check on their own.

At long last, he managed to key in the right passwords to check on Toby's personal account in which the sight of the newly transferred amount made everyone draw a sharp breath.

That was one billion euro! Even after the conversion, it was a staggering amount of money!

It was their first time seeing such a huge sum of money in someone's personal account. Furthermore, it was not a fixed deposit, but a fluid capital which one could withdraw any time he fancied.

This was the life of a rich person. Although some had a lot of money in their bank account, those were still only fixed deposits. They were not real money as those who possessed them were nothing but a fake rich. On the contrary, someone like Toby was actually rich.

Most importantly, that amount was just the edge of the iceberg to Toby. No one could imagine how much he had in other international banks.

The serial number could easily elicit jealousy in others. Why is there such a vast difference when we're all human?!

Everyone exchanged glances and saw the same helplessness and envy in their eyes. Still, putting their feelings aside, they were on cloud nine as the core members could remain in the headquarters.

"Mr. Smith, you were right. President Fuller is helping us!"

"Yeah, Mr. Smith. Isn't it great?"

"I know, I know." Brian nodded and a wave of relief washed over him whereas the burden was lifted in him.

It is great and it is a relief. Didn't I take the huge risk by using Miss Reed to set President Fuller up just for this moment?

The reality proved him right; he took the chance on it and it was a win! Moreover, the fact that Toby was willing to repay his deeds indicated that he was safe. Thus, he need not have to put his guard up and watch out for Toby's revenge.

Brian kneaded his brows and finally let out a smile as he was all loosened up. Next, he grabbed his gadget and contacted the Fuller Group to convey his gratitude.

He wished he could call Toby personally, but he did not have his contact number. Leaving with no choice, he could only give a call to the company.

In Fuller Group, Tom received the phone call from Brian and was not surprised one bit. As long as the other party was a thankful person, he would always express his gratitude through a call.

"I understand. It is nothing, but President Fuller has mentioned that this is the first and will be the last time. If something similar happens again, he won't let you get away with it," recounted Tom expressionlessly to the phone.

Although he was not sure what Brian had done, he warned in a stern voice as Toby had told him to do so.

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On the other side of the line, Brian shuddered upon hearing Tom's forewarning. His expression turned solemn and he nodded. "I understand. Don't worry, Mr. Brown. Please inform President Fuller that there will be no second time."

He was not that dull. Some things were meant to be done only once; repeating the same thing would be digging one's own grave.

"Okay. If there's nothing else, I shall end the call." Tom hummed before hanging up the phone. Following that, he informed Toby about Brian's thank-you call through text.

In Bayside Residence, Toby was going to the room for a nap after drying his hair. Taking merely one step forward, he heard his phone ringing in the bathrobe pocket. He checked the message and replied 'Got it.' before keeping it and heading toward the room.

He stood beside the bed while looking at the woman, who was fast asleep with red cheeks. Smiling helplessly, he bent over to lightly pinch her nose. He muttered, "You heartless one. How could you fall asleep when someone is actually scheming against you instead of helping you?"

"Hmph..." With her nose pinched, Sonia could not breathe and frowned while squirming.

Noticing that she was going to wake up, he released his hand and patted her shoulder gently to lull her to dreamland again. Soon, she stopped moving and was in a deep slumber.

He let out a soft chuckle and lifted the blanket to tuck himself in bed. After hugging her in his arms, he turned off the lights and closed his eyes.

...

The next day, Sonia was dealing with some documents in her office when Charles rang her.

"Sonia, what happened?" he questioned as soon as the line got through.

“What?” The phone was propped on her shoulder and his indecipherable question floundered her.

He massaged his cheek. “The commerce port. I arrived at the company this morning and my father called me to his office saying that Toby has offered us cooperation with a commerce port in a free-trade zone. Our company also has the lion share of the benefit.”

“For real?” The pen in her hand stopped as she sat upright instantly.

He nodded. “Yeah. It happened this morning. A representative of Fuller Group came to our company to relay the news. Everyone was so shocked when I first found out about it. Is he out of his mind? Why is he consenting to work with us? It is a cooperation in the commerce port and most of the benefits favor us! Has he gone mad? Why is he giving us free money for no reason?”

Hearing his blather, she recalled how Toby mentioned that he was going to thank Charles and Brian. The puzzles fitted perfectly when she associated it with the news of the commerce port cooperation between the Fuller Group and Lane Corporation.

It seemed like it was Toby’s way of expressing his gratitude to Charles. Not only was he a man of his words, he was also fast in setting things into motion.

Sonia shook her head with a smile. “Alright, Charles. I think I know what’s going on.”

“You know?” Charles, who reclined in his office chair languidly with his legs crossed on the desk, immediately put down his feet and straightened his body. “Tell me. What exactly is going on? Did he lose some screws in his head? Why is he giving us free lunch out of the sudden? Isn’t he always fussy when it comes to me? He must be crazy to do that.”

She found it hilarious. “His brain is functioning fine. He’s doing it because of you.”

“Me?” He was slightly baffled and his brows creased in confusion. “What does it have to do with me?”

“I told him about the components.” Instead of answering his question straightforwardly, she brought this up.

There was a nuance in Charles’ expression. “What? You told him about it? Are you—”

“Don’t worry about it. I’m perfectly fine. At first, he was unhappy that I kept him in the dark and did not seek help from him for such a serious matter, but we managed to talk it out after I decided to listen to you and Mr. Smith’s advice. Plus, he’s grateful to you guys for advising me, hence the token of gratitude,” Sonia narrated with a smile.

“Gratitude?”

“Yeah.”

He went silent for a moment before snorting as though he comprehended something. “So, the cooperation is his way of thanking me?”

“It should be.” She nodded.

He pursed his lips. “Who needs a ‘thank you’ from him? I told you those for your sake and nothing else. He—”

“Charles.” She sighed and interrupted him. “Don’t tell me that you’re turning down the offer.”

“I can’t accept it without any merit. So, why should I?” He pouted.

With a smile, she shook her head. “Who says that you don’t have credits? The advice you gave me is the merit. You saved his time of persuading me and made me fully understand my situation. Otherwise, I could’ve ended up being a haughty person. It is all thanks to you. So, you should accept the offer from Toby. Besides, I heard that Lane Corporation needs a commerce port to make international shipments, but you can’t find the suitable one just yet. Even if there is one, I’m sure that you won’t get much benefit from the cooperation. Since Toby has given you a suitable one, why don’t you just accept it?”

He parted his lips, but nothing escaped through them.

Sonia added, “Yesterday, you even told me that we should seek help from a backer if we have one. Now, I’m advising you to earn the money when there’s a chance before you. So, why shouldn’t you accept it? Even if you turn down the offer, he’ll make sure to repay your merit through other means. What’s the point of hesitating? You don’t have to confront him anymore after accepting his favor this time. Isn’t it simple?”

Charles smiled. “It is true that everything comes around. I was still advising you just yesterday and look how the tables have turned. Alright, you win. I’ll accept the offer, but do tell him that I won’t say ‘thank you’ to him.”

With that being said, he terminated the call. Sonia looked at the screen which displayed the main menu and smiled while shaking her head.

They’re all the same—prideful yet warm on the inside.

She kneaded her eyebrows before clicking on Messenger to send a text to Toby. “About the commerce port cooperation with Lane Corporation, is it your way to show your gratitude?”

Then, she set her phone down as she did not expect him to read the message right away. Since the new year was approaching, every big company should be busy with the annual assessment, let alone Fuller Group. Now was its peak period, so it was normal for him to not reply to messages immediately.

However, to her surprise, her phone lit up as soon as she placed it aside. It was a video call invitation from him.

Sonia raised her eyebrow. This man. I thought he's busy, but he wasn't. He gave a response so quickly and it's a video call.

Smiling, she picked up her gadget and accepted the call. Toby's handsome face appeared on the screen at the very next second with his office as the background.

"Aren't you busy?" She took a sip of coffee before smiling at the man.

He gave a light nod. "Tom worked overtime last night and most of the tasks are done. So, I'm not that busy."

"I see." She nodded and gave him a sideways glance. "What a nice boss you are to have Mr. Brown pull an all-nighter."

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Boss Your Wife's Asking for A Divorce Again Chapter 1037

"I am a nice boss." Toby slightly raised his chin as he displayed a smug expression.

The corner of Sonia's lips twitched. "Hey hey hey. I am being sarcastic. Can't you tell?"

She knew he loved exploiting Tom, but she never expected him to go this far! It was as if Toby did not know what was wrong with doing so.

"I can." He leaned against his chair and let out a light smile. He was not an idiot, so how could he not be able to read between the lines?

"So, what's with that proud face?" She gave the man an eye-roll.

He smiled. "If he isn't the one working overtime, then I will be the one. If so, I wouldn't have the time to be with you. So, why not let him do the work? He's single and has loads of time for it."

His shameless yet reasonable words rendered Sonia speechless. Despite the frustration and funny feeling, her heart went out for Tom.

What's wrong with being single? Is it a reason to be exploited?

Feeling helpless, she kneaded her forehead. "Think about it. If it weren't for you, he would've the time to find himself a girlfriend."

Toby fell into silence. That makes sense too.

However, he would not admit to it; if he did, he would be the main cause for Tom being single. Thus, he would never admit to it, so it was not his fault.

As an afterthought, he pursed his lips and coughed before replying nonchalantly, "Him being single is not on me. He is the one at fault. He doesn't want a girlfriend. If he does, he will spare the time to get one no matter how busy he is."

In short, it was none of Toby's business.

How could Sonia not know that he was being stubborn and not admitting the truth? He was making up an excuse. She shook her head in helplessness. "Yeah, yeah. It's none of your business. You care so much for your workers. How would his subordinates not have the time to find themselves a partner when they have such a nice boss, isn't it?"

Hearing that, Toby shamelessly hummed in response. Yeah, that's right.

The corner of Sonia's lips twitched once again.

This brazen man.

She said that on purpose and yet, he accepted it without a tad of guilt. Just what should she do with him?

"Fine. Regardless, don't exploit him too much. You guys are still young and have to work together for another few decades. If you put too much pressure on him, it'll take a toll on his health and what will you do in ten years time? Are you sure you'll be able to find someone who has a good rapport with you and knows you as well as he does?" She gave an eye-roll.

It took him a while before he reciprocated, "Little Leaf."

"Hmm?" She cocked her head. "What's wrong?"

"You..." Toby pursed his lips and his voice trailed off. A couple of seconds later, he finally continued, "I think you're worse than I am. You push Tom more than I do."

She was stunned. "What do you mean? How am I worse than you are?"

Don't frame me!

"I admit that I have high expectations for Tom, but I never thought about keeping him with me for such a long run, whereas you've already planned his decades-long future for him. It seems like you wanna tie him to Fuller Group and serve the company forever," he elaborated with a teasing glint in his eyes.

When Sonia heard that, she floundered for a moment before her face turned crimson. She even began to stammer on her words. "I-I am not! I didn't mean it that way. I-I'm just advising you not to push him too hard. I'm not saying that I want him to work for Fuller Group forever."

Her voice trailed away and her head sunk lower and lower as the guilt grew in her. She could not help the feeling since she did not mean it that way. However, the way she put it did call for some misunderstandings.

Hence, how could she not feel guilty? The way she said it was wrong at the beginning.

Looking at her embarrassed and awkward expression through the screen, he smiled. If she was there with him, he would've hugged and kissed her so badly. He could not help the urge; she was way too adorable.

She usually behaved maturely and her fashion sense was that of a career woman, hence the rare appearance of her demure side. It was a once in a blue moon chance to see her acting like that.

What's the popular internet slang again? Ah, I'm simping for her.

After watching Sonia's reaction, he could feel his heart pounding vigorously against his chest as there was a surge of sizzling sensation.

I guess this is how it feels like to be lovestruck.

"I know you don't mean it that way. I was just joking." He turned sideways and propped his chin, looking at the woman in the video call in a languid yet manly manner.

She glared at Toby. "You're always like this."

He chuckled softly and his low voice was engaging. "Alright. I'll stop."

She snorted and decided to let him off the hook. Then, she stared at him curiously. "You said that you're not planning to keep Mr. Brown by your side? What do you mean by that? Are you going to fire him?"

He shook his head. "Of course not. He owns 0.2% of the initial public offering of our company. So, he's not only my assistant, but also the shareholder of the company. He's forever tied to Fuller Group. I'm not planning to have him by my side for eternity

because once the time is right, I'll let him handle a subsidiary. Tom is a capable man. It'll be a waste of his talent if he works as an assistant forever."

"I see." Sonia nodded upon realizing the meaning behind his words. "I did hear that owners of big companies do let their confidants take over the subsidiaries. It is true."

"Of course. The ones working close to me are basically trustworthy. To have them handle the subsidiaries is an acknowledgement of their capability. I won't have to worry about traitors in the subsidiaries too." He narrowed his eyes.

She caressed her chin. "I've learned something new again. All in all, you'll do the same to Tom and the other secretaries and assistants. Am I right?"

Toby hummed. "That's right. I can't have them work for me as my assistants and secretaries forever. They have the potential. It's condescending to have them stuck in that position. The reason why I'm still keeping them by my side is to train them."

"I understand." She tucked her hair behind her ear as she thought, I've learned something new again.

If only Paradigm had such conditions, she would have put her knowledge to use. However, it was because Paradigm had yet to burgeon.

Once the company flourished, she could assign whoever to wherever she wished like Toby.

She could not help but giggle at that notion. Looking at her smiling like a little squirrel with pine nuts, he became curious. "What are you smiling at?"

"Nothing." She waved her hand, unwilling to tell him everything that was on her mind, for he was afraid that he would laugh at her pipe dream.

After all, the time for Paradigm to grow into a company as huge as his was imponderable. She was not even sure whether it was achievable in the least. Thus, she figured that it would be better not to tell him about it; it would be a secret of hers alone.

Read Novel Boss Your Wife's Asking For A Divorce Again Chapter 1038

Boss Your Wife's Asking for A Divorce Again Chapter 1038

Seeing how Sonia would not tell him, Toby raised his eyebrow and decided not to force her. Instead, he let out a faint smile. "Fine, let's not talk about Tom anymore. I'll be feeling uncomfortable if you mention another guy. Why did you call me?"

She pouted. "Why are you so sure that something happens whenever I call you? What if I'm just bored and need someone to talk to?"

He chuckled lightly. "Because I know that you're not someone who will chat with me during working hours."

He pointed behind her through the screen. She turned her head to look at the book rack, which was behind her. He was implying that both of them were working at the moment.

As he had mentioned, she would not call someone for something trivial or text someone else to slack off during office hours.

Even Toby himself was not an exception. Therefore, there had to be a reason for her to contact him right now.

She smiled. "Okay. Since you know me that well, I'll—"

"Reward me?" he interrupted.

Sonia gave an eye-roll. "Don't interrupt me. Who says I'm going to reward you?"

"But I know you all too well. Don't I deserve something?" He looked at her.

She pouted. "If we put it that way, I know you very well too. Shouldn't you reward me as well?"

"Sure." He nodded without hesitation. "What do you want? As long as you want it, I'll do anything for you."

The way Toby stared at her was so serious that it made her shy. "Who needs a reward from you? Let's get back to business. About the commerce port cooperation with Lane Corporation, is it your way to show your gratitude to Charles?"

"How did you know about it?" A dark glint flashed across his eyes. "I didn't tell you about it."

She drank some water. "Charles told me. He phoned me a while ago to ask if I knew about it and the reason behind it. Then, I recalled what you said last night, so I told him that it's your way of showing your gratitude."

He understood the situation and nodded. "It is me. I always repay people's kindness, so I won't be indebted. Lane Corporation happens to be needing it, so I offered them the cooperation."

"He was reluctant to accept it at the beginning, but I persuaded him." She smiled.

He claimed, "Even if you didn't do that, he will have to accept it in the end. His father won't give in to his attitude. His father has always wanted to work with a suitable commerce port since it's related to Lane Corporation's transition. So, he won't let the chance slip through when I've proffered the deal. If Charles dares to turn down the offer, I reckon he won't be able to see the daylight. He'll be sabotaged by his father."

Sonia covered her mouth as she burst into laughter. "Well, that's possible. In other words, my advice saved Charles from trouble, didn't it?"

"More or less so." Toby lifted his chin.

She giggled. "It seems like he owes me one."

Just as he parted his lips in an attempt to say something, she heard a knock resounded from his side. His brows furrowed as he was displeased by how an outsider interrupted the conversation by knocking on the door. Nevertheless, he responded to the knock. "Come in."

The door swung open and a secretary entered. "President Fuller, the guest who made an appointment yesterday, has arrived. He's waiting for you in the drawing room."

"Okay, I'll be there in a minute. Please entertain the guest while I'm on my way." He nodded to acknowledge the notification while motioning the secretary to leave.

The secretary reciprocated as his gaze swept across the phone in Toby's hand before he left the office. After closing the door, he leaned against it and patted his chest in relief.

It was no wonder he was welcomed by Toby's unpleasant and murderous gaze the moment he entered the room. It was because he had interrupted the lovebirds' video call.

That was why his boss was pulling a sour face at him. It was really bad timing to enter the office. Still, it was fortunate that Toby did not punish him for his untimely arrival, albeit displeased. Otherwise, he would have lost his job.

The secretary smiled bitterly. Placing his hands down, he marched toward the lift. Reporting to the supervisors was never an easy job. It took a simple mistake to step on the timebomb and lose one's job.

Guess I should leave this kind of errands to Mr. Brown.

He entered the lift while shaking his head.

In the meantime, the crease on Toby's forehead smoothened after the door closed. He averted his gaze upon the phone screen in the presidential office.

Just as he was going to say something, Sonia suddenly smiled. "I heard you've got a guest."

He hummed. "He's a close friend of my late grandfather. We have some business going on together. It seems like he needs my help this time round."

"Oh." She nodded. "Since it's your grandfather's close friend, you should get going. I called just to confirm about the commerce port cooperation with Lane Corporation. That's all. Now that I've confirmed, you should go ahead. We can talk at night if there's anything."

Now that she had put it that way, what else could he possibly say? Furthermore, he did not wish to keep Harry waiting. Not only was Harry a close friend of Toby's grandfather, he was one of Toby's teachers.

Harry Lore was an economy professor when he was young. Toby's knowledge pertaining to economy was basically taught by him. Thus, he was credited to Toby's contemporary success too.

Plus, he was a great person. Aside from overindulging and being over protective of his granddaughter, he was a perfect man. Therefore, Toby should pay his homage by not keeping Harry in wait.

"Okay, I'll meet him now. I will introduce you to him during the business party." Toby gazed at Sonia.

She nodded. "Alright."

"I'll hang up the call now."

"Hmm, go ahead." She smiled.

After looking at her for the one last time with a heavy heart, he terminated the video call. She looked at the screen displaying the list of contacts in messenger while smiling. She then put her phone aside and got back to work.

Suddenly, someone pushed open the door. Daphne entered the office frantically. Due to the fast pace, her face was flushing red.

Sonia was taken aback to see her in this state. She blinked her eyes and questioned, "What's the matter? Did something happen?"

As the ever polite staff, Daphne always knocked on the door to seek Sonia's permission before entering the office. It was not until something serious happened that she would barge in without reporting herself. Now that she was behaving this way, it had to be something serious happening.

Daphne panted before looking at her. "President Reed, you're involved in a scandal." It was as Sonia had expected—a bad news.

"What?" She was stunned for a moment before processing Daphne's words. With a baffled expression, she reconfirmed, "Me? Scandal?"

"Hmm." Daphne nodded.

The corner of Sonia's lips twitched. "Impossible. I'm not a celebrity. Why would I be involved in a scandal?"

She then broke into a smile in an unbothered manner.

Daphne hurriedly explained, "President Reed, you're not a celebrity, but you're a public figure. Please do not forget that you're the president of Paradigm and President Fuller's lover. These alone are enough to draw attention from the public. Not to mention the fact that you were trending on the Internet a few times previously. You're as influential as the top celebrities. Many netizens pay attention to your activities online. Someone took a picture of you and a man into a hotel, and a scandal broke out."

Read Novel Boss Your Wife's Asking For A Divorce Again Chapter 1039

Boss Your Wife's Asking for A Divorce Again Chapter 1039

It was not until now did Sonia comprehend the situation—someone took a picture of her with a man going to a hotel and the netizens were presuming that she was cheating with another man.

F*ck! What kind of nonsense is this?

Words failed her as her eyes hurt from all the eye-rolls. "Who did I go to the hotel with? Why didn't I know anything?"

Looking at her with mixed feelings, Daphne replied, "President Reed, have you forgotten that you and President Lane went to meet Mr. Smith in the hotel?"

Sonia's face darkened at that. "So, you mean someone took a picture of me and Charles going into a hotel, and they spread rumors about us? Is Charles the man involved?"

"Yes." Daphne lowered her gaze onto the ground.

Sonia smiled in vexed. "These people must be really free. Let me see their comments."

Then, she threw away the pen in her hand and held the mouse. Turning on her computer, she saw her so-called scandal the moment she logged into the website.

Due to the big banner on top of the website, she could not unsee it even if she wanted to. A striking topic was written on it with bold fonts.

'Shocking News! President Fuller's Girlfriend Went to a Hotel With Mystery Man! Is There a Good Reason for It? Or Is It a Moral Decadence?'

Looking at the title, Sonia was utterly at a loss for words.

Lunatic freak!

One could easily tell that it was Squirrel Media's style.

She did not click on the banner advertising immediately. Instead, her eyes narrowed before she raised her head to look at Daphne. "Do you know which media outlet spread the rumor first?"

The other main character of the scandal was Charles. Although Daphne mentioned that she was going to give up on him many times, it was not that easy to do so.

She still loved him. Now that he was involved in a scandal, she would not turn a blind eye, let alone shrugging the matter off without looking into it.

As Sonia had expected, Daphne gave a quick response to her answer. "It's the Squirrel Media."

"It is them." Sonia smirked. She could guess that it was their style from the title, but it was now verified that the first one to release the article was them as well.

These squirrels are seriously getting on my nerves.

"Besides them, other websites and media outlets shared the article soon after. The articles were scandalous and the news is sending everyone wild right now," Daphne added.

Sonia nodded to acknowledge her as her cold eyes remained fixated on the exaggerated banner. Etching the word 'Squirrel Media' into her head, she pursed her lips with a dark expression. Next, she grabbed the mouse to click onto the inflated title on the banner.

The Squirrel Media was considerably big as a media company, but they were an ant in comparison to the Fuller Group. Thus, they would not have the audacity to release such articles to offend Toby.

Even if there was something going on between Sonia and Charles, and they managed to take some pictures of them as evidence, the normal procedure should be meeting Toby personally in light of his identity. In doing so, showing him the content might earn them some hush money. They would never decide to release an article like this.

Releasing the article like this meant trampling Toby's dignity, which would lose themselves his favor. After all, everyone would find out that the president of Fuller Group, a man of such high status, was cheated on. No man would have the tolerance to put up with it; the media's demise was inevitable.

Sonia believed that the Squirrel Media understood that simple rule. However, they were willing to take the risk of offending Toby by dropping the bomb.

Hence, this meant that they had a backer to shore them up, someone who might have the power to keep them safe. Thus, the daring media passed Toby and released the article on the Internet just like that.

As an afterthought, her grip on the mouse tightened. She wondered what kind of content they wrote beneath the striking title after taking the risk of offending Toby. Sonia's small face was so cold that even the air around her was chilly.

Staring at her, Daphne could not help the surprised expression on her countenance.

Since when has President Reed looked so intimidating before?

It was as though she was looking at Toby. Although it was not as formidable as his, it was close.

Seems like she has learned a lot from President Fuller.

Oblivious of Daphne's thoughts, Sonia was staring at the monitor. The displayed content almost had her laughing.

Squirrel Media's article wrote, 'On 20th of January, a witness saw Miss Reed, the president of Paradigm, entering Atlas Hotel with an anonymous man in the afternoon. A couple of hours later, both of them were having fun while talking intimately at the entrance. Once the car arrived, they looked at each other and smiled before leaving. The witness could not help but wonder about their relationship.'

Following the paragraph were a few pictures.

One of them showed Sonia and Charles going into the hotel. Since they were talking, the close proximity made it seem like they were holding hands.

The next one was them waiting for the cab at the hotel entrance upon bidding Brian goodbye. In the photo, her head hung low as she warmed her hands while Charles stood next to her to put his coat on her shoulders.

In the third photo, she was wearing his coat while looking at him in shock. However, her cheeks were red. In addition to her surprised gaze, she appeared shy and it lent more reasons for one to misinterpret the situation.

In actuality, her cheeks were red because of the cold weather. It was not the kind of bashful reaction as shown in the picture.

As for her gaze, it was more ridiculous. She could easily tell that someone had brightened the picture to make her surprised expression seem to be that of a shy girl in love.

Obviously, the Squirrel Media edited the photos on purpose to mislead the netizens. In doing so, the netizens would assume that something was going on between Sonia and Charles.

These wicked people.

For the final picture, he was opening the car door for her whereas she smiled at him as a thank you.

Even so, the content was misunderstood due to the camera angle. It became the intimate and affectionate smile as mentioned in the paragraph.

In short, with those narrations and ambiguous photos, she would have mistaken that she had something going on with Charles if she was the third party. How would the netizens respond when Sonia herself conceived such thoughts after reading it?

The busybody netizens had always possessed a cognitive distortion of fanning the flames while watching the commotion. Plus, putting Toby and her identities together was merely adding fuel to the flame.

Not that she was looking down upon them though. It was just the truth.

Read Novel Boss Your Wife's Asking For A Divorce Again Chapter 1040

Boss Your Wife's Asking for A Divorce Again Chapter 1040

Due to the unparalleled social status and life quality, netizens usually bore resentful malice to influential people; instead of cheering for their success, the netizens preferred to watch them fall from their peaks.

After the downfall, they would not pity but jibe the ones that were unreachable to them. They would gloat over the misfortune or even kick them while they were down.

It was as if they could vent their anger, which was incurred by the unparalleled social status and life quality, by doing so. All in all, the scariest thing on earth was neither the spirits or ghosts, but humanity itself.

Therefore, Sonia knew how bad the comments were without having to look at them. The prevalent bandwagon effect amongst the netizens resulted in lack of critical thinking and ungrounded belief based by the media.

Basically, they rarely question the credibility of the media and build their judgment based on what was presented in the articles. Of course, some of them were being reasonable and questioned the validation of the news.

Yet, so what if they did?

Even if the rational ones were doubting its credibility, they would rather buy it as the truth due to envy. They might even leave more destructive comments and catastrophize things compared to the ones who trusted the news.

While the colossal thoughts whirled in her mind, Sonia scrolled down the website toward the comment section. As she had foreseen, the appalling comments revealed before her.

'Hahaha, I'm dying. They were just showing off their affection on the Internet a while ago. President Fuller made a love confession online and yet, she's giving him a reality check so quickly. He's been cheated on!'

'Oh my days, what have I just read? President Fuller is so handsome. I bet he's more attractive than the man, whose face isn't that clear in the picture. Look at the guy's outfit. It's too much. He seems like a pervert, dressing so thinly. He's no less different from the gigolos in the nightclubs. Just one glance is enough to tell that he's not a good person. What is this Sonia Reed thinking? Why did she fall for such a man and betray President Fuller? Just which part of this man is more charming than President Fuller?'

'Hey, up there. The grass is always greener. It doesn't apply only to men but women too. So what if President Fuller is handsome and rolling in cash? He's totally swarmed with work for handling such a big company and has no time for Sonia. Perhaps, she might've felt lonely and can't put up with it.'

'I knew that Sonia Reed wasn't a decent person from the very beginning. Think about it. The Reed Family's downfall happened a few years ago while the Fuller Family has been posited as the wealthiest family of all. Let's rewind to how she got married to him. Although she has explained it during the conference that President Fuller has married her as a token of gratitude for saving Miss Gray, aren't money and resources a better

option for compensation? It's the Fuller Family we're talking about! Why must it be a marriage? So, I guess there's other reasons behind all this. Perhaps, Sonia Reed set President Fuller up by bearing his baby, so he had no choice but to marry her.'

'That makes sense. No wonder President Fuller didn't favor her during those six years. This must be it! If I were him, I wouldn't let her get away with it. There's still something that bugs me. Didn't President Fuller free himself by filing a divorce? Why did they reconcile, though?'

'Who knows? There's gotta be some reasons that we don't know of. Maybe she has something over his head? That's why he has no choice but to reconcile and display his affection on the Internet. If so, President Fuller is so pitiful! This woman is such a snake!'

'I know right. President Fuller may be treating her the same way he did before the marriage. It's just that we don't know about it. Then, she became resentful and found another guy to take revenge on President Fuller, but it was careless of her to have her picture taken.'

'That'll be great if that's the truth. That means President Fuller will break up with her then. If there's a group chat waiting for their divorce, count me in!'

'Me too! If they really break up, it will be news worth celebrating.'

Every comment was urging Toby to break up with Sonia and they were even pre-celebrating the occasion. It was as though she was a snake that had something over Toby's head to force themselves together as stated in the comments.

Furthermore, some of the malicious comments called her a sl*t for cheating on Toby because she could not stand the loneliness.

The comments incurred the wrath in Sonia as her cheeks were puffed and her eyes reddened. It was malice of them to throw destructive comments on someone, who was a total stranger to them.

"President Reed, are you alright?" Daphne, who stood before her, concernedly questioned while knowing the reasons for her ire.

Sonia kneaded her temples. "I'm fine. Just a little stuffy around the chest."

Daphne sighed. "Anyone will feel the same after looking at such hateful comments; it happens. I don't think you should see more of them anymore. Let's just exit the website."

Sonia took a sip of coffee. "That's not the point right now. Daphne, there's something I gotta tell you."

“Go ahead, President Reed.” Daphne looked at her.

She bit her lips. “Miss Daphne, about the scandal, it’s not true. You know why Charles and I went to the hotel. It was to meet Mr. Smith. We didn’t do anything. You—”

“I thought you’re going to say something else, President Reed.” Daphne smiled. “So, you’re referring to this matter. Don’t worry about it. I know that there’s nothing going on between you and President Lane. You and President Fuller love each other so much, unlike what’s being spread on the Internet. You will never betray President Fuller by having something with President Lane. If it is so, it should’ve happened ages ago, not now.”

“But the photos—”

Daphne shook her head. “As for the photos, the people who know you well can tell that they’re fake; only the idiots will buy it. So, you don’t have to worry a thing. The scandal doesn’t bother me. I’ve said that I got over President Lane, so it doesn’t concern me at all. Besides, this is all fake.”

Hearing that, Sonia heaved a sigh as her jittery heart regained its tranquility. “It’s good to hear that you’re not overthinking about it. I’m just worried that you’ll feel uncomfortable from hearing the news.”

“Don’t worry, President Reed.” Daphne gave her a reassuring smile.

She hummed. “Okay.”

“But have you discovered that something is wrong with the pictures?” Daphne fixed her glasses while inquiring.

Sonia massaged her temples. “Yeah. As you’ve said, they’re fake. I know which parts of them are edited to make those normal pictures become suggestive.”

“No.” Daphne shook her head. “I’m not talking about this, President Reed.”

“Then, what?” Sonia blinked her eyes.

Daphne came forward and stood next to Sonia, who passed the mouse to her.

She grabbed the mouse and scrolled downward with a solemn face. “Look at this picture. President Lane’s face is blurred out, but your face is shown clearly. It’s obvious that the Squirrel Media has blurred him out.”

Thud!

Sonia slammed the desk in a fit of pique and her face was red. “F*cking squirrels.”

